

Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting

24 September 2025 in Holy Trinity Church

Those present:

Rosemary Brewerton, Mark Coundley, Lucy Docherty, Revd. Catherine Edenborough, Charlotte Farrell, Sue Hall, Donna Irving, Alison Jacobs, Sue Marshall, Jim Palmer (chair), Rowena Palmer, James Rowland, Robert Turner, Jane Whiteley

The meeting commenced with a short prayer.

1. Covenanting and Highlight of Responsibilities

A reminder was expressed to those present about the confidentiality of proceedings and that information must not be divulged externally.

2. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of interest:

Apologies were received from Emma Bourner, Mandy Crockford, Revd. Sam Cullen, Steve Ellis, Jules Harris.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Approve Minutes of PCC Meeting on 29 July 2025

These were accepted as a true record by the PCC on 7th August.

4. Matters Arising from previous PCC meeting of 29/7/25

a. List of helpful phone numbers to be displayed

Still outstanding.

b. Emergency contact forms at SC, individual conversations needed

Still ongoing, although more have been received. These will need to be made available online.

c. Parish name change, amending all documents

Awaiting formal approval.

d. Small group to be formed to drive Stewardship campaign

The Generosity Week leaflets have been received and will be circulated at the Generosity Service at both churches this weekend. At a recent, SCCC meeting, it was decided to start using the offertory plate again.

5. Safeguarding Matters

Live streaming permission documents need to be updated.

6. Main Agenda Item – St Columba Re-development (30 minutes)

To discuss the future of St Columba and agree a way forward.

Jim Palmer read the following statement:

“For several months, the St Columba Church Committee have been talking about our future in Northwest Fareham. You’ll be aware that we had hoped to sell the existing building and some of the land and then re-build on the edge of the site, using the proceeds of that sale. However, at a meeting earlier in the year, the Diocese advised us that in anything we did going forward, we would need to demonstrate value for money, demonstrate social value and justify building a new church.

With a worshipping community of around 30 and an ageing demographic, we were unanimous on the Committee in believing that we simply aren’t able to justify building a new church.

Our architect advises that fixing the problems in the existing building (including asbestos, insulation, heating and a time-expired roof) would likely cost more than a new building and, even if we did re-build or re-fit the church, we are struggling to find the people resources to maintain and run the church.

So, after much deliberation and soul-searching, the Church Committee have reached the difficult decision to recommend to the PCC that we close our building and sell the site. That said, we are passionate about maintaining a presence in this part of Fareham. We want to continue being St Columba church and we are keen to use funding from the sale of the site to develop and increase our mission to this part of Fareham, maybe by funding a youth worker.

We plan to meet to worship elsewhere in the area and have been exploring options. We have been talking with St Columba Primary School around the corner. We have a good relationship with the school and already have a presence there through Abi, as our Community Worker, and through Family Church. The school have advised they would be very happy for us to use the School Hall on Sundays. They will let us put some storage and an altar in the hall, so our sacred items could come with us. And there is parking. So, it’s an attractive option.

We have also been looking at the new community centre that Fareham Borough Council are planning to build adjacent to the Henry Cort School

site in a couple of years' time. There is potential to influence the design at the moment and for hiring a range of sizes of space there when it is built.

As we move forward, there are things we will need to do straight away. There are rumours circulating already, so we need to move quickly.

- We need to talk to our congregations on Sunday, to let them know what the PCC have decided. We have a meeting arranged already at St C but we believe an announcement is sufficient at HT.
- We must email our Hirers and Community Groups to let them know at the same time, offering face-to face meetings. We will commit to supporting them in finding new locations to hire.
- We must also let the local community know, maybe through the local Council and through a press release. We are seeking advice from the Diocese on how best to do this.

We need to consult over timings in the longer term, but we feel we need to have moved and closed the church by 2030. The new Community Centre is expected to open in around 2028.

Please could I ask you to note the sensitivity of this topic and ask that you discuss it with no one until after the announcement after the services on Sunday.

I would therefore like to propose to the PCC that the St Columba church building is closed, and the site sold”.

Both churches' congregations will be informed at the same time on Sunday, 28th September.

A press release is expected on Monday, 29th September from Neil Pugmire¹. Emails to church user groups will be sent out after the service on Sunday by Jim Palmer.

Sue Marshall asked if it was the whole site including the vicarage was being sold :

Jim Palmer stated that the formal legal position is still unclear but that the Vicarage is defined as a Parsonage and is overseen by the Diocesan Parsonages Board, so may be quite complex to deal with.

A number of suggestions were tabled, such as:

- Having discussions with the Funtley community about when their church closed.
- Looking at the Hope Church in Whiteley and how they function being part of a school.

¹ Post Meeting Note: The Diocese have asked that we don't issue a press release until further discussions have taken place with the Diocesan team.

- Revd Richard England had spoken to Revd. Sam about the possibility of looking at a “planting partnership”.
- Lucy Docherty thought it was important to discuss this with Diocesan team.

Jim Palmer explained that it would also be important to create a memory book and special stories.

Some of the community groups may be able to use the Hill Park Baptist church, as they did when the hall closed and when the church was being refurbished.

Jim Palmer proposed that St Columba church building is closed, and the site sold. This was seconded by Rowena Palmer

ALL AGREED

7. Fun Break

A time of quiet prayer and reflection took place, so the activity was postponed until the next meeting.

8. Finance

HBWB Fund:

This matter has previously been discussed regarding the selling of the shares and amalgamating them into one account. The forms have been completed for the Diocese. There are two minutes which require approval:

- The PCC approves the sale of the following shares held by the Diocese of Portsmouth for the HBWB Fund in the Parish of Holy Trinity w St Columba, Fareham:

Code	Number	Name of Share	Value at 31.8.25 £	Reference
GSK.L	240	GLAXO	3,538.80	11470081787
HLN.L	300	Haleon	1,088.70	11468644534
IBE.MC	416	IBERDROLA	5,807.36	10299571522
NG.L	654	National Grid Plc	6,808.14	11177718085
NG.L	1076	National Grid Plc	11,201.16	11160404679
SHEL.L	344	SHELL "B"	9,370.56	10630499485
UU.L	618	UNITED UTILITIES	7,107.00	10657187045
Total			44,921.72	

Any remaining Dividends to be paid to: Lloyds Bank.
 Acc name: PCC Holy Trinity HBWB TRUST
 Sort Code: 30-93-17:
 Acc No: 03578586

The Sales proceeds to be paid to the new CCLA Investment Acc: **CB1009835 – Holy Trinity WST Columba PCC – Helen Butter Waddell – Boyd Will Trust.**

- b. The PCC approves the following transfers of HBWB Investment Accounts, held by the Diocese of Portsmouth for the HBWB Fund in the Parish of Holy Trinity w St Columba, Fareham:

£	Acc No	
36,946.06	CB3013032	CBF CoE Short Duration Bond fund
151,991.19	CB3012823	CBF CoE Global Equity Fund Inc
34,221.38	CB3012867	CBF CoE Prop Fund Inc

The balances of all these accounts to be transferred to the new CCLA Investment Acc **CB1009835 – Holy Trinity WST Columba PCC – Helen Butter Waddell – Boyd Will Trust.**

These were proposed by Mark Coundley and seconded by Donna Irving.

ALL AGREED

9. To formally approve Tessa Harrison for training in the role of Anna Friend

Proposed by Sue Hall and seconded by Lucy Docherty. The meeting expressed their thanks to Tessa for stepping up.

ALL AGREED

10. Health and Safety

- a. Holy Trinity

The drain covers sunk, work to repair is in hand.

The tape on the carpet in the chancel area has been noted as a tripping hazard, MC to make safe.

Sue Hall mentioned that a parent has asked about whether there would be security lights on the patio over the fire exits? MC is aware of this, and this will be completed after the windows are finished.

Leaky guttering to be repaired.

- b. St Columba

The leaning tree leaning has been removed. Revd. Sam approved an urgent £650 spend for a tree surgeon to cut this down and check the condition of the other trees.

Car park surface: a working party has been set up to spread the scalplings on the 11th October.

11. Building, Fabric and Net Zero Reports

HT net zero report has been received and lists items, such as, more draught proofing, LED “A” rated light bulbs, heating systems (heat pumps) which will also act as air conditioning in the summer. These were items we had already established. Sue Marshall asked what happened to the £10K grant? Mark Coundley advised this had been spent on the energy audits.

Heat pads awaited.

Bob Turner advised that the window glass was due in on Monday, 29th. He also noted that there was damage being caused by water ingress and whether we could use a tarpaulin? Mark Coundley advised that we were waiting for feedback from the builders, who are returning to site in October. Mark will request an investigation.

ACTION: MC

12. Other Reports and Resources

Discussed at separate Church Committees and reports available on SharePoint although Sue Hall wanted to highlight the proposed new arrangements for Lent Lunches this year. “Churches will all take a share on doing the Lent Lunches, probably at the URC (tbc). All churches would be asked to support one day within the lent lunches period.

Also, Pete and Sue Hall will be at the Podium in Fareham on the 20th December and are asking for volunteers to support.

13. Events

Sam C highlighted the following events taking place:-

- a. Harvest Festival Beetle Drive, 3rd October, St Columba
- b. Quiet Day at Shedfield, 1st November.
- c. St Columba Church Committee (SCCC), 3rd November, venue tbc
- d. Holy Trinity Church Committee (HTCC), 4th November, Holy Trinity
- e. Churches Together in Fareham (CTiF), 6th November, Fareham URC
- f. St Columba Christmas Fair 10am-1pm, 22nd November, St Columba
- g. Churches Together in Fareham (CTiF) Christingle Stall, 22nd November, Fareham Town Centre – Volunteers needed
- h. Carols at the Podium 10am-12pm, 20th December, Fareham Podium – Volunteers needed
- i. Christmas Day Lunch, 25th December, Cams Hill School
- j. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service 4pm, 18th January, 2026, venue tbc
- k. Churches Together in Fareham (CTiF) AGM, 3rd February, Fareham URC
- l. World Day of Prayer, 6th March, Host Church: St John’s
- m. Lent Study Course begins, 23rd February
- n. Lent Lunches, venue and arrangement tbd on 6th Nov meeting
- o. Good Friday Service of Witness, 3rd April, led by St John’s

Christmas Services:-

Crib Service and Christmas Eve Carol Service, 24th December, Holy Trinity**

Parish Carol Service, date tbc, St Columba**

Joint Christmas Day Service, 25th December, Holy Trinity

Joint Sunday Service, 28th December, St Columba

**It was noted there was no mention of a “carols by candlelight” service at St Columba this year. Various members of St Columba attending this meeting stressed that this was an important service in the churches’ calendar and was very well supported each year. It was decided to take this to the next Worship Team Meeting.

No Midnight Service at St Columba, (tbc at Worship Team Meeting)

14. Any Other Business

None.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next PCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, 26th November, 2025 at Holy Trinity.

16. Closing Prayers

The meeting closed with the grace.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates for future meetings are as follows:-

Wednesday, 26 th November, 2025	at Holy Trinity
Tuesday, 27 th January, 2026	at St Columba
Wednesday, 25 th March, 2026	at Holy Trinity

Zoom meeting to be arranged to approve these minutes if required.

These Minutes were approved by the PCC as a true record on 21 October 2025 (via Zoom).

Signed by the Chair

Revd Sam Cullen