MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's New Beckenham held in the church hall on Wednesday 15th April 2026.

**2025 / 2026 No. 9**

Present: Rev'd Rachel Winn (in the chair), Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Clari Harrington, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

Apologies for absence had been received from Maria Adu, Wesley Guy, Anne Harkness, Sandra Horner and Penny Power.

Martin Steele attended the meeting during part of minute 1362.

Anne Howick opened the meeting in prayer.

**11360** Conflict of Interest

Keith Howick declared a Conflict of Interest as a trustee of the St Paul's Pre-School, and as a trustee of The Ugly Duckling Company.

**1361** Appointment of leader for *Your PCC Matters*

Keith Howick offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

**1362** Appointment of architect firm for the Heating project

A report and details of a proposed letter of appointment which could be provided by Steele Scammell Architects had been received. The Heating Working Group (HWG) had provided an update of their work to date, and a strategy report had been received from Wilson Building Consultants. Engineers had visited on site and had given a preliminary report regarding viable Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and Infra-Red (IR) systems. There were concerns regarding how much electrical supply was available, whether infra-red heating was a single possibility, and whether underfloor heating under the pews would be an option. Air source heat pumps would be very efficient and cost effective, but it would be very disruptive to instal them. Martin Steele had advised the HWG that it would be important to think about the future at St Paul's and it might be possible to do the work in two stages. Information regarding a heating project at a church in Melton Mowbray, and at Liverpool Cathedral was shared, with details of what had worked and what had not.

Martin Steele was welcomed to the meeting. There were various questions from the PCC put to him, such as the lifespan of ASHP and IR systems. Discussion was had about including the halls in the heating project. It was confirmed that installing an ASHP would be particularly disruptive and it would therefore be necessary to consider an alternative worship venue for services while the heating was being installed. It might be possible to meet in the halls, even if the person capacity meant holding two identical services.

There were questions regarding heating the church aisles, pews and social areas. Depending on the long-term vision for use of the building, heating 'zones' would make sense. It might be necessary to permanently remove the pews from the side aisles and have additional chairs for larger congregations or events. Further discussion with the wider church congregation would be needed regarding retaining all or none of the pews.

A PCC decision would be needed about the heating in order for Martin to further instruct Wilson & Partners. The consensus was that a Hybrid system would be the best for St Paul's, given the huge church space which requires heating. Discussion was had about installing IR only systems. This would require more electricity than the church currently has, and would require an increase in UK Power, which incurs extensive time delays and uncertain provision. ASHP alongside (directional) IR systems would keep a more overall building temperature, which would help maintain the fabric of the church and would avoid condensation. Other items discussed with Martin were the energy-efficient nature of ASHPs, some of the limitations regarding radiant heating, and the fact that radiant suspended heaters can be easily replaced. It would be important to have an architect who would understand what is needed and would be able to take a lead and offer guidance throughout the project. It would be important, if Martin Steele's architect firm was appointed, to have a formal contract of appointment. Martin Steele left the meeting.

Following discussions Ian Johnson proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the PCC appoint Steele Scammell Architects. **Agreed.** It was agreed that Rev'd Rachel should sign the contract.

A report had been received from the Heating Working Group. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Paul Lashmar, that the PCC accepts and endorses the design of a hybrid heating system for St Paul's, using underfloor heating heated by ASHP and with Infrared heating located around the church, all within the current capacity of the electrical supply. **Agreed.**

The Heating Working Group had made a recommendation regarding the halls. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded David Charlesworth, that the PCC consider heating in the halls as part of the scope of the project. **Agreed.** The PCC agreed to discuss what to do with the pews at the PCC Vision and Mission Action Planning meeting on 19th April.

**1363** Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th March 2026

The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th March 2026 had been received. David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Roger Wells, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 9th March 2026 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed, with four abstentions, as four people had not attended the meeting.**

**1364** Matter arising

(i) Minute 1341(v), Temporary Faculty. No response had been received yet from the DAC.

(ii) Minute 1348(ii), St Paul's Environmental Policy. Sarah Butler commented that the policy had been written five years ago and the annex had not been approved. It was agreed to defer discussions of this policy to the next PCC meeting.

**1365** Action Sheet

(i) Minute 1221(viii), Faculty for new notice boards. David Charlesworth and Anne Harkness would be meeting to prepare a request on 21st April.

(ii) Minute 1291(ii), Purchase of water butts. Adam Winn had researched possible butts, at a cost of £150-£200, which would go near the South porch.

(iii) Minute 1327, Pastoral Care team. Rev'd Rachel had taken photographs of half the group and would be taking some more on 19th April.

(iv) Purchase of bench and plaque. A lady had requested that a plant be put in the garden. St Paul's would be purchasing a new memorial bench and plaques.

(v) Minute 1341, Risk Assessment for hall hirers using outdoor space. A party had been booked for May and a risk assessment had been provided. David Charlesworth agreed to send Rev'd Rachel a similar Risk Assessment template which he has.

**1366** Decisions by the Standing Committee since last PCC

Sarah Clarke would be starting as the new Assistant Church Administrator on 20th April. The Standing Committee had agreed that a debit card should be purchased at the start of Sarah's appointment, but that she would have to obtain permission from either a churchwarden or the vicar for purchases over £100, until her probation period had ended.

**1367** Safeguarding and Inclusion

As Sandra Horner was unable to attend the meeting, she had sent a report. The E manual had continued to evolve and a new version of the safer recruitment code was now available. Sandra had been advised that paper copies of the Parish Safeguarding manual should not be displayed and she had removed the full version from the back of church. She had left the section which gives the "what to do" guidance. The redress scheme for survivors was now in place involving financial compensation, apologies, and counselling, and assessment was available. Guidance about retaining documents was now available from the Diocese. In-person Safeguarding Training of the various groups, led by Sandra and Rev'd Rachel, had been well attended.

**1368** Financial matters

(i) Financial limit regarding approval by the Standing Committee. Following discussion David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Roger Wells, that the financial limit regarding approval by the Standing Committee should be £5,000. **Agreed.**

(ii) Listed Places of Worship Renewal Fund. A report had been received from the Diocese. The fund is designed to support the repair and maintenance of England's treasured places of worship and targeted at places of most need. A total of £92 million had been allocated to the fund over a four year period. The Fund considers grant applications for churches with Listed status only. St Paul's is a Grade II listed church. Anne Harkness was asked to pursue an application.

(iii) SumUp machine. Rev'd Rachel thanked David Charlesworth for his handover notes. It would be important for this to be mentioned at the Finance Team and the PCC. Another person who is familiar with CollecTin and SumUp would need to be appointed, and the Finance Team should agree who the principal person should be. Rev'd Rachel felt it was important for her and the Finance Team to understand how the machines work, for example if the machine fails to work, on a Sunday or at an event. Sarah Clarke should also be given guidance, especially as she will need to know how to return a deposit to hall hirers.

**1369** Review of Legacy Policy leaflet
It was agreed that discussion of this item should be deferred.

**1370** Buildings Team
A report of the Buildings Team's actions and meetings since 4th December 2025 had been received. This item was deferred until discussion at the pre APCM meeting.

**1371** Communications Team
A report of a meeting of the Communications Team held on 28th March had been received.

(i) Connect Champions. David Charlesworth would be speaking at the APCM and showing some slides.

(ii) Church lobby. Rev'd Rachel had met with Martin Steele to discuss installing automatic glass doors and whether two internal doors would be necessary, given the costs. Martin had suggested that one of doors could be half glazed, and one set should be glass. Members felt that Martin Steele should be asked for a quote for his work. Roger Wells agreed to liaise with Catherine Metcalf, Martin Steele and Rev'd Rachel to arrange to meet on site to discuss.

(iii) SocMed Account Administrator. Olivia Masih and David Charlesworth would be meeting regarding handover and management of this account.

**1372** Appointment of new Assistant at Holy Communion
Rev'd Rachel Winn proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that Sergio-Dan Moldovan be appointed as an Assistant at Holy Communion. **Agreed.** Anthea Prendergast offered to speak to Sergio regarding the role.

**1373** Deanery Synod
Deanery Chapter had met on 14th April. The next Deanery Synod meeting would be on 16th June. This year at the APCM the current two Deanery Synod representatives would be required to step down but would be eligible for election. A copy of the role description would be available.

**1374** It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on 23rd April at 7.00 pm

**1375** PCC Vision and Mission Action Planning meetings
These would be held on 19th April and 3rd May. It was hoped details of the vision could be available at the APCM.

**1376** Filming request
Rev'd Rachel reported that St Paul's had received a request to film a wedding, over several days in August. If the PCC was interested it would be necessary to have a Chancellor's Faculty. It would be important to ask for further details about the project and the company, and to have someone available to liaise with the company. Members agreed that the Church Administrator should be asked to get more information, how many days would be involved, and the likely cost.

**1377** Ropes in the pews

Several members had wondered when it would be possible to remove the roped off areas of the pews. There was a big concert planned for 24th April so the ropes would be taken down prior to that event. It was hoped the congregation would still sit further forward and within the centre nave, even if the ropes were not put back in place.

**1378** Pre-School

A confidential report had been received. It was noted that Liz Spencer would be stepping down as chair of St Paul's Pre-School shortly. Following discussions it was agreed that Rev'd Rachel should have a meeting with Liz Spencer, the two managerial members of staff, and Keith Howick as soon as possible.

**11379** Items for *Your PCC Matters*

Heating update. Appointment of Martin Steele. Elections for Deanery Synod. Vision meeting on 19th April. Appointment of Sergio Moldovan as a Communion Assistant.

There being no other business, the meeting closed with prayer and the Grace at 10.15 pm.