

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC
held on Tuesday 10 May 2016 at 7.30 pm in St Matthew's, Harwell

Present

Jonathan Mobey (Chair)	Mel Gibson	Sid Gale
Jane Woolley (Secretary)	Tony Hughes	Frances Taylor
Christina Wood	Hazel Connelly (items 1-16)	Juan Bowerman
Martin Gibson	Michelle Walker	Andrew Keene

1. Opening & Prayer

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read Revelation 2 v1-7 – the first of seven letters to the early churches.

Jonathan remarked that this letter gives the early church in question some positive feedback and also points out where there is room for improvement. How would Jesus judge the efforts of our church at St Matthew's? Would He see hard work and perseverance? Have we "forsaken our first love"?

Jonathan then led the PCC in prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Peter Barclay-Watt, Gordon Gill, Pam Rolls, Jan Radford, Lizi Bowerman and Jean Barton.

3. Co-options

Jane Woolley explained that there are two further prospective PCC members who may be co-opted on to the PCC, as they were last year. These are Jean Barton and Andrew Keene. Jean Barton is unable to be elected to the PCC because she is ordained. Andrew Keene has only recently joined the church electoral roll and so is not yet eligible for election to the PCC.

Jane Woolley proposed that Jean Barton and Andrew Keene be co-opted on to the PCC. This was seconded by Frances Taylor and agreed unanimously.

4. Welcome to new PCC members

Jonathan Mobey formally welcomed the new members present: Sid Gale, Martin Gibson, Juan Bowerman and Michelle Walker

5. Reminder of the duties of trustees/PCC members

Jane Woolley reminded PCC members that they are charity trustees and therefore bear the responsibilities of charity trustees. All PCC members had been sent in advance of the meeting a copy to read of the document called "The Essential Trustee – what you need to know".

6. Minutes of the March 2016 meeting

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 1 March 2016 were signed as a correct record.

7. Matters arising

Songs of Praise

Jonathan Mobey confirmed the various arrangements that are in hand for Songs of Praise at Harwell Recreation ground on Sunday 29 May.

8. Decisions between meetings by Standing Committee

Godspell electricity costs

St Matthew's has offered to cover 50% of the electricity costs for the Godspell rehearsals and performances. This offer was accepted with thanks by the organisers. Mel Gibson asked why this had been decided when initially a majority of members of the Standing Committee had agreed with a proposal to waive all of the electricity costs. Jonathan Mobey explained that more information about the total proceeds from Godspell had been taken into account after a query and it seemed more reasonable in the circumstances to offer 50% rather than 100%.

9. 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.

The following were points of discussion:

- **Concert Managers**

Tony Hughes pointed out that the original arrangement involved the churchwardens acting as back up to the Concert Managers to give technical assistance or to cover if a Concert Manager ever had to pull out of handling an event. If Mel and Christina as churchwardens become Concert Managers, it means that the back-up arrangement is being changed. The consensus of the meeting was that, in practice, the other churchwarden or one of the other Concert Managers would be a back-up to Mel/Christina if necessary.

Jonathan Mobey pointed out that he is also available as a back-up Concert Manager in an emergency.

It was agreed that ideally we would expand the pool of Concert Managers still further.

- **Social Secretary**

The role of Social Secretary had no proposed candidates and was left unfilled.

Jonathan Mobey suggested that there could be a case for a role with a wider remit of hospitality or welcome instead. This could include (but not be limited to) the deployment of sides people at services and the tea/coffee arrangements after services. Jonathan suggested taking a step back and thinking about whether this sort of wider remit would be beneficial and who could best lead it. Martin Gibson said that ideally this person would be someone with a gift for it. Tony Hughes said that it is important to have something in place to enable a good "welcome" and have the means of organising "church family" events. The meeting agreed to park this issue for now and to revisit it in due course.

<p>Action: Jane Woolley to keep consideration of a role with a wider remit of hospitality or welcome on the PCC agenda.</p>
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The meeting then voted on the following resolution.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following roles:				
	Vice Chair		Tony Hughes		
	Treasurer		Peter Barclay-Watt		
	Secretary		Jane Woolley		
	Churchwarden deputies		Tim Roberts Ruth Slatter Frances Taylor		
	Bookkeeper		Brenda Pyke		
	Electoral Roll Officer		Mike Pepper		
	Gift Aid Secretary		Peter Barclay-Watt		
	Stewardship Secretary		Ruth Slatter		
	Concert managers		Liz Roberts Tim Roberts Mel Gibson Christina Wood		
Moved	Juan Bowerman	Seconded	Mel Gibson	Passed	Unanimously

10. Election/appointment of PCC sub-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.

The following were points of clarification/discussion:

- Under Church Representation Rules, the Rector is an ex-officio member of every PCC sub-committee.
- The PCC could appoint just the Chair of each committee and leave the Chair to appoint the members, as All Saints' Chilton do. It was agreed that there are some advantages and disadvantages to that approach. It was agreed to continue for the time being with the current arrangement whereby the PCC approves the members of the sub-committees as well as the Chair.
- It is best practice for charities to identify the skills required by sub-committees and recruit accordingly. In practice we do not explicitly specify skill requirements or recruit to fill gaps, and this might or might not happen informally. It is also hard to get volunteers to serve on sub-committees and so we tend to have to take a more pragmatic approach than the ideal.

- **Joint PCC**

Churchwardens, Treasurer and any clergy licensed to the benefice¹ i.e. Jonathan Mobey, Pam Rolls and Jan Radford are automatic members of the Joint PCC. It was agreed at the 2016 Annual Meeting that the two additional members of the Joint PCC will always be the PCC Secretary and the PCC Vice-Chair. This means we no longer need to consider this matter at a PCC meeting.

- **Buildings Committee**

Christina Wood is willing to continue as a member of the Buildings Committee but cannot attend the meetings.

- **Church Hall Committee**

All members of the Church Hall Committee have now stood down for one reason or another apart from Tony Hughes. Jonathan Mobey explained that Brian Zimmerman is now the volunteer Church Hall manager. Key duties involve letting ad hoc users in and out, managing the cleaner and dealing with small items of maintenance e.g. replacing lightbulbs. More extensive maintenance tasks will involve the engagement of a paid sub-contractor. Vicky Johnston manages the bookings as part of her Church Administrator duties. The PCC recently approved the approach of generally no longer taking ad hoc bookings for the Church Hall, only regular bookings. This reduces the work involved because regular users only book the Hall once/once a year, they open up and lock up the Hall themselves and they know how to operate the premises. Most of the income in the last few years has been generated by regular rather than ad hoc bookings anyway.

Tony Hughes pointed out that the crucial thing from a governance point of view is some mechanism whereby Brian Zimmerman is accountable to the PCC. The disadvantage of not having a committee is that someone on the PCC needs to take on the work of managing the Church Hall manager.

Mel Gibson asked if the Buildings Committee could take back responsibility for managing the Church Hall, as they used to before usage of the Hall was expanded. Tony stated that he is unwilling personally, or for the Buildings Committee, to take this on. The Hall maintenance workload is higher now that the Hall is used more heavily, and the workload of the Buildings Committee is already considerable. Tony stated that the Buildings Committee would be willing to advise and help a Church Hall Committee or the Church Hall manager, but not to be responsible for, say, conducting competitive tender exercises for maintenance work.

It was therefore agreed that the PCC should aim to re-appoint a Church Hall Management Committee, ideally chaired by a member of the PCC. In the meantime, Jonathan Mobey will ask Brian Zimmerman to talk to him or to Tony Hughes about any maintenance issues.

Tony Hughes said that he would be willing to be a member of a re-constituted Church Hall Management Committee, but not to Chair it.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to ask Brian Zimmerman to talk to him or to Tony Hughes about any maintenance issues whilst we are without a Church Hall Management Committee.

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

¹ Joan Impey and Jean Barton have permission to officiate but are not licensed to the benefice so they are not included in this list.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following committees:				
	Finance & Budget	Peter Barclay-Watt (Chair) Brenda Pyke Mel Gibson Christina Wood			
	Buildings	Tony Hughes (Chair) David Pyke Philip Roberts Mandy Birkinshaw Juan Bowerman Christina Wood			
	Standing Committee (Churchwardens and Rector are automatic members of the Standing Committee)	PCC Vice Chair, Tony Hughes PCC Secretary, Jane Woolley PCC Treasurer, Peter Barclay-Watt Other clergy licensed to the benefice: Pam Rolls and Jan Radford			
	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

11. 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.

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

The following were points of clarification/discussion:

- **Village Hall Management Committee**

It was agreed that the ideal person to represent the Church on this committee would be a member of the Church Hall Management Committee, once appointed (see item 10). In the meantime, this position is left vacant.

- **Harwell Charities Trust**

The Rector is an ex-officio member for this and so this does not need to be considered by the PCC.

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:
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	Churches Together in Didcot and District Jonathan Mobey				
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

12. Reflections on Annual Meeting

It was agreed that the same format for the Annual Meeting would be used next year, given that this year's format had been successful in eliciting a good volume of questions from attendees about planned improvements to church heating and seating.

Jonathan Mobey said that he would endeavour to make the preceding service the intended length next time i.e. shorter than this year.

13. Finances

The meeting noted Papers G and H and the budgeted deficit of £8,770.

14. Harwell St Matthew's Friends scheme

The following were agreed with reference to the decisions requested in Paper I:

- Whether to continue with the Friends campaign on Facebook (aimed at the "American Harwells")

Decision: yes

- Whether to submit a press release about the campaign to the local press

Decision: yes

Action: Jane Woolley to relay these decisions to Liz Roberts.
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15. Buildings Committee report

Paper J was noted. Jonathan Mobey thanked Tony Hughes for his hard work.

16. Improvements to St Matthew's Building

Chancel re-ordering

As mentioned in Paper J, Tony Hughes reported that a Faculty Petition has now been submitted to the Diocesan Registrar. There has been no response as yet. Assuming the Faculty is given, we should be able to remove the choir stalls in June and have the chairs delivered in September or October (there is quite a long lead time on making the chairs).

Jonathan Mobey said that he has in mind a special service in the autumn to commission the new seating arrangement.

Heating

Tony Hughes gave a verbal update on his recent investigations into electrical central heating. This alternative to gas central heating complicates matters slightly because it introduces another option to consider.

The company (Dunphy) who have given us a guideline quote for a gas central heating system have also started doing an electrical central heating system, called "Ecomiser". Tony Hughes noticed this in a Dunphy newsletter. So far it is being installed in Dunblane church. Peter Barclay Watt was passing near there and took a look but wasn't able to gather very much about it since the installation is not yet complete.

Tony Hughes has had some correspondence with Dunphy to find out more. The capital costs would be much lower than gas central heating but the running costs would be higher. Tony obtained some comparative running cost data from Dunphy for the Ecomiser vs. a gas central heating system. This indicates that the Economiser would be a contender if the church were in use for up to about 50% of waking hours. Above that level, gas would be more economical as measured by total costs (capital plus running costs) over 20 years.

Tony Hughes has sent this analysis to the members of the Heating Working Group. So far he's had one comment back from David Pyke. That comment focused on the uncertainty of predicting future church usage and David said that he therefore favours either no change to the heating system or to put in better radiant heaters (i.e. upgrade the existing system).

Mel Gibson commented that he thinks that other companies do similar systems to Ecomiser. For instance, the heater in Mel's conservatory at home is similar to Ecomiser and that firm also supply church heating. Therefore we should probably explore electrical central heating systems other than just Dunphy.

Seating

Tony Hughes relayed that no further progress can be made until the PCC makes a decision about how to proceed with heating and seating improvements. He did feel, however, that the time has come to start putting together an actual proposal about seating, since we now do have much of the data required. This could be the basis of a 'prospectus' for informing people and raising donations, and for what would be needed by the DAC.

Responses from Day of Prayer

Papers K and L refer.

Making a decision on heating and seating

Jonathan Mobey invited each attendee to state their point of view about improving the heating and seating.

- Mel Gibson said that he thinks that improving the heating is very important and that this is necessary to widen the use of the building. Without doing so, the building is too uncomfortable and people won't want to use it, even if seating is improved.
- Tony Hughes said that he thinks that flexibility of seating is more critical than improving the heating to widen use of the church building, and that we could continue to operate the existing heating system whilst we establish how much greater use changing the seating has brought. Tony also said that we are also due to carry out the final phase of internal redecoration by the end of 2017. This would be more expensive with the pews in place so an early decision about seating would be helpful. We should also not be under any illusions that the church can be made to feel as warm and comfortable as we expect in a modern building, especially in really cold weather. The 'central heating' options that we are seriously considering do offer significant improvements over our current radiant system, but not the complete removal of all deficiencies.
- Juan Bowerman said that he would be in favour of improving the seating first, and then deciding about heating later i.e. same view as Tony Hughes.
- Christina Wood said that what strikes her is that if we take the pews out we will also need to decide what to do with the flooring. Christina said that she does not have a strong view about whether heating and seating improvements should be made simultaneously.
- Andrew Keene said that his view is that the existing heating is not good enough.

- Michelle Walker said that she feels that we need to make a decision about both heating and seating simultaneously.
- Martin Gibson said that he thinks that both heating and seating need to be improved. Martin commented that his experience of using the church for Godspell rehearsals has informed this view – it felt cold despite the heating.
- Frances Taylor said that she would be in favour of improving the seating first and thereby open up access to the walls and floors for improved heating installation later. Frances stated that she feels that both the heating and the seating need improving.
- Hazel Connelly said that she thinks that flexibility of seating is probably going to be the thing that transforms how we use the church building and that re-ordering the chancel will give us a first glimpse of how this might feel. Hazel said that she is worried about the cost of improving heating and seating. She understands about the money already being set aside from legacies but is wondering if we should spend it on heating and seating. On the other hand, Hazel said that perhaps we should just commit once and for all to making these improvements and get on with it.
- Sid Gale said that his view is that seating is more crucial than heating – particularly from the perspective of potential use by the Scouts, with which he is involved. It would be fairly pointless to improve the heating without also improving the seating.

Hazel Connelly left the meeting at this point.

- Jane Woolley stated that she agrees with Mel Gibson i.e. that we should bite the bullet and improve both the heating and the seating at the same time. Jane is worried that if we don't improve the heating, we might say that we would be prepared to put the current heating system on for more hours, but in practice the running costs will be a significant disincentive to doing so. Also, the current system is ineffective at heating the building anyway.

Having heard from all those present, Jonathan Mobey stated that he proposes that the PCC agrees to improve both the heating and the seating and to do so at the same time. Jonathan feels that it is preferable to have just one major episode of disruption to the interior of the church. Jonathan also feels that there is also likely to be more support from other church members if we improve both the heating and the seating. This is because more people will have their improvement priority met. Jonathan said that what type of heating system we should go for needs more investigation. Jonathan said that what he would like to propose for now is an agreement in principle by the PCC to improve both the heating and the seating simultaneously.

Sid Gale queried how certain we could be that the improvements would result in a large increase in the use of the church building. Jonathan Mobey stated that we cannot be certain. However, with a growing local population there is a real opportunity for the church to reach out to people in creative ways, and the church building is an asset to be used to facilitate the church's mission. Currently this asset is very under used.

Tony Hughes commented that growing the secular use of the church building is a different thing to putting the church building to better use in furthering the church's mission (i.e. to make disciples of Jesus). Tony said that the evidence is that a strategy to widen the use of the church building per se (i.e. including secular use) is very different to a strategy that focuses on bringing people to faith/church growth (e.g. one which focuses primarily on people). Jonathan Mobey said that his past experience is that a church building with good facilities is a key asset in furthering church growth because it makes outreach activities much easier to deliver and also makes attending services a more pleasant experience for people.

Jonathan Mobey asked PCC members if the consensus is that we agree in principle to improving the heating and the seating and to undertake both at the same time. Those present indicated that they agreed that this was indeed the consensus overall.

Jonathan stated that the next step is to firm up plans for improving the heating and the seating.

Tony Hughes stated that it will probably take longer to come up with a firm plan for the heating than it will for the seating, because there are more factors (such as laying on a gas supply to the church) that

need more investigation. Tony said that progress would be easier if we excluded the underfloor heating option on cost grounds i.e. if the options to be explored were limited to gas central heating vs. electric central heating.

It was agreed that the plan for improving the seating and that for improving the heating would be progressed in parallel by different teams in the first instance. However, the intention would be to implement the plans simultaneously. The aim should be to have something further to report on each at the July PCC meeting.

Christina Wood volunteered to lead the development of a seating improvement plan, with Tony Hughes's guidance. This would incorporate:

- What chairs to buy
- The process for removal and disposal of the pews
- What flooring to install (e.g. tiles or carpet)

17. Church Hall Management Committee report

Paper M was noted. Also see item 10 of these minutes.

18. Health & Safety

This item was postponed to the next meeting (covering risk assessments and lessons for the Concerts Policy from the Godspell production).

Action: Jane Woolley to repeat the following items on the agenda for the July PCC meeting: risk assessment and lessons for the Concerts Policy from the Godspell production.

19. Future dates

Songs of Praise – Sunday 29 May

Harwell Feast – Monday 30 May

20. Any other business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 10.35pm with Jonathan Mobey leading in prayer.

CHAIR

SECRETARY

DATE

DATE