

Dickleburgh and the Pulhams Benefice Council

Meeting at The Rectory, Pulham Market on Wed 21st July 2010 at 7.30pm to 9.30pm

1. **Welcome and refreshments** – James welcomed everyone to the Rectory and his first meeting.
2. **Worship and hymns** – James read to the meeting from Acts and those present sang Abba Father and Father we adore you.
3. **Apologies** – Brian L, Paul, John, Tim and Julian
4. **Minutes** of the meeting on 27th January 2010 were agreed and signed.
5. **Matters arising** - none
6. **Items for Any other business** – Service Rota

7. **Treasurer's Report** – The present credit balances for our two accounts are
Bank of Scotland £3,926. Church of England Deposit a/c £13,219.00.

Since my report at the January meeting I have distributed the Christmas Tree Festival proceeds as agreed by the Council at that meeting. £600.00 to First Responders and £4000.00 towards 2010 Parish Share contributions, £2000.00 to each Dickleburgh and Pulham St. Mary. Church rooms rented from Dickleburgh PCC to the Benefice (£200.00) for last year has been paid; Rebecca has been paid up to March (current claim awaited!) and there has been no claim from the Rector as yet !! Two telephone accounts averaging £44.00 have been paid.

CRB checks. I am not sure how much parishes realise what these cost and I would ask this to be discussed at some future date for decision as to which body should finance them i.e. Benefice or PCCs. I have recently paid one for Starston for two applicants, costing £109.00 which from their annual donation to Benefice Funds of £455.04 makes a large dent! Norman is the expert in this field and I have nothing in my records authorising payment by Benefice. The annual cost to date has been £300 in 2008 and nothing in 2009 so I can only assume that some parishes deal with these internally?

I have never included this in previous reports but thought it might be of interest to mention in future, the income from quarterly Parochial Fees (Weddings; funerals etc) which passes through our account. Between March and June these totalled £3,486.00 from which £1,158.00 was forwarded to the diocese towards the stipend.

Finally, some months ago I submitted a paper to you for consideration by your PCCs recommending a review of contributions to Benefice Funding against a base of £4,500.00. You will be pleased to hear that due to monthly standing orders now set up, there is no need to proceed with this review for the time being.

Could I please again ask if Pulham St. Mary would set up a monthly standing order to cover its contribution towards Benefice funding? (end of report)

It was agreed that CRB checks would go on the next agenda. James pointed out that it was Diocesan policy to use an independent company which makes them more expensive. Discussion about the balance of the COE deposit account took place. It was felt that there was no need for it to be so high. It was agreed that James should speak to the PCC Treasurers about whether money should be returned to the parishes or their contributions reduced as the Benefice Council had no authority to deal with it. Some of the money would need to be left in for contingencies.

8. **Discussion re Benefice Council purpose** - See page 3

9. **Away Day** – The date was agreed as Saturday 30th October and it would probably run from 10am to 4pm. It would be outside the Benefice and James and Rebecca would look into suitable venues.

10. **Practical arrangements and outreach** – Not discussed. To go on next agenda

11. **Correspondence** - Letter and maps re Voluntary Registration of Churchyards distributed to all Parishes.

12. **Christmas Tree Festival** – Letters have been sent out to interested parties. There will be a committee meeting on August 2nd. The theme will be based on the planets as they were at the time of Jesus's birth. Bishop Alan has been asked to open the event. Norman asked if the Tree Festival could have a float of £3000. This was agreed.

13. **News from the Parishes**

Rushall – Open Gardens in June raised £2,800 for church funds. Considering action re Chancel liability. Having another Singalong on 13th Nov.

The Benefice Christian Aid collection raised £2,800.

Pulham St Mary – Alburgh Singers concert and the Horticultural service were well supported. 12th Sept Patronal Festival, 26th Sept Harvest Festival followed by picnic lunch, Toy Service 9.30am on 5th Dec which the Trailblazers are encouraged to take. The fete at the Whartons raised £700. Church restoration looks wonderful. Will be having an open weekend.

Thelveton – The walk and picnic at Frenze were very good, Flower Festival at start of Open Churches Week (OCW). 12th Sept at 5pm Band Concert, 24th Oct Harvest Service followed by a picnic in the church and sale of produce, 19th Dec Carol Service at 11am.

Pulham Market – Work has begun to make the Brewhouse usable. Benefice Trail Walk (6 miles) Sat 2nd Oct. Meet at Brockdish Church at 1.30pm. Toys'n more toys, events all OCW, details in the pewslip.

Starston - Successful Flower Festival which raised £1500. Talk about Tracing Your First World War Ancestors by Rosemary Steer at end of OCW on 7th Aug.

Dickleburgh – Flower Festival all week for OCW, Fete on Sat 31st July, Car Boot Sale Sat 7th July, finishing week with Songs of Praise on Sun 8th Aug.

(Full details for all Open Churches Week Events in the pewslip and on the website)

14. **Any Other Business**

a. Benefice Magazine – Gale suggested that it would be nice to have a Benefice Magazine again and offered to do one quarterly. It would include services and events and feedback from the Benefice Council/Leadership team. Everyone was grateful for Gale's offer.

b. Rota – This was discussed earlier in the meeting. Some parishes were not happy with the rota, particularly that the sermon series would reduce the rotation of clergy preaching at each church. The Rector explained why he wished to try this out, that he had been asked by the staff if we could have sermon series that followed a topic or a biblical book and that the teaching would build from sermon to sermon. It was recognised by the meeting that this may cause some problems.

15. **Date and place of next meeting** – to be decided when the PCCs have considered the proposal re the Benefice Council/Benefice Leadership Team
The meeting closed with the grace.

Signed.....

Date.....

Agenda item 8

Discussions took place based on the information and thoughts below from James. The Service rota was also discussed. See A.O.B

Ref: D Joint Councils section 19 Church Representation Rules

1 *From the minutes of the Benefice Council dated 27 Jan 2010 item 8 refers to a discussion of a constitution for the Benefice Council.*

2 *Looking at the Church Representation Rules 2006 (Ref D above) the Benefice Council has not been set up as a 'Joint Council'. The setting up of a joint council is complex and needs to be authorised by the Bishop.*

From the Church Representation Rules:

The joint council shall meet from time to time for the purpose of consulting together on matters of common concern.

I do not see the advantage of setting up a 'Joint Council' for the Benefice.

The Benefice Council is currently a subcommittee of the six PCC's of the Benefice.

3 *From the above the following points arise:*

- a. *We do need a statement of purpose so that we know what role we would like the Benefice Council to have.*
- b. *Should the Benefice Council deal with Finance or would the treasurers deal this with?*
- c. *What membership should it have and what size should it be? Should it be made up of the Ministry Team (Clergy and Readers) and PCC representatives? Should each Church have one or two representatives? Should those representatives be wardens?*
- d. *It would be helpful if the name of the Benefice council reflected its role. (e.g. Wardens and Ministry team) WAM*
- e. *Should it primarily deal with spiritual direction? For example what should we be teaching in our sermons - do we want to run an alpha course - would we like to run a Benefice away day?*

4 *When we have a statement of purpose we should ask the PCC's to delegate this purpose to the sub-committee. For this we should propose a motion for each PCC to pass and this should then be passed each year at the first PCC meeting after the AGM. We should therefore have a fairly simple statement of purpose.*

It was agreed that the PCCs should be asked to debate and vote on the motion below

PCC Action – To consider the motion that the Benefice Council should change as a) to d) below

a) Membership to be the staff and 1 representative from each PCC who has the trust and support of their PCC and congregation and will be able to represent their views.

b) The Statement of purpose of the group will be;

'To consider and further the spiritual wellbeing of the Benefice'

c) The name of the group will be the Benefice Leadership Team (BLT). It will meet quarterly.

d) It is proposed that Benefice finance will be dealt with by the six parish treasurers and the Benefice Treasurer.

e) Possible agenda items for the new group - Teaching, Sermon Series, Baptism Policy, Marriage Policy, Alpha Courses, Away Day, Mission Action Plan, Pastoral Visiting, Growth Plan, Benefice Outreach Initiative, Staff Training, Vision Statement, Lay Training, Leadership, training and resources etc.