

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 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

**2022 / 2023 No. 7**

**Present:** Rev Simon Couper (in the chair), Andrew Griffiths, Tarina Hill, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Hazel Koungoue, Paul Lashmar (for minutes 10739(v) - 10753, Nomsa Mafohla, Anthea Prendergast.

Apologies for absence had been received from Adelaide Adade, Richard Bradley, Sarah Butler, Ian Johnson.

Rev Simon Couper welcomed everyone and opened the meeting in prayer, including a passage from Psalm 138.

**10736 Conflict of Interest**

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

**737 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022**

(i) Minute 731(iv), Church notice. The information notice in the main porch had an incorrect website, not email.

Hazel Koungoue proposed, seconded Nomsa Mafohla, that, subject to the correction in minute 731(iv), the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 be received as an accurate report of the meeting. **Agreed.**

**738 Matters arising**

(i) Minute 724(iii), Shoebox Appeal. Anthea Prendergast reported that 24 boxes and several bags of bits and pieces had been taken to the Link to Hope Family & Elderly Shoebox Appeal based near Thayers Farm. The organisation had received hundreds of boxes. She hoped that next year this appeal could be shared with the whole church, with requests for family boxes or boxes for older adults. The vicar agreed with this suggestion.

**739 Action Sheet**

The revised Action sheet had been tabled at the meeting.

(i) Minute 648, Complaints Policy and Procedure. The vicar confirmed that this was on going and he was getting information.

(ii) Minute 668, Cleaning requirements. Hazel Koungoue would be speaking to Lorraine.

(iii) Minute 673, Eco Church. The vicar and Climate & Ecology team would be meeting with our local MP, Bob Stewart, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The vicar commented that members of the PCC would be welcome to join the meeting.

(iv) Minute 683, 3 Ashford House rental. The Finance Team had asked the vicar to speak to the current tenant, Vanessa Short, regarding a proposed increase to the rental of £50 per month. Going forward they would be having an annual review of the rental.

(v) Minute 695, Cost of living crisis. The vicar would be circulating information about what other churches are doing in the Deanery. It would be good to make blankets and hot water bottles available for people, as it was thought some would prefer to be at home. The vicar had

spoken with Rev Jessica Smith regarding soup lunches. The vicar hoped that on the second Friday in January a soup lunch would be available. Anne Howick commented that Crystal Palace Football Club would be opening a warm hub at Selhurst Park with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> December, inviting local residents aged over 65 once a week to come along for a free hot meal and drinks.

(vi) Minute 698, Support for new organisations. It was noted that the Mission Team had not met recently.

(vii) Minute 716, CAF Bank account. Work was continuing.

(viii) Minute 724, Quinquennial inspection. An update would be requested from Richard Bradley.

(ix) Minute 727, Cost of living crisis. Keith Howick reported on a meeting of the Lewisham Plus Credit Union on 7<sup>th</sup> December. There had been lots of application for loans. LPCU don't have a hardship fund.

#### **740** Cost of living crisis

The vicar reported on a recent Governors' meeting at Worsley Bridge School and how to support the community through the school. At the start of the new term St Paul's hoped to be able to support local families through the school. The vicar had obtained 55 Sainsbury's vouchers, fifty of which would be given to Worsley Bridge School for allocation by the staff to support families, and five would be given to the Pre-School. The School term finishes on 21<sup>st</sup> December and the children return on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. He was pleased to report that the School had recently asked the Church Administrator if they could book the church for a year 6 carol concert. The vicar reported that at the end of this academic year he would be stepping down from the Board of Governors. Each year group at the School would be coming to Experience Christmas from 1<sup>st</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **741** Christmas services 2022

A poster giving details of the Christmas services had been prepared. On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December there would be the Children's Nativity All Age service at 10.30 am when the children would be dressed as shepherds, angels etc. There would be community carols outside the church at 6.45 pm with the Crystal Palace Brass Band playing, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. At 7.30 pm there would be a Carols by Candlelight service. On 24<sup>th</sup> December there would be the Family Christingle Service at 5.00pm and Midnight Holy Communion at 11.30 pm. On Christmas Day there would Holy Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am and Family Communion at 10.30 am. There would not be a special Epiphany service on 8<sup>th</sup> January. The vicar recorded his thanks to Chloe Koungoue for her work on the posters and publicity. Keith Howick commented that it would be important to have something to remind people that church exists all year, not just at Christmas. The vicar thought it would be more appropriate to run an Alpha course after Easter. Welcome cards would be put out in the pews over the Christmas period. The vicar recorded his huge thanks to Andrew Griffiths for all his work on the church website, and also his thanks to David Charlesworth for his work initially.

#### **742** Safeguarding and Inclusion

(i) Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officer. The vicar reported that Bishop Jonathan Gibbs was still the Lead Bishop of Safeguarding but in March 2023 he would be stepping down. Following a meeting with Bishop Jonathan, the vicar had been advised that it would not be appropriate for Anne Howick, who is also a Pastoral Assistant and the PCC Secretary, to be the Parish Safeguarding Officer. He thanked Anne for all her work as PSO.

As a result the vicar had spoken to Sandra Horner who was willing to be appointed as the Parish Safeguarding Officer at St Paul's. He thanked Sandra for stepping up for this role.

(ii) Safeguarding policy - Promoting a Safer Church. A paper had been circulated to the PCC. From the chair the vicar proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the Parish of St Paul, New Beckenham, adopt the following policy. **Agreed.**

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church 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.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

The policy would include the names of the vicar and the churchwardens.

**743** Parochial Church fees 2023

The Church of England had recently reviewed the Statutory fees that are payable by law with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. Details of the changes to the fees for baptism certificates, weddings, banns certificates, funeral services, burials or cremations were noted. Details of the fees charged in 2021 and 2022 by St Paul's Church for the organist, the additional fee if a video of the service is made, for the vergers, the utility fee, the fee for a streamed service, and music (Copyright Licence) were noted. Andrew Griffiths commented that the Musicians Union currently recommends a minimum fee of £123 for a special service. The vicar suggested that he and Andrew should discuss what would be reasonable year on year, and the Standing Committee would be asked to approve any recommendations. With regard to funerals the vicar hoped the PCC might want to cover the cost if there were special pastoral care needs.

**744** Church Bank account

There had been no updates from Rosemary Dear regarding the change to CAF Bank.

**745** Appointment of Independent Examiner

The vicar reported that he had not heard back from Ernest Kabera. He would get in touch with other possible people.

**746** Christmas gifts

(Confidential minute attached)

**747** St Paul's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The vicar had been delighted with the unveiling of the new altar frontal on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November. The project had been spearheaded by Mili. It would now be necessary to make a matching fabric for the pulpit. The vicar recorded his thanks to David Bryan for all his help over fifty years in changing the altar frontals. David had said he would be stepping back now. Cherry Duffield would be taking over from David Bryan. The vicar felt it would be good to mark David's retirement with thank you gifts. He would check with Sue Waters as to what might be appropriate.

**748** Thanksgiving and Vision Day

Anthea Prendergast reported that some people had given donations on the day and others had signed up for regular giving. She had banked the donations. The vicar would update the pie chart.

**749** Lay Assistants at Holy Communion for the year 1<sup>st</sup> January - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

The PCC Secretary had consulted with all those who had been approved by the PCC in December 2022 to see if they were willing to continue for the year 1<sup>st</sup> January - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. It was noted that Elaine Storey had decided that she did not wish to continue as a Lay Assistant, and that, as they had moved away, Bidy Gillman would no longer be able to assist.

Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Paul Lashmar, that the following lay persons be authorised to assist in the administration of the Holy Communion during the coming year: Ann Birkett, Richard Bradley, Cherry Duffield (8am service only), Tarina Hill, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Hazel Koungoue, Anthea Prendergast, Roz Turner, Ann Vice (8am service only), Brian Woolmer.

The vicar reported that he planned to serve Communion from the Sanctuary rail in future and there would also be an extra table near the pulpit. He asked that if members heard of people who would be interested in serving as a Lay Assistant they should be pointed in the vicar's direction.

**750** Deanery Synod

There had been a joint meeting of the Deanery Synod and Deanery Chapter. Members from Beckenham, Bromley, Bexley and Orpington had met the Bishop. There had been questions to the Bishop regarding “Living in Love and Faith”. It was an ongoing process of discussion. There had been statements from the Bishops of Oxford and Dudley. The Bishops will present to General Synod in the Spring, and then it would be appropriate to discuss at PCC. The vicar reported on emails he had received from people who are gay and who had asked if they would be welcome to come and worship. These people were worried about their sexuality and whether they could come into the church.

**751** Electoral Roll

Gail and Roger Wells were welcomed on to the Electoral Roll.

**752** It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

**10753** Any Other Business

Keith Howick thanked the vicar for running the Advent course this year. The vicar gave thanks for an answer to prayer that it had been a great joy to welcome Worsley Bridge School to Experience Christmas.

There being no further business the vicar closed the meeting at 9.00 pm with the Grace.