

Godmanchester Parochial Church Council
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 18 March 2024

Present: David Busk (DWB) [Chair], Ruth Ekblom (RE), Robert Francis (RF), Bob Hurd (RH), Peter Morgan (PM), Nicholas Leigh Smith (NLS), Kevin Parks (KP), Simon Prince (SP), Kate Robinson (KR), Adrian Sington (AS), Bill Templeton (WT), Colin Thirlwall (CT), Jonathan Young (JY)

		Action
1.	Opening Prayer and Devotion	
	DWB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the opening prayer and devotion (John 8: 1-11).	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
	Apologies had been received from Lucilia Azevedo, Margaret Quaipe and Mike Westcott-Rudd.	
3.	Minutes of the Last Meeting	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2024 were amended under section 7 (Transformation Project – penultimate paragraph, first sentence) to read: RF said that he believed that there are several people in addition to himself who have grave doubts about the wisdom of the project <i>in its current form</i> . With this amendment, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by DWB.	
4.	Matters Arising	
	None.	
5.	Safeguarding	
	<p>SP noted that there is a big national focus on domestic abuse and that there is information on the diocese website which highlights things to look for, particularly in children. An online training course is available if anyone wishes to take it – Children’s Church leaders and helpers will be doing this.</p> <p>SP is concentrating on ensuring that all Children’s Church leaders and helpers have up-to-date clearance and he was pleased to report that another Children’s Church helper has come forward. The current PCC has valid certification at present but several members will be due for renewal in October.</p> <p>JY said that several retired clergy, who would otherwise be very willing to continue to serve, are unhappy at being asked to satisfy the additional DBS requirements which are required of them once they reach 80 years of age.</p> <p>PM said that at the recent Deanery Synod meeting, there was support for the idea of a paid Safeguarding Officer for the diocese. SP said he would be willing to mentor others as they took on the role if he were asked to do so.</p> <p>Thanks to SP.</p>	
6.	Finance Report	
	CT had been working on the Annual Financial Statements and reported that the Auditor was content with the Annual Accounts for 2023. He noted that at the end of 2023, the general fund was just in the black but only because an additional £8,000 had been transferred from the Church Hall fund.	

	<p>CT said it is difficult at present to draw up a monthly budget because of fluctuating costs – but that the income from the Church Hall is necessary for us to continue to function – we would be running at a loss without it. After a discussion it was agreed that CT will remind the congregation about the Parish Giving scheme and the collection plate for parents and helpers will be reintroduced at Children’s Church and DWB will speak to Paula Williams about this.</p> <p>Thanks to CT.</p>	<p>CT DWB</p>
7.	Transformation Project	
	<p>CT advised that Chell Perkins have funding applications almost ready to go, subject to our providing a few more details. The design work should be completed by the end of May and the architect (Suzi) is examining whether costs could be reduced by using smaller contractors who have lower overheads.</p> <p>RF said that he was worried by the large increase in costs (from £1.4m to £2.4m) and he was doubtful if the funds could be raised. He proposed that the PCC looked at reverting to the Mission Action Plan from March 2009, without the construction of the mezzanine floor, just a ceiling to enclose the proposed rooms below, as he felt that the current plans were too ambitious. The money currently being used for the detailed design could be used for this exercise, so that we would have an alternative plan if only limited funding was raised. This proposal was not supported and it was reiterated that the focus has had to be on the museum as this was necessary to garner HLF support.</p> <p>AS said that in discussions with potential private donors, he had become aware of a perceived lack of enthusiasm for the project among the congregation. SP said that he had been contacted by two people who had expressed reservations about what they saw as spiralling costs which were not being managed. SP said that he principally saw the issue as one of communication and there was general agreement about this.</p> <p>After a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by RE and seconded by RH that the PCC, with one objection, reaffirms its commitment to the project as it stands. This vote was carried with 12 votes in favour, one against and no abstentions. The concerns that have been raised are recognised. This will be relayed to the attendees of the APCM.</p> <p>DWB said that he would send a mailing to acknowledge perceived concerns and in which he will reiterate that the project has received all official approval. He will further say that funds for the project are restricted and if funds are not available, the work will not happen and hence there there is no possibility of our getting into debt because of attempting to deliver the project.</p> <p>Thanks to CT, AS and all involved.</p>	<p>CT</p> <p>DWB</p> <p>DWB</p>
8.	Fabric Committee	
	<p>CT reported that a new twin 13A socket has been installed by the south door as a precursor to installing some type of WiFi for a contactless payment device for visitors.</p> <p>Additional test points for the lightning protection system should be installed on Monday and the installation of a surge protection device in the main electrical supply on Tuesday will bring our system up to the latest standard.</p> <p>We are still waiting for a date for the work on the roof stonework.</p> <p>Thanks to CT.</p>	

9.	Future of Worship and Outreach	
	<p>DWB reported that the Friday @ 5.15 initiative will not take place in April but will be held at St Anne's School from May onwards.</p> <p>CT noted that the Somersham Town Band will be holding a "Come and Sing" Carol service on 8 December and DWB noted that there are plans to hold a service in conjunction with Wood Green later this year.</p> <p>DWB reported that we will not be implementing Bishop's Dagmar's suggestion that only first names appear on the Prayer List, since we are confident that everyone whose name is on the list is aware that it is and is happy for this. It was felt that if only first names were included, this could lead to confusion and possibly speculation.</p>	
10.	Approval of Annual Report and Accounts	
	<p>The draft Annual Report and Accounts had been circulated in advance and the Accounts have been signed off by the Auditor.</p> <p>It was proposed by RH, seconded by CT and agreed unanimously that the PCC approve the Annual Report, which was signed by DWB on their behalf.</p> <p>It was proposed by NLS, seconded by PM and agreed unanimously that the PCC approve the Annual Accounts. DWB will sign these later.</p> <p>Thanks to KR and CT.</p>	
11.	Dates for Church Diary	
	<p>Items for April:</p> <p>6 April - Quiz Night in aid of Thrive Youth Work (Church Hall, 7.00pm)</p> <p>14 April - Taize Service (Church, 6.30pm)</p> <p>15 April - Funeral of Christopher Leffler (Church, 11.30am)</p> <p>20 April - Ensemble of Friends Concert (Church, 7.30pm)</p> <p>27 April - Coffee Morning in aid of Friday @ 5.15 (Vicarage, 10.30am)</p>	
12.	Any Other Business	
	<p><i>Deanery Mission Fund</i> – The Deanery has a small fund which it can use at its discretion as part of the work to spread the Gospel and assist parishes in missional work. KR will forward an email with further details.</p>	KR
14.	Date of Next Meeting	
	<p>The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday, 15 April 2024 in the Church Hall. Prior apologies have been received from Kate Robinson and Adrian Sington</p>	

Signed:

Date: