

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 18th January 2023.

2022 / 2023 No. 8

Present: Rev Simon Couper (in the chair), Adelaide Adade, Richard Bradley, Sarah Butler, Andrew Griffiths, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Hazel Koungoue, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar (for minutes 10756 - 10770), Anthea Prendergast.

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

Rev Simon Couper welcomed everyone to the meeting. Adelaide Adade opened the meeting in prayer.

10754 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.

755 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 7th December 2022

The following amendments were requested:

(i) Minute 739 (ii), Cleaning requirements. Hazel Koungoue would be speaking to the Pre-School staff.

(ii) Minute 739(iv), 3 Ashford House rental. The rental would be increasing from £900 per month to £950 per month.

Hazel Koungoue proposed, seconded Adelaide Adade, that, subject to the corrections in minute 739, the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 7th December 2022 be received as an accurate report of the meeting. **Agreed.**

756 Matters arising

(i) Minute 739(iii), Eco Church. The vicar and Climate & Ecology team had met with Col Bob Stewart, MP, on 13th January. Bob Stewart had commented that Eco Church was not one of his areas of expertise. He undertook to pass on to those higher up the political chain that he had met some of his constituents and had a serious conversation regarding their concerns about climate change. It was noted that the Skidmore report had been issued on 13th January.

(ii) Minute 739(v), Cost of living crisis. The vicar reported that there would be a Soup lunch on the fourth Friday in the month, and the first one would be on 27th January at 12.30 pm. It was agreed that there should be a note in the notice sheet advertising the event and encouraging people to contact Anthea Prendergast if they could help with preparing and serving. All would be welcome to attend.

(iii) Minute 746, Christmas gifts. A thank you card had been received from Ron and Pauline Barrett.

757 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 647, Safeguarding courses. Members had been reminded and Anne Howick would be liaising with Sandra Horner, the Safeguarding Officer.

(ii) Minute 648, Complaints Policy and Procedure. More work needed to be done. The vicar would be checking the Diocesan website for up to date information and sending a policy to Andrew Griffiths to put on the St Paul's website.

(iii) Minute 666, People who need a visit. The vicar encouraged members to continue to advise him.

(iv) Minute 668(i), Cleaning requirements. Complete.

(v) Minute 673(ii), Eco Church. Complete.

(vi) Minute 683(ii), 3 Ashford House rental. The vicar had spoken to Vanessa Short, the tenant. In answer to a question from Hazel Koungoue, the vicar agreed to be in touch with Robyn Ranu.

(vii) Minute 695, Cost of living crisis. The vicar had been in touch with other churches in the Deanery.

(viii) Minute 698, Possible new Missions of the Month. The vicar would be speaking to the Mission Team.

(ix) Minute 716, CAF Bank account. There had been some progress and Rosemary Dear was in contact with the Bank. She was submitting the relevant paperwork requesting that St Paul's could have the use of a credit card.

(x) Minute 731(iv), Church notice in porch. This had not yet been corrected.

(xi) Minute 743, Fees. The vicar and Andrew Griffiths had not yet met.

(xii) Minute 745, Independent Examiner. See minute 763 below.

(xiii) Minute 747, Retirement gift. The vicar to check.

758 Cost of living crisis

The vicar had received thanks from Worsley Bridge School and St Paul's Pre-School for the Sainsbury's vouchers. St Paul's would be working together to continue to support the families in the coming months. As reported (minute 756(ii) refers), there would be a Soup lunch on 27th January. It would be for anyone, not just families. It would be important to think about how St Paul's can support those in need. In December 2022 St Paul's had not requested donations for the Children's Society but for the work to continue to support those affected by the cost of living crisis. Members were encouraged to think about who St Paul's wants to support, not just the school. There is money which was donated at the Christingle service, and the vicar's Discretionary Fund. Keith Howick commented that if collections or donations are not restricted the Diocese can take 10% of that money. He asked if Rosemary Dear was able to identify the Christmas donations. The vicar confirmed that Rosemary had handled the cash and he would check on the Sumup machine. Keith Howick proposed, seconded by the vicar, that the collections received over the Christmas period, including Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, which were to support the cost of living crisis, should be restricted. **Agreed.** The vicar would be updating Rosemary Dear on these discussions.

759 Christmas services 2022

Members reflected on the services in 2022, the Advent course, and Experience Christmas. Some felt it was disappointing that St Paul's had not reverted to the way it used to do Christingle, with the children standing round the church and having their candles lit. There had been about 275 attendees at Christingle. The church had felt full this year at the services on Christmas Day. Experience Christmas had been very successful for the children and the congregation. The vicar reported that he had received an email from Worsley Bridge School asking if St Paul's would be putting on Experience Easter in 2023. Members felt this was really encouraging and immensely important. The vicar thanked everyone for their support with the Advent course which had taken place weekly at 2.00 pm, in the evening, and on line. The Crystal Palace Brass Band playing inside, because of the bad weather, followed by refreshments, and then the service in church had worked well. The vicar thought it would be good to invite the Band to play again in future. He recorded his thanks to all those who help and contribute to the musical life of church, particularly over Christmas. It was noted that Christmas Day 2023 would be on a Monday. The vicar asked members if they had any further thoughts regarding the Christmas services to email him.

760 Bibles

Hazel Koungoue commented that there had been many families requesting children's bibles. The vicar reminded members that each child when it is baptised receives a bible. He would be happy to re-stock. Every time there is a special service they are available for the children.

761 Safeguarding and Inclusion

Sandra Horner reported on a recent on-line conference. The Sunday School organisers would be meeting shortly. Sandra, the vicar and Anne Howick hoped to meet soon. The vicar reported on a recent situation with a parent who had left their child in Sunday School and then left the church. Thankfully the parent did return later. Sunday School did have the parent's contact details. Members agreed it would be important to communicate to parents what is expected when their children attend services and Sunday School.

762 Church Bank account

Rosemary Dear had commented that she felt things were progressing with our application.

763 Appointment of Independent Examiner

The vicar reported that Ernest Kabera had contacted him and was happy to act as the Independent Examiner. He is currently living in Birmingham. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that Ernest Kabera be appointed as the Independent Examiner. **Agreed.**

764 Church Path

A report had been received regarding the church path from Brackley Road to the main entrance which had become increasingly uneven. It was also planned that a stone should be laid in the pathway at the Brackley Road end facing on to the pavement, engraved with the 150th anniversary scripture: *Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.* It was hoped this would be visible to those going past the church entrance. Members also discussed whether it would be possible to future-proof the project to accommodate some lighting for the footpath at a later date. It was noted that Simon McCabe would work closely with the vicar on this project. In planning to relay the path it would be important to check where any cables and pipes cut in from the main road into the church premises. Following discussion Andrew Griffiths proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that the PCC approve the motion to obtain three quotes to relay the main pathway, including the single slab-

width track leading to the church garage. A further three quotes would be obtained for the memorial stone engraved with the Bible verse. The final execution of the associated works is delegated to the Standing Committee. **Agreed.**

765 St Paul's 150th Anniversary

There would be a meeting on 30th January to review the events and to review what St Paul's would want to focus on in 2023. The PCC members were encouraged to feed in their thoughts to David Charlesworth. The vicar felt the street party had gone well and wondered about a similar event in May to mark the Coronation of King Charles.

766 Buildings Team

A report had been received regarding the Quinquennial Inspection (QI). The Diocese had provided a list of approved architects. Richard Bradley proposed, seconded Adelaide Adade, that the PCC nominate Ablett Architects of Bromley to execute the next QI survey, which it was anticipated would take place in late Spring 2023. **Agreed.** The vicar agreed to speak to Sarah Anderson, the DAC Secretary, regarding this proposal. It was noted that the next QI survey would take place in 2028.

767 Deanery Synod

The Reverend Allie Kerr had recently been appointed to serve as Archdeacon of Bromley and Bexley. A service of licensing would take place in late April. The vicar hoped to invite her to St Paul's soon after her licensing. He reported that Rev Dr Paul Wright, in retirement, was now able to officiate at services of Holy Communion.

768 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on 15th February 2023. The vicar reported that the House of Bishops had met recently and would be presenting their report on Living in Love and Faith reflection to the General Synod in February. Parishes had been encouraged to think and reflect on what their practice would be in relation to same sex marriages. The vicar expressed his views but felt it would be an issue that divides parishes. He planned that the agenda for the PCC meeting on 15th February should be as light as possible so that there could be a discussion on the reports.

769 Churches Together in Beckenham

The vicar had received an email from CTiB. Their treasurer had suggested that each church might like to consider making a voluntary donation of £50 so that funds are in place in the coming year to meet their requirements, including Public Liability Insurance and the hire of Beckenham Green. The vicar proposed from the chair that St Paul's make a donation of £50 to CTiB. **Agreed.**

It was noted that this year the Walk of Witness would be on Good Friday, 7th April.

10770 Women's World Day of Prayer

It was noted that this year the service would be on Friday 3rd March at 11.00 am at the Methodist Church and would be prepared by the women of Taiwan.

There being no further business the vicar closed the meeting at 8.55 pm with prayer and with the Grace.