

## PARISH OF ST PETER'S, COLCHESTER

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Monday, March 10, 2025

**Chairman: Rev'd Mark Wallace**

1. Opening Bible Reading and Prayer: Luke 22: 41-42
2. Apologies: John Hartwell
3. Declaration of conflicts of interest: None
4. Minutes of the previous meeting (January 13, 2025)

- a. Approval
- b. Matters arising

5. Short Reports

a. Ministry Report

Due to some concerns about SPK children's behaviour, the PCC may need to have a behaviour policy. The pressure falls particularly on leaders. Some form of training may help.

Without an obvious successor for leading Tiny Tots, the PCC agreed in principle to Lizzie Wallace using 2-3 hours of her Church Administrator time, although ideally someone else would take this on.

b. Churchwardens' Report

c. Fabric, Building, and Redevelopment Report

Andrew Lawn is seeing to the clock while Alan Gray is off sick.

Some painting (gate and railings) is needed.

d. Church Administrator's Report

Sally will be getting a mobile phone to replace the office landline.

**Action: Mark will advise Sally to go ahead with acquiring a mobile phone.**

The PCC agrees to let Sally deal with deposits and discounts for hall hire.

Sally will be on maternity leave from June 16.

e. Safeguarding Report

A diocesan dashboard system, to track progress in safeguarding compliance, is being launched soon. This will involve some work for the Safeguarding Committee, but this may be minimised by the fact that they have already been using a traffic light system. Once in place, the system will allow the PCC to see the data (but not the details) in order to monitor compliance.

f. Finance Report

Richard was thanked for his hard work.

After discussion at Standing Committee, a section on Ministry Support (essentially showing what is available for Mark's employment) has been added to the report.

Since the report was written another £10K has been received and there are other sums to come.

**Proposal (proposed: Richard Lawn; seconded: Anne Kavanagh): That Sally MacArthur (Church Administrator) be issued with a debit card linked to the church current account.**

**Result: Approved.**

**NB:** This process will need to be repeated for Sally's replacement, Lizzie Wallace, at the next PCC meeting.

We have £2K from the Colchester Churches Charitable Trust to spend on children's and youth work, with a requirement to show a missional gain by October.

The money will buy a table tennis table, a screen, and some games.

6. Spotlight Report: Ministry

*Discussion*

Some responses from Mark follow the main points; others are [inserted].

In terms of the 'vine and trellis', there has been a lot of encouragement regarding vine work. Sometimes this doesn't need a lot of resources (e.g., conversations after church; developing relationships with others; and the prayer meetings feed into this). Zoom prayer meetings are very accessible. The prayer meeting offering, of both a face-to-face version and an online version, represents a good hybrid.

Speaking of progression, it's also very encouraging to see people attending church, and moving on to Christianity Explored, then a small group, and putting themselves forward for baptism.

People seem to be coming into a structure that is characterised by support and discipleship. The trellis work is for the benefit of the vine, and may itself need more work. Some (e.g. Wendy) seem to do a great deal, so how can we build capacity and bring peripheral people in?

In terms of practicalities, there's a difference between volunteering a) on a Sunday and b) outside of a Sunday on a regular basis. It's valuable to distinguish between levels of **responsibility, commitment, and reliability**.

Another sign of progress is the £2,000 grant for resourcing SPK and Ignite.

Sally has done a lot regarding No. 5 (*How effective are we at monitoring and evaluating the resources required for different ministries? What changes might we need to introduce at governance level?*).

Catering for the Jericho Road meals is a positive, as is an increased number of children attending.

Presumably increasing SPK resourcing implies finding more leaders, as there are now more volunteers. [We're looking at helpers in terms of converting some into leaders.]

Re No 2 (*Are we currently under-resourced, or over-stretched, or both? What are the key factors contributing to this right now? How do we expect the situation to change in the next 3-5 years?*), Mark is overstretched. What could the PCC and/or the church do to alleviate this? We probably need people to volunteer, but it's not always clear if there's a need.

There's a lack of someone to organise volunteers [although John has been looking at this and meetings are ongoing. Wendy's three levels of distinction (responsibility, commitment, and reliability) are important here.].

We need more people trained up to do things. Bible study groups are growing, but it's difficult to find homes and leaders. [Since Christmas, this has been started. By September we hope to have two more, and Dan hopes to have a group going in April.]

We also need to train for pastoral care: i.e., for a team of people to delegate to / people to get alongside others in order to 'build the body'.

Regarding catering, there are plenty of people who seem to be helping; maybe we could feed this enthusiasm into other areas. Are some of them able to move towards other opportunities and responsibilities?

The fundraiser was an encouragement.

It's notable that there are 20+ people at the prayer meeting before the service on a Sunday.

The resource gaps mentioned in No 7 (Catering; cleaning; SPK/Ignite; buildings maintenance; admin: *Are these problems best viewed as spiritual/resourcing/practical problems?*) are largely practical.

No 2 (*Are we currently under-resourced, or over-stretched, or both? What are the key factors contributing to this right now? How do we expect the situation to change in the next 3-5 years?*) and No 9 (*If our church community (adults and children) continues to grow, what resourcing issues should we expect to encounter in the next 12 months? In the next 5 years?*) are similar: Prediction is impossible.

We seem to be resourced fairly well in general, if slightly under-resourced.

Re No 8 (*How clearly can we articulate the major obstacles or road-blocks to achieving what we want to see at St Peter's?*), it's unclear whether we could articulate a vision (e.g., by a 'mission statement'). It might be useful to look at other churches' mission statements.

In general, not everybody knows all of what's happening / what the needs are / all the work that is (or isn't) going on. Mark is probably best positioned, while others see only parts of the picture.

Some older people may feel left behind by technology (e.g. WhatsApp), so we need to think about communication with these. [This is partly the reason for the new WhatsApp arrangements. There will always be somebody who can't keep up, and PCC members are encouraged to inform Mark or the churchwardens about such instances.]

*Responses (Mark)*

[Others' contributions are inserted]

There has been encouragement over these six months since this list of questions was compiled.

Regarding cleaning, there are a few volunteers now, so a previously big problem has been resolved.

With some, availability becomes tricky, especially when they need to be let in and let out of the building.

The coffee-serving situation *seems* to be over-structured, but ChurchSuite has made it more manageable. [Dividing this into different roles has been helpful.] We could try to apply the catering model elsewhere.

[Being able to tidy up after church, without having to prepare on the same day, is helpful.]

We are looking at a few more teams (e.g., in admin, to help out during Sally's pregnancy; a pastoral team; adding to the cleaning team).

Further progression now needs structures in order to work.

#### 7. Maternity Policy

Thanks to Richard, the PCC now has a maternity policy.

***The PCC approved this document.***

#### 8. Administrator and Fundraiser posts

Lizzie Wallace has been appointed to a joint post, and Richard has prepared a draft contract to cover both roles. She will begin on June 9.

#### 9. Scheduling approval for the Annual Report and Accounts

Because of the dates of the Annual Church Meetings and the next PCC meeting (i.e., in that order), it would be wise to delegate approval to the Standing Committee, which will meet in advance of both.

***This approval is duly delegated.***

#### 10. PCC appointments and elections

The following are reaching the end of their PCC terms: Ed Bradley, Anne Kavanagh, Dan Watts, and there is also another existing vacancy.

The PCC is encouraged to approach others for election.

After 15 years, Richard will be ceasing his service as Treasurer, although he will continue until a successor is found. The PCC owes a great debt of thanks to Richard for his faithful

and conscientious work. As he has been responsible for so much, both strategically and on a daily basis (e.g. payroll payments, Charity Commission requirements, dealing with collections), it may be possible to split his role across a number of people. For example, a 'strategic treasurer' might deal with the bigger picture of financing (and serve on the PCC), while others could help out with the more everyday tasks.

11. Correspondence: None

12. AOB (to be raised with the Chairman before the start of the meeting)

13. Future meetings

- a. Full PCC meetings (7:30 p.m.): May 12, July 7, September 8, November 10
- b. Standing Committee meetings (7 p.m.): April 14, June 2, August 4, October 13, December 8
- c. Annual Church Meetings (AMP & APCM): Wednesday, May 7, 2025

14. Closing Prayers