



PARISH OF IFIELD MINUTES OF THE PCC MEETING

Held on 20th November 2023 at St. Margaret's Church

Present:

Clergy: Revd. Christine Spencer, Chair of the meeting, Revd. D. Desouza-Campbell, Curate
Laity: Mr. C. Bell, Mrs. J. Bell, Mr. M. Hull, Mr. I. Ironside, Mr. K. Lawler, Miss V. Nicholls, Mrs. L. Plunkett, Mr. R. Pudney, Ms. J. Silk, Mr. T. Strutt, Mrs. S. Ward, Mrs C. Wilson (Secretary), Mrs. N. Wood

1. **The meeting opened with prayer** led by Revd Christine Spencer.
2. **Welcome and introductions** Revd. Spencer welcomed everyone to the meeting.
3. **Apologies received prior to the meeting** – Mrs. N. Gater, Mr. J. May, Mrs. M. Pedlow, Miss A. Wilson
4. **Approval of the minutes of the PCC meeting 13th September 2023**
The minutes were approved and signed as a full and complete record of the meeting. Revd. Spencer will check the minutes for any redactions, prior to these being uploaded to the website.
5. **Matters arising from the PCC meeting 13th September 2023**
 - a) 4. More open – A frame board on the road: Rob Pudney has contacted the councillor, but has had nothing back, although there has been a change in personnel. Rob will keep trying with Alison Cornell's help.
 - b) 4.SMILE email – has been set up (Smile@ifieldparish.org). It needs to be considered who should have admin access to this.
 - c) 10i. Church lighting – This cannot be progressed currently.
 - d) 10ii. Church heating - Hilton Croft, boiler engineers, have gone out of business and an alternative engineer will need to be found.
6. **Finance**
 - a) The Finance report for month ending November 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Revd. Spencer advised that she would take questions and pass onto James for answers. We will break even this year. Some queries were raised:
 - i. The grant of £2000 in April 2023 was the heating grant from the Diocese.
 - ii. Wedding costs in February 2023 were £2014 which will be checked for clarification
 - iii. Bank fees – this seems quite a high cost monthly? Is this due to the contactless giving CAF fee? Revd. Spencer will check with James.
 - iv. May Fayre – the contribution may have been received in October or November.
 - b) Parish budget for 2024 – James May suggests that we pay an increased parish share with the heating grant. Chris Bell suggested that we ought to be increasing our rental charges for the mosque and St. Leonard's of around 3%, but would need to give three months' notice of this change. There has been no increase since they started renting and we have given them a year to recover following Covid. We need to get advice as to what the rental should be and further discuss this in January 2024. A letter will be issued to advise that the rental may be going up. This will be arranged by Revd. Spencer and the Parish Wardens with a view to an increase in April 2024 and again in January 2025. The rental contract states an annual rental review, which has not been done, and as a charity we have responsibility to do so. The rental agreement allows them to sublet the building. The original agreement was that they pay maintenance fees.
An unexpected bill for £2000 has been received for replacing the boiler in Lychgate Cottage. We need some contingency for maintenance of properties, other than the church.

James May has made a provisional parish share pledge. All were in favour of accepting James May's budget, with the understanding that we will work towards raising rental incomes, with a contingency for maintenance. The Diocesan budget booklet was shared via email to all PCC members to inform them how the parish pledge fits into the wider picture. There is a £1m deficit predicted. The Diocese has lost £500K this year and next year this will be taken out of reserves. We do need to be mindful of our parish share.

- c) Parish fees for 2024 – the statutory figures are not yet available, but will be shared once available. This will be carried forward to the next meeting.

7. Worship Matters

- i. Revised worship timetable – this started on Sunday 19th November for a 5½ month trial. The focus group is in place. This is a change to the plan agreed at the last PCC meeting, for which Revd. Spencer apologised. A service consultation leaflet had been available in church and a meeting held on 4th November 2023 to discuss the plans was helpful. Kevin Lawler asked that the new programme and the trial be shortened if the Focus Group thinks that this is not working, when we could then try option 2. An extra PCC meeting could be held if needed, to discuss this. This will be reviewed. The services have different titles, and it is not clear what each includes. People are asked to try them on a 'come and see' basis, without being too prescriptive as to what is offered.
- ii. Advent and Christmas – the posters and flyers are being printed and will be available soon. There will be larger ones for display on shopping parades. Thanks were given to Karl Ward and Trevor Strutt who will be collecting the Christmas tree to go up outside church on 10th December. Inside church will remain as advent and the tree will go up on 16th December.
- iii. Collections from Christmas - It was agreed that these will go to the Easter Team and Family Support work (FSW). The collections will be taken at the carols round the tree, the crib service and at midnight mass, divided 50/50.

8. Deanery and Diocesan Matters

Rob Pudney, Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, provided the Deanery minutes, which were circulate prior to the meeting. Revd. Richard Poole is the new Rural Dean. Juliette Williams, Parish Nurse, gave a positive presentation.

The Diocesan Synod meeting took place on 18th November 2023 with a discussion on 'Living in Love & Faith' and blessings being used for same sex couples. There has been an agreement to offer this in future. Trevor Cristin gave an update on church schools growing partnerships with community schools. There are changes across the Diocese with some schools closing due to pupil numbers. There was a net carbon zero discussion and an ethical investment vigil as the Diocese still invests in fossil fuels. These items will be discussed further at the Deanery Synod. The budget was received and voted. Ifield Parish do not fill their quota of East Grinstead Deanery Synod seats and we need to invite people to step up, as we have two vacancies for Deanery Synod currently.

9. Buildings matters

- i. Building Committee update – Martin Hull had provided a report. The boiler in Lychgate Cottage has been surveyed and found to be unsafe and unfit for purpose. This has been replaced.
- ii. Lighting and CCTV in church – the Diocese have quashed the proposals. They are concerned about the CCTV with regard people's privacy and the atmosphere, and that the lighting is not suitable. They have advised that the lighting should be like for like, including the Architect in the decisions and then making a faculty application. The plan had included a scaffolding tower for free, but has been rejected without giving regard to the specifications. Kevin Lawler expressed that we are not happy with this decision as the proposal has not been properly considered. The Diocese have been invited to come and take a look. Chris Bell is prepared to take this further with the Archdeacon, however, there would be implications if we were to go ahead and get the work done regardless. Chris Bell will write back to the Diocese expressing his concern that this has not been considered. The lights were due to be done last week.
- iii. Screen – the invoice for repair was £480. They are trying to source parts, but are we morally obliged to pay this. It was repaired when they left, but has failed again. There was no guarantee on the repair. We will cover the costs of materials only and when they return to repair this, they will be asked to guarantee the repair.

iv. Boiler – the electrics have been dimming when the boiler comes on. The electrician will be asked to check the crypt. The boiler hatch padlock is missing and needs to be replaced as soon as possible with a combination lock (*post meeting the padlock was located and reinstated*).

10. Children and Youth work – Mrs. Naomi Gater

Naomi's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. This would have been her final PCC meeting, but she had sent her apologies. Thanks were documented for all that Naomi has done. Naomi will be meeting with Revd. Spencer to look at what can be retained with regards children's work. Revd. Spencer will then get back in touch with youth team leaders with a plan. Naomi finishes on 15th December, but will be in church on 17th December 2023. There is no plan to replace the Youth and Children's Officer role currently, as we need to be mindful that the finances do not allow for this. Revd. Spencer requested ideas for a leaving gift. The summer club 2024 is planned for 29th July to 2nd August.

11. Safeguarding

Safeguarding report – Amy Wilson had provided a report detailing a delay in reporting an incident that had occurred during the Summer Club. No processes need to be changed and there is no learning to be shared. This was a first aid incident, and action has been taken that we now only have one accident book.

12. Mission Update:

Jill Bell had provided a report. The shopping parade collections on 18th November were cancelled due to bad weather and 9th December is now proposed for this. The dates for collections during 2024 will be circulated at the next PCC.

Action: Rob Pudney

Rob Pudney provided an update on SMITCH, which is no more currently, but could restart if needed.

Rob Pudney advised that communications need to be reconsidered as there are areas that we know that we can improve. We need to look at the website and comms channels sometime soon. Revd. Spencer will consider whether this would fit with the next PCC meeting, i.e. that we defer GITF and consider communications instead, which fits into GITF in any case.

13. Health and Safety

i. Boiler room padlock, as above. Andy Ironside will look into this and update the Buildings Committee.

14. Insurance Matters -

The food bank collection at the Scouts Fireworks on 13th November 2023 and the Parade collections planned for 18th November 2023 had been covered for insurance purposes by the Standing Committee, and the new date of 9th December was noted.

15. Correspondence None received.

16. Any Other Business:

a) Approval for electoral roll inclusion:

Angela Brooks-Usher, Piroska Patru, Jean Cooper and Nicola Wood were all approved for inclusion on the electoral roll.

b) No other matters for discussion

17. Review of meeting

It was agreed that the PCC code of conduct had been met.

18. Close of meeting There being no other business, Revd. Spencer thanked all for attending. The next meeting might be held by Zoom if the heating is not working. The meeting ended with The Grace at 09:10 p.m.

Signed..... *Revd. Mark Spencer* Date..... *31/01/24*
Chairperson of the meeting

Dates of future Ifield PCC meetings during 2023/24:
All at 7.30pm at St. Margaret's Church:-

Wednesday 31st January 2024 – Agree date for APCM. Reconsider GIFT plans and actions
Confirm Parish fees for 2024

Wednesday 13th March 2024 - Approve year end accounts 2023, Annual PCC Report 2024
and Child Protection / Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Statement 2024. Consider plans for
Patronal festival on 21/7/2024

Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting:
To be held after Easter on a Wednesday during April 2024 – date to be agreed in due course.
Followed by a meeting of the new PCC.