

## **Strictly Private and Confidential**

### **Minutes of Springfield PCC meeting**

20th November 2023 7.45 pm @ St Paul's Church Roundshaw

Present: David Atkinson (Chair), Dave Foulkes (minuting in the absence of Nigel Elderkin), Roger Brodie, Mike Cushion, Jenny de Rougemont, Rob Downer, Janet Downham, Tim Samuel, Kathryn Schofield, David Silcock, Mel Wynn.

**1. Welcome**

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened in prayer.

**2. Apologies**

Cathy Brearley, Sarah Miller, Kitty Olulari, Nigel Elderkin.

**3. Worship**

Janet Downham led a time of worship based on Psalm 96 and a prayer of praise to the Lord.

**4. Good News**

Janet related how, having read the book "Grace Outpouring", she had been thinking about a local "House of Prayer" on Roundshaw when she had been approached by Wendy Samuel to put this into action through prayer-walking on Roundshaw.

Mike mentioned he had been encouraged by a number of Youtube videos where academics who had previously proclaimed themselves atheists were now revising their opinions on divine creation.

Dave reported that the Men's Group had a successful bowls evening which had attracted fringe members of the church and non-churched guests.

**5. Matters Arising not dealt with elsewhere**

The Minutes of the PCC meeting in September were approved by a Council vote on 10th October. There were no other Matters Arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

**6. Ministry Updates**

David referenced the briefing document which he had sent out in advance to Council. Council noted the updates on the new Sunday series, the CAP Life Skills Group, the new Wellbeing & Wonder group, the Youth ministry, and Safeguarding. The feedback from the Diversity training on 18 November was good content but the delivery could have been sharper.

### Mission Giving (RUSH)

Council discussed Mission Giving and RUSH Kenya in the light of the news that International Needs (IN) have broken their ties with RUSH on the grounds of non-compliance with IN policies on managing assets and funding. Mel (looking back on previous minutes) informed Council that there had been a pattern of financial non-compliance issues with RUSH over recent years. Given that Springfield has yet to receive any communication from RUSH explaining the situation from their side, Council agreed that:

- If RUSH ask Springfield directly for money, our position is that we are not able to respond right now due to our giving policy but that RUSH can let us know if their situation changes.
- Jenny, as PCC lead on the MissionGiving Sub, would take the lead in drafting some criteria for Mission Giving but would welcome volunteers from PCC to assist her in the drafting. Once the criteria were drafted, the Church as a whole would be asked to suggest new mission partners where we have a connection (e.g. Open Doors).
- Council would need to consider how to manage the fund (£26k in total) which had been set aside for Mission Giving to RUSH over two years.

### Stanley Park Road

Roger updated Council on 49 Stanley Park Road, confirming that the Ruck family intended to move out on 18 December. Contractors are starting work this week on the works agreed by Council at its meeting in September and local estate agents would be giving their advice on what rent might be achieved on completion of the works. Council noted that it was very likely that there would be a period over Christmas and into 2024 where no tenants would be in the house.

When the property does come on to the market, it would first be offered to members of the church family. Council delegated authority to the Standing Committee to oversee the work on the property in the meantime.

### Bubble Church

Council considered a proposal to create a new Church service for families to engage with, aiming to deliver creative and engaging ways of bringing God into the community. The format, called "Bubble Church", had been successfully developed at Ascension Church Balham and was essentially a set template of a half hour service including action songs, puppets, a Bible story and prayers. Should the proposal be accepted, then Messy Church would become only seasonal to allow most of the Messy Church team to transfer to the Bubble team.

Council welcomed the proposal, particularly because of its set format which would allow the Springfield team of volunteers, led by Luke, to pick up a ready-made successful format and for the cost likely to be covered by grants.

It was proposed that we adopt the scheme in principle, with timescales dependent on discussions later in the meeting on budget and staffing.  
Proposed Jenny de Rougemont, seconded Rob Downer, agreed nem.con

Council paused for prayer before the next agenda item

## 7. **Budget and Staffing**

### Giving campaign feedback

Council noted the faith and sacrificial generosity shown by the church family following the Pledge Sunday in October and re-iterated its thanks to every Springfielder who prayerfully responded. Any measures taken to maintain our level of financial reserves was a result of historical decisions to invest in children and youth work for a fixed period of time and not as a result of a lack of generosity by the Springfield Church family.

### Updates to the paper on Budget and Staffing

The Chair informed Council of two significant developments since the issue of the paper.

Caitlyn Sawyer had submitted her resignation as Youth Pastor with effect from 31 December, believing that God was calling her into adult ministry. Also a church member has indicated to the Treasurer their intention to make a significant donation to the church of £10k to support with the transition to a sustainable budget.

### Reserves

Council noted that two of the reasons why we have hit our threshold level of reserves earlier than expected were due to the challenges of not having a permanent Treasurer had been in place for two years (noting Peter's incredible job in keeping the finances going during this time) and also the transition to a new financial system and team where some transactions were included in the latest reserves balance sheet which should have been designated funds, in particular last year's mission giving underspend and the income on 49 Stanley Park Road.

### Parish Support Fund (PSF)

Council were reminded that it had been agreed at the last meeting to maintain our level of contribution to the Diocese at a level of £73.2k which is a figure not far short of "paying our way" but also means that we may not succeed in obtaining larger grants from the Diocese for future projects where matching our PSF requirement is seen as a precursor to receiving grant funding.

After a full discussion on budgetary and staffing considerations (see below), Council agreed (without a formal vote) not to budget for an extra £2400 to meet our required PSF requirement but to keep our level of contribution to the Diocese at £73.2k for

2024. Should there be implications later in 2024 in terms of grant funding, then this decision would be reviewed.

#### Staff team financial challenges

Council agreed the importance of exploring all possible options for the future staffing requirements of the church, recognising that there are financial obligations the church needs to meet but also that we are not dealing with abstract roles but with beloved people who are core and dear to our church family. The discussions would take into account Caitlyn's departure and the offer of a £10k donation (see above).

#### Staff Christmas Gift

Council agreed, without a formal vote, to give a Christmas gift, as had been budgeted, to all four paid staff at a cost of 4 x £75 to the church. Letters would be sent to staff at the beginning of December to confirm this.

#### Staff Sub-Group

It was proposed to set up a Staff SubGroup, accountable to Council, which would own the process of staff restructuring and draw up job descriptions for the two roles of Administrator and Children/Youth Pastor.

The members of the subgroup would be :

- Roger Brodie
- David Foulkes
- Mike Cushion
- Carol Driver (non PCC member invited to join due to HR experience)
- Diocesan HR adviser (again subject to agreement)

The Chair would also approach Kitty Olulari to serve on the SubGroup

Proposed Tim Samuel, seconded Janet Downham. Agreed nem.con

#### Draft Budget 2024

It was proposed to sign off the draft 2024 budget in principle as a balanced budget. The details within a balanced budget would be agreed by the Standing Committee under delegated authority.

Proposed Mel Wynn, seconded David Foulkes. Agreed nem.con

## 8. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business and the meeting closed in prayer.

Dates of the AGM, PCC and Standing Committee (SC) meetings in 2024:

- 15 January - SC
- 29 January - PCC (worship Jenny de R)
- 26 February - SC
- 25 March - PCC (worship Mike C)
- 29 April - SC
- 19 May AGM
- 10 June - PCC (worship Kathryn S)
- 24 June - SC
- 15 July - PCC (worship David S)
- 16 September - SC
- 30 September - PCC (worship Roger B)
- 14 October - SC
- 25 November - PCC (worship Mel W)
- 2 December - SC