

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 4th October 2023.

2023 / 2024 No. 4

Present: Anne Harkness (in the chair), Adelaide Adade (on line), Maria Adu, Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar, Nomsa Mafohla, Anthea Prendergast.

Archdeacon Rev Allie Kerr attended the meeting for minute 10867.

Apologies for absence had been received from Revd. Fr. Jeremy Blunden, the Area Dean, Andrew Griffiths and Tarina Hill.

Anne Harkness opened the meeting in prayer.

10867 Pre-Vacancy (Pre-Section 11) discussions with Archdeacon Allie Kerr

The Archdeacon asked each member of the PCC to introduce themselves. She confirmed that, with effect from 17th October 2023, St Paul's would be in interregnum. Legally St Paul's would have no vicar and the churchwardens would be in charge. They would be supported by the Area Dean, and Archdeacon Allie and Fiona Porter in the Archdeacon's office, who would be the first people for them to turn to if they need cover for Sunday morning services. Bishop Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Rochester is the Patron. She encouraged St Paul's to look to appoint a permanent full time vicar rather than an interim vicar.

Archdeacon Allie had received a copy of the latest version of the Parish profile, which had also been circulated to the PCC. She would be providing a foreword and comments. The two Parish representatives would be working with the Archdeacon and the three of them would conduct the confidential interview process. She gave details of the different ways of advertising the vacancy, the costs, the interview process and when and how the Bishop is involved. She recommended waiting until after Christmas before placing any advertisements. The successful candidate would have to give three months' notice of their intention to move to St Paul's. Archdeacon Allie would be happy to help with services at St Paul's when she could. She would review the final version of the profile and get dates in her diary for meetings.

There being no further questions or discussions the Archdeacon left the meeting at 8.35 pm.

868 Appointment of two Parish representatives

Following discussion David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that Sarah Butler and Keith Howick should be appointed as the Parish representatives. **Agreed.** It was noted that Nomsa Mafohla was willing to be an informal interviewer. The two churchwardens would also be involved in the informal interview process. The churchwardens and Nomsa would be involved in the pre visits.

869 Correspondence with the Diocese

The Diocese would be sending a leaflet, booklet and forms after 17th October. The forms would need to be completed and returned to the Diocese. Following discussion members agreed that St Paul's should ask the Bishop for a referral and that the vacancy should be advertised in January 2024 with Pathways.

870 Parish profile

As discussed Archdeacon Allie would be providing an introduction. Members commented on some of the wording in the revised profile. Rev Simon Couper had passed on some thoughts and comments. Members hoped there could be some more photos. Following discussion Paul Lashmar proposed, seconded Sandra Horner, that, subject to some updates, the Parish profile be approved. **Agreed.**

871 Service rota

It was reported that the Church Administrator had met with Revd Fr Jeremy Blunden on 3rd October and he would be asking his team when they can support services at St Paul's. The Archdeacon would be available for some services, and it was understood that Rev Paul Wright would also be able to officiate. It would be important for Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth and Keith Howick to meet with Stephanie Fox, the Church Administrator, regarding the rota for November and December. Consideration of how many services would be held on Christmas Eve would be important. Comments had been received from some of the regular 8.00 am attendees. Sarah Butler and David Charlesworth agreed to attend some of the 8.00 am services when it was a time of Morning Worship. Stephanie was also trying to contact retired ministers at Bromley College.

872 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.

873 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 6th September 2023

The minutes had been received. Members felt that the church noticeboards should be replaced and updated. Subject to this comment Nomsa Mafohla proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 6th September 2023 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.**

874 Matters arising

(i) Minute 851(i), Church organ. The team would be meeting on 22nd October.

(ii) Minute 851(iii), QI inspection. The Buildings Team was asked to review the report. Discussion of the report would be an item at the November PCC meeting.

(iii) Minute 852(ii), Complaints Policy and Procedure. Copies should be on the noticeboard and the website. Keith Howick felt it was important for people to be able to find the document and suggested the churchwardens should ask the Archdeacon how visible the report should be. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Maria Adu, that the PCC agree the Complaints Policy and Procedure document. **Agreed.**

875 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 647(iii), Safeguarding courses. Sandra Horner reported there had been some progress.

(ii) Minute 648, Complaints Policy and Procedure. Sandra Horner would be reminding people. There is a link to click so that Sandra is updated.

(iii) Minute 799, Procurement Policy. The Climate & Ecology team had not yet prepared a draft.

(iv) Minute 851, Organ report. The group would be meeting on 22nd October.

(v) Minute 852(iii), Pastoral Advisory Group. Sandra Horner and Anne Howick would be meeting shortly.

(vi) Minute 852(vi), Lighting church path. Buildings Team to provide costed proposal.

(vii) Minute 860, DBS and safeguarding. Sandra Horner reported that DBS checks for Sunday Squad helpers were up to date. Not all helpers had done their safeguarding training yet, but she and Alison Charlesworth were liaising.

876 Decisions made by the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee, on behalf of the PCC, had approved the request to inter the ashes of the late Brian Egerton Gardiner in the Garden of Remembrance at St Paul's Church, New Beckenham.

877 Safeguarding and Inclusion

It was noted that Safeguarding Sunday would be taking place on 19th November. Sandra Horner had obtained a resource pack. David Charlesworth would be leading the 10.30 am service, and Rev Rachel Winn would be presiding. It would be important to remind the congregation that if they are taking on a role in the church safeguarding training is important and pre-requisite. People must do the relevant training. If necessary the Diocese would be willing to come out and do a training session. It was important that people feel they are in a safe place.

Members had commented that the noticeboards had out of date information. Sandra and Anne Howick had updated all the information and the Church Administrator would be printing off a copy of the Safeguarding handbook for display at the back of church. The website would also need updating.

878 Church Repair Fund

The PCC Secretary, Treasurers, churchwardens and the Archdeacon had received a letter from the Diocese. As at 21st September 2023 St Paul's had £37,443 in the Church Repair Fund account available towards paying the cost of recommended repairs as set out in the QI report. The Diocese had recommended that St Paul's should more than double the amount they contribute each month to the Fund so that there was a larger amount of savings in five years' time. The PCC agreed that the Finance Team should review this recommendation.

879 Finance Team

A report of a meeting on 7th September 2023 had been received.

(i) Church Administrator's remuneration. Since 2016 St Paul's had agreed that the Church Administrator, Stephanie Fox, should be paid at the London Living Wage. With effect from 1st October 2022 she had been paid £11.95 per hour. The new London Living Wage rate for 2023/2024 would be announced on 24th October 2023. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded by Anthea Prendergast, that the Church Administrator's remuneration should be increased from the London Living Wage to London Living Wage + 10% for all hours accounted for, with effect from 1st October 2023, with employer pension contribution remaining at 5% of salary paid, to be implemented automatically each year in response to an increase in London Living Wage. **Agreed.**

(ii) Outreach programme. The Finance Team had been asked if one of them could be part of the decision making on big ticket items as part of the outreach programme. Keith Howick proposed, seconded by Anthea Prendergast, that someone from the Finance Team should support and engage with the Outreach Team at least in respect of big ticket items. **Agreed.**

(iii) Autumn Fair. There was discussion as to where any profit should go. Following discussion Sarah Butler proposed, seconded by Anthea Prendergast, that the proceeds from the Autumn Fair should be split equally between St Paul's Church and A Rocha UK. **Agreed.**

880 Interment of ashes

A request had been received regarding the interment of ashes of Liz Burt. Anne Howick proposed, seconded by Anne Harkness, that the ashes of Liz Burt be interred in the Garden of Remembrance at St Paul's Church. **Agreed.**

881 Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod had met on 18th September at Christ Church, Beckenham. Following a short meeting there had been a time of light refreshments and conversation.

882 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on 1st November 2023.

883 Prayers at PCC meetings

The PCC Secretary reminded members that in the past it had been the tradition for a member of the PCC to lead the prayers at the beginning of a PCC meeting. She had prepared a rota for the remainder of the 2023/2024 PCC meetings and hoped members would be willing to lead.

884 Your PCC Matters

It was agreed that the following items should be reported in the notice sheet:
Result of discussions with Archdeacon Allie Kerr, Parish profile, interregnum, Safeguarding Sunday, Autumn Fair, appoint of two Parish representatives.

There being no further business Anne Harkness closed the meeting in prayer and with the Grace at 10.05pm.