

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Combined PCCs
of St Matthew's Harwell with All Saints' Chilton
held on Tuesday 23 May 2017 at 7.30 pm
in St. Matthew's Harwell**

Present

(J) Denotes Joint PCC member. There were thus 9 voting members plus the Rector at this meeting - all resolutions refer to Joint PCC votes

Jean Barton (Chair)	Naomi Gibson	Carol Pigott (J)
Lizi Bowerman	Stuart Gibson (J)	Pam Rolls (J)
Helen Brook	Steven Hale	Yvonne Sanderson (J)
Hazel Connelly	Tony Hughes (J)	Michelle Walker
Peter Cox (Secretary)	Andrew Keene	Christina Wood (J)
Sid Gale	Rebecca Lewis	Jane Woolley (J)
Martin Gibson	Tim Paget (J)	The Rector (J)

A Preliminaries

1 Opening & Prayer

Jean Barton said we should begin in quiet to ask God to guide us and also in recognition of the terrorist attacks in Manchester.

Jean read the Rogation Day lectionary readings which are 1 John ch. 5 v 12 to 15 and Luke ch. 11 v 5 - 13.

Jean said that we should do things according to God's will, and use all our gifts. She then led the meeting in prayer.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Peter Barclay-Watt (J), Phil Corbishley, Mel Gibson, Gordon Gill, Carina Loble, Hazel King, Liz Morris (J) John Pigott, Jan Radford, Alex Reich (J), Frances Taylor, Sylvie Thompson

Not required to attend: Heather House, Safeguarding Officer, Vicky Johnston, Church Administrator, and Peter Shields, Children and Families Worker (CFW).

3 Children and Families Work Options for 2017 Onwards and Recommendations of the Employment Group

Paper A refers: A report to CPCCs ref Benefice Employment Issues.

Jean Barton said that the proposals in the paper are only a start; there was no point putting all of the details in as the CPCC could disagree with the proposals. There could be other options. She opened the meeting to discussion.

Pam Rolls thanked the Employment Group for their work.

There was some explanation of the Children and Families Worker (CFW), Peter Shields' current employment situation for the benefit of new CPCC members as already covered in previous CPCC meetings. Essentially this is that the CFW is working part time for the Benefice and part time for Sainsbury's Didcot. A change from full time to part time, was agreed by the Joint PCCs Standing Committee just before Christmas 2016.

The discussion during the meeting was wide ranging and included the following, grouped together under appropriate headings:

Employment Group Answers to Questions and General Statements

The members of the group were: Jean Barton, Hazel Connolly, Phil Corbishley, Sid Gale, Martin Gibson and Naomi Gibson. They answered questions as follows:

- The two roles in the paper (CFW plus a Coordinator) could be recombined in the long term, or left as two roles. If the Coordinator role were fulfilled by volunteers.
- If the Combined PCC disagrees with the proposal in the paper then Peter Shields' contract will simply come to an end on 18 August.
- Jean Barton said that there will be a gap if Peter's contract ends on 18 August but the group has thought through the legal aspects: A full time contract would become permanent in any case after four years. Hence the proposal of a year's trial of two part time roles – if Peter Shields agrees. His contract ends on August 18th and we need to do something.
- The Employment Group has met Peter Shields but did not discuss the proposed split of the role with him. However they considered all options and took into account his strengths and weaknesses and are proposing that we appoint people to help on the administration side based on his needs. If Peter stays the Rector and a small group will discuss the specific proposal with him.
- It was stated that this situation was precipitated by the CFW and this is not the ideal way round - to write job descriptions to fit around people rather than find people to fit job descriptions.
- We should consider asking Peter Shields to continue – he has done good things.
- In some ways it was good that Peter took proactive action to reduce his hours rather than just resign or "suffer in silence". Jean Barton said that the group considered the PCC's duty of care to the CFW. There are a number of rules and regulations on care of employees (as listed in the paper). The group plans to get these things in order – this is recommendation 2 in the paper. Otherwise the CPCC is breaking a number of employment rules. This is a new situation for the Benefice. This was discussed further later in the meeting – see Proposal 1.
- An employment group member said that the first Job Description is the Children and Families Worker delivering the Children and Families Work. The second (Coordinator) Job Description is someone to develop plans, coordinate, give structure and recruit volunteers - volunteers will still be needed. The idea is to put a structure in place to support the CFW in what he is good at.
- The Employment Group decided that the original Job Description was over ambitious – there were far too many objectives requiring a very wide skill set so it was unlikely that we would find one person who could do them all. They went through each requirement asking if it was needed and whether all requirements should be there. The Group felt that getting one person to do all the requirements was very unlikely. So we should get another person with a different skill set to share the work. Partly it is a case of our hand being forced to have two people. With hindsight, perhaps it would have been better if the work had been shared by two people from the start.

General comments and discussion:

- There was considerable support for the roles as described in the paper and for having two employees who could support, encourage and inspire each other.
- Peter Shields provides inspiration, up front ideas, faith and enthusiasm. The Coordinator would be responsible for producing plans and structure to capture and implement the ideas and ensure they are completed. This role could be fulfilled by a number of volunteers.
- All of the Children and Families Work areas such as Kids Church would benefit from this structured approach.
- The Coordinator could be someone who is experienced in Children and Families Work themselves. Also Peter Shields could still be doing some administration. The hours could be increased as required.
- It would be good to have a person looking after volunteers and for example looking for assistants when required.
- For the proposal to work Peter Shields would have to be happy with, and cooperate with, the two roles arrangement.

Current voluntary assistance to CFW

- Michelle Walker said that she is working 2 hours per week on Children and Families Work administration.
- Jane Woolley said that she helps with Holiday Club administration – this evolved rather than was planned. She sensed a need a couple of years ago that this would allow the CFW to do what he does best. She is not a front person but a backroom person – an organiser and volunteer coordinator, enabling Peter Shields' work to go more smoothly. It is not a formal arrangement and they have not discussed who is in charge, though Jane's view is that overall responsibility lies with the CFW. If it was a formal arrangement then this would need to be clarified.

Return to Full Time Children and Families Worker

- Jean Barton said that there would be a gap if we now decide to go back to one full time CFW (and need to recruit again). The Rector said that we could have someone in post in January.
- Jean Barton confirmed that the full time Job Description would not be the same as the one Peter Shields was appointed to fill but the two Job Descriptions from the paper combined. The employment group members had composed an outline full time Job Description.

Funding

- Funding is in place for a 3 year term of full time CFW provision and the pay level was not part of Peter Shields' decision to go part time.
- The Rector said that the donations were for the role not the person so there was no requirement to consult with the original donors (though they would be kept informed).
- It was stated that employing two people part time costs less than employing one person full time as there is less Employer's National Insurance to pay on two lower paid roles than on one higher paid role.

Line Management Reporting Structure

There was considerable discussion with examples given from other churches and secular organisations. It is the intention that the Children and Families Worker continues to be accountable to the PCCs and the Rector would be the overall line manager. There were three broad opinions expressed with varying degrees of support:

Option 1

The two employees work as a team in a balanced relationship doing different aspects of the same overall role and are jointly responsible for the delivery of the Children and Families' work. There was considerable support for this.

The meeting discussed if this was a job share, as a part time CFW post will not suffice if there is no Coordinator. It was stated that it would only be a job share if both people were employed together. They would be made jointly responsible for their relationship and outcomes.

Option 2

The Job Description of the Coordinator – planning, calling on resources and being responsible for seeing the plans are completed – possibly a project manager - implies that the Coordinator is the line manager of the CFW. There was some support for this.

An employment group member said that they considered and decided not to have a CFW manager. It would be difficult to find someone to come in and do this, hence the Coordinator job description. This is a start; the hope is that Peter Shields' work will inspire more volunteers. The role is a "planning and policy" role not a "doing" role hence it is a paid position. Short term workers can be volunteers but long term workers should ideally be an employee to help ensure accountability. It was said that a paid position would give the role the honour it deserves in church.

Option 3

The description of the Coordinator as an assistant or supporting role means that the CFW is in charge of the Coordinator.

There was also discussion whether, if the Coordinator was a Personal Assistant, they would need managing. It was also said that the best PAs do not need managing.

The Rector said that he preferred to have one person responsible for the CFW work with a paid assistant or volunteers helping, which was why a senior, experienced person was employed. However he was willing to work with the first option if necessary.

PROPOSALS

Following discussion about the proposals at various points in the meeting these are the proposals in the order that they were voted with the associated comments and discussion:

PROPOSAL 1: Peter Shields Continuing

Jean Barton said that up to now we have all worked on the assumption that we are happy that Peter Shields continues. If this is not right we need to say so.

That the Combined PCC would like Peter Shields to continue as part time Children and Families Worker
18 FOR 1 AGAINST 2 ABSTENTIONS CARRIED

All present agreed that Peter Shields has done a very good job.

PROPOSAL 2: Employment Group

We need an employment group to ensure that all the required statutory employment policies are in place. It would be responsible for these and implementing other decisions. This is the first proposal from the paper. Discussion ensued including:

- It would assist the Rector and line management should be easier with this help.
- It is strange that the Rector is a non employee (of the Benefice) but managing its employees. There was some agreement with this, including from the Rector.
- The Rector said that in most churches the incumbent is the top of the management tree with responsibility for care of souls and delegates some of their responsibilities. He finds the PCCs' preferred option (Option 1 above) difficult to envisage in practice. In his previous church there were five Children and Families and Youth Workers with different responsibilities. They were in the same office and coordinated with each other. He was involved in trying to get administrative support for this team. There were Human Resources consisting of an Operations Manager and a PCC committee responsible for employment issues, and considered confidential matters that were not reported in details to the PCC
- The Rector is automatically an ex officio member of any PCC subcommittee, so he would be a member of the Employment Group too.
- If there is a grievance, a grievance committee would be required consisting of people not involved in the particular grievance. This would avoid any conflict of interest. The Rector agreed with this.
- The current Employment Group is very good. An Employment Group member said that they thought the group would benefit from professional Human Resources experience and there are people in the Benefice that could be approached.
- It was suggested that the group carries out performance reviews and is responsible for spiritual development – for example, to avoid situations where people “burn out”.
- Some churches require all employees to attend church services as a member of the congregation and have a person responsible for checking this. Jean Barton said that these are details and “development” includes this. The Rector said that it should be a concern if this doesn't happen but did not need a specific check.
- There was a volunteer to become an additional member of the group.
- This JPCC sub committee is needed as we have a complicated arrangement where St. Matthews is the employer. The Combined PCC is not a legal entity.

Recommendation 1 from Paper A:

An employment sub-committee should be formed of up to 6 people who have the necessary expertise. There should be at least 2 from each church, with the power to co-opt expert help, for example, HR. This committee would:

- a. ensure that we meet the statutory regulations, (grievance procedures, setting objectives, pay policies, whistle blowing policy etc).
- b. assist in review of personal performance and development of those we employ
- c. report to the CPCC and PCCs.
- d. be responsible for recruitment procedures

PROPOSED: Tony Hughes SECONDED: Sid Gale

STRAW POLL: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY JOINT PCC APPROVED BY IMPLICATION

PROPOSAL 3: Two Part Time Roles

Jean Barton said that the proposal is for two posts. The role names may change based on the job descriptions in Paper A. It could be a job share. Discussion ensued:

- Jean Barton said that we would need volunteer support and could adapt Peter Shields's role if we can't get a second person. It was suggested that the Employment Group should decide how.
- There was discussion of the implications if Peter Shields did not agree with the proposals
- The proposal for the second job is for 20 hours per week as the original job was 40 hours per week and Peter Shields is doing 20 hours a week. The Rector said that the split could be different. Employment Group members said that they did look at this.
- The Rector said that we would offer Peter Shields a new contract to continue as CFW. He has lots of skills but needs help. This help can be delivered in various ways and there are other options. He is not convinced that the proposed reporting structure (Option 1) will work but he will work with it.
- Jean Barton said that if we decide to keep the CFW as a part time role there is only a remote chance that we will employ the Coordinator before the end of August. Otherwise we could go back to a full time post, or we could do a review after six months.
- We should vote that we are minded to employ Peter Shields and a Coordinator then discuss this with Peter. If we make this definite then it is incompatible with the vote that we are happy that Peter Shields continues. There should be a proviso that if Peter Shields does not agree with this then we reconsider at the June PCC meeting.

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- The line manager (the Rector) and another person should visit Peter Shields to discuss the proposal with him.

The Combined PCC is minded to go forward with Peter Shields working part time and a part time Coordinator, hours to be arranged.

PROPOSED: Hazel Connolly SECONDED: Helen Brook

STRAW POLL: TWO ABSTENTIONS NONE AGAINST CARRIED

VOTE BY JPCC: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Rector said again that he had an issue with the division of responsibility for the Children and Families Work but will work with what is decided. Further discussion ensued of the division of responsibilities and it was suggested that the Employment Group should discuss this. Other comments:

- We are discussing this now as Peter Shields' contract runs out in August and he has a family to consider too.
- We have got CPCC agreement that Peter Shields could continue alongside another person whose responsibilities are to be agreed. We are far enough forward that the Rector can talk to Peter Shields.
- There was discussion of what happens if no other person comes forward and of what Peter Shields' response might be. It was stated that this is the situation we are currently in.
- Jean Barton said that we cannot go ahead with Option 1 unless Peter Shields agrees.

PROPOSAL 4:

The Rector will talk through the offer of part time work, details to be finalised, with Peter Shields and another person having joint responsibility with the emphases as discussed - one creative (CFW) and one administrative (Coordinator).

STRAW POLL AGREED.

There was further discussion but it was suggested that further matters should be considered by the Employment Group.

Jean Barton summarised that if Peter Shields agrees to continue on a part time basis, then we will try and employ a Coordinator.

There was a vote of thanks to the Employment Group agreed by all present.

Rev. Jean Barton closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer at 21:46 pm.

Dates of next meeting:

Combined PCC: 6th June 2017 at All Saints' Chilton.