

**The Parochial Church Council of the
Ecclesiastical Parish of Lichfield: Saint Michael with Saint Mary
Meeting: Monday 17 July 2023 7.30pm**

Minutes

Present:

Abbie Walsh (Rector – Chair)	Mike Godfrey	Sue Jones
Ray Allen	Richard Brooks	Viv Oliver
Ruth Bull	Edward Green (Ted)	Maureen Brand
David Easton	Steve Oliver	Veronica Morris (Secretary)
Sheila Irvine	Alan Toplis	

1. **Opening Prayer.** Revd Abbie opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies.** Mike Jones, Alison Stevens
3. **Declaration of Interest.** There was none.
4. **Notification of Any Other Business.** Revd Abbie added heating to the agenda under 8.1
5. **Minutes and Action List of previous PCC meeting: 15.05.2023.** These were approved subject to minor spellings.
6. **Matters Arising**
PCC approvals since last meeting:
 - Approval to go ahead with repair to the roof. SJ thanked everyone for their prompt replies and said that she had requested Alliance Technical Services to proceed with the work.
7. **Ministry (Note change of order)**
- 7.2 **Mission**
 - a) **Inclusive Church.** Revd Abbie commented that the church had been working through Inclusive Church prior to Covid. The vision statement (in the documents circulated prior to the meeting) contained the vision statement. Inclusive church was about welcoming all people into a church's midst so opening church doors to a wider range of people. Resources are available to support churches working towards Inclusive Church. In addition the church would appear on a Finders Map on the Inclusive Churches website which will help in reaching out to new people. What's involved? Registration and an optional donation. There is no subscription.
Revd Abbie suggested that we work through with the congregation what inclusive church means at Sunday morning services when nothing else is happening such as Family Praise. PCC supported this idea and agreed to the lectionary being ditched for a while during 'Common times' (Revd Abbie explained this was possible). SI suggested that drama could be used to get the message across. PCC accepted that it needed to be both supportive of the initiative and also lead the process of working towards Inclusive Church with the wider congregation. It was agreed a more formal vote could be taken later in the year. **Action AW and ministry team**
 - b) **Faith Places of Sanctuary.** This initiative had taken a while to get off the ground in Lichfield as it does not have a large transient population. Faith Places of Sanctuary was about making newcomers feel welcome, especially refugees. The document circulated prior to the meeting provides further information. Signing up to Faith Places of Sanctuary involved being committed to welcoming new people into the church – both social and worship activities count. It was noted that most of the faith places of sanctuary in Lichfield had already signed up. PCC then discussed how the City of Sanctuary

(different to Faith Places of Sanctuary) programme was being promoted across the city. MB suggested Faith Places of Sanctuary could be publicized on our website and included in the magazine. BL noted that sometimes practical support is asked for, such as bedding.

EG proposed and SJ seconded signing up to Faith Places of Sanctuary. PCC agreed unanimously.

Action AW

- c) **School.** Revd Abbie reported that things were going well. There had recently been a lovely confirmation service held in church conducted by the Bishop involving 11 young people. SJ asked PCC to thank Revd Abbie for all the work/ effort she had put in to making this happen. PCC agreed. Revd Abbie said that she was hoping to build on this work in the next school year through 'Eco-school'. Revd Abbie said she would put something in the magazine about the confirmation service. **Action AW**
More children were being gathered for homework club in the next school year. Revd Abbie said she also wanted to get more people involved in the life of the school through 'Pray, bake, read'. EG said the Head Teacher from St Michaels had spoken at Deanery Synod about the partnership between the School and the Church and that members had been astounded on what had been achieved and what was possible in putting children and their families at the heart of growing in faith.
- d) **Junior Choir.** EG reported that there were between 15-18 junior choir members mainly from Year 6 now involved. And that he hoped this would continue once they moved up to senior school. Choir members came from a range of schools not just St Michaels. Older members were mentoring younger members. The recent concert had been successful and had involved both the junior and senior choirs. The choirs would also support the Samuel Johnson celebrations on 23 September. It was suggested that young people could progress to choir from Messy Church and that this should be mooted with Messy Church Families.
- e) **Bereavement course.** Revd Abbie advised that this programme was now on pause, possibly until September as so few people had signed up. However there had been expressions of interest from other people and with the recent sad deaths of young people locally, this course could run in the daytime in the school. **Action AW**
- f) **Shaping for Mission.** Revd Abbie reported that this was on pause until the autumn but watch this space.

7.3 Pastoral

- a) **Safeguarding.** MB reported that one new PCC member had already been DBS checked and completed the training and the other was working through it. EG said he was in discussion with MB and RBr about training for the team travelling with the young people to Camas on the Isle of Mull. The centre have total responsibility when groups are there. To be discussed further. **Action EG, MB**
- b) **Health and Safety.** RBr said there was nothing to report.
- c) **Barn dancing and other social activities.** Revd Abbie said that the recent Barn Dance had gone down well and that she would like to encourage more social activities. There were plans to hold a 'family friendly' quiz night on 16th September. The event was to be a fund raiser to secure the remainder of the funding for the clock. PCC agreed.

7.1 Worship

- a) **Family Communion.** Revd Abbie asked for feedback on the first Family Communion service held in June. She described this as work in progress and would like to see the service become livelier and more reflective of the children leading the service. She proposed continuing with the Family Communion service, once a month in term time starting in September getting all generations working together.
- b) **Ministry Team update.** Revd Abbie reported that Revd Chris Baker had had his last Sunday presiding. He and Sandy would be moving away in a couple of weeks. Revd Brian Rosthill had joined the Ministry team and had already preached and taken a service.
- c) **Patronal Festival 24 September & Harvest 1 October.** Revd Abbie proposed the Patronal Service be broadly similar to last year PCC agreed that having afternoon tea prior to evensong was easier and better attended than providing lunch. Harvest would be in the form of Family Praise being the first Sunday in the month.

8 Church buildings and churchyard

8.1 Buildings

- a) **Church Maintenance.** SJ reported under Matters Arising that she had asked BHB (Brown Hayward Brown) to progress the repair work to the roof. She said that there had been some leaks during the recent rain storms but not as bad as they could have been. She indicated that the roof repair work may work out to be more expensive especially if roof rafters needed replacing.
Action SJ
- b) **Audio Visual System Update.** AT reported that he had received a quote from Beacons AV but that it was missing the electrical works required. He had chased them up for a revised quote. The Faculty application can be progressed in the meantime.
Action AT
- c) **Electrification of church clock.** MG reported that he was still awaiting Faculty approval. However he had confirmation of a successful grant application from the Conduit Land Trust for £2,000 towards the electrification of the clock. SJ to write and thank them. He was also in contact with Smiths of Derby who said they would need to come and do another survey. He said the interior of the church spire would also need a clean-up of the church spire. MG said it was all happening and it will happen!
Action SJ & MG
- d) **Heating.** Revd Abbie reported that she had taken advice from the diocese about heating options. The discussions were around 'heating the people' rather than 'heating the building'. The current heating system heats up the building quickly, was not overly expensive but it was noisy when on and so was switched off during services which meant the building got colder. We can't put roof insulation in nor double glaze the windows. There were 2 options:
- Under pew heating. Revd Abbie stressed that this would NOT be like what we currently have in the chancel. Technology had moved on. There were 2 types of heating to consider: under the pew heating or warm air heating that blows out in front of you (like in a car). She said she had spoken to a couple of people who had had pew heating fitted in their church and they were very happy with it and that it was relatively cheap to install compared to a whole heating system.
 - Seated heat cushions. Revd Abbie said these cost around £15 each and could be recharged. They could be particularly useful for meetings in church eg PCC. She suggested buying 4 or 5 so that they could be tried out.
- PCC agree that both options were worth exploring and gave the go-ahead to Revd Abbie to secure quotes. However, she stated that funding would have to be raised. **There might be some grant funding available from the Beneficiaries Trust but didn't know how much.** **Action AW for next PCC.**
- e) **Note:** The Parish Rooms to be discussed at special meeting on 31 July 2023. The agenda will include a vision for the grant applications, agreeing the design, moving on to the next stage RIBA 3, where the money is going to come from. Papers will be sent out nearer the time. **Action AW and Parish Meeting Rooms Team.**

8.2 Churchyard

- a) **Churchyard Report.** RA said on that he would cease to be leader of the churchyard working party but that he would continue to be a member. He also advised that some things would need to change, for example, high vis jackets and tools would need to be stored in church and some new tools may need to be purchased. These could come out of churchyard funds. PCC also agreed to explore purchasing new storage facilities.
Action??
- There were to be improved arrangements with the payback team especially with respect on what they do, such as them working on specific projects eg making paths for people with disabilities. Churchyard maps. Angie King (Office administrator) had found a map in the office that RA has updated. This map shows significant headstones and graves which will help locate where work is needed. Another map showing nature is under development. Both maps will help the churchyard working party working with the payback team.
Action RA
- Currently there is a young person volunteering in the churchyard as part of his silver DOE award and he wants to continue working in the churchyard to achieve gold. But for gold Revd Abbie advised. He needs to do more hours and do other things. She added that we would need to make his role more official and monitor what he does. PCC welcomed this commitment.
Action ??
- EG asked how much had been raised for the Coronation Tree. VO said she would look into it and report back.
Action ??

Finally, Revd Abbie thanked RA for leading the Churchyard working party for so many years. RA replied that he had really enjoyed it and that he had had a good team working with him. .

- b) **Bench.** SJ reported that has been ordered and we are awaiting delivery. She was in communication with Michael Toplis regarding installation. The family had paid for the bench directly. **Action SJ to monitor completion**
- c) **Bat boxes.** Revd Abbie referred to the circulated document containing the correspondence she had received from Andrew Roberts (AR) regarding putting a bat box in the churchyard. She said it was for PCC to give permission and that she would need to check with AR about he proposes to fit it and how he will get up the tree. RBr suggested that in view of the fact that bats are protected species and the proposed location was close to the new parish rooms development the bat box is located at the other end of the churchyard (but not on any of the ash trees). The current proposed location may mean that we will need to do another ecological surevey as something will have changed since the original one was undertaken. PCC supported RBr's proposal and also asked to have a Batcam fitted as well. Revd Abbie said she would go back to AR. **Action AW**
- d) **Elizabeth Logan grave.** Revd Abbie said that a quote for the restoration work had been received from Nevilles for around £2.5k. After making enquiries it was noted that there was no funding available from other sources. However, Revd Abbie said the work could be covered by churchyard funds. In addition some offers of donations had also been received. PCC agreed to go ahead with the quote provided by Nevilles. **Proposer SJ, seconder RA. Action AW**

9. Finance

- a) **Verification of accounts.** VO reported that the Diocese will look at the 2022 accounts in August. This indicated that the 2021 audit of accounts had been completed.
- b) **Energy costs.** Revd Abbie said that all churches had to submit a carbon footprint audit to the diocese. Ours had come back in the bottom third of all churches which is good news but means that this will probably exclude us from receiving any grant monies. Grants will probably go to high energy usage churches.
SJ reported that we now have a smart meter installed.
- c) **New Gift Aid Secretary.** VO said she was going to see Sandy Baker at the weekend to see what she does. Revd Abbie said she thinks she has a plan to cover this work going forward.

10. Deemed Business

- a) SC Meeting Minutes 3.7.2023. These were noted.
- b) Camas Report. The report provided by EG was accepted.

11. Any other Business

- a) **Approval of Treasurer and Secretary as PCC Trustees and approval of new Deanery Rep.**
- b) PCC approved the election of the Treasurer and Secretary to the PCC as Trustees (They are currently officers) so filling the remaining 2 vacancies. **Proposer AT, seconder BL.**
- c) **Deanery Rep.** This vacancy had arisen following EC's move away from Lichfield. Trevor James had indicated his willingness to stand and the post was not contested. **Proposer EG, seconder RB.** PCC was unanimous in their agreement.
EG said he would contact the diocese/deanery regarding the appointment and copy VM in on any correspondence. **Action ET, VM**
- d) **New Standing Committee PCC rep.** Again this vacancy had arisen due to EC moving out of the area. SI indicated her willingness to join SC and this was approved with thanks.
- e) **Trustee declarations signatures.** These were required by Charity Law. Church trustees need to sign to confirm they are suitable to stand as trustees. Most of the trustees present returned signed copies to VM. VM to chase up remainder. **Action VM**
- f) **Access to Charity commission website.** In addition to AT: VM, VO, Revd Abbie were approved to have access to St Michael's information on the charity commission website. **Proposer RBr, seconder BL. Action VM**
- e) **Cooperative funeral service.** Revd Abbie explained that the Coop Funeral Service were looking for space to meet with families whilst their building underwent refurbishment and she had been approached by them for using St Michaels building in return for a donation. The Coop were a key partner and there could be

benefits in supporting them with this request. However, whilst she had sent availability in August to the Coop this might change as we move into the autumn as she hadn't been advised of a definite start date. Providing the Coop with space in the church will greatly affect usage of the building and it was important that PCC approve it. She would report back.

Action AW

12. 12 **Date of next meeting:**
Special PCC 31 July 2023
SC 11 September 2023
PCC 25 September 2023

13. **Closing Prayer.** Revd Abbie led the closing prayer.

The meeting finished at 9.30 pm