

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC
held on Tuesday 13 May 2014 at 7.45 pm in St Matthew's, Harwell

Present

Jonathan Mobey (Chair)	Tony Hughes	Roz Shipp
Jane Woolley (Secretary)	Monika Buxton (from part-way through item 4)	
Liz Roberts (up to just before item 13)	Mel Gibson	

1. Opening & Prayer

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read Psalm 133 (“when brothers live together in harmony”)

Jonathan explained that the oil used to anoint a priest represents the Holy Spirit, which God gives to us all. The way that the PCC leads the wider church is very visible. If the PCC is in harmony then this has a ripple effect on the rest of the church.

Jonathan then led the PCC in prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Allan Macarthur, Peter Barclay-Watt, Lizi Bowerman, Gordon Gill and Pam Rolls.

3. Minutes of the March 2014 meeting

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 5 March 2014 were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

i) Christian Aid – publicise the decision and rationale for ceasing door to door collections, and highlight other ways in which people can give to Christian Aid – Jonathan Mobey

Jonathan reported that he had written extensively about Christian Aid in the May Broadsheet “Rector’s Letter”, although he didn’t go into the rationale for ceasing door to door collections as such.

Tony Hughes commented that not everyone had taken in the announcement because he was asked by several people why there was no street collection. So, with hindsight, the change could possibly have been more widely publicised. Mel Gibson commented that some people did donate via the Christian Aid envelopes at last Sunday’s service.

Liz Roberts queried whether we intend to continue to send a St Matthew’s representative to the local Christian Aid Committee now that Mary Hanley is no longer our representative.

Further action agreed:

Action: Jonathan Mobey to ask Pam Rolls if she would be prepared to represent the Benefice (as opposed to just All Saints’) on the local Christian Aid Committee, which she already attends.

ii) Christian Aid – outstanding action:

Action: Jonathan Mobey to encourage those who have expressed an interest in running other fund-raising ventures for Christian Aid to meet to discuss and plan these as appropriate, but for such events only to be run if judged not to be detracting from or ‘competing’ with other church activities and mission giving priorities. Jonathan to liaise with Mary Hanley about this in the first instance.

iii) **Harwell Feast – Jane Woolley to co-ordinate the labour for the Feast BBQ**

This is in hand.

iv) **Stewardship – Liz Roberts and Mel Gibson to draft a “Friends” leaflet, with support with financial content from Peter Barclay-Watt**

Mel Gibson and Tony Hughes thanked Liz Roberts for her help with preparing a draft Friends leaflet. Tony Hughes reported that the main contact he has found in the USA is the co-author of a book about the Harwell family migration and an academic at the University of Arkansas. It was agreed that the Rector could now send the draft leaflet to the contact for comment and advice.

Further action agreed:

Action: Tony Hughes to draft a covering letter for **Jonathan Mobey** to send to the main USA contact along with the draft Friends leaflet, and asking the contact for her feedback on the leaflet and her thoughts on how best to make the Friends scheme known to USA Harwells.

v) **Annual Report – Liz Roberts to prepare an abridged version of the Annual Report**

Done for both churches (Avril Butler did All Saints'). Liz Roberts wants to give the St Matthew's one a last look over, and then both will be ready to go on the website.

Further action agreed:

Action: Liz Roberts to send a pdf of both abridged Annual Reports to Jonathan Mobey.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to load them onto the website – either as a pdf or as a web page.

vi) **Letters of thanks; preparations for annual meeting; Mothering Sunday posies**

All actioned.

5. Reflections on APCM

Jonathan Mobey highlighted that we still have quite a few unfilled PCC vacancies, but that we can co-opt up to two PCC members during the year. Tony Hughes commented that it is a pity that no one came forward to fill these vacancies. Mel Gibson said that he approached several people and all of them cited lack of time/other time pressures as a reason for declining to be nominated. Jonathan Mobey wondered if he himself could have done more to highlight the importance of the PCC in the run up to the Annual Meetings.

Jonathan Mobey said that he had come across the idea of having the Annual Meetings during a Sunday service. This would have the advantage of bringing the proceedings more into the mainstream of the church. It could also help people to see being on the PCC as ministry. Also some people find evenings meetings difficult to attend. PCC members thought this idea had merit and was worth exploring further.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to enquire about any ready-made format for incorporating the Annual Meetings into a Sunday service

Action: Jonathan Mobey to mention the idea to All Saints' too.

Action: Jonathan Mobey and Jane Woolley to look in more detail at the best timing for such a service in 2015, given when Easter and school holidays fall, and allowing sufficient time to prepare and circulate an Annual Report, etc. in advance.

Action: Jane Woolley to identify the compulsory proceedings of the Annual Meetings, with a view to cutting the formalities down to the bare minimum to make it more feasible to incorporate the meetings into a service setting.

6. Election/appointment of officers

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing officers. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue.

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the posts listed. None was forthcoming.

It was noted that Elizabeth Gill is prepared to serve as Bookkeeper up until 31 December 2014, and that Peter Barclay-Watt feels that it would not be feasible for him to continue as Treasurer unless Elizabeth is replaced. This is due to Peter's absence in Scotland for a large part of the year.

Action: Mel Gibson to raise the issue of replacing Elizabeth Gill as book keeper by the end of 2014 at the next Finance Committee meeting.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following roles:				
	Vice Chair			Allan Macarthur	
	Treasurer			Peter Barclay-Watt	
	Secretary			Jane Woolley	
	Churchwarden deputies			Allan Macarthur Tim Roberts Ruth Slatter Frances Taylor	
Bookkeeper			Elizabeth Gill		
Electoral Roll Officer			Mike Pepper		
Gift Aid Secretary			Peter Barclay-Watt		
Stewardship Secretary			Ruth Slatter		
Social Secretary			Monika Buxton		
Concerts managers			Monika Buxton Roz Shipp Liz Roberts Tim Roberts		
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

7. Election/appointment of members of committees

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing committee members. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue.

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the posts listed. None was forthcoming.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following committees:				
	Finance & Budget	Peter Barclay-Watt (Chair) Elizabeth Gill Mel Gibson			
	Buildings	Tony Hughes (Chair) Roz Shipp Mel Gibson David Pyke Philip Roberts Mandy Birkinshaw			
	Church Hall Management	Tim Roberts (Chair) Roz Shipp Anne Gill Wendy Sinclair Monika Buxton			
	Standing Committee and JPC	PCC Vice Chair, Allan Macarthur PCC Secretary, Jane Woolley (Rector, Churchwardens, and Treasurer are automatic members)			
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

8. Election/appointment of representatives to organisations

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing representatives. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue. They were all willing, with one exception:

- Peter Barclay-Watt is standing down as a representative on the Harwell Charities Trust. He was only a representative during the interregnum. Jonathan Mobey is now St Matthew's ex-officio representative and so Peter does not need to be replaced.

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the other posts listed. None was forthcoming.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people as representatives to the following organisations:				
	Our Street Corner			David Woolley	
	Churches Together in Didcot and District			Jonathan Mobey	
	Village Hall Management Committee			Monika Buxton	
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

Action: Jane Woolley to double check with Howard Cattermole at the diocese office which clergy and “lay workers” should be ex-officio PCC members. Currently only Pam Rolls and Jonathan Mobey are invited to attend PCC meetings in this capacity.

9. Finance Committee Report

The following queries/clarifications were raised and answered in Peter Barclay-Watt’s absence:

- Legacy received – The £15k referred to in the commentary report – this is the first instalment of a much larger legacy
- Domain name expenditure referred to in the commentary report – this is for the harwellandchiltonchuches.org.uk domain name
- Donations/pledges received for C&FW – the £36k referred to in the commentary report – this is for St Matthew’s and All Saints’ combined, not St Matthew’s alone

Post meeting correction to the last point above: The Bookkeeper, Elizabeth Gill, pointed out after the meeting that the £36k is just what St Matthew’s has raised. At the March PCC meeting, it was reported that c.£18k had been recently raised by St Matthew’s, and c.£10k by All Saints’. There was also an initial pledge of £4k pa or £12k across the three-year appointment, from someone in Harwell. So the total raised in Harwell by the March meeting was £18k + £12k = £30k. Since then, therefore, a further c.£6k has been raised/pledged from St Matthew’s, bringing the St Matthew’s current total to c.£36k, which includes gift-aid. By way of completeness, the All Saints’ Treasurer, Stuart Gibson, reports that All Saints’ has now raised c,£18k. So the combined total raised so far across the benefice is c£36k + c.£18k = c£54k including gift aid. We need £90k to fund a three year C&FW contract (£30k from All Saints’ + £60k from St Matthew’s).

10. Registration with Charities Commission

The Secretary explained that we need to register with the Charities Commission because PCC income is likely to stay in excess of £100k pa. The Secretary is carrying out the registration. There were no questions about this.

PCC members need to sign a communal trustee declaration form to enable the Secretary to complete registration. Those who were present signed this.

Once St Matthew’s is registered, we will need to state that we are a registered charity on relevant documents e.g. on letters, appeal leaflets, receipts, invoices, website, and apparently even on cheques.

Action: Jane Woolley to complete the registration process

Action: Jane Woolley to alert relevant people about needing to state on documents that we are a registered charity

11. Buildings Committee report

Update Paper K was noted.

Resolutions	<p>1. That, following the approved seating trial from November 2013 to February 2014, the two long pews in the front row of the nave be replaced permanently by chairs;</p> <p>2. That the two long pews be offered for sale, but disposed of if there are no prospective purchasers after a period of three months.</p>				
Moved	Roz Shipp	Seconded	Liz Roberts	Passed	unanimously

12. Church Hall Management Committee report

Update Paper L was noted. Roz Shipp highlighted that private bookings had been particularly strong so far this year. Roz attributed this to better advertising e.g. in Harwell News, as well as word of mouth recommendation. There will also be an advert in the Feast programme.

Action: Liz Roberts to pass Roz Shipp's details to those organising the programme booklet for the Harwell School Summer Fair

Action: Roz Shipp to reinstate the advert for the Church Hall on the TV screen at Bob's Butchers

13. Improving the interior of St Matthew's

Resolution	To set up in due course a Heating Project Working Group which would report in to the PCC				
Moved	Jonathan Mobey	Seconded	Jane Woolley	Passed	Unanimously

Tony Hughes reported that there are as yet no volunteers identified to take forward the other two actions agreed in principle at the March 2014 meeting, namely (1) to conduct a 'market study' of what could be strategically and realistically planned for extended use of the church and (2) to investigate and recommend the best chair type for St Matthew's.

Tony Hughes suggested that it is preferable for the 'market study' to be carried out sooner rather than later because of the implications for decisions on heating. Otherwise the Heating Project will be held up. He had discussed the scope of the work with Jane Woolley and Liz Roberts and the names of one or two people who might be approached to take the lead had been mentioned. Jonathan Mobey reiterated his interest in being involved with the 'market study' and said that he might be more able to contribute to it once the C&FW appointment process was complete. Tony Hughes commented that the C&FW could indeed have an important role in influencing the study.

Tony suggested that the chairs investigation is less pressing, but is a more straightforward task. It was suggested that Gordon Gill, who visited many churches that had installed chairs, would have a lot of relevant information and could be closely involved in the work.

Action: Tony Hughes to approach those who might take the lead in the 'market study' and to ask Gordon Gill if he might be willing to be closely involved in the chairs investigation

14. Welcome to Church

Mel Gibson thanked Liz Roberts for organising the publication of the guidance notes to sidespersons. Mel reported that he had had positive feedback from quite a few recipients.

Mel Gibson relayed that he had received a paper via Gordon Gill from the Bishop on making church more welcome for people on the autistic spectrum. Rather than change the guidance notes again so quickly, Mel Gibson intends to issue a summary of the key points in an appendix to the guidance notes. When there is a wholesale update of the guidance notes, this appendix will be incorporated into the main body of the notes.

Tony Hughes suggested that the guidance notes/this appendix should point out that there are a variety of "special needs" (autism being one) of which sidespersons need to be conscious.

15. Future dates to note

Harwell Feast – Monday 26 May

Church Big Day out – Friday 23 - Monday 26 May

C&FW interviews – Sunday 1 June

Combined PCC meeting – Tuesday 3 June

St Matthew's PCC meeting – Tuesday 1 July

16. Any other business

1. **The lack of a complete calendar in the cards which replace the Ridgeway Broadsheet at Christmas & Easter** – This issue was raised by Joan Impey at the APCM. The APCM then referred it to the PCC to deal with. The meeting discussed two possible options:
 - I. Produce the full A4-sized calendar to include everything that would have gone into that month's centre pages Broadsheet calendar. A copy would then be delivered with each card. This would provide a calendar of all events that month (eg home groups, coffee mornings, etc) as well as a list of all services.

OR

- II. Just provide a comprehensive list of all services that month with the card. If there is room, this would be printed on the card itself. Otherwise, it could be printed on a slip of paper and delivered with the card.

Action: Jane Woolley to get feedback from Joan Impey on these options and report back to the next PCC meeting for a decision to be made

2. **Non-alcoholic communion wine** (note that this item was in fact taken after Item 12 but is a matter of AOB and so is recorded under AOB) – Jonathan Mobey informed the PCC that All Saints' PCC wished to revert to alcoholic wine until a more acceptable non-alcoholic wine had been sourced.

St Matthew's PCC members indicated that they were content to continue using non-alcoholic wine at St Matthew's in order to safeguard access to communion for those who do not take alcohol. PCC members tasted four types of non-alcoholic wine and agreed one which was the most acceptable (or least disliked) on average. This is to be used at St Matthew's services for the time being.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to liaise with the Church Administrator about sourcing other non-alcoholic wines for PCC members to evaluate – in particular to try to find one which is acceptable to All Saints' PCC members.

3. **Possible subsidised accommodation for C&FW** – Jonathan Mobey informed the meeting that he had had a couple of offers of lodging accommodation for a C&FW. This would be suitable for a single person or a couple without children. If family-accommodation were required, lodgings would probably not be suitable. Therefore, Jonathan has been exploring the possible use by the church of the property at 1 Loder Road, Harwell. This property has been empty for ten years, the owner lives in a different part of the country, and the property is in a neglected state. Jonathan has been in touch with the owner, who has no objection in principle to some sort of arrangement which would allow the church to benefit from the property at no cost to the owner.

It is obviously early days, and the necessary legal arrangements and financing would have to be in place. One option would be for the property to remain the owner's, but with the church allowed to use it for a certain number of years (perhaps 3-5 years) without payment to the owner, in exchange for making it habitable. The church could then rent it out (eg to the C&FW worker) and the owner could sell it at the end of the agreement period. Another option would be for the church to buy the property from the owner and then rent it out long term.

Jonathan Mobey has visited the property with David Pyke to make a rough initial assessment of what it would take to bring the property up to habitable standard. The building seems structurally sound e.g. no damp/leaks, obvious cracks. The inside would need complete refurbishment and a new kitchen and bathroom. An initial estimate of cost is around £25,000. Jonathan has also had some discussions with a church regular in Chilton who is a retired conveyancing solicitor who has provided some advice e.g. they have confirmed that the purported owner is the legal owner.

Jonathan asked for comments. PCC members present were generally nervous at taking on such a potentially large financial and legal commitment with quite a high degree of risk attached. Points arising were:

- We are likely to have to raise money to make significant improvements to St Matthew's building. Is the cost of refurbishing / buying a house really affordable on top of this?
- If we bought the property, the PCC would have to take out a mortgage. It was suggested that individual PCC members would then be personally liable for this sum if church funds were insufficient to cover the cost of the mortgage.
- Refurbishment costs have a nasty habit of being a lot higher than the initial estimate.

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- Legal arrangements and a refurbishment are unlikely to be completed before a C&FW starts in September. If we wanted to carry these out at an accelerated pace we would pay a premium.
- A C&FW might be prepared to wait until after the beginning of their appointment for the accommodation to be ready.
- If we provide a C&FW with subsidised accommodation they would have to pay income tax & NI on the benefit in kind provided – so it would affect their take home pay, even more so if we offered them a lower salary to reflect the provision of subsidised accommodation.
- If the C&FW's gross salary were, say, £24k pa or £2k pm, their net income would be around £1,600 pm. If the market rent of this sort of property were, say, £1k pm, that might only leave them with £600pm to live on if they were the only earner in the household. They might not be able to afford to live in such a property/location (relatively modest in size/appearance though it is) unless they paid significantly lower than market rent.
- Reasons why we might find it beneficial to subsidise the C&FW rent would be:
 - To make it feasible for a candidate to afford accommodation at the heart of the community, which is an ideal place for them to live given their role
 - To attract the best candidate
 - To offset salary costs

Action: Jonathan Mobey to prepare an options paper for the PCC(s) to consider further

The meeting closed with Jonathan Mobey leading in prayer.

CHAIR

SECRETARY

DATE

DATE