

Notes of Meeting of St Paul's PCC

16 June 2025

Present: Imogen Nay. Rob McCorquodale (acting chair), Jonathan Chaplin, Elisabeth von Rabenau (notes), Mark Elliott, Andrew Chaplin, Jenny Mander, Peter Bone, Andy Gordon, Marion Saunders, Rachel Hutchinson (PSO) part, Emma Caroe (CDW) part

Apologies: Becky Warner, Christina Barry, Helen Flynn

1. Welcome

- RMcC welcomed all and especially new members, MS and AG, to the meeting, and IN opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Safeguarding (RH) – verbal report

- RH is due to complete 'Leadership', the final module of her Safeguarding training, shortly. She has been working with EC on the safeguarding aspects of the Volunteer Handbook, focusing initially on the community groups. Jonathan Potts, new Centre Manager, will be taking on responsibility for DBS checks allowing RH to focus on the wider approach to safeguarding and establishing the ethos that this is everyone's responsibility. Another future focus will be on GDPR. RH is meeting fortnightly with IN and monthly with EC to ensure a team approach.
- RH's appointment as Parish Safeguarding Officer was formally approved.

3. Volunteer Policy – circulated in advance

- EC has primarily worked on this, drawing on a template from the Bishops' Council and diocesan documents, with some personalisation to St Paul's, e.g. in relation to expenses. Discussion and questions focused on the need to clarify and set appropriate expectations, e.g. about supervision in relation to different volunteer roles, and identifying a named lead person when projects are volunteer-led.
- EC and RH are working on creating a table of volunteer roles and grading these at different levels which would then link to the types of checks and training required for the role. In this context it was agreed that some roles, particularly those that facilitate Sunday services, would not be classified as volunteers; however, anyone working with children at any time must be registered as a volunteer.
- It was suggested that the policy should contain a more explicit statement that volunteers must not act in a way that could bring the organisation into disrepute.
- AG asked whether it was possible to provide an overview of the number of hours per week contributed by volunteers.
- The policy was agreed in principle.

Actions:

- **ALL to email any further editing comments copied to IN, EC, RH**
- **EC and RH to include the operational guidance about volunteer levels in the Handbook and bring this to PCC**

4. Community Work presentation and Fairbite proposal (EC) – proposal and draft collaboration agreement circulated in advance

- EC set the context both in terms of CCFB's desire to create a centrally located Fairbite and also of a St Paul's vision for transformational relationships in which we both seek to meet some basic needs but also spend time *being with* people as they are, helping to create community and providing longer-term support. There has been consultation with other churches offering Fairbite as well as visits to some of these by IN and other PCC members, and the proposal was aired in a church service with a subsequent Q&A with Jenny, the Fairbite Development Manager. EC intends to consult further with likely users and already tries to refer Foodbank users to Fairbite, although with little success as the existing ones are considered too far away.
- There was discussion of the various costs and risks. The initial commitment is for 12 months, renewable, with three months' notice of termination. The church would be required to fund a part-time coordinator (an extra day for EC while in post), and once Fairbite is established the shopping payments normally fund the coordinator post. The church is also expected to provide a robust team of volunteers so that the project is properly owned by the church. EC has had some positive interest from church members keen to become involved in a new project, and as this would replace Monday Foodbank some existing Foodbank volunteers are also expected to move across. It was noted that all volunteers would need to be registered with both St Paul's and CCFB. CCFB provides start-up funding and other Fairbites have not had a problem with securing additional grants. The food is provided by CCFB. If there is excess income, CCFB would expect some reimbursement. CCFB is seen as a trusted partner.
- EC was thanked for the energy, work and enthusiasm she has put into the initial proposal. It is seen as an exciting initiative but there are concerns, particularly about volunteer capacity and payments to CCFB. The PCC agreed that EC should further firm up the proposal, including a more detailed outline of the building and storage logistics, so that a final decision about whether to go ahead can be made at the next PCC meeting.

Actions:

- **EC bring finalised proposal to July PCC meeting**

EC and RH left the meeting after this item.

5. Minutes of APCM – circulated in advance

- RMcC thanked all who had contributed to the meeting and JW for facilitating. The minutes were agreed as correct, but need to be formally approved at the next APCM.

6. Minutes of last meeting – circulated in advance

- Agreed as correct.

7. Actions and Matters Arising:

- **Electoral Roll** – document circulated in advance, showing a significant decline in numbers. IN has reviewed the list with Martin and Julia Evans to take out people known to have moved away, but a significant number of people who were previously on the roll and continue to attend services have not re-registered (if they did so the number would increase to 111). As this may be unintentional or an administrative error, PCC members were encouraged to make personal approaches to individuals to check **(All action)**. An up-to-date list can then

also be used by the pastoral team to review needs. This led to questions about having a list, including contact details, that could be shared by members of the congregation who opted in. JC offered to be part of a working group to take this forward. This could also link to possible adoption of ChurchSuite database.

- **PCC Away Day and 4Cs group membership** – Standing Group to consider how to take PCC Away Day actions forward. MS and AG to consider after further induction with RMcC. Culture and Compassion groups have lost members, but gender imbalance in some groups also noted. JM currently without a group as Congregation subsumed within Ministry.
- **Church Weekend Away review** – Steering group awaiting responses to feedback forms. Request report for next PCC meeting (*EvR action*)
- **Sharing Governance structures with Congregation Electoral Roll** – Standing Group action carried forward to July PCC meeting.
- **Critical Incident Process** - Standing Group action carried forward to July PCC meeting.
- **Review of populated summary of policies** - Standing Group action carried forward to July PCC meeting.

8. Children and Family Work report (AP) – document circulated in advance

- The PCC noted the creativity and imagination of AP's work with children and the growth in numbers of children attending on Sundays and the Worship Club at St Paul's School. The struggle to recruit volunteers, and the decision, therefore, to abandon the Monday Toddler group for now was also noted. In terms of support, AP meets with IN and is also linked into the Ministry Group, although that group finds it more difficult to meet due to differing part-time hours and other commitments.

9. Standing items

Vicar's report (IN) – circulated in advance with parish and congregation data

- IN spoke to the data shared that the figures for our parish reflect the national picture of congregation growth but this not being back at pre-pandemic levels. Parish data indicates that St Paul's has a much higher percentage than diocesan level of people in the 20-30 age group and much lower percentage in the 70+ group. AC welcomed the growth during his time at St Paul's in younger adults attending. IN would like to focus her energy on building up our congregation. PB reflected on growth at St Paul's having happened organically in the past and whether there was a need for a more strategic vision/mission plan. This could be the brief for another PCC Away Day.

Finance (AC) – accounts and report circulated in advance

- AC asked that PCC members email him if there are any specific questions about the accounts and spoke to the following:
- Fairbite proposal requiring an increase of one day per week of EC's time. CCFB would pay half and the risk is further reduced because expected income from Fairbite should cover the remainder.
- The financial and HR implications of a proposal to extend the CFW role. It was agreed that this needed further exploration and would be brought back to the next PCC meeting.

Building/Maintenance report (JC) – circulated in advance

- AC confirmed that the unexpected additional costs of c £9K for necessary electrical repairs will largely be covered by income from the feed-in tariff.
- The fire alarm requires attention and will now be an urgent priority for JP when he starts.
- David Farrer has spoken to Huttie re the floor/heating issues and made some progress.

Commerce Group report (ME) – circulated in advance

- ME and the group thanked for their comprehensive work on lettings. There has been pushback from one long-term hirer about the standardisation of rates and discounts, which could also affect two other hirers, and this will require further negotiation.

10. AoB

- There has been a request for non-dairy milk at coffee after services and in the Centre.

Action:

- **JC as warden will action.**
- **Jonathan Potts to be invited to the next PCC meeting to meet members**

Meeting closed with a sharing of the Grace.

12. Next meeting date – Monday 14 July 2025 7.30pm Lower Hall