

## RUSHMERE ST ANDREW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Present:** Revd Alan Comfort, Gill Ainslie, Jim Ainslie, Bob Batchelor, Robin Brown, Rachel Daniels, Claire Driver, Joan du Boulay, Chris Gibson, David Gill, Margaret Mellor, Belinda Mottram, Mary Odam, Hilary Platts, Ruth Silburn, Revd Marion Walker, Chris Yule.

**Apologies:** Kevin Brazier, David Yaroslaw.

Revd Alan opened the meeting with prayer.

**26.11 Minutes of the PCC meeting** held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January: item 26.05e was amended to remove some duplicate text and they were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters Arising: 26.01: no progress yet on finding a musician/organist

#### 26.12 Correspondence

- Invitation from the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust to renew our membership (£25 pa). **The PCC agreed.**

#### 26.13 Ministry Team

- The 9.15 service has been going for about 5 months and is steadily attracting new people as well as being supported by regular congregation members. The number of children fluctuates from none to 12. People seem to like the variety of music and activities, Paul's storytelling and the opportunity for responses and prayer time. Will be reviewed in another couple of months.
- Outlook: the new style magazine is now being delivered and has received favourable comments. It was noted there was nothing about Toddler Group and Youth Club. Thank to Tim O. and Steven Gray for their work on Outlook.
- Home Groups joint evening: successful and enjoyable event bringing everyone together. Home Groups and the Explorer's Group are thriving and c.50 people are now in groups.
- Youth Work: Alan has approached the Diocese about the possibility of an Associate Minister to oversee youth work; this could be paid for from the large donation made last year. Alan will report back in May.
- Use of the screen in the 10.30 service: it is being used for notices and occasionally during the service (e.g. to show a film), but using it to display readings or key points of the sermon is being considered. It would not be used for hymns and liturgy.

#### 26.14 May Festival

Plans are progressing, tickets are on sale and the festival booklet is in hand. We were reminded about the festival's main aim of drawing people to faith or helping them to deepen their faith and not just about putting on activities.

#### 26.15 Treasurer's Report

##### a) Matters arising

- 2025 Annual Accounts approved by our Examiner.

- Charity Commission Registration, and investigations into Scottish Power billing and Hall Hire rates still on-going.

b) Income January-February 2026

- Donations: £500 from "The Coffee Fund"; £231 from contactless and on-line; £120 from Notoriety Choir and £100 from East Ipswich Girl Guides for use of Church.
- Events: £551 (less £267 expenses) from Burns Night Supper; £244 from Coffee Morning.
- Other: £212 from Toddler Group autumn term; £830 LPOW vat rebate - N.B. this very valuable scheme has ceased earlier than stated and, as no replacement has been announced, the Vestry Roof repair will now require full funding, likewise future vatable activities and projects. Nb could add £1.5-£2k to cost of roof work.

c) Payments schedule January-February 2026

A quiet 2 months, including:

- Together for Ipswich - £200 to help meet their running costs.
- CCLI licences - substantial rise due to 2 additional licences.
- Jill Comfort - 9 months expenses for Mission and Youth activities.
- DBF - initial 2026 Parish Share payment of 2 months.
- Steven Gray - extra work to set up colour graphics for new Outlook. Nb Printing costs slightly higher than expected at £640 – to be investigated

d) Income & Expenditure to 31/12/25

Income is slightly lower than reported at previous PCC and Expenditure is up slightly, so Surplus down about £400 to £4,468 - still a very good year!

e) Balance Sheet @ 31/12/25

Total is about £250 lower than reported at previous PCC due to reduced 2025 Unrestricted Surplus (now added to Designated Fabric Fund), but with the higher valuation of the Middleditch Endowment Fund.

f) 2026 Budget

**The PCC adopted the Budget** and Chris was thanked for all his work on this

g) Other

Money raised through donations for food at Mission Breakfasts: over time this has accrued to c.£600, and it appears this has been earmarked for donations to visiting speakers at Mission Breakfasts who are not representing a Charity of the Month. Chris will investigate this further.

**26.16 2025 Annual Report and Accounts**

Sandy Lloyd has signed off the 2025 Accounts, and his recommended changes to last year's Annual Report have again been incorporated; format as per usual.

**The PCC approved the Annual Report and Accounts** and pages 4 and 14 were signed and dated.

## 26.17 Updates:

Health & Safety: the PCC was informed of the location of the Emergency Plan and details of items to be salvaged, in preparation for the Vestry and Shed roof work.

Safeguarding: Volunteer Driver Agreement - the Diocese has supplied answers to questions raised at the January PCC. They accepted that it's not possible to have an escort as well as a driver for Lunch Club, and it's reasonable not to if drivers are DBS checked and have safeguarding training; an emergency could be medical or a fall; if drivers do not wish to sign the agreement they cannot drive. It is also required that Drivers inform their insurance company The original Agreement produced at the January PCC has been updated, but the PCC also questioned the feasibility of using one form to cover both Lunch Club and Child passengers.

**The PCC agreed** that the updated Agreement should be used provided that

- any references to Children were removed and
- a similar Agreement for drivers transporting children was produced

It was felt that a Passenger Consent Form was not necessary.

This is Bob's last PCC as our Parish Safeguarding Officer, and he was thanked for his hard work over the past 6 years of leading on this important are of church life.

### Eco Church:

Ruth would like to get the Eco Team meeting again, possibly on a Monday after the Working Party, and also to set up a WhatsApp group for interested parties

Heating: Jim reported on the work he and Tim have been doing. The Vision and Needs Statements and Statement of Significance are ongoing, and a suitable architect to advise on church building insulation and inner lobby projects is being sought. It is possible the hall roof would not support the weight of solar panels but integrated panels (which replace roof tiles) might work, and options and costs are being looked at. We will need to consider fund-raising, as this will help any grant applications. The Treasurer proposed that a Designated Fund be set up in the first instance, with a sum of money to cover this investigatory period – this could be made into a Restricted Fund at a later date. Chris, Jim and Tim to consider.

### Deanery Synod:

Robin Brown reported on the meeting of 24th February on the theme of vocations, covering all aspects of church life – including Ministry, membership of the PCC and Deanery Synod, Churchwardens and Safeguarding. A theme for the next year is Global Majority Heritage ministry. The Ipswich Deanery is to be reshaped in 2027 and consultations are underway.

## 26.18 Churchwardens' Report

- Elections will take place at the APCM for PCC members and Deanery Synod members; it would be good to have some new people come forward, especially those newer to church.
- Inventory: the lectern which was lent to Ipswich Hospital in 2011 cannot be located. Ruth to contact Bruce Wakeling to see if he remembers anything about it.

- Easter: look out for 2 dioramas Paul Hesketh is making (one indoor and one outside) plus two banners made by Maureen Reynel, as well as the usual Easter garden.

### **26.19 Panel reports**

Minutes were presented from the Children and Young People's Group, Pastoral Panel and Social Panel.

### **26.20 Events**

#### Past

Jan 24 Mission breakfast, Messy Church, Burns Night supper  
Feb 10 Home groups joint meeting  
Feb 21 Coffee morning  
Feb 28 Mission breakfast, Messy Church  
March 1 Joint service at Rushmere Baptist Church

#### Future

March 14 RTU Book and Jigsaw sale  
March 15 Mothering Sunday  
March 19 APCM  
March 28 Mission Breakfast, Messy Church  
March 29 - April 5 Holy Week  
April 11 Easter quiz and fish and chip supper  
April 18 Coffee morning  
April 25 Mission Breakfast, Messy Church  
May The Festival!  
May 28 PCC

### **26.21 Any other business**

Dishwasher: an under-counter dishwasher for the hall kitchen has been proposed. **The PCC agreed** that Kevin would get advice from Patrick at Smarttrams (who fitted the kitchen), and that Marion would co-ordinate a group of interested parties to look into kitchen use and requirements, and both would report back to the next PCC.

The meeting closed with prayers and The Grace at 9.50pm.

**The date of the next PCC Meeting is**

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026**