

PARISH OF ST PETER'S, COLCHESTER

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

held on Monday, July 6, 2026

Chairman: Rev'd Mark Wallace

1. Opening Bible Reading and Prayer: Acts 13: 2-4
2. Apologies: None
3. Declaration of conflicts of interest:
Mark Wallace, as an employee of the PCC.
From the autumn, there will be a form to record PCC Col for the year ahead. This will not preclude the opportunity to declare during a meeting, however.
4. Minutes of the previous meeting (May 11, 2026)
 - a. Approval: The May Minutes were approved and signed.
 - b. Matters arising: None
5. PCC Handbook
 - a. Review
The PCC Handbook is intended to help the PCC meet its governance and Charity Commission responsibilities. Feedback suggests it will be helpful for new PCC members. It can be made available to potential new members before they agree to serve, and will be posted on the church website.
There will be a 3-yearly review process.
A Code of Conduct for the PCC and Church staff is also being written.
The sections of the Handbook were outlined.
Discussion re Section 5 provided an opportunity to confirm the membership of the PCC Governance Groups (constituted to advise the PCC), as below:
Buildings Governance Group: Mark Wallace (Chair), Richard Lawn, David Whittington
Finance Governance Group: Mark Wallace (Chair), Julia Howard, Ann Larkin
HR & Remuneration Governance Group: John Hartwell (Chair), Ed Bradley, Michael Matthew
Risk & Compliance Governance Group: Mark Wallace (Chair), Duncan Breckels, Mick Kavanagh, Anthony Nwosu
Safeguarding Governance Group: Mark Wallace (Chair), Trevor Froude, Annette Long
GG WhatsApp groups need to be updated, with more information coming before September.
 - b. Approval and Adoption
The PCC agreed to adopt the Handbook.
6. Election of PCC Vice-Chair
David Whittington was elected as PCC Vice-Chair.

7. Short reports

Buildings Governance Group

The following will need the consideration of the GG:

- Heating pipe leak: Inspection and repair
- Noodle Bar passageway: To be discussed with the Noodle Bar
- Church Hall door/security
- Church Hall roof
- Hall cleaning: We are struggling to get this done between users
- Insurance report: No comment on risk management

Vicar

The following topics are moot, but questions are postponed for now:

- Communications are tricky; electronic means are not universally popular
- Volunteer capacity, especially for Ignite and Tiny Tots

8. PCC Finances

a. Finance update

Overall, finances are close to the budget income, and there are plenty of reserves. The Church Accounts extract shows a healthy situation.

The restoration fund incurs small but persistent costs, and holds relatively little. Some accessible funding would be helpful to drive the project on, especially if needed with some urgency. An amount from general funds could be made available, within an agreed limit. A £15K loan (for redevelopment) could be moved across; the donor is likely to approve.

Proposal: That up to £20k of unrestricted funds could be used to support a temporary deficit in the regeneration fund to facilitate planning costs, with the expectation that the regeneration fund deficit would be covered in due course by the receipt of future regeneration specific grants.

Result: Approved.

b. Ministry Support Fund appeal

With a requirement of £66K across 3 years, 32 responses have yielded a total of £75K. This represents (half-salary) funding well into 2030, for which John gave thanks.

c. Bank account change

There was no proposal, but the Co-op Bank, Lloyds, and CAF may offer better service than Santander, in particular if the church starts to handle grant monies. Further investigation is needed.

d. PCC Treasurer vacancy

There have been discussions with several people. Some may be willing to take on certain aspects of treasury work, but thus far none is willing to assume overall responsibility.

9. Mission partnerships and charitable giving

This item was prompted by a question at the Annual Meetings. The SC report suggests that the PCC should discuss this in more detail at a later date. ***Mark will write a paper for discussion.***

10. Safeguarding policy

a. Review

After approval in March, an updated version was presented.

In terms of usage by any individual, they should note Part A, and then any other relevant Parts.

The difference between 'approval' and 'implementation' (Section 3) was stressed, as were the main changes (Section 4).

NB: At 4.3, the reporting of child sexual abuse is now a legal requirement.

All PCC members should complete the safeguarding training required for their role.

b. Approval and Adoption

The following proposals were agreed:

PCC approves the revised St Peter's Safeguarding Policy, Parts A-H, as circulated, noting the summary of changes and the outstanding implementation actions set out in this paper.

PCC notes the associated safeguarding implementation actions and related policy work in progress.

11. Documents and Policies

Christina Whittington and Lizzie Wallace are producing drafts of all policies, to enable draft review and approval, and to ensure compliance.

12. Colchester Deanery Day (Saturday, 10th October)

The Deanery Day will be held at St John's, between 10:00 and 15:00. Several people can be invited to attend, but a note can also go into the Update. ***Mark will write to the Deanery, suggesting that a few will attend.***

13. Date of AMP & APCM in 2027

Proposal: Monday, 26th April

Result: Approved

14. Correspondence

a. From the Archdeacon, re SMMIB: The PCC agreed that ***Mark and the Churchwardens should draft a response.***

b. From Stephen Garner, re the bells: All agreed that ***Mark will reply to the effect that, while not raising funds for the bells, we will support bellringers' efforts to do so.***

c. From Annette, re difficulties for some entering the church from the High Street. ***Mark will discuss possible short-term and longer-term responses with the Churchwardens.***

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

The question was asked as to whether tables and chairs for the north aisle will be purchased out of the redevelopment fund. Mark is discussing with the DAC the most economical way to do this.

16. Closing Prayers

Future meetings

- a. Full PCC meetings (7:30 p.m.):
September 14, November 9, January 11, March 8, May 10, July 5, September 13
- b. Standing Committee meetings (6:00 p.m.):
August 10, October 12, December 7, February 8, April 12
- c. Annual Church Meetings (7:30 p.m.): Monday, April 26, 2027