

A Summary of the Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the 2023/24 Parochial Church Council of St Francis of Assisi, held on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 8pm

Your PCC members: Revd Canon Jenny Fennell, Tony Boon, Sarah Branwhite, Nikki Clare, Carol Jager, Julie Lowes, Stuart Richardson, Gavin Johnstone, Rob Smith, Tony Porter, Andrew Watkinson, Graham Bloye, Rachel Basch, Cathy Bloye, Jo Dunstan, Pui San Apling, John Butler, Nigel Cox, Will Brimley

The meeting opened in prayer.

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

Rev Jenny started the meeting by welcoming everyone.

2. Minutes from the meeting held on 25th September 2023

The minutes were signed as true record.

3. Matters Arising

The PCC was asked to note and endorse the contents of the safeguarding action plan as discussed in the PCC meeting of 25th September. All members voted in favour.

A “domestic status rating” form had been received from central government regarding the use of the church hall, including the percentage of time it is in use. It was highlighted that this does not apply to St Francis as it is a church.

4. PCC Vision – discussion

To kick off the session the attendees split into small groups to discuss the following:

- Why we came to St Francis?
- What keeps us here?
- What does success look like?
- What could we do better?

A general discussion then followed within the group as a whole, centred on what success should look like and what we should be focussing on next. It was highlighted that there is no perfect answer – do we focus on being closer to God or ensuring we have a full church? It was suggested that it needed to be looked at from different perspectives. Church could mean different things to different people at different stages of their lives and we should ensure that no one is excluded. Any vision we develop should not have such constraints.

The discussion then moved on to how we could get better at communicating what we do. There was a sense of this being lost somewhat since COVID – “if we don’t tell people they won’t know”. It was asked whether people would know what Jenny did during the week (Jenny stressed that no two days are the same) and could this be communicated within the church community.

The scope of the discussion was widened to what happens outside the church building itself, in terms of house groups, schools and visiting. Where does this fit in terms of our priorities? How can we re-engage at a deeper level together?

It was asked whether we could extend this discussion outside the PCC to the congregation – a “Vision Day for everyone”, for example. Rev Jenny suggested we focus on output from the PCC itself, then include in a Sermon and move on from there. It was agreed that it would be constructive to recognise in services how much is done within the church community.

It was felt that we needed to ensure that people know we are thinking about these things – how people are valued and how we can bring people together. The Quiz Night was identified as a good

example of how this could be done. It was added that sometimes people got to know others more at lunches than at services.

It was agreed that the group would discuss the various topics with members of the **congregation* and provide feedback accordingly. **Please let us know your thoughts.*

5. Chairman's Report

Included Children's Report

There have been some new families join Toddle Time, a couple of which are thinking of moving on to Wild Church and/or baptisms.

6. Treasurer's Report

No report was available. It was highlighted that there was not much cover in this area and recommended that we look at how such a situation could be rectified.

7. Safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has been checking training completion. One individual remains who has one section left to complete. Checks on DBS are also being carried out. Records are being moved over to the new system and will be maintained on this moving forward.

8. Warden's Report

Report was received before the meeting. It was added that there is a small change to the wording of the posters to be displayed in Frankie's Garden, however this would be discussed at the Standing Committee.

9. Health, Safety & Environment

Nothing to report.

10. Eco Church

Report was received before the meeting. The hedge and grass cutting policy referenced in point 4 of the report will be shared with the community payback garden group in preparation for their visit.

The topic of solar panels was raised. The council are becoming increasingly receptive in terms of planning in this area so could we explore this option further? Rather than starting from scratch could we learn from other churches that have gone through this exercise already? Are there grants/funding available?

Eco-charity proposal:

It was proposed to move the discussion regarding a donation to the Tearfund Toilet Twinning charity to January 2024, when the PCC will discuss the topic of charitable donations - it might be possible to donate more as the organisation could be identified as a designated charity.

11. Inclusion

Nothing to report.

12. Stewardship

In response to the email being sent, it was reported that three individuals had asked for our bank details in order to set up regular donations and one had increased their donations. It had been noted that there was nothing on the relevant form relating to GDPR, so it was going to be established what the standard wording is. It was suggested that contacting the Diocese for their advice would be appropriate.

13. Future Events

There will be no schools week this year, however Rev Jenny will be visiting Applecroft School.

Arrangements for the Christmas Tree Festival continue to progress. Flyers have been printed and will be distributed. Posters have also been put up.

It was asked if there was a list of who had keys to the church. It was answered that there was a list.

14. Correspondence including Electoral Roll Update

Electoral Roll Update: There has been a change to the figures reported at the last meeting: residents 98, non-residents 84, giving a total of 182.

Some apologies were sent for the next meeting.

A member of the PCC volunteered to type the minutes at the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.41pm, at which point the Grace was said.

Next meeting: 22 November 2023 at 8pm in the Parish Hall