

RUSHMERE ST ANDREW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th November 2024

Present: Revd Alan Comfort, Gill Ainslie, Bob Batchelor, Kevin Brazier, Robin Brown, Rachel Daniels, Claire Driver, Joan du Boulay, Chris Gibson, Margaret Mellor, Mary Odam, Tim Oxbrow, Hilary Platts, Ruth Silburn, Revd Marion Walker, Dave Yaroslaw.

Apologies: David Chaplin, David Gill.

Revd Alan opened the meeting with prayer.

24.50 The Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 26th September were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters Arising:

24.30 Should read 'the final cost for the work carried out at William Steward's was £224'.

24.49 Revd Alan is still talking to Graham about concerts.

Surplus relays: these have not been found. Mike Osborne has been informed.

Minutes of a Standing Committee held on 1st October re. a leaving gift for Archdeacon Rhiannon: as there was not time to organise a collection, a donation of £100 was made on behalf of the church. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Minutes of a Standing Committee held on 22nd October re. purchase of a cycle rack: the final cost was £108. The rack has been installed. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

24.51 Correspondence

- Letter of appreciation from Linda and Neil Roberts for the Remembrance Day service and decorations inside and outside the church
- Thanks from Amelia for organising and funding trips and for her new Bible
- Thanks from FIND for the Harvest gifts
- Thanks from St Elizabeth Hospice for donation of £212.50 raised at our October quiz

24.52 Ministry Team

- Prayer ministry: 4 training sessions, open to all, to be offered Jan-April. Still working out how to fit it into the pattern of services.
- Sermon series: Jan 12th – March 2nd, on Heroes of Faith. Sunday School and Messy church will share the same theme.
- A third Sunday afternoon activity at Dumbarton Hall is being considered, possibly aimed at older people, a Songs of Praise or bereavement support.
- Projection equipment in church: Revd Alan outlined some possibilities and invited discussion. Points raised: saves confusion on which hymn book to use; what's wrong with using books; who to operate it; saves paper; could display bible readings; people's heads would be up when they sing; how much time would it take to input hymns; is ceiling too high; permission would be needed; expense; need to look to the future; younger people more used to such technology. There is still much to be considered and a decision will not be rushed.

24.53 May Festival

An outline paper with some estimates of cost was tabled. Theme – Shining the light of Jesus. It is hoped the Knitted Bible exhibition, London Community Gospel Choir and the

speakers will bring in many people from outside the church. Three school visits to Bible exhibition already booked. The LCGC concert will be in the new end of church to improve visibility. Fewer seats mean cost will need to be higher; possibly sell reduced view seats in old end at lower price. The White's will be staying at the Vicarage. **The PCC agreed**

- to underwrite the estimated baseline cost of £5420, plus other expenses eg programmes, banners, ticketing system costs.
- to the payment of a deposit of £1,250 for the LCGC

Sound system: Tim will discuss with AED when they come to do repair work in December.

24.54 Treasurer's report

a) Matters arising: all covered below

b) Income September-October 2024

Anonymous donation of £1,000. PCC needs to decide how to handle this plus previous donation of £20,000, by next meeting.

c) Payments schedule September-October 2024

Nothing exceptional: Lloyds fixed-term deposit at 3.01% was best available; £1,812 for central heating pipe repair.

d) Income and Expenditure to 31/10/24

Excluding May Festival and Youth Worker monies, Income and Expenditure up 5% on a like-for-like comparison to 2023, yielding a Surplus of £2,350. Giving incl. G/Aid up just over £7k (14%); all other income lower than 2023 at this stage, apart from Outlook and Interest; higher Mission costs are due to Messy Church; greater Fuel costs due to purchase timing differences and cost increases.

e) Funds schedule

Overall Funds are up £23.7K and looking healthy. **The PCC agreed** the Organ Fund could be used for things like piano and organ tuning and CCLI expenses.

f) 2024 Forecast

Income up 3% incl. Giving up 9% compared to 2023, with Expenditure up 4% and a healthy Surplus of £3,000, hopefully better. PCC will need to decide where to put this Surplus in Reserves at year-end.

g) 2025 Initial Budget

Income up 6% compared to possible 2024 Forecast and Expenditure up 13% due to potential May Festival monies impacting normal funds rather than Reserves. The Treasurer will be consulting widely as usual.

h) Other

The Treasurer attended a Zoom ACAT conference and picked up some good ideas, and also a Deanery Treasurer's meeting. The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme due to expire in March 2025 unless extended. It was suggested we write to our MPs about it.

(Further information and a draft letter can be found here

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/news/autumn-budget-important-update-uk-churches>)

24.55 Fees & Salaries 2025

A list of proposed fees was tabled. The Treasurer proposed no changes to our own fee rates, although he will review the Organist's fee when he has obtained the latest RSCM pay survey. **The PCC agreed:**

- an annual RSCM subscription of £141 to be paid
- a 3% increase to the Youth worker's salary

- that the Standing Committee should arrange honoraria for Mary Odam and Margaret Mellor in recognition of their musical contributions to worship

24.56 Appointment of an Independent Examiner

Sandy Lloyd is willing to be our Examiner again, and **the PCC approved** his appointment and thank him for carrying out this role.

24.57 Declaration of Members' Benefits

The Treasurer read the paragraph from our Annual Report; there was nothing to declare.

24.58 Charity Commission Registration

A background paper outlining the points for consideration had been circulated.

The PCC agreed:

- Trustee training would be welcomed: Treasurer to look into it
- Documentation: headers/footers and logos should be standardised, and some drafts were considered; information on requirements for financial documentation to be researched by Treasurer and Sandy Lloyd
- Safeguarding: PSO to check all activities and volunteers are adequately covered, especially for new outreach activities
- Email addresses: the use of role-based rather than personal ones was preferred
- Process contacts: Chris Gibson to be Application Contact and Hilary Platts ongoing contact
- Reporting: will be reported when process completed, hopefully by the APCM

24.59 Expenditure Authorisations To be held over to next meeting

24.60 Updates:

Health & Safety: Annual meeting coming up in January; Tim has contacted groups which need to update their Risk Assessments.

Safeguarding: new Diocesan trainer has been appointed, starting in January, so training will be organised. Some DBS checks coming up soon. In future alternate PCC meetings will include a Safeguarding topic for discussion to enable us all to share and learn.

Eco-Church: Gold award application has been submitted. Recent developments – cycle rack, herb box in garden, recycled toilet rolls, communal Christmas card scheme. Some non-environmentally friendly cleaning products are still being purchased and options were discussed. Phase 2 of our Energy Plan (draught-proofing and insulating doors and windows by 2025) needs to be addressed.

24.61 Churchwardens' report

Thanks to everyone who helped with the many events that took place September–November. There has been much positive feedback from those attending.

Vestry roof: going to tender in New Year

Vicarage: new vinyl flooring in kitchen

Monitor screen in hall: being fitted 3rd December. Tim and Kevin to remove noticeboards. Still waiting to hear about grant for sound system upgrade.

24.62 Panel Reports

Pastoral: no matters arising

Social Panel: thanks to retiring members Teresa Rose, Bob Batchelor, Pat Scates (and also to Joan Batchelor and Russell Scates, who always help although not Panel members). Welcome to Anna Ifejika and Linda Roberts who are joining the Panel.

Youth Panel: no matters arising

24.63 Church Events

Past

September 29th:	Chris Yule's last service as Reader
October 6th:	Harvest service and shared lunch
18th:	Mothers' Union Service of Prayer, Praise and Healing
59 gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child collected throughout the month	
November 3rd	Service of Memories
10th	Remembrance Sunday Service and Parish Council light show
11th	Armistice Day Service, refreshments and entertainment
16th	Murder Mystery evening
22nd-23rd	RTU sale

Future

November 30th	Prayer breakfast and Patronal Festival
December 1st	United Service at St Andrew's
8th	Informal Worship
15th	Messy Church
22nd	Carols by candlelight
24th	Crib Service and Midnight Eucharist
25th	Family Holy Communion

24.64 Any Other Business

- Parish Directory: after a discussion of the GDPR implications, **the PCC agreed** that any member of the congregation requesting a copy could have one and they should be encouraged to complete a form for inclusion in the next edition
- Sunday breakfast: the provision of breakfast after the 8am service is greatly appreciated by those attending, but over time it has become more elaborate while the number of volunteers willing to provide it has decreased. **The PCC agreed** that from January a simplified meal (drinks, toast, yogurt?) could be provided and would still offer a valuable opportunity for fellowship. Chris Gibson offered to join the rota.
- Candles at the Carol Service: there was discussion of the safety aspect of giving out individual candles. It was proposed and **the majority of the PCC agreed** that more candles on window sills and a few ceiling lights would be tried out this year.
- Dates of 2025 PCC meetings: Jan. 23rd, March 6th, March 20th APCM, May 22nd, July 24th, Sept. 25th, Nov. 27th
- Awake Suffolk Coastal Mission, September 2025: events and activities for all ages, tailored to our needs and aims. Alan will bring to next PCC.
- **It was agreed** that tokens would be available for people who give by standing order or cheque to put in the weekly collection plate; this was stopped during Covid.
- People are reminded that the Hope Group meetings are confidential, and it is not appropriate to enter the Hall or kitchen while such groups are meeting. It was suggested they are asked to bolt the Hall door when meetings are in progress, and possibly a small fridge could be purchased for the vestry for Open Door use.

The meeting closed with prayers and The Grace at 10.10pm.

The date of the next PCC Meeting is 23rd January 2025