

**Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC**  
held on Tuesday 2 July 2013 at 7.45 pm in All Saints', Chilton

**Present**

Jonathan Mobey (Chair)	Liz Roberts	Mel Gibson
Jane Woolley (Secretary)	Tony Hughes	Peter Barclay-Watt
Gordon Gill	Monika Buxton	Roz Shipp

**1. Opening & Prayer**

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read Revelations Chapter 3 v.14-22 – a letter to the church in Laodicea, rebuking them for being lukewarm in their response to the Gospel.

Jonathan explained that the link of this passage to PCC is the danger of not being wholehearted or being wavering in our commitment, which is a risk for any church. The passage also highlights the risk of arrogance or an attitude of “we’re successful”; the reality is that we are always spiritually needy.

The PCC then had a period of silent reflection, following which Jonathan led the PCC in prayer.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Chris Wheaton, Lizi Bowerman, Scott Cockburn, Vicki Luker, Anne Gill and Allan Macarthur.

**3. Minutes of the May 2013 meeting**

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 14 May 2013 were signed as a correct record.

**4. Matters arising**

- i) **Electoral Roll preparation – ask Mike Pepper for feedback on the reason why those who were “missing” were missing – Jonathan Mobey**

Done. Of the 13 names removed, 7 had moved away, 3 had died and 3 had not renewed but are all involved regularly in church life still.

- ii) **Find a replacement for Roz Shipp as a churchwarden deputy – Jonathan Mobey, Tony Hughes and Mel Gibson**

Done – see resolution proposed and passed below:

<b>Resolution</b>	To approve the appointment of Frances Taylor as a churchwarden deputy				
<b>Moved</b>	Monika Buxton	<b>Seconded</b>	Roz Shipp	<b>Passed</b>	Unanimously

- iii) **Finance queries in Section 10 of May 2013 minutes –ask for a response from the Treasurer – Jane Woolley**

**2013-07-02 St Matthew's PCC – approved minutes**

Done – covered in Papers C and D. The £3,000 donation will be transferred from General Funds to the Digital Fund, if required. With some increased regular giving in May and June, the upshot is that our budgeted deficit should not be exceeded at the end of the year.

**iv) Harwell Feast feedback/future plans**

Nothing further to discuss at this stage.

**v) PCC Awayday – think about the best timing for another awayday – Jonathan Mobey**

This is now an action arising from Combined PCC and so will be monitored there. Jonathan will send out a “Doodle Poll” to gauge availability in due course.

**vi) Harvest Lunch – ensure the village hall is booked – Monika Buxton**

Monika reported that we can't actually make a booking per se as Pilates classes have a year-round booking on Mondays. However, we make an informal arrangement with the Pilates teacher and she always seems very happy to move to an alternative venue. There was then some discussion about whether Mondays are the best day to have a Harvest Lunch.

<p><b>Action: Monika Buxton to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approach Pilates teacher about using the village hall on Monday 7 October, and then to let Keith Beswick know if we are going to be using it.</li> <li>2. Consult the Harvest Lunch regular volunteers about whether in future years it would be workable to hold Harvest Lunch on a Sunday instead, so that families can attend.</li> </ol>
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**5. Resolutions arising from the June Combined/Joint PCC meeting**

Due to the limited powers of the Joint PCC, the following resolutions drafted there now need to be brought back to St Matthew's PCC for formal agreement. These were duly put before the PCC.

<b>Resolution</b>	Subject to finding an appropriate source and acceptability according to Canon Law, to trial between September and November 2013 the use of alcohol-free wine at Holy Communion services at 9.30 and 11.00am and to review the success of this at November JPCC				
<b>Moved</b>	Chair	<b>Seconded</b>	-	<b>Passed</b>	With one abstention

Jonathan Mobey informed the meeting that he is taking legal advice from the Diocese. This is because Canon Law does specify that we have to use a certain type of wine. However, the Diocese is sympathetic to the pastoral care issue surrounding alcohol and is looking into the matter. So we can really only make plans to implement the trial once we have a final legal opinion.

<p><b>Action: Jonathan Mobey</b> to arrange appropriate publicity about the trial if we get the legal go ahead, including an invitation to the congregation to feedback their views to PCC members.</p>
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<b>Resolution</b>	To change the service on the 4th Sunday of the month to 'Service of the Word' with the option of keeping secondary-aged children in the congregation for the whole service				
<b>Moved</b>	Chair	<b>Seconded</b>	-	<b>Passed</b>	Unanimously

It was also agreed that the logical start time for this arrangement for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month would in September 2013, in tandem with the new school term.

## 6. Missions budget

The PCC discussed the proposed distribution of the 2013 St Matthew's missions giving budget of £9,510 at some length (Paper F).

The PCC would like to thank the members of the missions group for their hard work, careful consideration and faithful prayer.

The PCC appreciated the points listed at the start of Paper F which have guided the formation of the proposal. However, several PCC members voiced the following concerns about the rationale for giving to some of the chosen beneficiaries:

- It is important that our money makes a difference. Often our money goes further than it does here when we fund mission work abroad. However, it is not clear how much some of the recipients actually need the funds. For instance, Gordon Gill said his quick online research had revealed that some have large reserves (Gideons) or marketing budgets (MAF), and he would therefore question whether their stewardship of funds received is optimal.
- There is no current personal connection with MAF (though it is accepted that there is a historic Harwell connection).
- One of the ultimate beneficiaries is closely related to one of the mission group members. Whilst there is no suggestion at all of impropriety, a beneficiary with a very close personal relationship to a decision-maker might look odd to the wider world, however worthy or needy the recipient is.

Whilst not wishing to unnecessarily hold up distribution of funds to uncontroversial recipients, the PCC was not prepared to accept the proposed missions giving budget at this stage but would be happy to re-visit the matter at the next PCC meeting in October.

**Action:** Jonathan Mobey to talk to Pam Rolls and Sid Gale about PCC members' concerns and how best to move forward on the 2013 missions giving proposal, and in future years.

## 7. Christian Aid collections

Paper G set out the current situation and the difficulty of sustaining door to door collections. Given the difficulties, the meeting agreed that door to door collections would probably need to be abandoned.

The task of coordinating the annual door-to-door collections is without doubt the largest part of the coordinator's job. The PCC has been notified that the current holder wishes to relinquish the task, which, in part, gave rise to this discussion. However, if St Matthew's is to continue support for Christian Aid in any form, e.g. through fundraising events, it will need

to be investigated whether a 'correspondent' from the parish will still be required. If so, the feasibility/desirability of this will have to be considered.

Various ways of continuing to encourage donations were suggested for example:

- Putting a note in the Broadsheet and/or via letters through the letterbox of “stalwart givers” asking people to give direct to Christian Aid online
- Running fund-raising events eg plant sales, coffee mornings, in aid of Christian Aid

**Action: Jonathan Mobey to**

- Consult current Christian Aid coordinator and collectors about the proposal to no longer collect door to door, get their feedback on this, and whether they would like to be involved in organising one or two fund-raising events for Christian Aid instead.
- Investigate whether a 'correspondent' from the parish will still be required if we cease Christian Aid collections but facilitate donations/fundraising in other ways.
- Publicise the eventual decision made in consultation with the current collectors, including the rationale, and also details of alternative way(s) in which people can still give to Christian Aid.

## 8. Finance Committee Report

The Treasurer, Peter Barclay-Watt, explained one particular aspect of the Income & Expenditure spreadsheet: the year to date figure on the last line (Surplus for the Year) gives the impression that we are going to end up with a very healthy surplus. This is misleading and is due to i) tax being recovered on a different cycle than in previous years; ii) insurance premium still to pay; iii) missions giving budget still to pay out; iv) £3,000 ear-marked for Digital Projection Fund. The outcome of this, plus some new regular giving which commenced in May/June, is that we are on target to end up with the same level of deficit for the year as we budgeted for.

Jonathan Mobey expressed the PCC's thanks to the Treasurer and to Elizabeth Gill, the Bookkeeper.

## 9. Buildings Committee Report

Further to Paper J, Tony Hughes reported that:

- Electrical testing – Mel Gibson has been getting quotes and has just commissioned the chosen contractor, who will do the work sometime this month.
- Investigation of the chancel roof – this work was carried out last week. Nothing dreadful was found. The contractor did replace any tiles that needed replacing which they could reach. They found that quite a few of the stone tiles on the chancel roof are beginning to crumble at the header end (where the pin goes through to secure them to the battens). The Committee will keep a watch on this area. The church architect is aware of the situation and inspected the roof during the investigation. It is clear that the chancel roof will eventually get to a point where repairs become uneconomic, but it is not clear how long away this will be. To have it re-roofed would cost at least £40,000 at today's prices, depending on how many of the old tiles could be reused.

With regard to the Buildings Committee proposal that they run a trial of replacing the front row of pews with soft chairs, the following resolution was carried:

<b>Resolution</b>	Approve a 2-3 month trial of a more flexible seating arrangement at the front of the nave on both sides by replacing the front pew on each side with soft chairs to improve accessibility and choice.				
<b>Moved</b>	Mel Gibson	<b>Seconded</b>	Roz Shipp	<b>Passed</b>	Unanimously

**Action: Tony Hughes to**

- Seek an Archdeacon's Temporary Licence for this temporary change to the pews as soon as possible
- Communicate with the congregation about the trial

### 10. Digital Projection Group update

The contractors have been commissioned. The installation is planned for w/c 22 July, and the equipment will formally be launched on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**Action: Peter Barclay-Watt** to ask Elizabeth Gill to ask people who have made pledges to the fund to now fulfil those pledges

### 11. Church Hall Management Committee report

Update Paper K was noted, and in particular that the Hall is almost paying for itself now.

The Committee intends to raise the hourly hire fee from £7 to £8 from January 2014.

Jonathan Mobey remarked that with more groups using the Hall, it is less available for church events, and this is in keeping with recent discussions about making the church building more flexible so that it can more easily accommodate a range of events and activities.

### 12. Update on Great Western Park (GWP)/Valley Park housing development

Update Paper I was noted, in particular the proposal that St Matthew's ecclesiastical parish boundary might be re-drawn so that GWP and Valley Park become a separate parish. Some PCC members anticipated that this would be controversial and would need careful handling with local residents/some members of the congregation, but comments were made in favour of the proposal.

### 13. Coffee urn

Update Paper M was noted. Mel Gibson explained that there appear to be two camps of people: those who care about having better quality coffee served after morning service and those who do not. This has led to a current state of impasse on the matter.

Jonathan Mobey asked the PCC members present whether they were willing for someone to continue to explore ways in which better quality coffee could feasibly be served. The consensus was that they were.

Gordon Gill suggested looking at flask-based cafeterias used by another church he knows of.

**Action: Jonathan Mobey** to speak to Mike and Anita Pepper about further investigating the various options, mindful of the need to balance health and safety concerns of any option against the health and safety concerns of the current arrangements.

#### 14. Concerts at St Matthew's

The meeting agreed with the proposal in Paper N that a proper system for managing arrangements for concerts in the church building needs to be put in place and accepted the recommendations.

**Action: Jonathan Mobey/Tony Hughes/Mel Gibson** to put the proposed system in place

#### 16. Future Dates

The only date mentioned was that listed on the agenda – the Steventon Choral Society "Voices for Hospices" Concert on Saturday 12 October.

#### 17. Any other business

Peter Barclay-Watt recommended the following biography: Archbishop Justin Welby: The Road to Canterbury by Andrew Atherstone

**The meeting closed with The Grace at 10.10pm.**

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Chair

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Secretary