

Minutes of The Eighth Meeting of the 2024/25 Parochial Church Council of St Francis of Assisi held on 26th February 2025 at 8pm in Parish Room

Present: Stuart Richardson Graham Bloye Cathy Bloye Julie Lowes Revd Canon Jenny Fennell John Owen Rob Smith Andrew Watkinson Carol Jager Rachel Basch John Butler Gavin Johnstone

Present On-line: Pui San Apling

Apologies: Jo Dunstan Nikki Clare Sarah Branwhite Tony Porter Nigel Cox

Rev Jenny opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

Rev Jenny started the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from previous meeting held in January 2025

Minutes were accepted with no changes.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

- Roots subscription has expired. Now to renew on hello@ email address.
- Rev Jenny is also leaving us in April 2025, last Sunday is Easter Day. Her new role is in the education sector, working with children and families, this role is funded by the Academy Trust. She will retain her license and work in the cathedral as well as possibly becoming a self-supporting minister. Rev Jenny will be taking two weeks off after Mothering Sunday to move house.
- Process for recruiting a new minister can start as permission has been given to begin profile writing. There is no minimum length of vacancy time required. Wardens and PCC are to find ministers to cover during the vacancy, Jenny will try to find as many as possible before she leaves. The Rural Dean should also be able to help find cover.
- The church is not allowed to change its service pattern while in a vacancy. Visiting ministers could expect expenses to be covered. Salaried ministers only get expenses, retired ministers are allowed to request fees.
- Standing Committee is to meet Monday 3rd March to start discussions on next steps. Any profile written for the vacancy needs to be approved by the PCC.
- Jenny will not attend the PCC in March to allow discussions to continue as after this meeting, there is no further PCC meeting until May.
- It was said that we owe Jenny a tremendous debt of gratitude for her work at St Francis, what she has given the church over the last 15 years has been special.

5. Treasurer's Report

See notes issued ahead of meeting from treasurer.

- Numbers for January are out for all to review
- In February we received £25k in legacy from a parishioner's estate, some of which is to be used for the repair of the Claire Chapel windows.
- As of last week Friday, we were £3k ahead of budget which is good news.
- Cash collections at services are reducing, migration to foyer terminal has been successful
- Church fees are up due to memorial and funeral services, but we still need to pay some of these to the diocese.
- Total income Jan-Feb was £50k

- Costs – bank charges are higher (partly due to banking cash from the Christmas Tree Festival) – cleaning costs are going up by 12% in April, (review being done to see whether we can stop part of the church cleaning).
- Overall, £2400 ahead of budget, expenses £27,748
- Castle Water – the bill was being estimated. Treasurer has resolved with them and paid the £650 true arrears.
- Parish Share – treasurer was due to meet with the diocese, they now want to include the bishop in the meeting. Treasurer to follow up as now we are in vacancy this is very important.

6. Churchwarden's Report

- Electrical Wiring – there is doubt about the wiring in the cellar as the freezer keeps tripping. Electrician to come next week to assess
- Extractor fan in the cellar is broken – electrician will also repair this – cost £360
- Water heater is off again in the church hall – to be repaired tomorrow
- Fascia – Warden knows a handyman to be asked to look at the fascia boards. PCC agrees these can be changed.
- Still chasing Nicolette for the garden work. Hard to find a day which works as we have more hall rentals.

7. Safeguarding

- Diocese has changed its policy on those who have sustained contact with children and vulnerable people – all will be asked to complete the Domestic Abuse training module.
- Volunteer has an extended check which the safeguarding team at St Francis has accepted. It cannot be added formally to the dashboard as the diocese determines they only need a basic check to do the role, which we cannot get as they have an extended one. Notes have been added to the dashboard.
- Wardens asked for a list of those who attend Thursday lunches who have all the necessary safeguarding training.
- Safeguarding survey needs to be done for the whole church, suggestion to leave until after the APCM.

8. Health Safety and Environment

- Query whether risk assessment required for Frankies @ 5 – Jenny suggests adding an amendment to the general services assessment .

9. Policies

- GDPR Policy – accepted by PCC
- CCTV Policy - accepted by PCC
- Expenses & Claims Policy - accepted by PCC
- Website Policy - accepted by PCC
- Lettings Policy - accepted by PCC

10. APCM

- Electoral Role opens this week, leaflets in the foyer explaining how to register. Registration is now also electronic. Closes on 6th April
- PCC vacancies – Warden has spoken to various people.
- NC will not stand again for PCC.
- TP has reached his time and needs to stand down. JL will also be standing down

- Membership of the PCC is set by the diocese, and a church of our size needs 12 elected members.
- No second church warden has been found. However, member of serving team has agreed to have keys and help when needed.

11. Inclusion update

- The inclusion service will be on 23rd March led by Carol and Louise. There will be no YACC.

12. Future events

- AW said there is interest from the art world locally in possibly holding an exhibition in the church. A team was set up comprising to investigate this with the date provisionally set for 25-27th September 2025.
- Two quizzes – March to be led by the Dunstons and October by Rob
- Suggestion to run the June Frankie's as a café style church in the hall with afternoon tea
- Christmas Tree Festival – Scout leader may not be available due to his new job. contact him this week to confirm.

13. Correspondence including Electoral Roll Update

- Electoral Roll: 87 residents and 80 non-residents - 167 in total – no change since the last update.

14. Any Other Business

- Prayer Focus this time to be – for our vacancies – APCM – upcoming community events, that they may bring more people into the church.

The meeting ended with Jenny saying it was a huge privilege to have been at St Francis for the last 15 years and she thanked the PCC for all their help.

Next meeting: Thursday 27th March, 8pm in the Parish Room