

PCC Minutes: Monday 25th March 2024
St Luke's Church, Grayshott
Meeting 409 of the PCC in the Church Hall at 7.30 pm.

Present:

PCC Members: Revd Jeremy Haswell (Chairman), Sheila Austin, Edward Tobin, Clive Purkiss, Clive Loder, Hilary Loder, Jeremy Hassell, Alice Murphy, Anne Gale-Jones, Susie Millard, Philippa Whitaker, Frankie Kelly, Penny Thomas, Ros Balfour, Viv Ward.

1. Welcome and opening prayer

Revd Haswell read Psalm 31 v 1-5 and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies

None

3. Minutes of PCC Meeting 408

The minutes were agreed and signed by the chairman.

3a. Matters arising

Section 3 of PCC 408 minutes:

Clive Purkiss (as Human Resources lead) pointed out that Anna Gilderson (part time administrator) could not carry out all of her duties in the hours she worked. He had met with her for an appraisal but could not identify her objectives. He felt these needed to be decided at staff meetings. The vicar commented and agreed with this. He told the PCC a volunteer had been found who will be helping her in the office fairly soon.

3b. PCC 409 Action List

Item 1: Sharing the Load:

The vicar pointed out that the "Sharing the Load" document had been updated. Viv Ward said that the champions need to agree objectives with the relevant people.

Item 3: i-know church training:

Anna Gilderson is looking into this including alternative software systems.

Item 4: Risk Assessments:

In safeguarding, risk assessments need to be done. Hilary Loder outlined how some people find these quite difficult and she has given some guidance for Anna to make available. The vicar emphasised how important risk assessments are.

4. Finance – Annual Report and Financial Statement

The treasurer, Viv Ward, had circulated the annual report of 26 pages to the PCC.

He highlighted the **outward giving** payments for 2023 of £11k which were yet to be paid to the various beneficiaries.

There was still £12k owing to the diocese for the reductions in **parish share payments** we had made during 2023 but we are now able to afford to pay this. *(See section 5 below)*

General Fund – There was a surplus of £6,400 even after accruing for the outward giving and the parish share payments. Income had increased by £5k due to some very generous single donations from the parish and from the village including one for £10k. However, regular giving was down and income from collections was reduced by £3k.

Penny Thomas pointed out that the improvement in the finances was at a cost to parishioners including reduced heating in church.

Regarding expenses, there were savings on gas and electricity costs and salaries. Grayshott Today made a surplus of £399. For 2024, Viv has budgeted for a deficit of £25k.

The **Youth Worker Fund** showed a deficit of £6,200 compared to a budget of £12k. This was because the residential full time youth worker had been made redundant and replaced with a part time youth worker with funding aided by East Hampshire District Council. The treasurer had transferred £5k from the designated to the restricted fund. He asked for the approval of the PCC. This was proposed by the vicar and seconded by Jeremy Hassell and approved by all PCC members.

Rhys (the youth worker) has been taken on working for 6 hours for the village and 4 hours for the church each week. Hilary discussed detailed aspects of this with the treasurer.

For the **Youth Fund Village** there had been a deficit of £1,031 due to redundancy payments etc. Money had been transferred from the general fund to support this so the fund started the beginning of the academic year at zero.

The **Financial Statement** had been considered by the Finance Working Group. The first part of the report was written by the vicar with the charity commission in mind. All PCC members were listed (as Trustees). The electoral roll was 157. Church attendances were listed. The treasurer's report included policies on reserves and investments and outward giving. Considering all the funds there was a surplus of £5,169 compared with £5,400 the previous year. Total funds were £142k. Regarding the pension fund the PCC now has no liabilities. Viv outlined details listed all the funds on a spreadsheet circulated to the PCC members.

The Independent Examiner (Christopher Kelly) had moved house and his address needed updating.

The vicar thanked Viv for all his work on the accounts.

Susie Millard asked whether the Payaz cardreader had made a difference. The treasurer pointed out that different credit cards had different charges. The vicar gave examples of how some events have seen some generous giving.

The annual accounts to 31st December 2023 were proposed by the treasurer, Viv Ward and seconded by Sheila Austin and approved unanimously by the PCC.

Payroll and Pensions. Anna Gilderson (admin) and Rhys McLaren (youth) had both completed their probationary period but were not yet in a pension scheme.
The treasurer proposed that we use the Churchworkers' Pension Fund. This was seconded by Frankie Kelly and agreed unanimously.

Parish Funding Programme: Regular giving comparing the months of September and December 2023, saw 4 people stop giving, 1 person start giving and 12 people increase their giving.

Shelagh Edwards had retired as **Stewardship Recorder** and Barbara Johnston had taken over the role. The vicar thanked Shelagh for all her hard work.

5. Vicar's Report

When the **Parish Share payments** had been stopped in June (and then resumed at a reduced rate in September 2023), it had been agreed *the PCC suspends payments for the parish share with immediate effect until we are clear about our financial position at the year end.* With the parish's financial position now improved, delayed payments of the Parish Share could (and should) be made without a further vote by the PCC. However, the reduced monthly payments (£6k instead of £8k) would continue until the treasurer was certain that the parish would not sustain a further financial deficit (from the March accounts).

There was a discussion about the **church's heating**. Even with the heating on for Sunday services, the church still felt cold. The vicar recounted how Grayshott Concerts hired a space heater with temporary ducting through the belfry vestry door to heat the church before their last concert. Jeremy Hassell had used the same firm to heat a large sports hall at St. Edmunds school and will make enquiries on behalf of the church. There was also the possibility of putting glass doors at the porch, so less heat is lost.

Penny Thomas queried whether the Parish Share had increased from £96k and the treasurer confirmed this was the same as in previous years. She was concerned that our focus was on asking for donations e.g. on the website. Edward Tobin pointed out that the church's activities have been well summarised in the vicar's report in the first 8 pages of the financial statement. The vicar acknowledged Penny's comments.

Edward asked for the website to avoid putting so many links to donations on the home page and Viv recalled this had been mentioned at a PCC meeting last autumn without any action being taken. The vicar will ask Anna to amend this. Sheila had asked if collections at services would continue, and the vicar confirmed they would.

There was a discussion about the website.

Hilary said that the Christmas Candle Service had not pressurised for donations but had made a good income for the church.

The vicar announced that Alice Murphy and Vanessa Rispin will be going on **Lay Assistant Minister training programme** (2 years of background training and being involved in projects). This will be funded from the Ministry Training restricted fund which was £5,827. ***The vicar proposed this be approved by the PCC and seconded by Clive Purkiss. The PCC gave unanimous support.***

At the **APCM and Vestry meeting** on 16th May, there are **vacancies** for a churchwarden and 2 PCC members. Ros Balfour had completed 6 years' service and could not stand for re-election and Frankie Kelly had completed 3 years but would not be standing for re-election. Edward Tobin had completed 6 years as churchwarden and would not be standing for re-election. The vicar thanked them for their service to the PCC.

The vicar thanked Susie Millard for running the Palm Sunday service. He thanked the school foundation governors including Alice Murphy for their work. Susie reminded the PCC that there had been 3 parent deaths recently at the school affecting 6 children and asked people to pray for them. The vicar commended the head teacher Richard Austin in his role.

6 Churchwardens' Reports

Edward had circulated details of a **diocesan grant** of up to £5k / parish to help repairs suggested in the last Quinquennial Report (April 2021). **The PCC approved the application**, but the details need to be worked out.

The church hall toilets needed improvement and Sheila had written to the users of the church hall to canvass ideas about what was required.

Adrian Banwell has taken over organising the **rotas for church services** and Sheila asked people to help him and volunteer for reading lessons &c wherever possible.

The **Outward Giving Group** had identified the charities that would benefit from the £3k unspent that was originally designated for St. Mark's church, Bordon. These are in the treasurer's report and £1,000 will go to each of the Testimony of Faith Homes, Acorn Christian Healing and the Dohnavur Fellowship, India. **This was proposed by Sheila Austin and seconded by Philippa Whitaker and approved by all PCC members.**

Chris Grocock is to be relicensed as a Licenced Lay Minister at a service on 22nd June. This is until 3rd June 2027 (his 70th birthday) and the vicar needs the support and approval of the PCC. **This was put to the PCC (with all present) with unanimous approval.**

7. Safeguarding

Following a meeting of the safeguarding officers and the vicar on 8th February, Penny asked the PCC to adopt a policy about live streaming of services which had been circulated before the meeting. This was prepared by the Baptist Union

<https://www.baptist.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=310581&view=download> and used with permission.

The vicar was already aware while taking services and Susie also discussed this with her involvement in leading children's services. Hilary reminded the PCC that young people are more vulnerable from social media than older church members.

8. Youth Work

Hilary went through her report. A legacy had been received for youth work which could finance continue the funding after the EHDC grant ends in 2025. She asked that the PCC might approve its investment to be able to continue youth work at St.Luke's.

There is a need for **folding gates** across the car park so ball games can be played in the car park. A grant application for this had been unsuccessful. She emphasised the need for more volunteers to enable the youth activities to continue.

On 5th May and 16th June there will be a 45 minute afternoon service called WAFFFL (**W**orship **a**nd **F**amily **F**ellowship at **F**our o'clock at St.Luke's). This is intended for families and will run as an experiment on these 2 Sundays. Pews will be moved to make the church a "café style" environment. The vicar gave his full support for this.

9. Pastoral Team

The vicar thanked Ros for the report and all her work. He confirmed that Green Gables Nursing Home is now involved and he will be visiting again in April.

10. Outreach

The vicar thanked Claire Haswell for her report

11. Hospitality

The vicar thanked Anne Gale-Jones for her report and all the work she does.

The meeting finished in prayer at 9.35pm
The APCM will be held at 7pm on Thursday 16th May
The next PCC meeting will be held soon after that