

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham, held in the church hall on 2nd April 2025

2024 / 2025 No. 9

Present: Rev'd Rachel Winn (in the chair), Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Clari Harrington, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar (for minutes 1164 – 11179), Nomsa Moldovan, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

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

Anthea Prendergast opened the meeting in prayer.

11162 Conflict of Interest

Keith Howick declared a Conflict of Interest as a trustee of St Paul's Pre-School, and of The Ugly Duckling Company. David Charlesworth declared a Conflict of Interest for some of the discussions following the report from the Finance Team.

1163 Appointment of leader for *Your PCC Matters*

David Charlesworth offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

1164 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 26th February 2025

The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 26th February 2025 had been received.

Minute 1153, 2nd paragraph, the word "remove" was corrected to "remote".

Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Sarah Butler, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 26th February 2025 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.**

1165 Matters arising

Minute 1154, Basic Christianity course. It was noted that, due to Rev'd Rachel's recent sick leave, St Paul's will not have time to run this course in June. However, St Pauls will run a Baptism and Confirmation course some time in July, as several people had shown an interest. Details would be available at the next PCC meeting.

1166 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 992, Hire rates. See Finance Team report below.

(ii) Minute 994, Church heater. It was noted that St Paul's is a member of Bromley Eco Church network. There had been a presentation on Sustain Quality regarding energy. The company come and give advice. Sarah Butler was asked to get in touch with Emmanuel URC in West Wickham for more information. The Diocese had appointed Net zero advisers.

(iii) Minute 994, Cleaning products. The Climate & Ecology team had spoken to St John's Eden Park and were waiting to hear back from their cleaner. The Eco church website has guidance for churches, e.g. BioD washing up liquid. It was noted that Holy Trinity Lamobey have a Gold Eco award and could be asked what cleaning products they use.

(iv) Minute 1056, Fees for live streaming at weddings. Discussion was deferred until the PCC meeting in May and would include fees for funerals.

(v) Minute 1129, Support for Church Administrator. Stephanie Fox had been asked to provide a job description. To be discussed in June 2025.

(vi) Minute 1148, Prayer morning. It was agreed this should take place on Saturday 7th June. Wesley Guy offered to take a lead on organising this.

(vii) Minute 1149, Parish Giving Scheme. Roger Wells had contacted the Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser, Liz Mullins, and had cc'd the vicar, Rosemary Dear and Anne Harkness. A meeting would be needed with Liz some time in July to work on information for the resources needed to launch the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). The vicar suggested that the Scheme should be launched in the autumn, after the PCC had had time to consider God's vision for St Paul's; this would help the church focus and may be more likely to generate an interest in increasing our giving.

Liz Mullins would come and do a presentation to the church at a meeting; the suggestion was to invite her to speak on 28th September and move the Harvest service to 5th October. A small working group would be needed to provide Liz with the content of our presentation based on information about the church. Liz would then help us put together a brochure about the church, with photos, information about the community and including items such as Connect events. On 7th, 14th and 21st September the sermon series would be on 'Generosity'. The sub-committee members would be Rev'd Rachel Winn, Rosemary Dear, Anthea Prendergast, Keith Howick and David Charlesworth.

(viii) Minute 1150, Legacy. The vicar had emailed Barbara Judge suggesting Peggy's legacy might be used for glass doors at the church entrance. Barbara had thought that glass doors would be quite a good thing, especially as her parents were very involved in the welcoming and hospitality at St Paul's.

(ix) Minute 1153, Training on sound system. It was hoped a meeting could be arranged soon.

(x) Minute 1154, Basic Christianity course (see also 1165 above). Thoughts regarding dates in June or July were on hold currently. There is lots of material. Keith Howick and Ishmael Gowero had offered to help run the course. The vicar had put in a request to the Diocese regarding hosting a Confirmation service in the Autumn and the focus in July would therefore be on those seeking Baptism and/or Confirmation.

(xi) Minute 1158, New bench in church garden. Anne Howick had spoken to Ann Vice and Moreen Lane regarding a possible bench in the Garden of Remembrance. She would encourage them to speak to John Williams.

(xii) Minute 1160, Refreshments at wedding, 17th May 2025. Roger Wells had spoken to Gail Wells. The vicar would be paying for nibbles and bubbles after the service and would provide more details shortly.

1167 Safeguarding and Inclusion

Sandra Horner had attended a meeting with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, who had asked that people's attention should be drawn to the document, Safer Environment and Activities, which could be found on the Church of England website. There were articles regarding running activities safely in the church for those in positions of responsibility, e.g. clergy, Lay Readers, churchwardens, Youth leaders, safeguarding officers, pastoral care, volunteers who drive. There should be awareness of children running around in the service, those taking older persons to the toilet, working with vulnerable adults, observing those taking power from people. Sandra offered to send the website link to the PCC Secretary.

The vicar commented that a risk assessment would need to be done for visits from Worsley Bridge School but the school had not replied yet. Anthea Prendergast had done an assessment for Babies & Toddler Group. It would be important to do a risk assessment for the Youth group, and Friendship Group. Paul Lashmar reported that he had done this work in the past and would be willing to help if necessary. The PCC then completed a Safeguarding Scenario case study.

1168 PCC Away Day, 19th July 2025

The vicar had been in touch with Archdeacon Allie and would be meeting with her towards the end of April for guidelines.

1169 Finance Team

A report of a meeting of the Finance Team which had met on 21st March 2025 had been received. The draft accounts were with the Independent Examiner. Income had exceeded expenditure thanks to two significant legacies, which had masked a deficit in 2024 of £29,627. 3 Ashford House had been revalued by 10% which had given the Balance Sheet a boost of £35,000. There had been notable increases in expenditure on church and halls running costs and admin costs, as well as vicarage costs. We currently put £500 per month into the Diocesan Repair Fund and have about £60,000 in the Fund. St Paul's had received extra income from the Pre-School since it started using the hall on four days a week.

The Team had discussed charges for use of the church for a rehearsal and performance.

- (i) For a charity the church should be available on a donation only basis.
- (ii) For a booking linked to a member of the church fellowship, the church should be available at a discounted rate. The rates should be £30 per hour for rehearsal time, and £40 per hour for concert use.
- (iii) For an arm's length booking the church should be available at a standard rate. The rates should be £40 per hour for rehearsal time, and £50 per hour for concert use. Members were reminded that if tickets are charged for, and alcohol is offered, a Temporary Event Notice must be sought from Bromley Council, and a risk assessment made.
- (iv) There should be a "vicar's discretion" override available if a particular need arises for reserving use of the church building.

Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Sandra Horner, that the Structure as outlined should be approved. **Agreed.**

1170 Parish Giving

The Finance Team had prepared a timetable in the hope of encouraging giving. There would be discussions at the July PCC Away Day. After the August holiday period it was suggested there should be a sermon series leading to a Giving Day and the launch of the Parish Giving Scheme. Liz Mullins had agreed to be involved as a key person in encouraging the fellowship to understand their essential role in giving to enable St Paul's to build God's Kingdom at St Paul's.

1171 Mission Team

It was understood that Julia Birkett would be returning from Thailand and it was hoped she would be able to visit St Paul's on 13th July. Sarah Butler proposed that there should be a Bring & Share lunch when Julia visits St Paul's.

1172 Music Worship Planning

The vicar reported that she was planning to establish a Music Worship planning team, bringing together all those leading worship in the church. The team would discuss music and any proposals, e.g. band space, particularly looking at special and seasonal services. Further information would be brought to the PCC.

1173 Networking/AV Project

It was reported that Phase 1 was almost complete. Virgin would be installing new cabling. David Charlesworth commented on the new notice boards; we were waiting for swatches and hoping to sort out what colours can be used. He would consult with some of the PCC members.

1174 Deanery Synod

The Beckenham Deanery Synod and Bromley Deanery Synod had met on 10th March and Bishop Jonathan had attended the meeting, talking about the new Diocesan Vision Strategy. With regard to “Living in Love and Faith”, he had asked for prayer as to how to handle in the future. Concern had been expressed about the lack of children in Parishes, and the decline in attendance. It was emphasised that parish ministry is key. It was important to understand what is “Missional”. The Diocese had applied for a grant of £11m to support its work in looking at what God is doing. PCC members thought that the Experience Christmas and Easter events at St Paul’s had been evangelistic.

1175 Electoral Roll

It was confirmed that forms were still being received, with a deadline of 20th April 2025 as this year a new roll is being prepared and the old electoral Roll would be wiped. Everyone was encouraged to speak to people and to encourage them to sign up if they wish to belong to St Paul’s and have a say in the future of the church..

1176 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on 7th April 2025. Preparation for the APCM would be the chief topic.

1177 Insurance

It would be important to notify our Insurance Company when CES are doing work at St Paul’s.

1178 Church garden

Paul Lashmar asked if St Paul’s would be having a No Mow May this year. He had noted there were quite a number of butterflies. It was agreed to think about this in future.

1179 South porch

It was reported that one of the walls in a cupboard in the South Porch was damaged and would need re-rendering. Members wondered if St Paul’s should consult a surveyor.

11180 Items for Your PCC Matters

PCC Away day, including proposed day. Deanery Synod. Preparation for the APCM. Safeguarding. Lighting project work after Easter. Finance information.

There being no further business the vicar closed the meeting with prayers and the Grace at 9.30 pm.