

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham, held in the Church hall on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**2024 / 2025 No. 4**

**Present:** Rev Rachel Winn (in the chair), Maria Adu, Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Wesley Guy, Anne Harkness, Clari Harrington, Sandra Horner, Anthea Prendergast, Roger Wells.

Apologies for absence had been received from Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar and Nomsa Moldovan.

Rosemary Dear was in attendance for minutes 11068 – 11070.

Andrew Griffiths opened the meeting in prayer.

**11068** Conflict of Interest  
None were declared.

**1069** Appointment of leader for *Your PCC matters*  
Andrew Griffiths offered to prepare a report on the meeting for the notice sheet.

**1070** Financial Matters  
Rosemary Dear was in attendance to talk through the report and recommendations from the Finance team following their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

(i) Vouchers for Worsley Bridge School and St Paul's Pre-school families. £312.50 remained after the summer appeal. Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that this be put towards vouchers at the end of the current term, topped up with further donations. **Agreed.** The congregation would be asked to contribute at the beginning of November.

(ii) Stewardship. The Finance Team had suggested that the time was right for a stewardship campaign and had recommended that Liz Mullins, from Rochester Diocese, should be asked to advise. Rev Rachel had had previous experience of the way that the Diocese could assist in preparing a campaign to encourage people to give for the first time, or to increase their financial giving. It was recognised that stewardship involved more than money and that there were also other ways that people could contribute, which could be linked into the campaign. Rosemary Dear would say a few words about giving on 3<sup>rd</sup> November and it was agreed that Rev Rachel would ask Liz Mullins to come to speak to the PCC, with a view to launching a campaign in the New Year. **Action**

(iii) Limits of spending by the Vicar. The Finance Team were content for Rev Rachel to make purchases, when necessary, without further sign-off, but had asked the PCC to decide what the limits should be. It was agreed that the limit for individual items should be £500, no more than twice a week. Anything over and above this should go to the Standing Committee. On this basis Rev Rachel would go ahead and purchase some Common Worship books for use at Morning Prayer.

(iv) Giving button on the website. It was noted that this was not working, and to avoid frustration by those who might try to give in this way, Andrew Griffiths was asked to remove the button from the website. It could be reinstated in due course as part of the IT project.

(v) A revised budget was received by the PCC without further comment. Rosemary Dear was thanked for her attendance.

**1071** Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Andrew Griffiths proposed, seconded Clari Harrington, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be received as an accurate record of the meeting, apart from a correction to the name Aaron Thomas to Arun Thomas. **Agreed.** Four members abstained as they had not been present at the meeting.

**1072** Matters arising

(i) Minute 1052(x), The Garden of Remembrance Policy. The PCC Secretary was asked to circulate this to PCC members.

(ii) Minute 1057, Distribution of Holy Communion. The revised arrangements had gone smoothly on 6<sup>th</sup> October with roughly half the congregation choosing to receive from the shared cup. Anthea Prendergast was approaching a few people to add to the list of Communion Assistants.

(iii) Minute 1060, Mission Team. Rev Rachel reported that she had been in touch with Gareth Hall and would be having a chat with him before he comes to give a talk at St Paul's.

**1073** Action Sheet

(i) Minute 862(iv) External notice boards. The Comms Team had not met. Move due date to November.

(ii) Minute 975, QI Work. Richard Bradley had spoken to roofers and work will be progressed. Report back in November.

(iii) Minute 990, New National Safeguarding Standards. Still awaiting information. Review again in November.

(iv) Minute 992, Restricted funds – proposals for use. PCC members were concerned that action had not been taken to spend these funds. It was agreed that all church Teams should be requested to consider prayerfully and bring any suggestions for how the money could be used to the PCC for discussion in December. In order to help this process, clarification was needed about the purpose the funds had been restricted for. Rev Rachel and David Charlesworth would discuss further with the Finance Committee at their next meeting.

(v) Minute 994, Church boiler – Climate and Ecology Team (C&ET) to research possible replacements.

Cleaning products. C&ET to review what is being used and if alternatives could be found that were better for the environment, as long as they were not prohibitively expensive. Review both the above items in January 2025.

(vi) Minute 995, Notice boards – sourcing of signs. Work in progress, remove from action sheet.

(vii) Minute 997, Organ. The Diocesan Adviser had visited, and his report was awaited. David Storey would be asked to chase this up. Review in November.

(viii) Minute 1002, 3 Ashford House rent and cost of local agents. Anne Harkness reported that the ceiling had been repaired and some further work was needed to level the bath, at a cost of £600. She had also made some enquiries about letting agencies. She had had a reply from Vincent Chandler Estate Agents, but Property World (who had been recommended) had not replied. If an agency was to be used this would incur more expense and the church is already letting the property for less than the market rate. Rev Rachel **will undertake** to visit and check on the pastoral situation of the tenant. The intention is to raise the rent from January 2025. Anne Harkness was asked to warn the tenant about this in advance. It was suggested that the congregation could be asked if anyone would be able to take on the management role of the property but Robyn Ranu should be told about this first. **Action.** To be reviewed in January 2025. The cost of completing the necessary repairs was agreed, but the insurance should be checked to see what might be covered. **Action.** Proposed: David Charlesworth, seconded: Anthea Prendergast.

(ix) Minute 1023, Networking and Audio Visuals, Minute 1043, Change of email provider and Minute 1059, New giving machine. These items could be combined on the Action sheet as they were all part of the ongoing IT project. David Charlesworth reported that the first stage was to get the internet working more reliably. Two quotes for this work had been received, one very much more expensive than the other. A third quote would be sought. Progress to be reviewed in December.

(x). Minute 1058, Leaking disabled toilet etc. The work had been completed.

#### **1074** Report on decisions made by the Standing Committee since the last PCC.

A report explaining the decisions and rationale for purchasing a new printer for the office had been provided for members of the PCC.

#### **1075** Safeguarding and inclusion

(i) Sandra Horner reported that safeguarding training was going well and that Safeguarding Sunday would be marked on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

(ii) Members considered a safeguarding scenario based on a lone working situation which led on to discussion about the possible risks for the church administrator when she was in the building on her own.

(iii) The following **actions** should be put in place as soon as possible:

(a) The administrator should not be handling cash.

(b) It was suggested that a “no access” notice be put on the door from the chancel to the office.

(c) A new doorbell to the Bishop’s porch should be installed with audio-visual facility so that the administrator can see who is calling and speak to them without opening the door.

(d) Enquiries should be made to find out if a panic alarm could be installed, linked to the current alarm system.

**1076 Lone working policy**

Consideration of the draft policy was deferred to the next PCC meeting. It was noted that the vicar and the leadership team have agreed they need to let someone know their movements when visiting people at home, providing expected return time, with a code phrase for emergencies. Lone workers in the church are being issued with personal alarms.

**1077 Church cleaning**

Ron Barrett had not been in the best of health recently and had been unable to work. As a short-term solution volunteers to help with the cleaning would be sought. Sandra Horner proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that a taxi account be set up for Ron and Pauline to use when needed. They would be asked to let the church wardens know when they used the account. **Agreed.**

**1078 Mission Team**

Rev Rachel had attended the Mission Team meeting for the first time on 8<sup>th</sup> October. The Team had allocated contingency money to Tearfund and Open Doors, and money raised from Christmas tree tags to Hope into Action Bromley.

**1079 Buildings Team**

A written report from the Team's meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October were received. It was reported that subsequent questions from the Diocese and CES had been answered which meant that the external lighting work could progress. The final stage requires a planning Application to be submitted, which Anne Harkness had undertaken already. Anne was thanked for all her efforts and achievements in moving this project forward.

**1080 Communications Team**

David Charlesworth reported that the Comms Team would be meeting the following week. A meeting to discuss outreach and the Connect programme for next year would also be held shortly. The IT/AV project was ongoing.

**1081 Deanery Synod**

Rev Rachel reported that, in the absence of the planned speaker, Father Jeremy Blunden had spoken about diversity and inclusion. Fr Jeremy had recommended the film "After the Flood" about slavery, the church and reconciliation; and "I too am C of E". He had spoken about making church leadership more diverse. He had also talked about making churches more dementia-friendly and being mindful of a church's heritage, where there might be former links with slavery.

**1082 Contact with MP for Beckenham and Penge**

Rev Rachel informed members that Liam Conlon MP had been proactive in wanting to engage with churches and they thought he would make a positive contribution. She had invited him to attend the Transforming Bromley Borough leaders' breakfast in February.

**1083 Electoral Roll**

Mrs Sheila Harman had applied for enrolment. The PCC welcomed her on to the Electoral Roll.

**1084 Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**1085** Any Other Business

Andrew Griffiths had expressed concern about the lack of children in the Sunday Squad. On the previous Sunday one of his daughters had been the only child present. The PCC shared his concern and acknowledged that a more intentional approach to attracting children and publicity at outreach events was needed. It was also suggested that the Lego Corner should be set up at the Saturday Connect Café mornings. Further thought needed to be given to what could be done, and prayer. **Action.** It was noted that David Charlesworth had created a mini leaflet advertising Sunday Squad which would be circulated to Babies and Toddlers and placed in the Lego Corner at the Autumn Fair and Connect Cafe.

**11086** Items for your PCC Matters

Christmas voucher appeal, Church teams update and visit of Diocesan organ adviser, Safeguarding and Lone working.

There being no further business the meeting closed with The Grace.