

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 7th September 2022.

2022 / 2023 No. 4

Present: Rev Simon Couper (in the chair), Adeladie Adade, Richard Bradley, Sarah Butler, Andrew Griffiths (for minutes 10692 - 10703), Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Hazel Koungoue, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar, Anthea Prendergast.

Apologies for absence had been received from Tarina Hill and Nomsa Mafohla.

Anne Howick opened the meeting in prayer.

10690 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.

691 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 13th July 2022

The minutes of the meeting had been received. Richard Bradley proposed, seconded Rev Simon Couper, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 13th July 2022 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.**

692 Matters arising

(i) Minute 680, Energy audit. Sarah Butler reported that Paul Kunert had asked SELCE who they had worked for before. They had worked with schools, and two churches regarding solar power. Paul had also spoken to the Diocese. Keith Howick reported that St Paul's currently has a fixed gas contract for three years and there are still two years on the contract. Members agreed that more information was needed for the Standing Committee and hoped a decision could be made as soon as possible.

(ii) Minute 684(ii), Gardening Team. The vicar confirmed that the Gardening Team had been informed about the Restricted budget. Negotiations between the Gardening Team and the Pre-School had taken place regarding the area which the Pre-School could use and Pre-School would have access to space in this academic year.

(iii) Minute 10689, Top of the Pew Quiz. Sadly the St Paul's team had lost by a few points. Richard Bradley reported that he would be the Quiz master in the next round.

693 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 647(iii), Safeguarding courses. Further information was also available on the Diocesan website regarding the courses.

(ii) Minute 663(i), Donation plate. This was now in the service template.

(iii) Minute 672, Indicate Offer. Keith Howick confirmed he had reported to the Diocese.

(iv) Minute 673(iii), List of people willing to give lifts. Concern was expressed regarding safeguarding and DBS checking. There should be training for those giving lifts. In answer to a question regarding whether people know that Hazel Koungoue has a list of people, she confirmed that she would be happy to prepare a list.

(v) Minute 679(i), Gardening Team budget. The vicar had discussed with the Team.

694 Safeguarding and Inclusion

The vicar reported on a vulnerable member of the public who visits St Paul's and attends services.

695 Cost of living crisis.

The vicar asked members to consider how St Paul's could engage with the wider community and the most vulnerable. He would be meeting with Maggie Wilkinson and Rev Jessica Smith shortly and would check regarding the possibility of offering a community meal once a month. St Paul's Pre-School had offered to clear their things away on Mondays and Tuesdays if the church would need to use the hall in the evenings. It was noted that the heating is not on regularly in the evening, but it might be possible to do it manually. It would be a good idea if there was a rota of which churches are open and when. The vicar suggested that there should be a notice in the weekly notice sheet encouraging people to come and have a word with him and St Paul's would try and help the community. He would also make an announcement at services on 11th September to encourage people to let him know if they are struggling. Members also suggested there should be a mention on social media regarding getting in touch. It would be important to offer something that is defined, not vague. Members suggested there should be community meals in a warm space, not just food available. Following discussions Rev Simon Couper proposed that there should be a commitment to community meals, the costs should be absorbed by St Paul's, and that he should speak to Chloe-Jane Ross, a member of the local Lib Dems.

696 St Paul's 150th Anniversary

Paul Lashmar reported on ticket sales to date for the Gospel Concert which would be taking place at St Paul's on Saturday 10th September. There was a team of twenty volunteers who would be helping on the day. There would be an interval of thirty minutes when refreshments would be served. The vicar agreed to get some more SumUp payment machines.

697 Bible Sunday, 23rd October

On this day the current bibles would be replaced. It was noted that Amnesty take in old bibles. Concern was expressed regarding how the bibles would sit in the pews. It was agreed to purchase one hundred new bibles and if members wished to make a donation of £10 for a bible they should speak to the vicar or Rosemary Dear. There would be a notice in the notice sheet.

698 Mission Team

The minutes of a meeting of the Mission Team held on 3rd September had been received.

(i) Missions of the Month for 2023. The Team had agreed that St Paul's should continue to support Ben and Katy Ray working with CMS with disabled people in Tanzania, Julian and Catherine for their work on Yakar translation with Wycliffe Bible Translators, Julia Birkett working with OMF in Thailand, CAP (Penge) and Welcare in Bromley. They had also recommended that St Paul's should support SAT-7.

(ii) Contingencies. The Team had recommended that £500 should be sent to TEAR Fund for the Disaster Emergencies Fund for the floods in Pakistan, and £500 to Open Doors for relief for people in need and especially persecuted Christians.

(iii) Christmas Labels 2022. The Team had recommended that money collected from labels on the Christmas tree at St Paul's should be sent to Prison Fellowship for their Angel Tree project which enables prisoners to give presents to their children at home. Following discussion regarding the timing of when to send the money, the vicar proposed, seconded Hazel Koungoue that St Paul's should support the Angel Tree project and send the same amount of money as in

2021 in time for the prisoners to be able to give presents to their children at Christmas 2022. If more money was donated compared with 2021 then that money should be sent later. **Agreed.**

Andrew Griffiths suggested that thought should be given to other new organisations which St Paul's could support in the future. The vicar agreed with this suggestion and also hoped the Mission Team could look at supporting other organisations via money from Contingencies.

699 Finance Team

The minutes of a meeting of the Finance Team held on 31st August had been received.

(i) Sumup machines. The vicar would be preparing a note with instructions for the stand alone machines.

(ii) Blessings in Church. Anne Howick commented that the total fee payable for a Marriage Service in Church in 2022 is £480. This fee is set by the Church of England. The vicar reported that when he was in discussion with couples having a blessing he had invited them to make a donation if they would like to and they were aware of the fee for a Marriage Service in Church. Keith Howick proposed that the vicar should continue to use his discretion regarding how much to ask couples to pay or donate.

In answer to a question regarding marriage preparation courses, and whether they still take place, the vicar reported on the different times in advance of the wedding day when he meets with couples, that the rehearsal is usually two days before the wedding, and that Anne Howick, as pastoral assistant, also meets with couples. The vicar hoped that the Pastoral Support group would be able to meet again soon.

(iii) Financial Overview. A report of income and expenditure against budget for the first six months of 2022 had been received from Rosemary Dear. There had been a £10,000 legacy. So far a relatively small amount of the budget for the 150th celebrations had been spent. It was likely that next year the Diocese would increase the Parish offers compared to 2022.

(iv) Stewardship. The Finance Team had discussed the possibility of holding a day when people could give to celebrate the work of St Paul's over the last 150 years and looking ahead to work that needs to be done. Following discussions Keith Howick proposed, seconded Andrew Griffiths, that there should be a Thanksgiving day on Saturday 12th November. **Agreed.** It would be important to be particularly attentive as to what is shared with the congregation.

(v) Staffing. The PCC noted the need for a Children & Family worker. The vicar would be having further discussions with the Diocese regarding having a curate. Andrew Smith, an ordinand, would be joining St Paul's for the month of September.

(vi) Away Giving report. A report had been received from Elaine Storey for January - June 2022.

700 Deanery Synod

There had been a presentation from Jennifer Ross, the Communications Manager and Bishop's media adviser at the Diocese. She was happy to help with strategy at Parish level.

701 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be held on 5th October 2022.

702 Babies and Toddler Group

Anthea Prendergast reported on the group since it had re-opened in September 2021. The group would be starting up again on 8th September. There had been a graduation service for those who were leaving at the end of the summer term and going on to 'big school'. Each family is asked to make a contribution of £1 to cover costs including refreshments. Over the year there had been a surplus of over £750 which had been paid into the Church accounts towards Hall running costs. Thanks were expressed to all those who are involved with running the group.

10703 PCC membership

It was reported that Sandra Horner had expressed interest in supporting the work of the PCC. Anne Howick proposed, seconded Keith Howick, that Sandra Horner should be co-opted on to the PCC. **Agreed.**

There being no further business the vicar closed the meeting in prayer at 9.40 pm.