

CROMER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on Thursday 27th February 2025 at 7.30pm at St Martin's**

Members present: Revd Will Warren (Chair), David Anderson, Judith Anderson, Dennis Broughton, Anne Cottingham, John Hodgkinson, Tracy Johnson, Ivan Kimble, Sarah McCandlish, Alison Orsborne, David Orsborne, Glyn Purland, Simon Purslow, Doug Tuthill and Eileen Woodfield.

2502-01 The meeting opening with a short time of worship led by Simon Purslow.

2502-02 **Bible study and prayer**

Will Warren (WW) led a short reflection on 2 Corinthians 4 in which he spoke about three paradoxes inherent in the gospel and in gospel ministry: i) power through weakness; ii) life through death; and iii) glory through suffering. We are encouraged by recognising that our weakness reveals God's power; the frailty of our mortality reveals the life offered by Jesus; and, when we have our eyes 'fixed on Jesus', our suffering can be seen in perspective against the backdrop of eternity. This was followed by a time of prayer.

2502-03 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Revd Julia Chamberlin and Mary Pallister.

2502-04 **Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 23rd January 2025**

The minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record of that meeting.

Matters arising

a) Item 2501-04b - **Leadership Structures:** Andy Bagwell has been booked and will come to Cromer in May to carry out an operational audit.

b) CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

c) 2501-07 – **Mission Partners** – More than 120 members of the church family had voted. Satisfactory Safeguarding Policies had been seen by the PSOs, and Canaan Christian Trust (Focus month: July) and Tearfund (June) had been selected as Mission Partners for the period 2025-2027. The Secretary had written to all those who had nominated organisations, thanking them and advising them of the outcome of the vote. The results had been displayed at both worship centres.

d) 2501-11 – **Fire Risk Assessment** – Further quotes had been received and were with Nick Claridge who is preparing a report and recommendations. The quotes were within the indicative amount already approved by PCC and members

AGREED to delegate this matter to Fabric Leadership Team. ACTION: FLT

2502-05 **Vicar's briefing**

a) Revd Joanna Haywood had been instituted and inducted on Sunday 23rd February. PCC members were encouraged to continue to pray for her in this next phase of her ministry.

CONFIDENTIAL

b) **Revd Julia Chamberlin** has been signed off from work and PCC members were encouraged to continue to pray for her.

c) **In informal conversations with Bishop Jane** about the appointment of a new Curate from Cromer, she has been sympathetic, but it is unlikely that a curate will be available until the summer of 2026 at the earliest. The number of people offering themselves for training is falling – especially those from Evangelical backgrounds - and the recent scandals and ongoing uncertainty about the future are making this worse.

d) **The cost of housing in North Norfolk is making it harder for retired clergy to settle here.** This is likely to limit the flow of those coming to serve here in retirement.

PCC Members expressed their concern over the growing workload pressure on WW and affirmed their prayerful and practical support.

2502-06 **Living Leadership: Powerful Leaders?**

WW introduced the 'Audit of Abuse of Power' that has been created alongside Marcus Honeysett's book **Powerful Leaders?** He said that this was an important topic but rarely discussed. The abuse of power is not confined to any particular group or 'level' within the Church. It was timely to consider this as it will feed into the Organisational Audit to be carried out in May. The book is a good read, but 'weighty'. WW has set aside time to complete the leadership review. After discussion, it was AGREED that PCC members would re-read the introductory section of the leaflet and then tackle the questions on pages 8-10. Responses and comments to be fed back to the PCC Secretary who would collate them for further discussion at the next meeting.

ACTION: All members, DO

2502-07 **Installation of glass doors at the Parish Church**

IK introduced this item and explained that the Diocesan Chancellor has asked PCC to confirm their agreement to the revised proposal for the doors: that is, with the iron gates being retained instead of being removed as in the original proposal.

After discussion it was proposed by Ivan Kimble and seconded by David Loades that: "PCC agrees to seek a faculty from the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Norwich for permission to undertake the following works: i) to install two sets of frameless glass doors in the south porch of the Parish Church; one set in front of the existing iron gates (which are to be retained) and another set in front of the existing wooden doors (which are also to be retained); and ii) to repave the South Porch with York stone."

This was AGREED unanimously.

2502-08 **Finance**

The Treasurer (DT) presented the end-of-year statement, which showed a positive and healthy financial situation. Overall, planned giving had come in slightly higher than expected (102% of budget) with giving through the Parish Giving Scheme being even more buoyant (105%). The challenge was to encourage more cash givers to use the Parish Giving Scheme. Based on current figures, this has the potential to release up to £750 additional income through recovered tax claimed under the Gift Aid scheme.

The bookstall, Cornerstone Café and the organ recital series had covered the costs of running these services and had generated significant additional income. Casual donations, mostly from visitors, were also buoyant, although giving through the donation station was lower than budgeted because of the closure of the Parish Church for three months to allow major works to take place at the start of 2024.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Treasurer has been actively managing funds to maximise income from interest (111% of budget) while ensuring that funds remain readily available to support the whole mission and ministry of the church.

Income from fees is down, mainly because more funerals now take place at the Crematorium. Income from Parish Church lettings is artificially high because of payments received after the end of the previous financial year.

Expenditure has been well-managed by the various budget holders and, where this has exceeded the original budget figure, this has been approved by PCC during the year.

Overall, income exceeded the amount budgeted (117%) and routine expenditure was slightly above the amount budgeted (101%).

Major capital expenditure was above the amount budgeted (117%) but the cost of these works was covered from funds set aside for those specific purposes.

The External Examiner will have the final accounts ready for approval by PCC in March. PCC thanked the Treasurer for his work and for his report and recorded its thanks to budget holders and to all those whose efforts contributed to the positive outcome this year. Simon Purslow summed things up well: 'Thank you, Lord'.

Members expressed concern at the way the Diocese had recorded Parish Share payments; in particular, that the part paid through the Ephesian Fund was showing as 'unpaid'. The Treasurer explained that this was because, at our request, those payments had been credited to the Parish Share of another parish. Members were also concerned about reports that Cromer had been 'named and shamed' as not paying its Parish Share. Leadership changes in the Diocese mean that the planned meeting with representatives of the Diocesan Finance Team and the Ephesian Fund to try to resolve matters have not yet taken place. ACTION: WW, DT

2502-09 PCC Membership

The PCC Secretary (DO) introduced this item setting out some of the challenges and suggesting possible ways forward. A lengthy and lively discussion followed in which various points were made including:

Electoral Roll numbers are different from real, 'regular attendance and commitment' strength. This makes the calculation of 'proper representation' more complex than it is portrayed in the Church Representation Rules (CRR).

It can be too easy to 'belong', without developing commitment and engagement. This is a discipleship issue that makes it more difficult to get people to engage in the work of PCC (and other responsibilities).

The 2020 resolutions were properly considered and made changes allowable under CRR. The proposals in terms of Elected Members have got a bit out of kilter and we should rectify that this year.

We should be cautious about proposing major changes ahead of the Operational Audit.

Taking a break from responsibility is good; making the arrangements more flexible and linked to a pastoral discussion could avoid having to use co-option to 'solve a problem' that we have created.

Based on current numerical strength, proportional representation of the different congregations seems about right.

CONFIDENTIAL

It was AGREED to refer this matter back to Standing Committee (S&F) to consider PCC's responses and to bring forward firm proposals that could be considered for sending on to the APCM. ACTION: DO, S&F

2502-10 PCC Elections

This had been largely covered in the discussion under item 2502-09 but is minuted here for clarity. Dennis Broughton, Sarah McCandlish, Alison Orsborne, Mary Pallister and Glyn Purland come to the end of their term of office at the APCM. Under our current rules, Dennis, Sarah and Glyn are eligible for nomination for re-election. There are also two previously unfilled vacancies from the 2024 APCM. The APCM will, therefore need to elect seven members to PCC (five for three years and two for two years). As Deanery Synod elections take place next year, the vacancy created by Mary Howard's death will be left unfilled.

2502-11 Reports

a) Minutes of Standing and Finance Committee (S&F) (11th February)

The minutes were **RECEIVED**.

b) Safeguarding

After clarification about the issue of Known Offenders, the report was **RECEIVED**.

The Secretary agreed to send the link for the Safeguarding training portal to all members on behalf of the PSOs.

c) Health and Safety

The report was **RECEIVED**.

d) Electoral Roll

The membership of the Electoral Roll is currently 288. Initial response to the renewal of the Roll has been positive with more than 100 people signing up in the first week.

e) General Synod (February 2025)

The report was **RECEIVED**.

2502-12 Correspondence

Three items of correspondence had been received:

a) A question about progress with the work agreed at St Martin's

IK provided the following update:

Partition in the worship area. This was raised by Dave Walker at the Fabric Leadership Team (FLT) meeting in February and is to be raised with Simon after the bookstall extension at the Parish Church has been installed to draw up the specification and get quotes for the partitions/bi-fold doors to bring to PCC.

Storage in the lounge at St Martin's: this was also raised at the FLT meeting and Dave Walker agreed to look into getting wardrobes that can be fixed to the wall. Dave is currently carrying out other work in the lounge and is investigating lockable wardrobes from B&Q. These will be purchased and fixed shortly.

Ventilation fans installed in the Hall at St Martin's: investigations have been carried out for this work and appropriate fans can be installed suspended from the roof of the hall to be level with the suspended ceiling at an approximate cost of £3,650 + VAT. This cost needs to be fed back to PCC to see whether they want to progress this project.

SP will produce drawings etc for the partitions and bring a proposal back to PCC.

CONFIDENTIAL

PCC AGREED to progress the installation of fans in the hall, and this was referred to FLT to work up a full, costed proposal.

b) A proposal that Jonathan Anderson become the church rep. for the Cromer Peregrine Project

Roger Fickling is standing down from this role and Eddie Anderson and Jonathan (not related) had contacted IK and the PCC Secretary suggesting this change. PCC AGREED. Members recorded their grateful thanks to Roger for his work with the Cromer Peregrine Project and wished him and Janet well for their forthcoming move.

The PCC Secretary will contact those concerned.

ACTION: DO

c) A request from John Hodgkinson to replace the folding doors on the Cornerstone Kitchen in the Parish Church as they have become unsafe.

This was AGREED.

2502-13 **Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting of S&F is on 13th March.

The next meeting of PCC is on 27th March.

2502-14 **Review of the meeting**

The main positive issues were the lively discussion and the willingness to work together on challenging issues. The main negative issues were about managing time in the meeting and the length of the agenda.

2502-15 **The meeting closed with The Grace at 10.10 p.m.**