

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 6th September 2023.

2023 / 2024 No. 3

Present: Anne Harkness (in the chair), Maria Ayu, David Charlesworth, Rev Simon Couper (for minutes 10849 – 10858), Andrew Griffiths, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Paul Lashmar, Anthea Prendergast.

Apologies for absence had been received from Adelaide Adade, Sarah Butler, Tarina Hill, and Nomsa Mafohla.

Rev Simon Couper opened the meeting in prayer.

Maria Ayu, who had been co-opted on to the PCC at the PCC Meeting on 5th July 2023, was welcomed to the meeting.

10849 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.

850 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 5th July 2023

Rev Simon Couper proposed, seconded Anthea Prendergast, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 5th July 2023 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.**

851 Matters arising

(i) Minute 834(ii), Church organ. The vicar had sent a summary to the working team. Andrew Griffiths had asked for some additional financial information. Keith Howick commented that he thought somebody should be the co-ordinator or champion and take the lead on the PCC. It was agreed that the organ should be an item on the PCC agenda on 1st November. The team were encouraged to meet to discuss the future of the organ with John Blakely and David Storey in October and provide a report for the PCC. After the PCC discussion there should then be feedback to the congregation and an opportunity for a discussion.

(ii) Minute 836 and 843, Church path. The work had been completed.

(iii) Minute 844, QI inspection. The inspection had taken place and the QI report had been received. It was suggested that this should be an item for discussion in October. The vicar recorded his thanks to Simon Ablett for his work.

852 Action Sheet

(i) Minute 647, Safeguarding courses. Sandra Horner reminded PCC members that, as a member of the PCC, all were required to complete the safeguarding courses. She encouraged all members to complete the relevant courses before the PCC meeting on 5th October.

(ii) Minute 648, Complaints Policy and Procedure. The vicar had sent information to the Church Administrator. There are Church of England templates for Parish use. The vicar would be asking the Church Administrator to circulate the information for PCC approval.

(iii) Minute 666, People who need a visit. Keith Howick felt it was important that the Pastoral Support group knew who is visiting and who they are visiting. Sandra Horner commented that many are vulnerable people and safeguarding was important. There is a Parish

safeguarding booklet with information about what to do in different situations. It was agreed that Sandra Horner and Anne Howick should meet to discuss next steps.

(iv) Minute 695, Cost of living crisis. The Connect café was now happening on the fourth Saturday in the month. It was suggested that from November there should be a soup lunch on the second Friday of the month.

(v) Minute 799, Procurement policy. If articles cost over £500 three quotes should be obtained. Liz Spencer and Sarah Butler were working on a new policy and this would be ready for discussion at the PCC meeting on 1st November

(vi) Minute 836, Church path. Cable ducts had been laid in place so that external lighting could be added. There was £3,000 in restricted Church funds for use. The Buildings Team would be asked to provide a plan before the beginning of December.

853 Appointment of Churchwarden

It was noted that Hazel Koungoue had stepped down as churchwarden as she would be undergoing ministerial training. The vicar proposed, seconded Keith Howick, that Anthea Prendergast be appointed as churchwarden in place of Hazel Koungoue. **Agreed.** If anyone was interested in serving as an Assistant Churchwarden they were asked to speak to Anne Harkness or Anthea Prendergast.

854 Interregnum

It was noted that the interregnum starts when the vicar leaves, and that is when the process of looking for a new vicar can begin properly. Archdeacon Allie would be attending the PCC meeting on 4th October.

855 Appointment of two Parish representatives

Sarah Butler and Keith Howick had been suggested as the two representatives (see minute 10832). It was noted that churchwardens should be part of the interview process as well. It was hoped a younger member of the PCC, e.g. Nomsa Mafohla, might be willing to be part of the informal conversations with the candidates.

856 Correspondence with the Diocese

The Diocese should be kept up to date on discussions, including Archdeacon Allie's visit to the PCC. It was noted that Rev Paul Wright had offered to officiate at the 8.00 am service on the 4th Sunday in the month and the 10.30 am service of Holy Communion if necessary.

857 Support for Church Administrator

Anne Howick had spoken to Stephanie Fox regarding the rota. The vicar had been working with Stephanie to set up the rotas, using the Lectionary, up to next summer. Members were reminded that Anne Howick is Stephanie's line manager. Everyone was encouraged to support Stephanie and make sure she was not overburdened during the interregnum. Following comments regarding financial matters Anne Howick agreed to check what other churches are paying, and to report to the Finance team for consideration.

858 Parish profile

David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Anne Harkness, Sandra Horner and Keith Howick had been involved in preparing the draft. Members thanked them for all their work. Copies would be available for the congregation and there would be a meeting after the 10.30 am service on 17th September when people could share their thoughts. Following the meeting a final version of the profile would be prepared and this would be available for approval at the PCC meeting on 4th October. The vicar commented on some of the wording which might

be included regarding what St Paul's was looking for in the next vicar, e.g. thoughtful, sensitive, creative, takes the mantle seriously, depth in teaching, how they would engage with the community, what gifts would they bring to help the Parish.

Archdeacon Allie would be attending the PCC meeting on 4th October and it would be good to discuss with her when we should advertise, when applicants should apply by and when she would be available to be part of the interview process. Anne Howick was asked to check the Church Times advertisements for timings of dates.

859 Standing Committee

Following a request from Anthea Prendergast, the Standing Committee had agreed that seven Pre-School size tables should be purchased from Gopak for use by church groups and the Pre-School at a total cost of £775.99 inc vat and delivery. The order had been placed and the tables should be delivered on 14th September. The old tables would be donated to the Barnmead Road group allotment.

860 Safeguarding and Inclusion

Sandra Horner reported that some PCC members and Sunday squad had done their training. DBS checks were also being undertaken. 19th November is Safeguarding Sunday for which there is a pack of recommended hymns and prayers. Sandra agreed to work with the relevant minister and the Church Administrator.

861 Finance Team

A report of a meeting held on 19th July 2023 had been received. It was noted that the team would be meeting on 7th September.

862 Communications Team

A report of a meeting held on 22nd August had been received.

(i) Contact points. In the absence of a vicar it would be important to make clear who was doing what and who people should contact.

(ii) Social media and Online accounts transfer. There had been discussion about who should be posting on Facebook, who would now have use of the vicar@ email account, and whether the Instagram account should be reactivated.

(iii) Email accounts. The church would be changing to 1and1 IONOS so that more addresses for official church roles could be included.

(iv) External communications. The church noticeboards would need updating. It was proposed that the Christmas edition of *Connect* should be produced during November and circulated to the whole Parish at the beginning of December. David Charlesworth and Anne Howick would be reviewing the list of those who deliver within the Parish and which areas are covered.

(v) Branding. Mili Tharakan had offered to help David Charlesworth with graphic content of communications including use of CANVA. Keith Howick offered to help with any branding matters. The external community programme would be renamed as "Connect @St Pauls".

(vi) Internal noticeboards. These would need refreshing and updating.

863 Deanery Synod

The next meeting would be 18th September. Members were reminded that St Paul's is entitled to have two representatives but currently Keith Howick is the only representative.

864 Electoral Roll

There had been no applications. It was noted that some churches write to people on their Electoral Roll who are not attending services to ask how they can help. It was noted that some people come on to the Electoral Roll so they can get married at St Paul's but then don't attend services. It was suggested the Pastoral Aid Group should follow up with people.

865 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be on 4th October 2023 when Archdeacon Allie would be attending.

10866 Your PCC matters

The vicar would be preparing the item for the notice sheet. Items to be included should be external lighting, Buildings Team, appointment of new churchwarden, soup kitchen, update on interregnum, organ, Parish profile.

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