

**CHAPTER MINUTES**

Minutes of the 245th Chapter Meeting
Tuesday 1 October 2024 at 3.00 pm

Chapter Room

**Present:** The Very Rev’d Joe Hawes, Co-Chair (JPH)

Mark Pendlington, Co-Chair (MP)

Archdeacon Sally Gaze (SG)

Sue Hughes (SH)

Jaime Mellows (JM)

Barbara Pycraft (BP)

Paul Torrington (PT*)*

The Rev’d Canon Matthew Vernon (MV)

Jane Haviland Webster (JHW)

**In Attendance:** Stewart Alderman (SA)

Sarah-Jane Allison (SJA) *via Zoom*

The Rev’d Anita Rooney (AR)

Christine Stokes (CS) *via Zoom*

 Erin Seligman (Clerk to Chapter)

1. **Prayers and Welcome**
	1. The Dean (JPH) opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
	1. Apologies were received from Terry Stark.
3. **Conflicts of Interest** (No conflicts noted.)
4. **Notification of AOB**

4.1 JPH will provide a brief update from the Smaller Cathedrals Seminar he recently attended in Leicester.

1. **Correspondence** (No correspondence received.)
2. **The Dean’s Report**
	1. **Staff**
		1. With pride and sadness, JPH announced the Rev’d Anita Rooney (AR) will leave her post as the Cathedral Curate in January to take up a new position as Rector of the Horringer Benefice.
		2. The Cathedral will renew the precentor interview process after the New Year and expects to have a person in post after Easter.
		3. The Rev’d Dr Victoria Johnson will be installed as a Chapter non-executive member and Canon Theologian at Choral Evensong on 17 November.
	2. **Kevelaer**
		1. Following two successful visits recently, conversations on how to develop a richer ecumenical relationship with the shrine of Our Lady of Kevelaer is underway. Organising choir visits in 2025/26 and embedding pilgrimages into the Heritage Fund Project are also under consideration.
3. **Sustainability**
	1. **The Heritage Fund Project**
		1. Chapter received minutes from the 4 September and 24 July Project Board meetings.
		2. Chapter received an outline of the Heritage Project’s Communication Plan. Chapter noted the plan refers to West Suffolk but should be a wider narrative given West Suffolk Council’s desire to forage county-wide links to include Sutton Hoo. Christine Stokes (CS) will develop and oversee the marketing and communication plan, but Catherine Rayson, the Cathedral’s marketing manager, will help take it forward.
		3. Chapter received a Fundraising Framework for review. Feedback from focus groups will be used to produce a fundraising prospective to include how supporters will be thanked and recognised. The Cathedral’s Fabric and Advisory Committee and the Cathedrals Fabric Commission to be included in these conversations. Again, CS will oversee this plan with Project Manager James Mellish with support from Katie Schutte, the Cathedral’s fundraising manager.
		4. Once all the project consultants are in place JPH will begin fundraising for the £1.9 million needed to help develop The Heritage Project.
	2. **Finance**
		1. This Heritage Project is already requiring much time and energy for the Dean, Sub Dean and additional staff members, and from a financial point of view will bring new complexities and dwarf all other fundraising schemes for a considerable amount of time.
		2. The Cathedral has begun claiming reimbursement for Heritage Project-related costs (e.g. staff hours).
		3. To help break a habit of Cathedral departments working within individual “silos,” Paul Torrington (PT) is calling for those responsible for income generation to meet together on a regular basis to enhance communication and share ideas.
		4. Chapter received August month-end financial reports. Enterprises again exceeded its budget by £5k.
		5. 3 Crown Street has yet to sell and is incurring unbudgeted costs (e.g. solicitor fees, repairs and maintenance) and the lack of a sale is further delaying refurbishment of the Deanery. As the Cathedral is now a registered charity, securing a more favourable Charity Bank loan to fund the Deanery refurbishment until 3 Crown Street is sold may be a viable option. A working party consisting of SJA, PT, MP and Sue Hughes (SH) will review terms of the loan and make a recommendation to Chapter via email.

7.2.6 Visitor donations for 2024 total about £76k to date, compared to £50k this same time last year. While the Welcome Assistants have caused a noticeable uplift in monthly donations, they will still not be able to make up for the first three months of the year when the Welcomers were not yet in place. Therefore, year-end projections still reflect a £20k loss.

7.2.7 September was another fantastic month for Enterprises. Cash flow is holding back slightly, but the Enterprises Board is still expected to make a donation to the Cathedral.

7.2.8 JPH provided an update on the recent Smaller Cathedrals Seminar, noting smaller cathedrals have made great strides to recover post pandemic, but still struggle with limited resources, reserves and property profiles. Available Church Commissioner grants for staffing are a great help, but funding ends within a couple years leaving cathedrals to either absorb those salary costs or make those positions redundant. On behalf of smaller cathedrals, JPH has written to the Church Commissioners to seek additional financial support.

7.2.9 Lovewell Blake Charted Accountants will be unable to audit the Cathedral’s accounts this year as their workload is at capacity. This will not present an issue as the Cathedral was already preparing to go to tender for a new auditor.

7.2.10 Refurbishment of the final Angel Hill flat is nearly complete, and the property will be advertised for let soon.

**7.3 Worship & Building Update**

7.3.1 Chapter received a copy of the Chorister Handbook, a requirement for next year’s safeguarding audit, for review. Barbara Pycraft (BP) noted safety concerns/issues within the Cathedral Car Park on rehearsal days and suggested the handbook invite parents to find an alternate location to pick up and drop off choristers.

* 1. **Order of St Edmund**

7.4.1 The Bishop seeks to appoint Clare, Countess of Euston to the Order of St Edmund. Chapter **agreed**.

* 1. **Risk Management**

7.5.1 Chapter received the Financial Management Policy and Standing Orders for review.

7.5.2 Chapter received the Statement of Delegated Authority approved by the Finance Committee.

7.5.3 Chapter received the Risk Register due to be updated this year. SJA has called for the document to be utilised in a better way and for certain risks to be explored in-depth by a small working party.

7.5.4 The lack of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), particularly as the Cathedral expands and becomes more complex with The Heritage Fund project, has been identified as a potential risk. An application for funding for a CFO will be submitted to the Church Commissioners.

7.5.5 A working party will be organised to focus on succession planning, especially in light of the upcoming retirements of several staff members. PT, JHW and Stewart Alderman to assist with this workstream. Uniting with other cathedrals to combine administrative duties was suggested but would be difficult to achieve given each cathedral is so different and geographically far apart.

* 1. **Safeguarding**
		1. Chapter received early commentary on the five cathedrals that have already undergone the INEQE audit. The Safeguarding Committee has reviewed the comments in preparation for the Cathedral’s 2025 audit. Renewing our Masterplan and including more emphasis re: safeguarding is needed ahead of the audit and the Safeguarding Committee will help take that forward.
	2. **Policies**
		1. Chapter **approved** the Managing Sickness and Absence Procedures. Return to work meetings will now be held with
		2. Chapter **approved** the Absence Policy.
1. **Governance**
	1. Chapter **approved** the nomination of Jill Merriam as foundation governor of St Edmundsbury Church of England Primary School.
	2. Chapter **approved** the nomination of Neil Parsons to join the Nomination Committee.
2. **Minutes and Reports**
	1. **Chapter received the Chapter Minutes**
		1. The Chapter and Confidential minutes from the 23 July meeting were amended and approved.
		2. The Action Log was reviewed, and any outstanding actions noted.
	2. **Matters Arising**
	3. **Chapter received the minutes from the 3 July Forum meeting.**

9.3.1 Forum has unanimously agreed the Cathedral should increase its annual donations to charities. MV will bring this to Senior Management for discussion.

* 1. **Chapter received the minutes from the Friends of St Edmundsbury Cathedral’s 8 May meeting and 6 July7 annual general meeting.**
	2. **Chapter received the minutes from the 27 August Information Protection Group meeting.**
	3. **Chapter received the minutes from the Association of English Cathedral’s 18 June Annual General Meeting and the 4 September Executive Meeting.**
	4. **Chapter received the minutes from the 16 July Ancient Library Committee meeting.**
1. **Any Other Business**
2. **Confidential Items**

1. **2025 Meeting Dates**
* Monday 20 January 3.00-5.00pm
* Tuesday 18 March 1.00-3.00pm
* Thursday 8 May 1.00-3.00pm
* Wednesday 18 June Greater Chapter 3.00-8.00pm
* Monday 21 July 3.00-5.00pm
* Monday 6 October 3.00-5.00pm
* Wednesday 5 November 1.00-3.00pm

Chapter meeting concluded with prayer at 5.13 pm.