

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham, held in the church hall on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**2023 / 2024 No. 9**

Present: Anne Harkness (in the chair), Maria Adu, Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Sandra Horner (for minutes 10962 – 10972), Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Anthea Prendergast.

Apologies for absence had been received from Adelaide Adade, Tarina Hill, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar and Nomsa Mafohla.

David Charlesworth opened the meeting in prayer.

**10962** 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.

**963** Leader for *Your PCC Matters*

Andrew Griffiths agreed to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

**964** Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed** with four abstentions as four people had not attended the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.

**965** Matters Arising

(i) Minute 948 (vi), Church laptop. This had not been purchased yet.

(ii) Minute 949 (iii), Procurement policy. David Charlesworth would be putting details on the church website. Members felt other policies, e.g. health and safety, should also feature on the website. Sandra Horner commented that there had been information from the Diocese regarding lone working. It was hoped there could be a link to all the policies.

(iii) Minute 949 (ii), Complaints Policy – this was on the website.

(iv) Minute 960, St Paul's Pre-School. Members had asked at the previous PCC meeting if they could have more information about the use of the hall on Fridays. Anthea Prendergast reported that the Mini Athletics group use the hall for two hours each week. The Pre-School would wish to use the hall for more than two hours. Sometimes there is a booking for a party on a Friday. The Friday soup lunch could take place at the back of church. There was a discussion regarding the pros and cons of the Pre-School booking the hall on a Friday. Following discussion Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Andrew Griffiths, that the halls be made available on a Friday for the Pre-School with effect from June or September 2024. **Agreed, with two abstentions.** The Pre-School would need to be reminded that they would need to leave the hall clean after use and to ensure all items had been put away. Keith Howick was asked to contact the Pre-School to discuss the possible date for use on a Friday. Once the date was agreed, Mini Athletics to be given notice. It was discussed that they could continue in the church garden and back of church over the summer, to allow more time for them to find an alternative venue.

## 966 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 647, Safeguarding. Sandra Horner reported that more people were starting to do their renewals. In future, after three years, people would only have to renew the highest course which they had done. She advised some of the PCC regarding which courses they needed to renew. Everyone would be required to take the Domestic Abuse course every three years.

(ii) Minute 648, Complaints Policy and Procedure. This had been published.

(iii) Minute 860, Sunday Squad helpers. Sandra Horner confirmed that the helpers were up to date with the safeguarding training.

(iv) Minute, 862(iv), External notice boards. It was agreed to review in June 2024 whether the name of the vicar is on the external notice boards.

(v) Minute 862(vi), Internal notice boards. To be reviewed in April.

(vi) Minute 911, Pastoral care meeting. It was agreed to review this in September when Rev Rachel Winn was in post.

(vii) Minute 914, Independent Examiner. Keith Howick had checked with Rosemary Dear who had not heard back from Ernest Kabera.

(viii) Minute 916(iv), Church Repair Fund. The Finance Team thought that St Paul's did not need more funding in the Repair Fund.

(ix) Minute 932, Administrator's working hours. Anthea Prendergast reported on the different hours which Stephanie Fox had worked in October – December 2022 and October – December 2023. Some months she had worked twice as many hours in 2023 as in 2022. In February 2024 she had worked 31 extra hours compared with 25 extra hours in 2023. Members acknowledged that during the interregnum Stephanie had had more work to do. It would be important to review Stephanie's hours when Rev Rachel had been in post, probably after six months. Some members wondered whether St Paul's needed to think about getting someone else in to support and work alongside Stephanie. Anne Howick commented on the times during Stephanie's working hours when there were lots of interruptions from church members visiting the church office.

(x) Minute 933, Safeguarding for Prayer Ministry Group. Sarah Butler had a list of who was involved. Sandra Horner would need to check with one or two people. The policy had been noted. It would be important that at least one of the two people on duty had received the relevant training.

(xi) Minute 936, View / hear services in hall. It would be possible to plug a laptop into the television. It would be good to trial for a month and see if anyone uses the system, so they can hear the sermon. It would be good to check if the old laptop would connect to the system and to set up the big screen.

(xii) Minute 953, Valuation of 3 Ashford House. Anthea Prendergast reported that there was a lot of maintenance going on on the estate at the moment. Without a viewing an estate agent had suggested the property could be worth £385,000 - £400,000. The property was listed in the accounts.

David Charlesworth commented that there is £63,000 of restricted funds which were not being spent. He asked what the restrictions were. The Finance Team and the Buildings Team

would need to think about what to use the restricted funds for, e.g. work on the organ. Members felt it would be important to discuss the Restricted funds account with Rev Rachel soon after she was in place.

**967**    Report on decisions made by the Standing Committee

Four quotes had been received for repainting of the vicarage study, living room, dining room, four bedrooms, toilet, hall, stairs and landing. The Standing Committee had agreed to accept the quote from Stuart Burnett for £4,360, with the hope that he could start work in March or April. Anne Harkness had contacted Rev Rachel and given her Stuart's contact details so she could liaise with him regarding colours. Anne Harkness and Anthea Prendergast had arranged to meet with Rev Rachel to discuss paint colours and carpets.

**968**    Interregnum

Anne Howick, as PCC Secretary, had received a letter from Rev Simon Couper following the announcement of the appointment of Rev Rachel Winn as the next vicar of St Paul's. She would be circulating it to the PCC confidentially shortly.

**969**    Installation of new vicar

Keith Howick reported that the Bishop had agreed that the installation of Rev Rachel Winn should take place on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July. Members thanked the Parish representatives and others who had been involved in the appointment process for their work. Keith Howick was asked to write to the Diocese to accept the date with thanks, but also to express disappointment that it was later than planned.

**970**    Support for Church Administrator

It was noted that the next service rota was in the process of being prepared.

**971**    Easter Services and services during Holy Week

There would be a Compline service on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Anne Howick would be leading the service on Monday and Clive Grinham would be preparing the reflection. On Tuesday David and Elaine Storey would be leading and reflecting, and on Wednesday Wesley and Suzanne Guy would be leading and reflecting.

**972**    Safeguarding

The PCC noted the publication of the Church's National Safeguarding Standards and the report by Professor Alexis Jay into the Future of Safeguarding in the Church of England. General Synod would be reviewing a proposal from John Grenfell at its meeting in July.

**973**    Preparation for the Annual Parochial Church Meetings, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024

A report had been received giving details of when things needed to be done and by whom. In the absence of a vicar someone would need to be appointed to chair the meeting. The churchwardens were asked to prepare the review of the year. Anne Harkness would be removing the blue borders of the noticeboards. She would be liaising with Anne Howick regarding the information about the PCC.

**974**    Legacy

The PCC Secretary reported that she had been advised that a £500 legacy had been left to the church for the general purpose of the Parish.

**975**    Buildings Team

The minutes of a meeting of the Buildings Team held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 had been received.

(i) Exterior lighting project. The donor had clarified that they would like the funds to be used to improve the lighting of the path from Brackley Road to the main church entrance, floodlight the entrance and tower above, and potentially floodlight the north façade of the church. The Climate and Ecology Team had commented that they were not in favour of floodlighting the church. It had also been suggested that Victorian lamp posts might be installed. The PCC did not agree that there should be Victorian lights and preferred that there should be bollards.

Concern had been expressed regarding the height and width of the yew trees at the entrance to the church which were blocking some of the light on the entrance path. Following discussions with the Gardening team it had been suggested that the trees should be cut back by half. It would be important to speak to some tree surgeons.

The QI inspection had advised that, before September 2024, St Pauls would need to attend to the South side roof ladder, to relocate the ladders, improve the handrails, and replace slipped and missing slates on the roofs. The valley gutters would need cleaning and inspecting for any repairs and to apply solar reflective paint. Three quotes would be needed if the first quote exceeds £1,000. Keith Howick and David Charlesworth offered to provide details of roofers.

**976**    Communications Team

The Easter edition of Connect had been produced. David Charlesworth thanked those who had helped with the production. There had been good feedback.

**977**    Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod had not met since its last meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

**978**    Interment of ashes

Anne Howick reported that she had been advised that John Collins had indicated to his family that he would wish to have his ashes and a stone in the Garden of Remembrance at St Paul's. The PCC **agreed** this request.

**979**    It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**980**    Items for *Your PCC Matters*

Appointment of Rev Rachel Winn; review and use of restricted funds; Safeguarding Standards and the report by Professor Alexis Jay into the future of Safeguarding in the Church of England; proposals for lighting the church path and entrance; Easter Connect leaflet.

There being no further business Anne Harkness closed the meeting in prayer and with the Grace at 9.40 pm.