

# Hughenden Parochial Church Council

Minutes of Meeting - Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 7.30 pm in Church House

Present

Clergy: Keith Johnson, Helen Peters

Lay Reader: David Tester

Churchwardens: Julia Grant, Frank Hawkins

Elected: Janet Booth, Andrew Cole, Clare Godfrey, Mike Hill, Arthur Johnson,  
Brian Morley, Antony Rippon

Secretary: Susan Brice

## **1. Opening Worship**

Helen opened in prayer reflecting on Psalm 136 with the response: His love endures for ever.

## **2. Apologies**

Ben Sharp, Mark Sherrington

## **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

The minutes were approved without amendment and were signed by the Vicar.

## **4. Matters arising not on the agenda**

Helen said that we would not have a presence at Napfest this year for several reasons. We would consider it again another time.

Julia, as the NT contact, told the committee that the signs in the car park area would be available soon but that there had been a production hold up with the boards.

The actions on the May minutes were checked with several being completed and 3 left outstanding.

## **5. Progress Reports from Vision Working Groups**

- **Helen gave the first presentation from the Community Group.**

At their early meetings they had questioned who our community actually was and how much we engaged with them. It was noted that there was agreement that we were not starting from zero; there already was a good degree of involvement and engagement.

The group had noted what we were good at as a Church and also had considered our limitations, primarily due to the geographical location and age of the buildings.

Moving forward, it was agreed that the main beneficiaries of any further community development should be: families, the under-18s and the lonely and isolated (not only the elderly.) We should accept that 'belonging before believing' is a useful thought to keep in mind and that to ensure any significant progress we must 'be open to change and development.'

The employment of a youth worker is an important part of our work within the community. Helen reported that a meeting had been held with James Wood from the diocese and that he had been suggesting that Hughenden look to employ a full-time youth worker. He said that considerable funding was available from the diocese with grants of up to 50% of the costs, possibly for 3 years. It was recognised that this was a serious undertaking both in terms of finance and time and that there would be many other related costs involved.

Frank encouraged the PCC to move forward with urgency and Mike commented that he felt we needed a trained, experienced person rather than an enthusiastic youngster.

Keith proposed that Helen run a steering group with the aim of producing a new job description by September 2023 and the PCC were in full agreement.

Antony thanked Helen for her work and leadership.

- **Keith gave the second presentation on the work of the Buildings and Facilities group.**

They had their meetings in Church House and had decided to initially focus on the actual Church building, its limitations and a wide variety of ways to make it more accessible and family friendly. It was noted that both the Church and Church House were listed and this will always have serious implications for changes that could be made. However, it was agreed that it was vital to move forward with developments that showed we were putting people first, over and above buildings. It was commented that several local churches had obviously received permission for quite radical, modern alterations and extensions and that we should bear this in mind.

The group had walked the site and come up with several interesting ideas, particularly with accessibility in mind after the visit of the diocesan disability officer. It was accepted that the slope of the drive could not realistically be altered and discussion then took place regarding different forms of transport that might be useful for people with mobility challenges.

The group were thanked for their work and their thoughts thus far.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Brian reported that the financial goal was to cover the £81,000 Parish Share with the Bankers Orders but that this year the total was running below last years high of £75,000.

He noted that this could be a potential problem in the future.

Gift Aid money had produced more than we thought, giving the Church about £6,500.

Brian told the PCC that there was £193,000 in the savings account, attracting an interest rate of nearly 5% and at present there was £68,000 in the current account.

Arthur requested that reinstating monetary collections within services be considered and it was agreed that the Standing Committee would look at this.

- **Standing Committee**

Frank reported that the external lighting had been completed and the interior lighting would also be finished very shortly. The 24th and 25th July should see the end of the project.

The PCC were told that permission had been received to repair the stained glass window in the nave and also that the installation of a ramp for wheelchair access was set to be actioned at a cost of approximately £10,000. Frank proposed that we move ahead with the ramp, Helen seconded this and the committee voted unanimously in favour.

Frank said that Derek Brown and Lionel Erasmus were working together to bring the new noticeboard and defibrillator at the bottom of the drive to fruition.

The Standing Committee was also going to look into the creation of a Friends Group for the Church, now that we were a registered charity and a simpler formula could be employed.

- **Approval of revised financial policy**

Keith read out the changes to the policy that had been sent out by Ben Sharp.

The acceptance of the changes was proposed by the Chair and approved unanimously.

## **7. Vicar's Matters**

The work on the ramp will take approximately 10 days and so Sunday worship in Church will be impossible on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023. It is hoped that one service on that day will be able to take place in a local school hall. Harvest Festival will be moved to the next Sunday and Keith will consider what to do about the Patronal Festival.

Keith asked the PCC to approve the service times as they stand at present. The committee agreed unanimously.

The local police have been in email contact with Keith regarding the January break in. The trial is moving forward and bail has been extended.

An Oxford based musical group called 'Moonrakers' has been in contact asking to hold a concert in Hughenden Church. The PCC gave agreement for this possibility to be explored.

Keith said that after some discussion he had decided that he would like to offer the common cup again at communion. He envisaged this happening early in September. After some thoughts being offered about unity, diversity and inclusion, the PCC approved the proposed move.

## **8. Churchwardens Matters**

Julia reported that she had had a useful meeting with BBONT regarding the churchyard and the management thereof.

Plastic flowers on the graves were discussed as a possible nuisance.

It was noted that a quinquennial inspection was again due and Keith said he would give Julia the name of a possible inspector.

Frank said that one gazebo had been ruined by rain and would need replacing.

It was noted that from now on expenses would be given to Anu with respect to the barbecue that her family annually hosted.

Frank commented that both a skills audit and a church suite update were required.

## **9. PCC subgroups**

Thanks were given to Antony for the Social and Outreach update.

## **10. PCC members responsibilities**

The Vicar said that this would be considered at a later date.

## **11. Deanery and Diocesan Synods**

Deanery Synod will meet later this month.

Diocesan Synod is encouraging all churches to have environmental matters at the forefront of every decision taken.

Questions were asked by members as to how we were supposed to do this?

## **12. Parish safeguarding**

Julia (on behalf of Roger) reiterated that all PCC members need to complete their safeguarding training and obtain a DBS.

She asked for PCC approval of the Safeguarding Action Plan. This was given with one abstention.

### **13. Electoral Roll**

Arthur informed the committee that there were two new names on the electoral roll:

Anna Grace Inman

Jake Frederick Hutt

### **14. AOB**

It was announced that Helen would be on sabbatical from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 until the end of June 2024. She agreed to do a short presentation about her plans at the September meeting.

David closed in prayer and the meeting closed at 10.04 pm.

### **ACTIONS:**

Carried over from the last minutes:

- **Frank: to look into heat loss within the church.**
- **Keith: meeting with Arthur to discuss safety issues.**
- **Keith: to consider PCC member responsibilities.**

New:

- **Keith: will consider what to do about the Patronal Festival, 29<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Keith: will give Julia the name of a quinquennial inspector.**

Susan Brice (PCC Secretary)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2023