

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham, held in the Church hall on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

### **2024 / 2025 No. 1**

**Present:** Anne Harkness (in the chair), Maria Adu, Sarah Butler, Wesley Guy, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

Apologies for absence had been received from David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Clari Harrington, Sandra Horner and Nomsa Mafohla.

Anne Harkness welcomed Maria Adu, Ian Johnson and Paul Lashmar back on to the PCC following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. She also welcomed Wesley Guy and Roger Wells who had been elected on to the PCC at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

Anne Harkness opened the meeting in prayer.

#### **10999 Conflict of Interest**

Keith Howick declared a Conflict of Interest as a trustee of Paul's Pre-School and of The Ugly Duckling Company. Roger Wells declared a Conflict of Interest due to his work with Living Well.

#### **11000 Appointment of leader for *Your PCC Matters***

Ian Johnson offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

#### **1001 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Anne Harkness proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 be received as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to one spelling correction in minute 993. **Agreed.** One member abstained as he was not present at the meeting, and two members abstained as they had only been elected on to the PCC at the APCM meeting in May 2024.

#### **1002 Matters arising**

(i) Minute 985(ii), Procurement policy. It was noted that this policy is now on the church website.

(ii) Minute 986(iv), Giving leaflet. This had been distributed at the APCM.

(iii) Minute 991(vi), Vicar's report. Clive Grinham had prepared a report for the APCM.

(iv) Minute 992(vi), 3 Ashford House rent. Anthea Prendergast reported that the rent had been increased in January 2023 by £50 per month. It was not clear whether anyone had spoken to the tenant regarding the decision at the PCC meeting in April 2024. Anthea was asked to contact Robyn Ranu and the Church Administrator regarding the tenancy and the contract. Keith Howick suggested that there should not be a back dated increase to the rent. It should be increased in August 2024 and then in January 2025.

(v) Minute 992(viii), Wedding fees. Anne Howick confirmed that a link to the CofE cost of church weddings web page had been added to the St Paul's website.

(vi) Minute 997, Church organ. David Storey had been advised that St Paul's may require a faculty to remove the organ, and is awaiting a response from the Diocesan Organ Advisor about next steps.

### **1003 Action Sheet**

(i) Minute 862(iv), External notice boards. A proposal had been received from David Charlesworth on behalf of the Comms Team. It was agreed that this proposal should be discussed with Rev Rachel after her installation.

(ii) Minute 918(i), External lighting – see minute 1017.

(iii) Minute 938, Updated Giving leaflet. This had been made available and handed out at the APCM.

(iv) Minute 975, Yew trees at entrance – see minute 1017.

(v) Minute 988, Removal of oak tree in vicarage back garden. The Diocese had appointed Keven Watts to remove the oak tree and the maple tree in the vicarage garden that had been causing concern to the vicarage neighbours, cost £6,060. Anne Harkness had been liaising with Keven re the removal date, and keeping the neighbours informed.

(vi) Minute 992, Church hire rates. The Finance Team had been asked to discuss the rates.

(vii) Minute 992, School vouchers. Anthea Prendergast explained that in the past the Diocese had offered vouchers but that scheme was no longer in place. St Paul's had had a scheme whereby people had been invited, at Christmas and before the summer holidays, to contribute to fifty vouchers worth £50 each for distribution to Worsley Bridge School and St Paul's Pre-School. Keith Howick commented that the schools had been very grateful. The PCC underwrites the scheme. St Paul's provides the vouchers and the schools select which families should receive vouchers. Members agreed that there should be a voucher scheme before the summer holidays and the congregation should be made aware of this and encouraged to contribute.

(viii) Minute 994, Cleaning products. The churchwardens were asked to check if these are compliant.

### **1004 Interregnum**

(i) Support for Church Administrator and rota updates. The service rota for June and July had been distributed.

(ii) Thank you gift. Keith Howick reported that it had been suggested that St Paul's should give Paul Wright, Archdeacon Emeritus, a thank you gift in acknowledgement of all the services he had led during the interregnum. Following discussions Paul had suggested he would like a garden kneeler. It was agreed that St Paul's should purchase a garden kneeler, and give him some red wine, at a 10.30 am service at the beginning of July.

(iii) Preparations for installation of Rev Rachel Winn. On 4<sup>th</sup> June Anne Harkness, Anne Howick and Anthea Prendergast had met with Rev Rachel Winn to plan the service, using a template provided by the Diocese. Rachel had provided details of the hymns and readings she would like. Anne Howick had drawn up a list of those to be invited from the Deanery and Anne Harkness would be printing the invitations and sending them out by post shortly. Rachel would be inviting her family and friends. All would be asked to reply to Anne Howick. Catering arrangements were in hand and Sandi Lee, Gail Wells and Marian Sewell were the catering leads. Help with setting up and clearing away would be welcomed. There would be tables for drinks and the finger food would be handed round after the service. Members agreed

that the PCC should serve as waiters, including distributing the finger food. Ian Johnson apologised that he would not be able to attend the service.

#### **1005 Work at the vicarage**

All the work had been completed. There would need to be some tidying up of the garden. Tim Harrington and Anne Harkness were planning to get the work done and would appreciate any extra help. They would also be speaking to Rachel's husband, Adam. Stuart Burnett had done the painting and decorating in the vicarage. There had been some extra expenses so the total cost had been £5,050. Rachel and Adam had paid for the wall papering and the Diocese would be paying £150 towards the work that their builders had not done.

#### **1006 Safeguarding and inclusion**

A copy of the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy : Promoting a safer church, had been distributed. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the Safeguarding Policy: Promoting a Safer Church should be approved. **Agreed.**

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy St Paul's is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

#### **1007 Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officer**

Anne Howick proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that Sandra Horner should be appointed as the Parish Safeguarding Officer. **Agreed.**

#### **1008 Safeguarding courses**

Members were reminded that all PCC members are required to have a DBS check and to do two safeguarding courses. Keith Howick reported that on 1<sup>st</sup> June he and Clive Grinham had attended a face to face Leadership Safeguarding course. Ruth Campbell had led the course and all attendees had been encouraged to imbibe a culture of care in the church. The courses had previously been on line but it was hoped there could be more face to face courses so that the course would be more accessible.

#### **1009 Annual Parochial Church Meetings, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

(i) PCC representatives. It was noted that Maria Adu, Wesley Guy, Clari Harrington, Paul Lashmar, Ian Johnson and Roger Wells had been elected.

(ii) Appointment of Licensed Reader. Sarah Butler had been appointed to serve as an *ex officio* member of the PCC.

(iii) Open Forum. Discussions had included updates on the noticeboards, lighting of the church path, cutting back of the yew trees by the main church path. Some people visiting St Paul's had not realised St Paul's was in interregnum. The churchwardens had thanked all those who had covered services during the interregnum. Keith Howick had commented that the church finances were stable and had encouraged people to reflect on their personal giving. In answer to a question he also explained what the Deanery Synod does.

#### 1010 Standing Committee.

In answer to a question, Keith Howick explained that the PCC can delegate matters of urgency to the Standing Committee for consideration and approval. Paul Lashmar proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that the vicar, churchwardens, PCC secretary, a PCC representative from the Finance team, and the LLM representative should be appointed members of the Standing Committee. **Agreed.**

#### 1011 PCC appointments

Information regarding the current appointments had been received. Keith Howick wondered whether there should be a PCC vice-chairman. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Maria Adu, that the following appointments should be agreed: PCC Chairman - the vicar, PCC vice-chairman - Anne Harkness, PCC Secretary – Anne Howick, Assistant Treasurer Planned Giving (Gift Aid) – Rosemary Dear, Assistant Treasurer (Away Giving) – Finance Team, Assistant Treasurer – Anthea Prendergast, Electoral Roll Officer – Rufus Ballaster, Lay Reader representative – Sarah Butler. **Agreed.**

#### 1012 Team appointments

The PCC Secretary was asked to circulate details of the teams and to ask PCC members for their thoughts on which teams they would like to serve on.

#### 1013 Sidesmen and Welcome team

The PCC Secretary had spoken to those who had been members of the team for the past year. It was proposed that the following people should be members of the Welcome Team and on the sidesmen rota for 2024/2025: Maria Adu, Ann Birkett, Alison Bradley, Rosemary Dear, Alison Dockray, Anne Howick, Laura Lashmar, Paul Lashmar, Sandi Lee, Roz Turner, Brian Woolmer. **Agreed.** The PCC agreed to think about who might be invited to join the team.

#### 1014 Approved signatories

A paper with recommendations regarding approved signatories had been received.

(a) National Westminster Bank plc. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that National Westminster Bank plc should continue an Account in the name of St Paul's Church, Beckenham and be authorised to accept instructions

(i) for operations on the Account and

(ii) to release items in security or safe custody in the name of St Paul's Church from Anne Mary Harkness (Churchwarden), Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Churchwarden), Rosemary Mabel Dear (Assistant Treasurer), and Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary). It was proposed that any two of the above be authorised as cheque signatories of which, wherever possible, one should be a Churchwarden. Rosemary Mabel Dear should remain the main contact.

It was noted that for internal National Westminster Bank plc transfers, e.g. to/from the Business Reserve Account from/to the Bonus Saver Account, only one signature is required. **Agreed.**

(b) Rochester Diocese. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that Anne Mary Harkness (Churchwarden), Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Churchwarden), Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary) and Rosemary Mabel Dear (Treasurer) should be authorised signatories, any two to act of which, wherever possible, one should be a Churchwarden. Rosemary Mabel Dear (Treasurer) should be the main contact. **Agreed.**

(c) CAF Bank Ltd account. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that CAF Bank Limited be authorised to accept instructions for operations on the Account from

Anne Mary Harkness (Church Warden), Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Church Warden), Rosemary Mabel Dear (Treasurer), Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary) and John Dore. It was proposed that any two of the above be authorised as account signatories of which, wherever possible, one should be a Church Warden. Rosemary Mabel Dear should be the main contact. **Agreed.**

#### **1015 PCC financial liability**

PCC members were reminded that they needed to complete the form and return it to the PCC Secretary.

#### **1016 Away Giving 2024**

A paper regarding calculations of amounts for 2024, and payment dates, had been received. Keith Howick reminded members that the amount for use for the six Missions of the Month is calculated as 10% of voluntary income. Payments are not made until after the two months have occurred. There is also a contingency fund for emergency appeals. The PCC or the Standing Committee approve the amounts. He thanked Rosemary Dear for preparing the report.

#### **1017 Buildings Team**

The minutes of a meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May had been received.

(i) Yew trees. Four tree surgeons had been approached. Two quotes had been obtained. Pictures of how the trees might look after the work had been done had been circulated. This would make the church more visible and welcoming, provide more light from the street lights and less slippery from the berries. It would be necessary to submit a List B permission on the online faculty system. The trees are not covered by a Tree Preservation Order, are not in a conservation area, and are not listed on the ancient yew database. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Paul Lashmar, that the PCC accept the quote from Keith Archers Tree Care of £954 inc vat. **Agreed.**

(ii) Wood flooring. It was reported that the wood floor at the rear of the church is badly worn and marked and would benefit from restoration. Richard Bradley had obtained three quotes. It was noted that one of the companies had restored the wood flooring in the vicarage. They had proposed that they would fix any loose blocks, sand the wood floor, apply one coat of primer and two coats of lacquer. It was noted that the work would have a two year manufacturer's warranty. Ian Johnson proposed, seconded Wesley Guy, that the quote from Rolin Cleaning Services, of £2,372.82 + vat, should be accepted. **Agreed.**

(iii) Exterior lighting. Quotes had been obtained from three external lighting specialists with ecclesiastical sector experience. It was noted that there is £5,000 in St Paul's restricted funding account. It would be important to check if the donor was happy with the proposals. CES had proposed to set up a trial of lights by the entrance to show the team the lighting scheme. They would prepare a document for planning and for a Faculty. Members asked if this trial would be after the work on the yew trees had taken place. Roger Wells commented that Christ Church had used CES in the past. During discussions Maria Adu proposed, seconded Roger Wells, that St Paul's accept the quote from CES. EV Bullen had provided a quote for work to install five bollards on the right of the path, including a trial. Heritage Lighting and CES had agreed to provide quotes this month. Following discussions Keith Howick proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that St Paul's accept the quote from CES and encourage them to get the work done as soon as possible, as it would be important to get the work done before the Autumn. **Agreed.**

**1018** Mission Team

The minutes of a meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 had been received.

(i) On 30<sup>th</sup> June Ben Ray would be visiting St Paul's and it had been suggested that after the 8.00 am service there should be a time of coffee and croissants when members of the congregation could meet with him and learn more about his work with disabled people in Northern Tanzania. The Mission Team had asked for the PCC's opinion on whether St Paul's should pay any travel expenses. Members **agreed** that St Paul's should offer to pay any travel expenses.

(ii) Christmas tree tags. Following discussion the PCC agreed that the Mission Team should arrange for Christmas tree tags to be available in 2024.

**1019** Deanery Synod

Keith Howick reported that there are traditionally three meetings a year. He and Sandra Horner are the two representatives from St Paul's. Father Jeremy Blunden is the Area Dean and chairs the meetings. It was noted that Keith Howick had been re-elected to serve on the Diocesan Synod.

**1020** Electoral Roll

The PCC welcomed Rene Gordon and Peter Quantill on to the Electoral Roll. It was noted that two applicants had not been worshipping at St Paul's for six months, but that it would be possible to consider their applications at the PCC meeting in July.

**1021** It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

**1022** Garden of Remembrance

The PCC Secretary reported that she had received a request from Sylvia Pickering's daughter for Sylvia's ashes to be interred in the Garden of Remembrance. This request was **approved**.

The PCC Secretary had received a request from Martha Collins that in the future the family would wish to have Alison Collins's ashes interred in the Garden of Remembrance. This request was **approved**.

Members commented that it would be important for Rev Rachel Winn to be aware of the policy regarding who can be interred in the Garden of Remembrance.

**1023** Audio visuals

It was reported that David Charlesworth was looking at different options. It would be important to engage a professional. Hopefully there would be people at other churches that St Paul's could engage with.

**1024** Church laptop

A new laptop had been purchased for the Church Administrator and would be set up soon.

**1025** Accounting system

Stephanie Fox, Rosemary Dear and Anne Harkness had been reviewing a new accounting system as Sage was getting too expensive. A possible alternative was Expense Plus and Rosemary Dear was in touch with the company.

**1026** Polling station

The Standing Committee had agreed that there could be a polling station in the hall at St Paul's on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July for the General Election. We would be charging the same hire charge as had been charged earlier in the year. The Pre-School would do the cleaning on the Wednesday and Friday.

**1027** Community Café

There would be an enhanced Community Connect café in July so that the community would have the opportunity to meet Rev Rachel after her installation.

**1028** Any Other Business

Members were reminded that the different teams consider various items relevant to them and report and make recommendations to the PCC. Following the APCM there is often a lot of business to be considered at the first PCC meeting. In the past there have been PCC away days for a time of discussion and thought regarding the life of St Paul's. It would be important to reflect with Rev Rachel when she is in post regarding having an away weekend.

**1029** Items for *Your PCC matters*

School vouchers; grateful to Paul Wright for all his work during the interregnum; yew trees and lighting; flooring; new readers and members of the welcome team; plans going well for installation on 11<sup>th</sup> July.

There being no further business Anne Harkness closed the meeting in prayer at 9.45 pm.