

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham, held in the Church hall on 14th November 2024.

2024 / 2025 No. 5

Present: Rev Rachel Winn (in the chair), Maria Adu, Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Anne Harkness, Clari Harrington, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Paul Lashmar, Nomsa Moldovan, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

Apologies for absence had been received from Andrew Griffiths, Wesley Guy, Keith Howick and Ian Johnson.

Sarah Butler opened the meeting in prayer.

11087 Conflict of Interest

David Charlesworth declared an interest in discussions regarding hire rates for church concerts and other events.

1088 Appointment of leader for *Your PCC matters*

Roger Wells offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

1089 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th October 2024

David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Maria Adu, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th October 2024 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.** Three members abstained as they had not been present at the meeting.

1090 Matters arising

(i) Minute 1072(ii), Distribution of Holy Communion. Anthea Prendergast reported that she had spoken to several people and five people had indicated that they would be willing to serve. It was noted that the full list of Lay Assistants at Holy Communion for 2025 would be an item on the agenda for the PCC meeting on 4th December 2024.

(ii) Minute 1072(iii), Mission Team. Rev Rachel reported that she would be meeting with Gareth Hall in January 2025.

(iii) Minute 1073(iv), Restricted funds. See minute 1095(iii) below.

(iv) Minute 1073(vii), Organ. A report had been sent to the PCC on 14th November.

(v) Minute 1075(ii), Safeguarding and inclusion. Following on from the previous PCC 'safeguarding scenario', concern was raised about the Church Administrator receiving cash in the office. It was therefore hoped all payments could be by bank transfer, or by using a SumUp machine. The church administrator would be asked to keep a clear record of all transactions. David Charlesworth was asked to connect the SumUp machine and to install a new doorbell with audio-visual facility at the Bishop's porch, and to assist Stephanie Fox with understanding new Sum Up transactions.

(vi) Minute 1077, Church cleaning. A taxi account had been set up. The taxi company had been asked to let St Paul's know when the account had been used and how much had been spent. Rosemary Dear had commented that there might be tax issues if the account is used regularly. The vicar said that she would advise users that the Taxi account was for emergency and occasional use only.

1091 Action sheet

(i) Minute 862, External notice boards. David Charlesworth reported that three quotes had been received. During the process of checking the quotations the vicar and David Charlesworth realised that a three-panel option would be more suitable, given the increase in our advertising. There would be three boards by the main entrance to St Paul's. The central one would have permanent information, and the left and right boards would have diary and upcoming information which could be updated each month. At the corner of Brackley Road and Lawn Road, and at the entrance to the church hall, there would be two boards with semi-permanent information. The proposal from David Charlesworth was a need to agree the final costs once a single revised quote from GreenBarnes Ltd (the preferred company) had been received. Following discussion Clari Harrington proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the PCC authorise the Standing Committee to agree the proposal when further information had been received. **Agreed.**

(ii) Minute 911, Pastoral Care meeting. The vicar would be sending round information about the possible date for a presentation and evening meal invitation regarding forming a Pastoral Care Team.

(iii) Minute 975, Roofing works. Work on the roof slates had taken place. More work had been identified and a second quote from the roofer had been requested. Adam Winn had offered to clean the valley gutters. It would be important to check St Paul's insurance.

(iv) Minute 990, New National Safeguarding standards. Sandra Horner had not received any information from the Diocese. She would be attending a meeting of Parish Safeguarding Officers on 16th November.

(v) Minute 992, Hire rates for church concerts and events. Anne Harkness hoped it would be possible for the Finance Team to formalise the fees and to set an hourly rate. She wondered if there should be a discretionary discount for church members.

(vi) Minute 994, Cleaning products. Members were not sure if Liz Spencer had spoken to Ron and Pauline regarding these products. The churchwardens had not yet spoken to other churches.

(vii) Minute 994, Church boiler. Anne Harkness commented that it would be good to get new controls for the heating so that it can be on and off at different times. She and Keith Howick had each received a quote. Keith Howick was researching whether it is possible to adjust the temperatures on the thermostats. The Buildings Team was asked to clarify the possibilities. Anne Harkness to report back to Keith Howick.

(viii) 3 Ashford House. Anthea Prendergast had written to the tenant regarding the rent increase with effect from January 2025. The tenant had acknowledged that there would be an increase. The vicar had arranged to visit the tenant on 11th December, from a pastoral angle.

(ix) Minute 1056, Fees for live streaming at weddings. The Finance Team was asked to prepare a recommendation.

(x) Minute 1059, Cost of rental agents. It was noted that Robyn Ranu was willing to carry on looking after 3 Ashford House. She had visited the church office to ensure all relevant documentation is on One Drive. There is a spreadsheet of when renewals are due. The Church Administrator had been asked to remind Robyn Ranu at relevant times, and to let the churchwardens know as well. This would be reviewed after six months. Paul Lashmar asked

about support for Robyn Ranu. He was concerned she was trying to micro manage the situation and wondered if she should have an extra person with her.

(xi) Minute 1070, Vouchers. Requests for contributions had been included in the notice sheet for 17th November.

(xii) Minute 1070, Parish giving. The vicar had invited Liz Mullins to speak to the PCC regarding Parish Giving scheme. This would be at a separate meeting on a Sunday after a service, hopefully in mid February 2025.

(xiii) Minute 1070, Giving button. It was confirmed that Andrew Griffiths had removed the giving button from the church website.

(xiv) Minute 1072, Garden of Remembrance. The PCC Secretary had circulated details of the Garden of Remembrance policy to the PCC.

1092 Decisions made by the Standing Committee since the last PCC

Due to a short notice deadline from the Deanery, the Standing Committee had agreed that the vicar should contact Area Dean Fr Jeremy to say that St Paul's would be willing to host an Autumn Confirmation service in 2025. The vicar had subsequently put in a formal request to Rochester Diocese. The PCC agreed the action taken by Standing Committee decision.

1093 Safeguarding and Inclusion

The Makin report into the safeguarding issues relating to John Smyth had recently been published. As a church St Paul's needs to think about the effect on the community and the church. In the light of the report the vicar would be interviewing Sandra Horner, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, at the 10.30 am service on 17th September. The children would be leaving the service earlier than usual to go to their activities.

Members considered a safeguarding scenario based on people being alone in a church.

1094 Lone working policy

The draft Lone Working policy had been circulated. David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Sarah Butler, that members should read and review the policy and send any comments to Anne Harkness, and that there should discussion at the PCC meeting on 4th December. **Agreed.**

1095 Financial matters

(i) Indicative Offer. A letter had been received from the Diocese giving details of the Total Calculated Indicative offer 2025. In 2024 the Offer was £73,460 and the Offer for 2025 would be £76,889. These figures are based on 10% of St Paul's Unrestricted Gross Income 2023, total Ministry cost, Diocesan Support Costs. Paul Lashmar proposed, seconded Nomsa Moldovan, that the PCC approve the Indicative Offer for 2025. **Agreed.**

(ii) London Living Wage. As at 23rd October 2024 the Living Wage Foundation had announced that the London Living Wage would be £13.85 per hour. St Paul's has been committed to being a London Living Wage employer since 2016. Anne Howick proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that with effect from 1st December 2024 Stephanie Fox, the Church Administrator, should be paid at the rate of £15.23 per hour. **Agreed.**

(iii) Restricted funds. The vicar and Rosemary Dear had met on 12th November to clarify the restricted and designated funds. Details of the Restricted funds had been circulated to the PCC. The vicar's main concerns were regarding the organ and the church office. A report on the organ had suggested it might cost over £200,000 to renovate. There might be over £92,000 available for an organ/building-related project. The DAC had commented that there are grants and it would be worth considering restoring the organ. The possibility of having an electronic organ with surround sound had also been suggested, possibly at a cost of about £60,000. Decisions regarding any kind of building works impacting the organ need to consider the music worship vision for the future. In future would we want organ and piano based worship.

The vicar also expressed concerns regarding the church office which she felt was not fit for purpose. She would like to be based in the church, so she could engage with people. She had concerns regarding safeguarding, and people wanting access to the church toilets which was only possible via the office when the Pre-School are meeting. If the organ was removed it would be possible to extend the office and to have access via a door near the pulpit. Another possibility would be to locate the office in the South aisle with visible glass structure, which would make the office more visible but there would also be some privacy. Another consideration was whether we would need more hall space, toilets and to modernise the kitchen. The vicar also mentioned the possibility of removing some of the pews in the North aisle to allow for a more comfortable space, e.g. for the soup lunch.

The vicar asked members to pray for the situation and it was agreed to discuss in more detail at the next PCC meeting. It was hoped there could be a PCC away day in 2025.

1096 Mission Team

A report of a meeting of the Mission Team held on 8th October had been received. The vicar hoped to meet up with Julian Shelton shortly. The Mission had recommended that £1,225 from Contingencies be sent to Open Doors for "persecuted Women's projects" and £1,225 be sent to TEAR Fund for their Middle East Emergency Appeal. **Agreed.**

1097 Communications Team

A report of a meeting of the Communications Team held on 15th October had been received. The team had thanked Patty Lien for her graphics work. It was hoped more people might be able to do graphic work, particularly when Patty is away. The Team would be discussing a possible new logo for the external noticeboards.

1098 Climate and Ecology

Sarah Butler reported that £791.66 had been raised at the Autumn Fair. It had been agreed that the profits would be shared between St Paul's Church and Ripple Effect. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that £400 be donated to Ripple Effect. **Agreed.** The ECO church survey had been updated and the team would be looking at it in the next few months.

1099 Connect Team

There had been a very positive meeting on 10th November to view 2024 and to consider and discuss items for the programme in 2025.

1100 Buildings Team

Anne Harkness reported that work on the yew trees should have taken place on 14th November. It had not happened and hopefully the workmen would be coming back on 21st or 28th November. The Council planning notice with respect to the lighting project is on display and any objections would need to be reported in the next week. Hopefully the Council would make a decision by 23rd December. It was hoped work could be done in the new year.

1101 Dates of PCC meetings 2025

Following discussions with the vicar, the PCC Secretary had circulated a report with details of dates of PCC meetings during the first part of 2025. It was noted that PCC meetings would be held on Wednesday 15th January, Thursday 27th February and Wednesday 2nd April. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting would be taking place on Sunday 11th May 2025.

1102 Deanery Synod

The next meeting would be taking place on 12th March 2025.

1103 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be held on 4th December 2024. It was agreed that the meeting would start at 7.00 pm with refreshments.

1104 Electoral Roll

There were no applications. It was agreed to promote the Electoral Roll at Communication Sunday.

11105 Items for *Your PCC Matters*

New noticeboards. Safeguarding. Yew trees and lighting. Building and organ needs. Future developments.

There being no further business the meeting closed with the Grace at 9.47 pm.