MINUTES OF THE CHURCH SUPPORT GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN

ST MARGARET’S CHURCH ON 29 NOVEMBER 2016

PRESENT: David Frost, Revd Celia Parkes, Penny Savill, Michael Scott and Harold Taylor

1. NOTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2016

These were agreed as a correct record.

2 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

PCC Membership: Liz Lawrence has been co-opted onto the PCC. She has agreed to look at grants available for work to church buildings.

Carol Concert: Michael confirmed four bell ringers will be ringing the bells on Sunday, 18 December for the carols by candlelight service.

NADFAS (1976 report on St Margaret’s church): Penny has yet to contact the Essex Records Office. She confirmed she has this matter in hand.

3. AGM HELD ON 19 OCTOBER

The draft minutes of the AGM circulated with the agenda were noted. The following matters were highlighted and discussed.

Renewal of Annual Membership: We agreed a copy of the AGM minutes would be included with the renewal form and letter from the chairman. And these would be sent to members in the New Year. **ACTION: M. SCOTT/P. SAVILL**

Fund Raising Activities: The following suggestions for music concerts were noted: Southend boys and girls choir - Angela Smith; Cantate - Liz Lawrence; Doddnaze Artists - Michael Scott.

We agreed to look at dates for another concert next year. The financial risk of agreeing to pay a fixed fee for a performance and then not being able to sell many tickets was discussed. Michael confirmed Doddnaze Artists charged 80% of takings or a fixed fee.

4 PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Revd Celia reported on the various matters discussed at the PCC meeting on 17 November. David Frost and Liz Lawrence, the two new co-opted members, had attended this meeting.

Liz had expressed an interest in helping to organise a flower festival. This will be an agenda item for the next PCC meeting. She also agreed to look into funding opportunities for repairs to church buildings and to contact possible charitable agencies.

David’s revised Bakers of Danbury quotations for the guttering, dampness and drainage work were agreed by the PCC. His suggestion to widen the drive to prevent further damage to the grave stone was agreed also. **See minutes 6 and 7 below**

The PCC treasurer’s financial summary to the end of the year showed the general fund had a deficit of £678. After taking into consideration outstanding funeral and wedding fees the PCC had agreed to make a further parish share payment of £1,000.

Claire Renowden resigned her post as benefice organist on 13 November. Every effort is being made to find someone to play the organ for the Christmas services at Margaretting and Mountnessing.

Revd Celia expressed her gratitude to members of the support group committee for their continued support.

The PCC is due to meet again at 7pm on Thursday, 26 January 2017.

5. CHURCH SUPPORT FINANCES

Harold reported on our current financial situation. We have £2,480 in the bank. To this a further £800 from a legacy will be added once proof of bank details have been received by the executors dealing with the legacy. **ACTION REVD CELIA/H. TAYLOR**

6. CHURCH YARD IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE

Front, side and rear paths: Laying additional shingle to the church paths is to wait until the church porch drainage problem has been solved.

Damaged Gravestone: We noted we have the PCC’s authorisation to widen the sweep in the drive to the right of the porch to prevent further damage to the grave.

Compost Bin and Signage: Thanks were expressed to Michael for tidying and clearing the compost area and the brambles in the church yard. Michael is dealing with the sign reminding folk to take home all non compostable materials. Ian Houghton, Harold’s contact, has quoted £1,170 to install a bin structure in keeping with the location. A drawing of the proposed structure was circulated and approved at the meeting. We agreed the £800 legacy should be used for this project and Ian Houghton would be given the work. Harold agreed to contact Ian Houghton to confirm a date for the bin to be installed and to see if the price is negotiable. **ACTION: H. TAYLOR**

Grass, Hedges and Trees: Revd Celia confirmed monitoring the grass cutting is a PCC responsibility. We noted a number of trees and bushes require attention. The PCC is to check whether there are any Tree Preservation Orders on the trees in the churchyard. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

We agreed a list of churchyard maintenance tasks should be drawn up before approaching volunteers. We suggested a list for the church cleaner, setting out weekly and monthly tasks, should be drawn up too. Revd Celia will include both these matters as agenda items for the next PCC meeting. **ACTION: REVD CELIA/P. SAVILL**

7. CHURCH BUILDING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Porch Drainage: Bakers of Danbury have quoted for £1,900 plus VAT to install a metal drainage grill and york stone paving to the porch entrance. This has been accepted by the PCC.

Harold reminded the meeting he had been asked to look into how best to solve the porch drainage problem. He reported the advice received from Ian Houghton indicated renewing the former drainage system to allow the surface water to be routed round the porch into the existing church gullies should solve the drainage problem. He had obtained an estimate for carrying out this work.

After discussion we agreed Ian Houghton’s proposal was the preferred solution. We further agreed the porch drainage proposal could not be considered work to the ‘church fabric’ and that Support Group funds would be used for this project. Revd Celia said she would contact Archdeacon Elizabeth for advice and authorisation to progress this matter.

**ACTION: REVD CELIA**

Dampness and Missing Tiles: The PCC has agreed the two revised quotes totalling £2,080 plus VAT from Bakers of Danbury for the guttering and the internal damp problems. A quote (£1,050) from R M Maintenance to replace the missing tiles has been agreed too. David now has the PCC’s authority to contact Bakers of Danbury and R M Maintenance to agree dates for the work to begin.

Vestry: Thanks were expressed to Michael for tidying and clearing the vestry. Penny and Celia have agreed to sort out the files in the new year. **ACTION: REVD CELIA/ P. SAVILL**

8. APPLYING FOR CHARITABLE RECOGNITION STATUS

Both Harold and Michael spoke to this item. After discussion we agreed to hold back on applying for charitable status or seeking HMRC recognition as a charitable not for profit organisation. We also agreed to remove any reference to paying UK tax on our membership forms. **ACTION: P. SAVILL**

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Humidifiers

We discussed the idea of using a humidifier to help solve the internal damp problem.

(ii) Spring Working Party

This will be an agenda item for the meeting.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 15 February 2017 at 11am.