



LYMINGTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday January 25th 2024 in St Thomas' Church Hall

at 7:30 pm

	<p>Present: Rev. Lee Thompson (Vicar), Chris Stroud (CS) (CW), Daphne Johnson (DJ) (CW), Jonathan Cook (JC), Malcolm Ward (MW), Andy Clapper (AC), David Hanks (DH), Maureen Harris (MH), Jeremy Vines (JV), Pat Cashin (PC), Peta Walmisley (PW), Sylvia Pepin (SP), Celia Swan (CMS), Michael Standage (MS), Andy Payne, Treasurer (AP), Mary Hill, Secretary (Sec).</p>
1	<p>Opening Prayer. The Vicar opened the meeting with prayer.</p>
2	<p>Apologies for absence: Marion Lewis</p>
3	<p>Proposals for AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I. Foundation Governor for Lyminster Infants School.II. Coffee on Sundays.
4	<p>Corrections and approval of the Minutes for the previous meeting. There were no corrections. Approval of the minutes was proposed by PW and seconded by CS. All approved.</p>
5	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>The Vicar reported that Henry Bradley had offered to fill the vacant H and S position on the PCC.</p>
6	<p>Chairman's Report.</p> <p>The Vicar reflected on all that had happened in the church and in the town during December and over the Christmas period. He thanked everyone who had contributed to the various services and events i.e. Blessing the Crib, Switching on the town lights, the Christmas Tree Festival, Advent Carols, community and school Carol services, Life and Soul Services, Nine Lessons and Carols, Crib service, Messy Church, Midnight Mass, Christmas Communion, Christmas Lunch.</p> <p>During this period, the new Bishop of Winchester was welcomed with a special service in the Cathedral and the Vicar attended a Bishop and Clergy conference.</p> <p>He thanked the governors of Lyminster Infants School which had its SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection in January and received an excellent report.</p> <p>The Vicar also thanked everyone who had participated in the ongoing work of the Parish (pastoral care, hospitality, building maintenance, safeguarding, building community and faithful witness.)</p> <p>At the conclusion of the report, DJ on behalf of the PCC, thanked the Vicar and Helen (his wife) for all that they had done over the last two months.</p>
7	<p>Standing Committee Report.</p> <p>The PCC had received a copy of the Standing Committee agenda prior to the meeting. In answering the question 'Why do we have a Standing Committee?', the Vicar replied that, since he was still relatively new in post, the meeting helped him to a) become better acquainted with key issues e.g. finance and buildings, b) have the opportunity to discuss some issues in more detail, and c) to enable him to set the agenda for the PCC meeting.</p>
8	<p>ChurchDesk update: The Vicar</p> <p>The License for ChurchDesk starts from this calendar year and is being used to deliver the weekly Newssheet earlier than anticipated. The Vicar then shared the plan for the next few months as follows:</p>

	<p>February: The Vicar and the Church Administrator to migrate all bookings into ChurchDesk. March: The Vicar will prepare the Forms and Data policies which will need to be approved at the March PCC Meeting. April: The website will be launched. May: After the APCM, the PCC will begin to use ChurchDesk for document storage.</p> <p>Training is included in the cost of ChurchDesk and will be in groups via Webinars and Self-Help tutorials. The Vicar also said that free training is also available from the ChurchDesk website.</p>
9	<p>Music at St Thomas': The Vicar</p> <p>JC had circulated a document concerning the Appointment of an Organist and the Engagement of a Choir Conductor. The document described the arrangements that were made towards the end of the Vacancy at the end of July when a six-month agreement was made with Peter Roper-Curzon to cover organ and choir music between September 1st 2023 and 29th February 2024. Towards the end of the six months, Peter Roper-Curzon said that he would be willing to take-on as an employee, the organist's role subject to terms and conditions. JC has written a Job Description for the role which had been circulated to the PCC. Salary negotiations have yet to take place.</p> <p>In addition, the Vicar proposed that the church engage a self-employed Choir Conductor, Fern Daish-Handy, whose commitment would be to conduct at one choir rehearsal, one morning service and one evensong per month at a rate of £40 per session. Fern is an accomplished musician who has filled this role for several years receiving an annual honorarium from the Choir Fund.</p> <p>The Vicar said that his aim was to develop the choir and with a permanent organist to make the church a music centre in Lymington.</p> <p>There followed a general discussion relating to these proposals including the implications for the budget.</p> <p>JC proposed that the PCC approve the opening of negotiations with Peter Roper-Curzon with a view to employing him as the St Thomas Organist as from 1 March 2024 and to approve the appointment of a self-employed Choir Conductor.</p> <p>This was proposed by DJ and seconded by CS. The motion was approved with 12 votes for the motion, 1 vote against and 3 abstentions.</p>
10	<p>PC Awayday: The Vicar</p> <p>The Vicar put forward his plans for the future which will begin on Sunday February 11th when he would be asking all the congregations at Sunday services to suggest ideas on how they see the Church in the future. With that information, he suggested that, within the next three months, the PCC should have an Awayday meeting off the church premises to discuss these ideas. He put forward four areas for discussion at this meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Pastoral provision; II. Church services for families and children; III. The development of a 'Choir Church'; IV. The current service pattern. <p>He proposed that this meeting would be for the PCC plus key people involved in the life of the church, about 25 – 30 people in total. The meeting would include a time for worship, several presentations and time for break-out groups and whole group discussions.</p> <p>His vision is that St Thomas' church should not only be the town church of Lymington but that the congregation should also reflect the population of Lymington.</p> <p>Details of possible dates, location and budgetary implications will follow.</p>

11	<p>Safeguarding Report: JC JC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. The Vicar then thanked JC for his vigour and determination in the Safeguarding work he had already done.</p>
12	<p>Finance Report: AP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Finance and funeral fees: AP asked the PCC to approve the Wedding and Funeral costs 2023-24. This was proposed by MS and seconded by MH. All agreed. II. Organist and Choir Conductor: JC had prepared a contract of employment for the organist and an agreement for the Choir Conductor which were approved by the Finance Committee, (see item 9). III. AP had circulated, for information, the Church's annual energy usage and cost comparing the last quarter figures for 2022 with the last quarter figures for 2023, indicating the doubling of costs in a single year. IV. AP had circulated the PCC fund balances at the ends of years 2020 (£670,000), 2021 (£625,000), 2022 (£581,000) and 2023 (£530,000). He commented that the reduction over the years had been largely due to the building work but the cost of this had been mitigated by some generous legacies. V. PC Funds 2024: AP warned that, although the PCC keeps a Buildings Reserve and an Operational Reserve of £260,000, the Finance Committee recommends adding an additional £100,000 to the reserve funds as a cushion since the cost of external repairs to the church buildings continues to increase. He therefore warned the PCC to be prudent in its spending and not to exceed £170,000 (£530,000 minus £360,000) unless it was clear that this was a temporary situation. VI. 2024 Budget: AP had circulated the draft budget for 2024. He emphasised that regular expenditure (e.g. possible youth and family worker and music costs) with unknown costs had not been included as well as two items of exceptional expenditure (i.e. repairs and maintenance flagged by the QI reports and the cost of tree pollarding in the Churchyard). The Finance Committee recommended that these items of exceptional expenditure needed to be prioritised with those relating to Health and Safety. The Finance Committee recommends that it works closely with the Fabric Committee to ensure financial stability. VII. A request to pay £145 plus VAT for a discounted energy audit was considered but reluctantly rejected. It was flagged as 'pending.' <p>Acceptance of the draft Budget was proposed by PW and seconded by MS. This was agreed with 15 votes for the motion and 1 vote against.</p>
13	<p>Buildings and Land Report MS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS reported that they were investigating some unexplained discoveries with the drains which had yet to be resolved. • Research was ongoing on the heat loss reported in the Church Hall. • DJ proposed that a professional energy audit, partly paid by the Diocese, should take place. This was seconded by CMS. This was passed with 11 voting for the motion, 3 voting against and 2 abstentions. • There had been a complex and detailed fire risk assessment of the church which CS and MS agreed to look at critically and assess. It was also agreed that an assessment by a Fire Officer was also needed. • It was agreed that fire training was needed for a number of people.
14	<p>Health and Safety Henry Bradley's offer to be the new Health and Safety Officer had been accepted.</p>

15	Good Samaritans: Following a recent request, it was agreed to explore the idea of creating a Hardship Fund.
16	Pastoral Report (MH) MH reported on her activities: supporting members of the congregation; managing home communion teams; visiting Care Home Residents and forwarding Prayer Chain requests to the office. She also suggested that the PCC might agree to a presentation by Anna Chaplaincy in order to widen the pastoral team. She also suggested that another welcoming event for new members might also attract more volunteers to join the team.
17	Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vicar announced that he had been appointed Padre to the British Legion in Lymington.
18	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patricia Owen from Romsey was proposed as a Foundation Governor of Lymington Infants School. After the Vicar had read out her application statement, CS proposed and MH seconded that she should be recommended for the position. All agreed. Coffee between services on Sunday morning. Since Marion Lewis was moving to London in the near future, there was a need for a new coordinator. DJ was pleased to announce that Derek Schaefer had volunteered for the role. DH together with his wife also offered their help. The Vicar thanked them all for their support.
19	Diary dates: It was agreed that the next PCC Meeting should be moved from Maundy Thursday to Tuesday March 26th .