

The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham
Parochial Church Council

Full meeting of the PCC on Thursday 22nd January 2026
19:30 in Church



Present: Lorna Dyer (LD); Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW); Nick Grief (NG); Simon Hall (SH); Emi Inetianbor (EI); Davina O'Brien (DOB) – Treasurer; David Ormiston (DO); Linda Randall (LR); Barbara Strachan (BS); Revd Nathan Ward (NW); Terry Whittaker (TW)

In Attendance: Jo Whittaker (JW) – Secretary

PCC MINUTES

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Act of Worship:	
	The meeting opened with Night Prayer.	
2.	Apologies:	
	These were received from Davina O'Brien (DOB) and Jean Penney (JP).	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting on 27th November 2025:	
a.	<u>Approval</u> – Following some minor amendments the minutes of the meeting were adopted unanimously, proposed by NG, and seconded by LD.	
b.	<u>Matters Arising (not included elsewhere):</u>	
i.	Acts Six Lease update – JGW had received an email from the solicitors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCN hoped to extend using a portable building in the old outdoor nursery space; this would require planning permission, and all parties would require notice, including the Diocesan Board of Finance and it was suggested that nothing could move forward until this was received. 2. There might be a need for an alienation clause to be included (JGW was waiting for clarification about this) 3. Acts Six solicitors were still to provide some further information. After a quick discussion it was agreed that the best way forward was to try to arrange an online meeting with all three solicitors. NW would email all parties and get a date in the diary.	NW
ii.	Application to change trust terms – Geoff Marsh had requested a copy of the constitution of the Church Estates Charity. It was suggested that DOB would have this and be asked to send a copy to NW.	DOB/ NW
4.	Safeguarding Dashboard:	
	JP was unwell and unable to provide a report. This was carried over to the next meeting.	
5.	Finance:	
a.	<u>Position against budget, including unusual or unexpected expenditure</u> – TW reported that there was a minor cash flow issue because of the overdue payment of the September lease from Acts Six; this was due to be paid imminently. It was noted that the end of year figures presented at the meeting did not take into account depreciation etc. so would differ to those in the Annual Report & Accounts. There had been no unusual or unexpected expenditure this month.	
i.	Parish Giving Scheme – uptake had been low but for those who had signed up it was working well.	
b.	<u>2026 Parochial Fees</u> – these had risen between 2.5%-4% from 2025. TW proposed that these be adopted – all in favour. There were some additional fees set by the church e.g. digging fee for interments, AV during a funeral/wedding which could be increased in line with the parochial fees. Finance Committee would look at the structure and bring their proposal to the next meeting.	Finance Cttee
6.	Church Overview:	

a.	<u>Solar panels</u> – NW reported that we did not get the initial funding that was applied for, but the DAC faculty had been approved. Listed building consent was required to move forward, and Martin Steele (architect) would undertake this by mid-February. There was a two-year window for the work to start.	
b.	<u>Staffing</u> – the advert had gone out for the contemporary music leader and Russell had been interviewed and appointed. However, for personal reasons he no longer felt able to continue and the advert had gone out again, with an applicant being interviewed the following day. Russell had confirmed he would continue in position until the new person was appointed. NW was also due to have a conversation with someone possibly interested in the children and families worker role. The broader issue of staffing was difficult, with 12 new people attending the 10.30 service the previous weekend, but there being little capacity to follow up and build relationships, but there was overwhelming support and positivity for St Margaret’s on social media. TW was working hard with all the funerals coming in. Church was growing but the infrastructure was not and NW encouraged us to pray for the leaders, to be gentle with one another and to be alert.	
c.	<u>Basic Theology Course</u> - NW advised that it was important as a diverse church to put foundations in place on fundamentals of the Christian faith and was looking at running a course on basic theology. This would not necessarily be a specific teaching discussion group, but sessions could be reproduced and put into a booklet which could then be given out to newcomers. The challenge was where, when, and how these sessions would take place.	NW
d.	<u>Doctorate</u> – NW had been exploring doing a doctorate in ecclesiology. This would start in September 2026 and take about 5/6 years to complete, costing £5.5k a year and requiring two 1-week blocks of tuition per year. NW was asked to leave the meeting to allow the PCC opportunity to consider what part the church could play in making this happen. After a brief discussion it was unanimously agreed that we should support NW in this training and meet the cost. It was noted that this was not creating a precedent but responding to the situation.	Finance Cttee
7.	PRF Update:	
	The committee were due to meet the following week, with all key people involved. Given the project was entering a new phase, it was proposed that the committee members change to accommodate a more technically minded team to take it forward. The proposed main team would be Rob & Vicky Schultz, NW, LD, Martin Steele (architect), Martin Ray (finance work) plus the quantity surveyor. NW had spoken to every member of the current group, and all were happy with the proposed way forward. TW proposed and JGW seconded the proposal which was agreed unanimously.	PRF cttee
8.	Policies:	
	All charities and employers were required to have agreed policies and procedures in place and various proposed documents had been circulated to the PCC prior to the meeting. 90% of these were legal policies. There was a second raft of ‘good to have’ policies still to come. It was noted that once agreed, this created a lot of operational work for implementation. NW thanked JP, TW, and JW for their tireless work in getting us to this point. Time was then spent in going through each policy. After some amendments these were all unanimously adopted by PCC.	
9.	Health and Safety:	
i.	<u>Implementation of the 2019 Fire Risk Assessment and Safety Consultation</u> – after some discussion NG proposed and BS seconded the proposal that the PCC authorise NW to secure a new comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment based on current regulations, and to include the Millennium Centre (at a cost of £1,920 inc. VAT). All in favour.	NW
ii.	<u>MC garden store</u> – proposals included changing the doors to metal doors and/or venting the doors. This would be included in the new fire risk assessment.	
10.	Maintenance:	

	The committee were due to meet this week. The Quinquennial inspection had taken place and the draft report received. There did not appear to be anything of any concern. This would be circulated to PCC once the final report was received.	
11.	Correspondence (if any):	
a.	Energy Footprint Tool – this had been received from the diocese and needed to be submitted. NW to liaise with DOB and the Churchwardens.	NW/LR/ SH/DOB
b.	NW distributed papers relating to legal advice from the solicitors on the children and families worker contract. There were no major red flags but it required some ‘tidying up.’ The diocesan project manager was waiting to speak to the diocesan secretary to confirm what happens next.	
12.	AOB (to be notified to the Chair prior to the meeting):	
a.	Standing Committee decisions (if any): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC had agreed via email that legal advice be taken regarding the children and families worker contract 	
b.	<u>Baby Loss Memorial</u> – there had been some discussions about having a memorial in the churchyard for those who had lost a baby, where there were no remains. One of the 8 o’clock congregation members was an artist and had put together a proposal to create a sculpture memorial ready for baby loss awareness week, together with mini versions to be given to families during the week. The estimated cost was £2,870. It was noted that there could be external funding available for this. After discussion of the proposal and drawings, PCC agreed to continue exploring this and NW was tasked with working with the artist and preparing a faculty ready for October.	NW
c.	<u>Memorial Book in the chapel</u> – it had been noticed that the pages were not always turned and on the correct date. JP to ask Ana to put this on her list of working practices.	JP
13.	Dates of Next Meeting:	
	All meetings at 19:30 in Church: Thursday 26 th February Thursday 19 th March Thursday 16 th April (*note change of date from 23rd*) APCM – Tuesday 28 th April Thursday 21 st May (*note change from usual pattern*) Thursday 25 th June Thursday 23 rd July	
14.	Closing Act of Worship:	
	The meeting ended at 22.14 with the final part of Night Prayer.	