

The Parish of St. John the Evangelist Newbury

Parochial Church Council Meeting held **on Zoom** on Thursday 3rd June 2021 beginning at **7.00pm**

Present:

The Revd. Gary Collins – Chair

The Revd. Julie Howell – Curate

David Oats and Alison Foulkes – Churchwardens

Kim Slade – Hon. Treasurer

Sam Brown – Secretary

Also in attendance:

Margaret Baker (MB), Melanie Brown, Ann Dixon, Stephen Kerry, Jennifer Wright JW, Jeremy Wright JPW, Aeron Slade

1	Opening Prayer & Welcome	
2	Apologies for Absence – Roger O’Callaghan Absent - Andrew Kingston, Jennie Marwick-Evans	
3	Correspondence Margaret Baker 31/05 - subject the organ. Immediate repairs to resolve a specific issue and then a review of funding required and a potential project next year. Fr Trevor 29/05 - request for PCC minutes – DO (as on site) reviewing request to view minutes lodged in the files. The Treasurer 25/05 - £150 CTNA Subs, updated that this has been processed. JW sought clarity (and it was confirmed) that the church would be supporting Church’s Together in Berkshire – thus an additional £20 will be paid for CTIB The Treasurer 23/05 - CCLA CBF data collection from PCC Members. The Treasurer updated the PCC on why it was necessary for all PCC Members (trustees) to supply information for anti-money laundering/FCA regulations. She will produce a format and the Secretary will facilitate obtaining the information from PCC members. ACTION Jennifer Wright 25/05 - H&S – Reviewed in H&S below David Oats 20/05 - PCC Members list -all to review in advance of APCM	 DO KS PCC
4	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 th March 2021 – This was circulated in advance of this meeting. Fr Gary asked the PCC for any feedback and if the PCC were happy for him to sign the minutes off. The PCC were unanimous and DO proposed and SK seconded signing off the minutes as a true account, Fr Gary signed off the minutes.	
5	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes. Safeguarding training (see below)	
6	Safeguarding Update. Fr Gary asked the PCC whether any safeguarding issues had been reported. None reported. The PCC confirmed that they had undertaken the basic safeguarding course. Fr Gary updated that he has had discussions with Kathy Winrow at St Georges who has offered to provide training and guidance, however we do need a volunteer for the Safeguarding Officer (Jan Goodenough has resigned), this could be from the PCC or from the wider congregation. Fr Gary asked	PCC

	the PCC members to consider. Action: All PCC to please update the Secretary to confirm they have completed the online training (not necessary to provide a copy of the certificate at this time).	
7	H&S Update. No issues have been reported or concerns raised. JW reminded the PCC that everyone is responsible for H&S in the church. Signs giving H&S advice will be posted shortly in the Parish Room and the St Richard Room. Focus of the conversation was on the paths around the church. JW updated on what St Mary's Shaw had done to their paths. DO suggested we need to keep the surface clean, plus relaying uneven slabs and getting the gaps filled in so that the paths are safe. MB stated she had not noticed them being uneven and suggested another church in Newbury is much worse. JH (as a chartered H&S practitioner) suggested a written risk assessment and will work with JW on organising. Fr Gary thanked JW for her offer.	JH / JW
8	Preparing for APCM – Please forward written reports. DO advised we need a 2020 report for the Synod (AS organising). Venue for the APCM is to be decided, possibly in church and on Zoom. JPW, MB and JH are on holiday and send apologies for absence.	SB / AS
9	Vicar's Report. Fr Gary advised the church has been open now since Palm Sunday. Encouraging numbers and some new attendees are joining. Having a server back in services is adding to the liturgy. Thanks to JPW and MB and the choir for their beautiful music. Fr Gary is working with the Baby & Toddler Group to enable them to return (DO updated they are in next Tuesday). Fr Gary reflected that this is our time to think about how we broaden our church. He reminded the PCC of the Thoughts and Dreams box at the back of the church. Suggesting a morning session together (a Sat 9-12) to listen to each-others dreams and ambitions. We are in challenging times but are moving forward. For example, reviewing the upcoming Patronal Service but possibly as an all age service, the number in the congregation (with children and parents) would be significant and having this number, creates some difficulties, given the Covid-19 situation. We need to consider the Governments 21 st June announcements and we then need to meet to consider the implications.	
10	Financial Report Most recent financial update has been circulated in advance of the PCC meeting for review. 2021 to date operationally down £14k (5 months). The Treasurer updated that we are forecast to be £14k down for the year, as we should get more rent in and more from giving plate. Two new Good Exchange projects; Essential Running costs and Chairs and Handrails are now match funded (paperwork came through today). Gas bills were reported as high so far this year. Audited Accounts from 2020 (which had been sent out to all the PCC for review prior to the meeting). The PCC approved for BB, DO and KS to sign off the accounts to submit to the diocese. DO proposed accepting the accounts, AF seconded, and this was unanimously approved. The Treasurer updated that she will produce some slides for the APCM. Fr Gary thanked the Treasurer for her efforts. He asked the Treasurer whether £14k down is something we should be losing sleep over? The Treasurer advised that we ought to be aiming to break even, but we do have the comfort of the bequests that generate both dividends and growth to pay for the operating deficit.	
11	Progress reports at St. John's. Maintenance and use of church - DO advised we have 3 new groups for room hire and the Perform Drama Group are now here for two sessions a week instead of one. (paying every term). MB reminded that we should try and get more income, as the bequest income should be used for projects (such as the organ). Perhaps charging more for concert hire would help. A comparison was made with St Nicholas but DO updated that they have a bigger building and therefore has higher charges. DO advised we don't have the size for large concerts but agreed to look at the charges for concert hire. MB suggested we should consider doubling our fees for concerts. MB	

	<p>advised that St Johns is a great place for concerts because of its acoustics, and we should look to expand that side. Fr Gary agreed we should increase our presence/profile on social media and focus on opportunity. DO advised we do need to look at giving in general to increase church income. AD suggested a new electric organ rather than a repair to the existing pipe organ. DO stated that we have been upgrading and maintaining the organ, and that the actual amount spent on the organ had been planned and paid for through fundraising (and the cost of a new organ is not a cheap option).</p> <p>iCap Faculty submitted now with Registrar – no objections from them thus far. [REDACTED] has stated that he is putting forward an objection, he has until 25th June 2021. Fr Gary presented an artist impression of the finished project and the images were universally well received by the PCC.</p> <p>Handrails still at foundry no further update.</p> <p>Chairs - & Funding Fr Gary reminded the PCC that the Standing Committee agreed for 50% funding before an order is made. Fr Gary highlighted excellent news that we now had match funding. MB asked previously whether there was any difference in price due to the number ordered and if not, do we need to order all at once, her suggestion was we could go with the funds as they accumulate. AS updated on various options and organisations willing to support funding, he noted emails recently received had given greater confidence. AD asked if we were purchasing 30 chairs, 15 each aisle? This was confirmed, rows will be adapted to fit in the new chairs. DO advised this has been worked through.</p> <p>Notice boards Holding for now, but we could paint the metal poles and the crowns.</p>	
12	<p>Greening St John's – JH updated we have had two meetings with a further meeting next week. We have a regular slot in the newsletter to get the message out. The group is full of ideas, but we need to focus in on a smaller number of ideas. The new logo has been selected 'a cosmic tulip'. A display board is being pulled together. Big thank you to SK who has converted some pallets into 4 tubs, Mathew, Mark, Luke and John and is growing runner beans. Good start! SK advised he has used 4 varieties of beans so it will be interesting to see which ones grow best. SK updated that they are placed against a warm wall and out of the wind, so the location is suitable for growth.</p>	
13	<p>Reopening Church – Fr Gary asked for any thoughts on the church re-opening and how things are going. JW said that the return to some normality is reassuring. JH advised people miss having the cup of coffee/tea before or after, the sense of hospitality is important. Fr Gary suggested we set up tables and chairs outside in the summer and make space so we could get people together. AD suggested people walking by may join in. AF suggested as an '8am person' there are not many in that congregation and wondered if the 8am was under threat. Fr Gary reassured her that it is more a practicality of running two services and that longer term, the 8am will return. Additionally, he hoped that a midweek Eucharist would restart when possible and, changing the other weekly service to a more round-table coffee-based event, which presents a different but still holy experience. If two Sunday services are to restart, JW suggested using alternate rows for each service. Fr Gary suggested we could use the aerosol spray between services. Fr Gary suggested we just want to see how the next few weeks develop. AF suggested having the 8am in the Lady Chapel to avoid possible contamination of the seats. Fr Gary thought this was a good idea providing we could ensure some social distancing. JPW asked if the opening goes ahead as planned on the 21st June, are we going to proceed without masks if the Government relaxes mask wearing inside? AS, suggested that wearing masks in church should not be enforced if not illegal. DO stated that we are well served for doors for air flow, and we can continue with social distancing.</p>	
14	<p>An Open Future. Fr Gary wants us to reflect on the material shared. The issues are bigger than the time afforded in the PCC meeting and need longer for us to consider. Fr Gary asked if the PCC could meet on a Saturday morning in July, to meet in a nice venue (possibly outside) to see how ambitious we could be. Fr Gary is considering 17th July 9-12.</p>	PCC

15	<p>St John's School Connection. Continuing well but online. St Johns may come under the federation of St Nicolas School. Fr Gary updated that we are developing a good relationship with St Nicolas School, this is a positive step, as well as continuing with our excellent relationship with St John's. There will be one governing body for both schools and with positive changes afoot. AS suggested that majority who start at St John's Infant School do move to St Nicolas' Junior School later. In a period of consultation now with more information to follow.</p>		
16	<p>Any other relevant business. No AOB</p>		
17	<p>Part 2 – Confidential</p> <p>Benefice Expansion update</p> <p>DO advised that we had the joint meeting with the PCC's with nothing reported since. The PCC embarked on a general discussion about the proposals.</p>		
<p>Closing Benediction</p>			
<p>The meeting closed at 20:45</p>			
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	<p>Date and time of next meetings</p> <p>08.07.21 Standing Committee 7pm 22.07.21 PCC Meeting 7pm 24.06.21 APCM 7pm</p>		