

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 June 2023.

2023 / 2024 No. 1

Present: Rev Simon Couper (in the chair), Adelaide Adade, Sarah Butler, David Charlesworth (for minutes 10805 – 10817, and 10819 – 10831), Anne Harkness, Sandra Horner, Anne Howick, Keith Howick, Ian Johnson, Hazel Koungoue, Paul Lashmar, Anthea Prendergast.

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

The vicar opened the meeting in prayer.

10805 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. David Charlesworth commented that he was not sure what to sign on the form in advance of a meeting as a Conflict of Interest.

806 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 19th April 2023

The minutes of the PCC meeting held on 19th April 2023 had been received. Keith Howick reported that, in minute 797(ii), St Paul's has a gas contract which would be coming to the end of a three year contract in June 2024. We currently have a one year electricity contract which ends in June 2023. In minute 799, Hazel Koungoue had commented that some donations are not Fair Trade.

Hazel Koungoue proposed, seconded by the vicar, that the minutes of the PCC meeting held on 19th April 2023 be received as an accurate record of the meeting. **Agreed.** Those who were not present at the meeting abstained.

807 Matters arising

(i) Minute 792(ii), Improvements to the vestry. The vestry carpet had been replaced and a new chair had been purchased. The vicar had spoken to Stephanie Fox regarding the laptop.

(ii) Anthea Prendergast reported that St Paul's had been awarded a Bronze Eco Church award.

808 Action Sheet

A revised list had been circulated.

(i) Safeguarding courses – see minute 813 below.

(ii) Complaints Policy and Procedure – on going.

(iii) People who need a visit – The vicar requested that members should advise him. He reported that he planned to set up a Pastoral Advisory group which would meet once a term. Members were reminded that Anne Howick is the Pastoral Assistant, and there are others in the congregation who are also supporting people. Hazel Koungoue felt it was important that it was clear what safeguarding courses needed to be done and the vicar commented that people must declare what they are doing, they should not be a secret visitor. Keith Howick recommended that the vicar, Sandra Horner, the St Paul's safeguarding officer, and Anne Howick, Pastoral Assistant, should be members of the Pastoral Advisory Group. Some members were concerned

that it might make it difficult for people to just drop by a friend for a cup of tea and chat, but it was also important to make sure people don't fall between the gaps. It would be helpful to know informally who is visiting who.

(iv) Church path – see minute 824 below.

(v) Worsley Bridge School. The vicar reported that each year group would be visiting the church in July. The theme would be Church and Community.

(vi) Procurement Policy – The Climate & Ecology team had been asked to develop a policy.

809 Cost of living crisis

The vicar reported that he was hoping to have a meeting with Worsley Bridge School. As they approach the summer holidays many families will have food poverty. The headteacher, Sophie, had said that the PCC can join meetings if they are interested in how to help the vulnerable families over the summer. Keith Howick offered to help.

810 Safeguarding and Inclusion

The vicar proposed from the chair that the Parish of St Paul's, New Beckenham is committed to implementing the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies and good practice guidance and that the PCC should adopt the House of Bishops' "Promoting a Safer church; safeguarding policy statement". **Agreed.**

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy St Paul's is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The vicar reported that there would be a safeguarding notice board at the back of church in future.

811 Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officer

From the chair the vicar proposed that Sandra Horner should be appointed. **Agreed.** The vicar thanked Sandra for stepping into the role. He reminded members that the current Bishop of Rochester had been the Church of England Lead Safeguarding Bishop for three years.

812 The Code of Safer Working Practice

Sandra Horner distributed copies of the document which sets out what is expected from anyone who ministers in the church, in both paid or voluntary roles. It gave details of what is expected in the following situations:

- (i) All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults.
- (ii) Details of what those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not do.

(iii) Details of what is regarded as acceptable touch and what should not happen and in what situation.

Sandra Horner proposed that everyone should have a copy of the document where they are in a leadership role. She encouraged everyone to be ultra careful. David Charlesworth commented that people should not take photographs on a church activity of children without having a signed declaration from parents. Members felt there should be a degree of common sense, and that it was useful to have the document in case there was a problem. The vicar would also be looking at what guidance there is from the Diocese.

813 Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Sandra Horner distributed copies of a quick guide giving details of different scenarios and what to do and who to contact. Copies would be on the safeguarding notice board. She reminded the PCC that they all needed to be up to date with their safeguarding courses, C0, C1, and the Domestic abuse course. Certificates are usually valid for three years. It was important that members should check with Sandra when their current certificates expire.

814 Sunday Squad

The vicar reported that there had been 16 children and only two volunteers at Sunday Squad. At the moment there were not enough helpers on the list which meant they were needed to help every two weeks. The volunteers should be DBS approved but do not need to be trained teachers, just people who enjoy being with children.

815 Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 14th May 2023

(i) Election of six PCC representatives. David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Sandra Horner, Keith Howick and Nomsa Mafohla had been elected. There was one vacancy. It would be possible to co-opt someone during the coming year.

(ii) Licensed Reader. Sarah Butler had been appointed as the *ex officio* Licensed Reader to serve on the PCC.

(iii) Deanery Synod. Keith Howick had been elected to serve as a representative of St Paul's. There was one vacancy.

(iv) Open Forum. There had been a discussion regarding the Electoral Roll and whether it should have contact details. The vicar would be checking the GDPR regulations. He would be drawing up a Google form and paper form asking members if they wished to be in the Parish directory. He would be discussing the form with the Communications Team.

816 Standing Committee

Anthea Prendergast proposed, seconded Keith Howick, that the following should be members of the Standing Committee in 2023/2024: the vicar, churchwardens, PCC Secretary, a PCC representative from the Finance team, and the LLM representative. **Agreed.**

817 PCC appointments

The following appointments and role holders were considered: PCC Chairman, PCC Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer Planned Giving (Gift Aid), Assistant Treasurer (Away Giving), Assistant Treasurer, Electoral Roll Officer, Lay Reader representative. It was noted that Rosemary Dear did not want to be the Treasurer. The vicar confirmed that the Diocese were aware that St Paul's did not use an accountancy firm, due to the cost, but that Rosemary Dear provides the relevant information. David Charlesworth commented that it would be good to check with the Charity Commission whether St Paul's needs a nominated Treasurer.

818 Re-commissioning of the Evangelist

David Charlesworth had served as an Evangelist at St Paul's Church and was required to be re-commissioned. Paul Lashmar proposed, seconded Sarah Butler, that the Parochial Church Council, having been consulted, approve the nomination and welcome the ministry of David Charlesworth as an Evangelist. **Agreed.**

819 Team appointments

The PCC Secretary had circulated a paper giving details of the teams and who had indicated their interest in serving on the different teams. Following discussion the following teams were agreed in principle.

Buildings Team: Anne Harkness, Richard Bradley, David Holmes, Walter Lombard.

Children and Youth: Sandra Horner, Eric Barney, Alison Charlesworth, Agnes Gyorffy, Alicia Kysow, Jash Masih, Roz Turner.

Climate and Ecology: Sarah Butler, Keith Howick, Anthea Prendergast, Sandi Lee, Patty Lien.

Communications: David Charlesworth, Andrew Griffiths, Anne Howick, Olivia Masih.

Finance: David Charlesworth, Keith Howick, Anthea Prendergast.

Mission Partners: Sarah Butler, Alison Dockray, Clari Harrington, Marion Lowe, Roger Wells.

It was noted that the vicar was the only member of the Worship team now. He would reflect on that. He puts together the sermon series. He asked the PCC members of each team to organise their team meeting. Keith Howick noted that there used to be a Growth & Nurture Committee which had looked after outreach in the past. David Charlesworth commented that there is an informal outreach team which has individual champions for individual needs. He would report to the PCC on the team.

820 Assistant Churchwarden

The vicar felt it was important that there should be an Assistant Churchwarden to support the work of the two churchwardens. He hoped in future there could be two assistants. It was noted that St Paul's had not appointed an Assistant Churchwarden in the past. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Ian Johnson, that Anthea Prendergast should be appointed as the Assistant Churchwarden. **Agreed.**

821 Sidesmen and Welcome team

It was noted that the following had been given duties on the latest service rota: Maria Adu, Ann Birkett, Alison or Richard Bradley, Rosemary Dear, Alison Dockray, Anne Howick, Nicolas Koungoue, Alicia Kysow, Lindsey Lamb, Laura Lashmar, Sandi Lee, Anthea Prendergast, Roz Turner, Brian Woolmer.

822 Approved signatories

(a) National Westminster Bank plc. David Charlesworth proposed, seconded Adelaide Adade, that National Westminster Bank plc should continue an Account in the name of St Paul's Church, Beckenham and be authorised to accepted instructions

(i) for operations on the Account and (ii) to release items in security or safe custody in the name of St Paul's Church from Anne Mary Harkness (Churchwarden), Hazel Koungoue (Churchwarden), Rosemary Mabel Dear (Assistant Treasurer), Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary), and Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Assistant Treasurer). It is proposed that any two of the above be authorised as cheque signatories of which, wherever possible, one should be a Churchwarden. Rosemary Mabel Dear should remain the main contact.

It was noted that for internal National Westminster Bank plc transfers, e.g. to/from the Business Reserve Account from/to the Bonus Saver Account, only one signature is required. **Agreed.**

(b) Rochester Diocese. Ian Johnson proposed, seconded Paul Lashmar, that Anne Mary Harkness (Churchwarden), Hazel Koungoue (Churchwarden), Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary) and Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Assistant Treasurer) should be authorised signatories, any two to act of which, wherever possible, one should be a Churchwarden. Rosemary Mabel Dear (Assistant Treasurer) should be the main contact. **Agreed.**

(c) CAF Bank Ltd account. Keith Howick proposed, seconded Adelaide Adade, that CAF Bank Limited be authorised to accept instructions for operations on the Account from Anne Mary Harkness (Church Warden), Hazel Koungoue (Church Warden), Rosemary Mabel Dear (Treasurer), Elizabeth Anne Gordon Howick (PCC Secretary) and Anthea Dawn Prendergast (Assistant Treasurer). It was agreed that any two of the above be authorised as account signatories of which, wherever possible, one should be a Church Warden. Rosemary Mabel Dear should be the main contact. **Agreed.**

David Charlesworth asked who was authorised to use the CAF account debit card. Anthea Prendergast reported that use was restricted to Rosemary Dear and Stephanie Fox, the Church Administrator, as only two people have access to the card. Keith Howick was asked to convene a meeting of the Finance Team, and for there to be discussion regarding the controls of use of the card.

823 PCC financial liability

PCC members were reminded that they all need to sign the PCC Financial Liability form and to return it to the PCC Secretary.

824 Church path

The vicar had been in contact with seven companies. He had received quotes for the main path to the entrance to the church from Brackley Road and the path round past the vicarage to the tool shed from Grounddown Construction and Steadway Construction Ltd. He had also received one quote from a company for the flag stone which would include the 2022 150th anniversary verse. It would be important to check with both companies regarding laying of the flag stone. Following discussion, the vicar proposed from the chair that he should have further discussions with Grounddown Construction regarding the costs and the implication of installing a separate flag stone. **Agreed.**

825 Mission Team

The minutes of a meeting of the Mission Team held on 23rd May 2023 had been received. The Team had noted that in future the Finance Team would be agreeing a fixed budget for Away Giving. The Team had discussed the possibility of replacing the mission noticeboard at the back of church but the vicar commented that he would encourage the Team to get better sticky stuff to attach notes to the noticeboard rather than replacing the noticeboard.

826 Deanery Synod

The Venerable Allie Kerr had been appointed Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley in April 2023 and had recently visited St Paul's. Rev Simon Couper is the deputy Area Dean. Members were reminded that only one representative from St Paul's was elected at the recent APCM and the vicar encouraged everyone to seriously think about whether they would like to serve on the Deanery Synod.

827 Electoral Roll

The PCC welcomed Lesley Brittain on to the Electoral Roll.

828 It was noted that the next PCC meeting would be taking place on 5th July 2023.

829 Coffee machine

It had been suggested that a new coffee machine should be purchased for use by the monthly coffee café. Anne Harkness had suggested that a Kingdom Coffee Bravior machine should be purchased at a cost of £199 + vat. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Sandra Horner, that a budget of £350 be approved for the purchase of a new coffee machine. **Agreed.**

830 Community Outreach programme

David Charlesworth had prepared a report of possible community events for 2023/2024 with a cost budget of £8,210. It was hoped that revenue from donations and ticket sales would largely offset the costs. Anthea Prendergast commented that it would be important for the PCC to receive papers in advance if the PCC is discussing such a budget. It would be possible to delegate consideration of the budget to the Standing Committee. Following discussion Keith Howick proposed, seconded Anne Harkness, that a budget of £8,500 be approved to cover the costs of the community events in 2023/2024. **Agreed.** Members were reminded that the financial year for St Paul's is the calendar year.

10831 PCC Digest

The vicar reported that he was proposing to include on the PCC agenda an item where members would agree what matters from the discussions should be reported to the congregation. From this meeting it was agreed to include budget for outreach, church path, safeguarding, need for helpers in Sunday Squad, Teams, one PCC vacancy.

There being no further business the vicar closed the meeting in prayer at 10.00 pm.