



CROMER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Parish Church**

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

2503-01 The meeting opening with a short time of worship led by Simon Purslow.

Bible study and prayer

Will Warren (WW) led a short reflection on Jesus' 'High Priestly' prayer in John 17. The focus of the prayer is three-fold: he prays for himself; he prays for his disciples; and he prays for the church. In this last he is, therefore, praying for us here in Cromer in the 21st Century. The subject of his prayer for the church is two-fold: unity and glory. Unity, because this reflects the nature of the Godhead and the impact of the gospel on the world. Unity cannot be forced or achieved through structures alone; it is the work of the Spirit. Glory because in his death and resurrection we see his glory, and as his redeemed people we share in his glory – and the best is yet to come.

2503-02 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Revd Julia Chamberlin, John Hodgkinson and Eileen Woodfield.

Declarations of interest not previously recorded

There were none.

2503-03 **Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 27th February 2025**

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

Matters arising

- a) Item 2502-03 – JJC has been signed off until 12th April and we continue to pray for her.
- b) CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE
- c) 2502-12 – **Work at St Martin's** – Storage cupboards have been installed in the Lounge and are ready for everything to be sorted and put away. SP is awaiting two alternative outline proposals for the partitions in the church and PCC will be asked to make a decision about how to proceed once they have been received. Fabric Leadership Team is working on detailed proposals for the installation of the fans.

2503-04 **Vicar's briefing**

There were no new items. PCC Members expressed their concern over the growing workload pressure on WW and affirmed their prayerful and practical support.

2503-05 **Living Leadership: Powerful Leaders? – Audit of Abuse of Power**

WW introduced this item, noting that the issue had also been mentioned at Diocesan Synod last Saturday. He thanked PCC for completing the audit and invited members

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to comment on the themes that stood out in the collated responses. In the discussion the following points were made:

- a) The collated responses should be used as part of the brief for the Operational Audit in May. Understanding our roles and the way we operate is crucial in determining how we move forward.
- b) We're sometimes better at producing policies than at implementing them. We have good policies in many areas but need better ways of implementing them and reviewing their impact. In a business environment, an organisation of our size would have someone to do this. For us, much of this falls on volunteers and, particularly, on the Incumbent. PCC could consider creating a review group to help with this issue.
- c) Understaffing creates constant pressure, as does uncertainty over the medium- and long-term future. Clergy and ordinand numbers are falling, especially among evangelicals. We have confidence in our leaders but continue to be concerned for the workload burden that they bear. Uncertainty over staffing issues is unsettling.
- d) We strive to be accountable and to make sure our governance and leadership processes are as transparent as they can be.
- e) It is important that we communicate well about the work of PCC, and especially about leadership, governance and staffing issues. PCC itself has a key role in this, and it would be helpful to discuss how we can do this effectively.

WW thanked members for the discussion and it was AGREED that the responses should be fed into the Operational Audit.

2503-06 **PCC Membership**

The Secretary (DO) introduced the proposals from Standing Committee (S&F) noting that they do not propose any change to the 2020 APCM resolutions. They encourage us to make every effort to inform the church family about the role of PCC and the importance of its work prior to the elections so that we fill all the available places at the APCM and bring PCC numbers up to the level set in the 2020 resolutions. They encourage PCC to create opportunities to inform, encourage and support those considering standing for election, and also encourage the creation of opportunities for existing PCC members to reflect on and develop their role.

WW and MP will collaborate on an item for the Weekly Update.

Following discussion, the proposals were **AGREED**.

2503-08 **Finance**

The Treasurer (DT) presented the final accounts for 2024 which showed a positive and healthy financial situation.

The External Examiner has worked hard to get the accounts ready for this meeting and PCC recorded thanks to them and to the Treasurer for their work.

It was proposed by Simon Purslow, seconded by David Loades and AGREED unanimously that the accounts be adopted.

The Treasurer has received a note from the Diocese confirming that Cromer had paid its Parish Share in full but stating that the part paid through the Ephesian Fund would not be credited to Cromer because those payments had been credited to the Parish Share of another parish. DT and WW reported that the Diocesan Finance Team are not willing to meet about this issue.

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Members discussed whether Parish Share payments for 2025 should be directed through the Ephesian Fund. The following points were made:

- a) There would be some benefit in paying everything through the Ephesian Fund. Endless discussions about how to deal with this are not good use of PCC time.
- b) Paying everything through the Ephesian Fund could be seen as a 'hostile act' by the Diocese.
- c) The Diocesan breakdown of how the Parish Share is used is different from last year, identifying central costs rather than 'mission and ministry' costs.
- d) We could work on the same basis as last year by apportioning the amount the paid through the Ephesian Fund in a similar.
- e) We are not being awkward. PCC is accountable for ensuring that the money is used for the purpose for which it was given. Lack of transparency and a difficult attitude on the part of the Diocese have made this difficult but we've spent enough PCC time on this and now need to 'put it to bed'.

Two proposals came out of the discussion.

- i) That we pay 100% of the Parish Share through the Ephesian Fund.
Proposed by the Treasurer (DT); seconded by DL.
- ii) That we pay the same proportion of the Parish Share through the Ephesian Fund as we did in 2024. Proposed by SP; seconded by GP.

In a vote, **Proposal ii) was CARRIED**. Votes FOR: 9; AGAINST: 2; ABSTENTIONS: 2

2503-08 **APCM Arrangements**

The following items were **APPROVED** (with changes noted) in advance of the APCM:

- a) Safeguarding Policy and Portfolio of Documents
A typo in the first paragraph was corrected: the word 'for' deleted in line 4.
The Safeguarding Provision for the Hire of Church Premises was corrected to show Eileen Woodfield as PSO instead of Sue Brocklehurst.
- b) List of persons with DBS checks approved to work with children and adults.
Heather Pike was added to the list supplied with the PCC Papers.
- c) Health and Safety Policy
- d) PCC Secretary's Report
- e) APCM timeline and election arrangements

The draft PCC calendar for 2025-26 was NOTED.

2503-09 **Reports**

a) Minutes of Standing and Finance Committee (S&F) (13th March)

The minutes were **RECEIVED**.

Matters arising

Arrangements for Sabbatical were noted. WW has been granted a three-month sabbatical (9th June - 9th September). Discussions are taking place about suitable Locum arrangements and an announcement will be made to the wider church family once everything is in place.

Giving and Gift Acceptance Policy

IK introduced the draft policy. In the discussion that followed, members suggested several small amendments:

- i) in p.3c - Replace the phrase 'do not align' with 'are in conflict with' and ensure that the 'would be detrimental to,,,' test is clearly articulated

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- ii) in p.3d – to avoid PCC becoming involved in unnecessary (and sometimes confidential) detail, suggest PCC delegates this authority to Standing Committee or Incumbent and churchwardens, as appropriate.
- iii) in p.4 - Correct the typo 'Cromers' to 'Cromer'.

With the amendments noted, the policy was APPROVED unanimously.

b) Safeguarding Report and Action Plan

The report and action plan were **RECEIVED**.

c) Health and Safety Report

The report was **RECEIVED**.

d) Electoral Roll Report

The final membership of the old Electoral Roll was 288. At the date of the meeting, 243 people had signed up for the new Roll.

2503-10 **Correspondence**

Standing Committee (S&F) had approved a funding request from the bellringers for repairs to the bell ropes. This was reported to PCC and the accompanying invoice provided. Standing and Finance Committee Minute 2503-11 refers.

The outcome of PCC business conducted by correspondence between meetings was RATIFIED. The motion: "The PCC supports Mrs Jacqueline Austin in the continuance of her role as a Holy Communion Assistant in the Benefice of Cromer" was CARRIED with none against.

2503-11 **Date of next meeting:**

The APCM is on 24th April at St Martin's

The next meeting of S&F (if required) is on 8th May.

The next meetings of PCC are on 15th May (Election of Officers) and 29th May (Business meeting).

2503-12 **Review of the meeting**

The main positive issues were the timekeeping in the meeting and the constructive nature of the discussions. The main negative issue was the length of the agenda.

The meeting closed with The Grace at 9.40 p.m.