**PARISH OF ST PETER’S, COLCHESTER**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council**

**held on Monday 6th March 2023**

Chairman: Revd Mark Wallace

1. **OPENING BIBLE READING & PRAYER**

The Vicar provided introductory context in relation to current developments of the Redevelopment Project, recent proposals by the House of Bishops and the church’s response to the financial situation around future ministry at St Peter’s. The Vicar expressed a heartfelt thanks to the Churchwardens for exploring various avenues and for their initiatives regarding the latter. The Vicar then opened the meeting with a Bible reading from Jeremiah 5:30-31 and with prayer.

1. **APOLOGIES**

See Appendix 1.

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16th JANUARY 2023**
2. The previous Minutes were approved *nem con* and signed by the Vicar.
3. Short reports (§4 in the previous Minutes): Colchester Archaeological Trust quoted £6,150+VAT to carry out the work they are required to do during the Re-development. This covers all three phases of the work. The cost for phase 1 is estimated to be c.£2000 in the event of a “worst case scenario”, so there is a possibility that it could be considerably less.
4. **SHORT REPORTS**

The PCC approved for the salary of Mr Dave Lacy, our caretaker, to increase in line with the rise of the National Minimum Wage with effect from April 2023.

1. **SPOTLIGHT REPORT: BUILDINGS, FABRIC & MAINTENANCE**

A number of matters from the report were drawn to the PCC’s attention. Issues around clearance of the church building drains, hall boiler, a plaster fall in the church at the east end of the south gallery in November 2022 and insufficient lighting across the churchyard were highlighted.

The PCC agreed that Mrs Wendy Whitfield oversees the process of establishing a contract for regular clearance of the church roof drains.

The PCC decided not to commission the provision of lighting in the churchyard at this point, but to revisit this matter later this year.

The PCC expressed a warm thanks to Mrs Wendy Whitfield for the report and for her work this past year related to the buildings.

1. **THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

After discussing implications concerning a steep hike in overall costs for the work and after laying out options for funding the gap, whether it be further fundraising and/or a bridging loan to complete the work, the PCC took a final vote on whether to proceed with the Redevelopment Project or not.

The PCC reached the decision to proceed with the redevelopment work, with 10 votes in favour, 0 against, and 1 abstention. The work is planned to begin by the end of March 2023.

1. **RELOCATION OF CHURCH SERVICES DURING THE REDEVELOPMENT WORK**

The redevelopment work will allow for services to be held in the church building without necessary needing to be held elsewhere. Various issues were discussed, such as preventive measures for dust exposure.

Proposal: That the PCC delegates authority to the Standing Committee the decision-making whether to continue to hold services in the church for the duration of the project or to relocate, and, if so, when.

The PCC agreed to delegate the decision of relocation to the Standing Committee. Sunday services will continue to be held in the church for now. The Sixth Form College remains the preferred venue for a temporary relocation.

1. **RESPONSE TO THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS’ PROPOSALS AT THE FEBRUARY GENERAL SYNOD**

The PCC discussed various options of actions and responses to the House of Bishops’ recent proposals and looked in detail at suggestions presented in the CEEC (Church of England Evangelical Council) recent document*: Keeping Faith: Every Voice Matters.*

The PCC agreed that the Churchwardens draft an initial letter to the House of Bishops on behalf of the PCC.

The PCC agreed to uphold the right to withdraw the invitation to preach, preside and confirm at St Peter’s of those invited who do not formally agree to the orthodox view on sex, marriages and relationships outside the marriage.

The PCC decided to proceed with exploring a setting-up of a separate trust or CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

The PCC agreed to encourage the congregation to respond to the House of Bishops’ proposals and to keep communications open with the congregation locally and nationally.

The PCC agreed to continue with the parish share payments for the time being.

1. **ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Proposal: To return to pre-Covid procedure of breaking bread and using the common chalice, with communicants given the choice to opt out of receiving wine from the common chalice. The aim is to reintroduce this on Easter Day.

Result: All in favour.

1. **PCC APPROVAL OF THE MINISTRY OF PAUL LARKIN AS AN AUTHORISED PASTORAL ASSISTANT**

The PCC approved the proposal of the transfer of Paul Larkin role as Authorised Pastoral Assistant (APA) from Greenstead to St Peter's.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**
2. An email had been received from Bishop Roger with options for employing Rev Mark Wallace as Vicar of St Peter’s from September 2023. The PCC decided to look towards the setting-up of a trust or CIO.
3. An email had been received from Bishop Guli re arrangements for episcopal care and oversight from +Ebbsfleet.
4. An email had been received from Colchester Fibre with a quotation for the installation of internet connection in the church building. The PCC acknowledges that it is not currently viable financially to proceed, but aims to revisit this in a few months.
5. **AOB**

The Vicar sought PCC’s permission for the purchase and installation of a second-hand sound desk from cashconverters following a recent, sudden blow-up of the current sound system.

The PCC approved for the Vicar to source a second-hand sound desk.

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next PCC meeting is planned for Tuesday 2nd May 2023.

1. **CLOSING PRAYER**

The meeting was closed with prayer.

**APPENDIX 1**

Mr Ed Bradley apologies

Mr Duncan Breckels present

Dr Matt Cox present

Mr Trevor Froude present

Mr Tim Hearn present

Mrs Anne Kavanagh present

Dr Mick Kavanagh present

Mr Richard Lawn apologies

Mrs Val Morris present

Mrs Clare Reid apologies

Revd Mark Wallace present

Mrs Bernice Watts present

Dr Dan Watts apologies

Mrs Wendy Whitfield present