

PCC Minutes: Monday 25th November 2024
St Luke's Church, Grayshott
Meeting 413 of the PCC in the Timothy Room at 7.00 pm.

Present: PCC Members: Revd Jeremy Haswell (Chairman), Sheila Austin, Clive Loder, Hilary Loder, Anna Lescure, Alice Murphy, Clive Purkiss, Viv Ward, Susanne Wavre, Philippa Whitaker.

In attendance: PCC Secretary, Edward Tobin

1. Welcome and opening prayer

Revd Haswell opened the meeting at 7.05 pm. He took a text from Matthew 5 verses 1 -12 (the Beatitudes) and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies

Susie Millard, Jeremy Hassell, Graeme Bowerbank, Anne Gale-Jones.

3. Minutes of PCC Meeting 412 on 23rd September 2024

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed by the chairman. Hilary Loder asked that we check the minutes of meeting 409 in March 2024 to see whether the PCC adopted a policy about live streaming of services which had been circulated before the meeting. [further reference to the recording of the meeting showed that the matter had been presented and discussed but not formally adopted].

3a Review of the Action List (Matters arising)

Sheila had been informed that recent PCC minutes had not been added to the website and this would be addressed.

- I. **Sharing the Load** – Sheila had put a stand-alone version on one-drive for PCC members to review regularly. If anything needs updating, please advise her.
- II. **Risk Assessments** – will be kept in electronic format on the one-drive as well as paper copies except those containing confidential information.
- III. **The Fundraising (Happy) Team** had met recently. Sheila informed the meeting that the Christmas concert had been considered non-viable and had been cancelled. Another event early in 2025 is being considered. There will also be an appeal to the village for the restoration of the weathervane on the spire. Clive Loder has details of a charity that may be able to help with the funding of this. Jeremy told the meeting about the Bridge and Scrabble Drive on 22nd January 2025. Philippa would be grateful to receive any raffle prizes.
- IV. **A suggestion that I-know Church be replaced with Church Suite**
Anna Gilderson had provided a report to PCC members about the two systems. Viv suggested that Clive Loder should speak with Anna about the technicalities. The Church of England had made various updates & add-ons (e.g. "Organiser") of i-know church free to parishes making it much less expensive than Church Suite.
- V. **Sharing the School Newsletter** (suggested by Linda Holbrook at last meeting). Hilary asked that this only goes ahead with the permission of the head teacher.
- VI. **Prayer Corner in Church** – Sheila requested that this is left tidy and undisturbed.
- VII. **Pastoral Team's Appeal for Volunteer Drivers** – was discussed.

Hilary reminded the PCC that, unless the driver was known to the vulnerable person they were taking in their car, there should be another volunteer in the car to satisfy safeguarding requirements. The resulting logistical problems were discussed by the PCC.

VIII. **Hospitality** – Jeremy thanked those that had installed the new kitchen fridge.

4. Financial Update

Viv presented the Management accounts to 30 September 2024.

In the last nine months, the General Fund showed a surplus of £12,654 against a budget deficit of £11,000. Due to generous donations, collections and a legacy, income was £10,914 better than budget. Expenses were £12,740 better than budget. The reduced monthly payment for Parish share accounted for £5,409. Utilities and careful spending accounted for the rest.

The original budget deficit of £25,623 was now reforecast to £8,560 – an improvement on the previous forecast in June of £12,412, but Viv pointed out that this was still a deficit. However, there had been a reduction in regular giving. The reserves brought forward were £59,926 so the general fund balance was £51,366 at the year end. With annual operating costs at £159k, three months costs (the amount we should hold in reserve) would be nearly £40k which exceeded our general reserve of £51k.

Using an inflation rate of 2%, income to the general fund was forecast to be £144,877, but with expenses of £174,276 this resulted in a net deficit of £29,399.

The treasurer listed items that he had been asked to budget for. This included a replacement photocopier. The present one is 6 years old and will need replacing at some time, but only when necessary.

The vicar had asked for a budget to pay the (Ukrainian) leader of the music group. This was discussed by the PCC.

The Finance Working Group (FWG) had met on 6th November and had recommended that, where appropriate, spending on budgeted items was delayed until money was available. Fundraising would be needed.

The treasurer outlined capital expenditure requirements – some by the next Quinquennial Inspection (QI) in April 2026. He explained which other designated and restricted funds might be available including the Buildings Fund, the Equipment Fund and the Village to Church Fund. Smaller items in the budget like a connection for a laptop in the lectern and a second camera for streaming services could be authorised as well as replacing the oak bargeboard near the church porch.

Clive Loder told the meeting that the 30-year-old church rooms needed cavity wall insulation and double glazing. The Timothy Room was built before that but to very low specifications and probably didn't justify major improvements to the structure. The vicar reminded the meeting that the Timothy Room would be redecorated early in January. Clive Purkiss felt that the church could not justify charging high hiring prices with the building in its present poor state.

The treasurer conceded that a small amount of the building fund might be spent on new toilets, but Sheila reminded the PCC that some other items need to be done in time for the next QI so the money should be used wisely.

Viv therefore proposed that the PCC approve the budget with the caveat that some projects are delayed as recommended by the FWG. This was seconded by Sheila Austin and approved unanimously.

The vicar thanked Viv for all his work on this. He would also contact a specialist carpenter who might help us with the oak bargeboard.

The treasurer had prepared the Fund Movement report and circulated this before the meeting. There were no queries from PCC members.

Parish Share had been paid in full up to June 2024 but, paying only £6k /month of our £8k /month allocation to the diocese, by September we were underpaid by £5,409. The treasurer stated that the PCC could now afford to pay the full amount. He had also researched the amounts that similar parishes were paying in our deanery and compared the deprivation data. There followed a discussion, and the vicar said he would undertake to discuss the matter with all other incumbents in the deanery as this appeared to be a much wider problem than just in our parish. The treasurer reminded the PCC that, last year, he had emailed Jo Lambert at the diocese that the parish would pay the deficit when we could afford it.

Viv proposed that the PCC approve paying the deficit of £5,409 to the diocese. It was seconded by the vicar and 7 PCC members were in favour and 3 PCC members were against this decision. It was therefore approved.

Sheila asked whether the recent government budget increase in employer National Insurance contributions would affect our parish. Viv assured the PCC this would not apply as salaries we paid were still under the £5k threshold (previously £10k).

5. Reports

a) Vicar's Report including Outward Giving

The vicar reported on a meeting of the Outward Giving Group (OGG) on 18th November. It was decided to discontinue payments to Acorn as the director, Revd. Wes Sutton, had recently retired. There were active links to the other charities such as Dohnavur Fellowship Mission in India which Suzanne Wavre had recently visited. The OGG report had been added to one-drive 6 hours before the meeting so had not yet been circulated by email.

The vicar proposed that the PCC approve the OGG recommendations, and this was seconded by Philippa Whitaker and it was approved unanimously.

The amount freed up (£800) was discussed and the vicar proposed that it was given to the St.Martins in the Fields Appeal. This was seconded by the treasurer and approved unanimously.

b) Churchwarden's Report

This had been circulated as had the draft "Hiring Terms & Conditions 2025" document.

c) Safeguarding Report

The Safeguarding Action Plan for Grayshott level 3 had been circulated to PCC members for their approval at the meeting. Hilary expounded on this. The PCC was required to consider non-church activities – The Thursday Community Lunch, The Base, The Women's Group, Children's Holiday Activities.

d) Youth & Children's Activities

Hilary's report had been circulated.

The full EHDC grant of £5,632 for the Base this year had been received. This represented the third (and final) part of the grant awarded in 2022 which contributes to the salary of our Youth Worker. The PCC will need to reapply to EHDC & Grayshott Parish Council for funding to continue.

The Base has had an average weekly attendance of 18 since September.

Rhys McLaren had had a performance review on 15th November and he continues to meet regularly with Chris Grocock who is his spiritual mentor. He will be finishing his contract in September 2025.

St. Edmund's School were donating £2 for each school jumper sold and this was for our Youth & Children's Fund.

The WAFFFL monthly Sunday afternoon services will finish the six month experimental period with the January 2025 service. The November service had been attended by 6 adults and 6 children. The vicar discussed the value of these services. Hilary plans to run a children's workshop over February half term in addition to the one she is leading on Saturday 21st December.

e) Deanery Synod

Clive Loder had circulated a report on the Deanery Synod meeting he attended on 9th October. He had also circulated documents on Eco Church and a C of E Net Zero Questionnaire which he had completed for our parish. This had given us a bronze award for Buildings & Energy. Most other churches in the deanery had been registered for some time. We may be able to use an infra-red camera to assess where heat is being lost. Alison Moulden (Diocesan Environmental Officer) may be able to visit our church and assess how we can move forwards. Grants may be available to help with funding.

f) Prayer Report

The vicar asked for more intercessors for the 10.30 Sunday services and asked PCC members to consider this.

g) Pastoral Report

The vicar thanked Ros Balfour for providing her report and reminded the meeting of the safeguarding considerations discussed earlier.

h) Outreach Report

The vicar thanked Claire Haswell for her report

6) Other Business

New application form to join the Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll Officer, John Haine, had asked the PCC to approve the wording of the 2025 Application Form. Both this and the present forms had been circulated to PCC members before the meeting. PCC members considered that the wording on the new form was complicated and unnecessarily complicated regarding applicants living outside the parish who were not regular attenders at church services.

Hilary Loder proposed that this PCC continue to use the 2023 – 24 form and that any applicant falling outside the categories listed should email or write to the vicar explaining their extenuating circumstances. This was seconded by Sheila Austin and approved unanimously by the PCC.

The Electoral Roll will be totally renewed next year before the APCM. Everyone will need to reapply. This occurs every six years. Sheila asked the PCC to consider the date of next year's APCM. She also announced that she will be standing down as churchwarden then.

The meeting finished in prayer and the grace at 9.30 pm

The next PCC meeting will be held at 7.00 pm on Monday 20th January 2025.