

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC
held on Tuesday 12th May 2009 at 7:45 pm in St Matthew's Church, Harwell

Present

Sid Gale	Vicky Luker (part)	Chris Stott (Chair)
Mel Gibson	Tony Hughes	Frances Taylor
Gordon Gill (part)	Martin Speed - minutes	Matt Webb
Clive House	Roz Shipp	Jane Woolley

1. Opening and prayer

Chris welcomed the new members of the PCC and opened the meeting with a reflection on 'doors opened for us' (reading Revelations 3: 8 and from 2 Corinthians 2) and with prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Georgina Greer, Gordon Gill (who was attending the Deanery Pastoral Team meeting and joined for part of the meeting), Vicky Macarthur, Allan Macarthur, Steve Tunstall and Tim Roberts.

3. Minutes of the last meetings

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 10th March 2009 were signed as a correct record after minor alteration.

4. Matters arising

- a) **Pew sale:** In the absence of Tim, Tony reported that the pews had been advertised and a number of people came to view them. However, there were no sales. Tim himself has bought one, leaving two pews remaining.
- b) **Health and safety:** This item is still to be completed, but Tony and Allan have discussed the issues and prioritised the writing of the Health and Safety policy which Allan is working on.
- c) **Church directory:** The meeting expressed their appreciation of the initial draft from Kate and some members reported passing on comments by e-mail (as agreed at the last meeting). The meeting was concerned that Kate may consider not completing this now that she has left the PCC and Chris agreed to speak to her, pass on the appreciation of the PCC for the progress so far and ask her to continue.

Action: *Chris pass on the appreciation of the PCC and request that Kate continues with this.*

- d) **Renewal project consultation:** In the absence of Allan, this item was carried forward.

Action: *Martin to circulate the Renewal Project paper to the new PCC members. [This has now been done by Chris.]*

- e) **Support arrangements for cashiers:** It was thought that arrangements were in place, though it could not be confirmed whether Tim had provided a counting machine (as he had offered) and so this item was carried forward until Tim was present.
- f) **Hall cleaning budget entry name change:** Clive reported that the change had been made.

- g) **Pig roast arrangements:** Jane reported that she had recruited 3 co-ordinators for the day, and that she was making progress on compiling a list of volunteers.
- h) **Parish portfolio:** Chris introduced the brief progress report paper that had been circulated with the minutes. It was noted that there were items that referred specifically to Chilton while some Harwell topics were conspicuously absent (music and the visiting team being mentioned in particular). It was however not clear whether this was intentional (either because the portfolio was reported to target developments during Pam’s training period, or because Pam was based in Chilton.)

Action: *Martin to raise these issues in an e-mail to Hazel and offer contributions from Harwell if appropriate.*

5. Election of officers

Resolution	That the people listed below are appointed to the posts specified				
Moved	Frances	Seconded	Tony	Passed	Unanimously

- Secretary: Vacancy [Martin Speed has subsequently agreed to take this on for another year if co-opted by the PCC.]
- Vice-Chair: Tim Roberts
- Churchwardens’ assistants: It was agreed that these would not be required again this year.
- Treasurer: Clive House
- Book keeper Elizabeth Gill
- Electoral Roll Officer: Mike Pepper
- Gift Aid Secretary: Geoff Jenkinson
- Stewardship secretary: Ruth Slatter
- Joint PCC members: Sid Gale and Georgina Greer (in addition to ‘standing members’: Treasurer, Rector, and 2 Churchwardens)

6. Appointment of committees

Resolution	That the people listed below are appointed to the committee posts specified				
Moved	Tony	Seconded	Jane	Passed	Unanimously

- Missions: Sid Gale (chair), Kate Ullmer, Betty Pyke, Grace Mein, Georgina Greer.
- Social: There is a vacancy for a co-ordinator, and though various members of the congregation are ‘regulars’ in supporting functions such as the Harvest Lunch, there is no specific committee.

Action: **Chris** to add an item in the notice sheet and have it included in the notices at the start of services.

- Standing committee Rector, Churchwardens, and treasurer.
- Finance and Budget: Clive House (chair), Elizabeth Gill, Chris Stott, Allan Macarthur, and Sid Gale.
- Buildings: Tony Hughes (chair), Mel Gibson, Roz Shipp, Frances Taylor, Tim Roberts, David Pyke.

Worship: Chris Stott (convenor), Steve Ward, Vicky Macarthur, Naomi Gibson, Pam Rolls, Martin Speed, Mel Gibson.
 Ministry leadership team: Tim Roberts, Allan Macarthur, Chris Stott, Steve Ward, Kate Evans, Naomi Gibson, Pam Rolls, Alex Reich, Carolyn Vickers.

The organisational structure of the Church was briefly discussed, and Martin was asked to circulate the structure diagram that he prepared previously to new members – though he noted that, while this was an aid to identifying the range of activities that were undertaken, the structure shown was neither an agreed representation of the current position – nor an ‘ideal’ that the PCCs had agreed to work towards.

Action: Martin to circulate the ‘structure diagram’.

7. Appointment of representatives to organisations

Resolution	That the people listed below are appointed to the organisations specified				
Moved	Kate	Seconded	Clive H	Passed	Unanimously

Christian Aid: Vacancy.
 Winterbrook Youth Club: Tony Hughes
 Churches Together in Didcot: Liz Roberts
 The Village Hall Committee: Vicky Macarthur

8. Financial report

Clive talked the meeting through the figures and the report provided by Elizabeth Gill – in summary he said described the position as ‘satisfactory at present’.

Missions giving budget

Sid introduced the budget proposed by the missions group. It was noted that this represented 15% of the total income of the Church – in line with the precedent set by previous years.

Sid briefly introduced the items and clarified some items by reference to the notes on each organisation or individual beneficiary which were provided in the paper distributed with the agenda. It was explained that the Dugdales were no longer beneficiaries of the budget because they had retired from mission. A question as to when the payments would be made was raised, particularly in reference to Andrew Thomas (whose ordination will take place very soon.) Sid said that the money would be paid very soon after the budget was agreed by the PCC.

The budget was formally agreed by the meeting.

Resolution	That the Missing Giving Budget be distributed as follows:				
		FFNI (John Abu Bakker)	650		
		Church Pastoral Aid Society	900		
		Action partners	1800		
		Gideons	700		
		Scripture Union	550		
		Bible Society	550		
		Andrew Thomas	350		
		CMS (David and Heather Sharland)	2900		
		Church Army	450		
		Missionary Aviation	700		
		Richard and Roti Dugdale	----		
	Barnabas Fund	450			
		10000			
Moved	Sid	Seconded	Mel	Passed	Unanimously

9. Buildings report

The report of the Buildings Committee was noted.

Tony drew the attention of the meeting to the following points:

Portable electrical appliance testing: was reported to have been completed in the Church and Church hall and resulted in the removal of a number of items that did not pass the inspection. However none of these items represented a significant loss – and most were superfluous anyway. Tony noted that the failure of some items raised the issue of whether portable electrical appliances brought into the Church (or hall) by church members as gifts or long term loans should be identified at the time they were brought in, so that it was possible to test them before they were used.

Inspection of the Church for insurance: Tony reported that at the request of Elizabeth Gill (who deals with the administration of the insurance cover for the church) he had accompanied the insurance surveyor on the inspection of the Church and the Hall. The reports that were provided by the insurers were passed to Elizabeth. Tony reported that no major issues had been raised by the inspection, but that the assessment of the re-building costs had increased. This raised the possibility of premiums going up. However, Tony said that there were options to adjust the degree of cover and the ‘excess’ in the policy to counteract the increased valuation and therefore maintain the premiums at the previous level. Clive reported that the finance committee had taken this option. [After the meeting it was clarified that the Finance committee have agreed to have a £500 excess for both the Church Hall and the Church, and not to insure against terrorism.]

Mini working day: Tony reported that this was very successful and thanked Roz on behalf of the PCC for her work in organising it.

Vestry Proposal

Roz talked the meeting through the paper on the details of the vestry proposal.

She explained the problems she had experienced finding a suitable supplier to provide cabinets of sufficient quality, but said that in the proposal submitted she believed she had found the solution. She explained that the original idea of moving the safe had been rejected after the practical issues were considered in detail (the safe being bolted to the floor) and so the proposal is for two cabinets one between the safe and the tower door and the other to the left of the table and the mirror. She reported that the donor who had provided the fund for the work in

memory of his wife was happy with the proposal and that a small plaque would be included. This was approved by the PCC.

Resolution	That the buildings committee progress with the work in the vestry as specified in the paper presented by Roz Shipp				
Moved	Roz	Seconded	Vicky	Passed	Unanimously

Handrail

Tony informed the meeting that final specification for the proposed handrail at the front of the church was not quite ready yet and would be presented at the next meeting.

10. Direction

The papers on 'governance' and trusteeship were noted.

Tony introduced the listing (from the minutes of the May meeting of the PCC last year) of the key issues raised by a SWOT analysis.

A number of issues were briefly discussed.

The question of whether **objectives** had been identified for the Church was raised. It was noted that the Church had gone through the process of formulating a vision statement a few years back, and that the vision statement that emerged was: "Sharing life at the heart of the community and making followers of Jesus". It was noted that the annual report was expected to link the financial report to the objectives adopted and the progress against them. It was observed that maintaining the clergy (through the parish share) and maintaining the buildings represented the vast majority of the budget. It was therefore noted that whilst this expenditure provided the resources that were needed to realise the vision it overshadowed the costs associated with any individual objectives, and that these therefore had less of an impact on the finances. It was also noted that the SWOT analysis last year had been followed by agreement that 'communications' would represent a key focus for the last year. The other recent initiative to support objective setting – 'the because approach' – was also briefly introduced.

Action: *Martin to circulate the vision statement. [Chris has now done this.]*

It was observed that nothing had been done in connection with the item recorded under 'opportunities' in the analysis last year that there may be **opportunities to share with other Christians** in the village.

The significance of the issue that changes in life-style were making Sunday a less convenient day for worship was stressed, and the question of **whether Sunday services should start at 9:30** in both villages was raised and some of the pros and cons identified.

The question of whether there should be a more formalised **role of school liaison** was posed - and it was suggested that this might be a way of improving the take up of children's activity days (though it was also observed that better marketing of these days could be addressed in other ways.)

It was agreed that there was more to the topic than could be addressed at the current meeting and it was agreed that a separate meeting should be convened to deal with it outside the normal schedule of PCC meetings. It was agreed that a weekday evening in June would be best suited to this, and Martin was asked to circulate potential dates and identify a suitable occasion after taking views from members.

Action: *Martin to arrange a 'SWOT and Direction' meeting date in June by e-mail*

11. Child protection

Sid talked the meeting through the papers that he had been circulated regarding the adoption of the Oxford Diocese child protection policy. It was agreed that the options were either to adopt the policy or establish something different that would do the same job - and it was agreed that adopting the Oxford policy was preferable.

Whilst there was support for adopting the policy there were two barriers to doing so at the current meeting: (a) there was not time to undertake the required discussion of the Principles of the House of Bishops' policy set out at the beginning of Protecting All God's Children; and (b) it was necessary to check that Georgina had either already taken on or was prepared to take on the role of 'Children's Advocate' in addition to the role of 'Child Protection Co-ordinator' (it was established that Frances is the 'Approved Parish Representative').

Action: *All to prepare for discussion of the relevant paper at the next meeting*

Sid to discuss the relevant roles with Georgina

Martin to include the topic on the next agenda

12. Comfy chairs

Tony raised the issue of the notices on some of the chairs in the Church that identified them as being reserved for those with a disability. This he reported was in conflict with the principles agreed when some of the pews were replaced by chairs and the six armchairs purchased and the framed notice at the entrance to the Church inviting the congregation to 'sit anywhere'. Chris had arranged for the notices after an uncomfortable episode at the start of a service where a visitor was sitting in one of these chairs and was asked to move by a regular member of the congregation.

There were different opinions regarding this. The viewpoints expressed included a desire to avoid arguments over seats, and also a desire to avoid the notion that the congregation had a right to particular seats. The notion of members of the congregation expecting particular seats was believed to have a detrimental impact on visitors and newcomers. The view was expressed that it was especially important for visitors to feel welcomed and comfortable wherever they sat. Seats at the back were noted to be particularly desirable for newcomers who didn't feel comfortable to take a seat at the front where everyone appeared to be watching them and it was more difficult for them to follow the lead of the rest of the congregation on the local conventions for standing/sitting or taking communion. The importance of the role of the sides people was noted and discussed. The practice in some churches of taking the sides people role a stage further and having 'ushers' to show people to a seat was discussed - though it was agreed that there would be resistance to this among regular members of the congregation if proposed for Harwell.

A consensus could not be reached on whether it was best to have the notices or not and it was put to a vote.

Resolution	That the notices identifying some chairs as reserved for those with disabilities be removed.				
Moved	Tony	Seconded	Vicky	Passed	By five votes to four (with two abstentions)

13. Standing committee

There were no decisions taken by the standing committee since the last PCC meeting.

14. Future dates

- 27th May 2:00 pm, service of thanksgiving for the life of Doug Jordan
- 7th June Songs of praise
- 7th June Scouts renewal of promises
- 17th Jan 2010 Canon John Alderman from the Church Pastoral Aid Society would visit and preach – the CPAS being one of the bodies responsible for appointing the Rector at Harwell.

Chris reported that there would be an Alpha course in the autumn – dates to be arranged.

15. Other Business

- a. **John Abu Bakker Curry Lunch:** Sid reported that (as advertised in the notice sheet) John Abu Bakker would be preaching on Sunday 24th and afterwards cooking a Curry lunch in the church hall. John would buy the materials himself for this special form of 'Mission Tea' but the church would want to re-imburse him for this expense. It was agreed that asking for donations would be preferable to charging a fixed price per meal – but it was acknowledged by the meeting that this may result in a shortfall between contributions and the cost. There was general support for any such shortfall being made up by the PCC – though no formal resolution to this effect was recorded.
- b. **Pandemic plan:** Chris circulated a specification from the Diocese for drawing up a Pandemic plan for the parish. This raised lots of issues which there was not time to discuss. Some aspects represented the need for 'contingency planning' or 'disaster recovery' plans to keep the church operating at a time when many key people may be unavailable because of sickness. It was felt that these aspects were unsuited to discussion in a wider forum until a smaller group had put together draft proposals. Other aspects represented the approach of the church to support for the community during a time of widespread sickness. These aspects seemed unsuited to discussion before the members had had a chance to reflect on them. It was therefore generally agreed that (in line with the suggestion in the specification) it would be best for preliminary work to be done on this prior to a discussion at a subsequent meeting. The specification recommended that the plan be drawn up by the incumbent and churchwardens, but Chris noted that Allan and Tim had considerable demands on their time that this would make relying on them to work on the plan difficult. He therefore suggested that other members of the PCC might like to volunteer (after the meeting) to work with Chris on this. (Frances Taylor and Gordon Gill volunteered)

Action: *All to reflect on this issues and consider volunteering to help Chris formulate a draft plan for consideration at the next PCC meeting.*

Martin to include the issue on the next agenda.

16. Close

The meeting closed at 22:10.

17. Next Meeting

The next **Harwell PCC meeting** will be on **Tuesday 7th July 2009** at 9:00pm in All Saints Chilton, following a **combined PCC meeting** which will start at 7:45 in the same venue.

These minutes were signed as a true record by:

..... Chris Stott, chairman

PCC09M1

Secretary

.....

On (Date)

PAPERS

PCC08M6	Minutes of previous meeting
PCCP9-1-01	Financial report
PCCP9-1-02	Mission Giving Proposal 2009-10
PCCP9-1-03	Buildings committee report
PCCP9-1-04	Vestry proposal
PCCP9-1-05	Trusteeship - An Introduction for PCC members
PCCP9-1-06	PCC membership guide
PCCP9-1-07	SWOT analysis 2008
PCCP9-1-08	Child protection

Outstanding actions from previous meetings

	Action	Timescale	Responsibility
1.	Report on pew sale	When complete	Tim
2.	Child protection issues	When progress	Sid
3.	Report back on issues from H&S audit	When complete	Tony
4.	Work towards a Church directory	When progress	Kate
5.	Arrange consultation for 'renewal project'	ASAP	Allan
6.	Provide proposals for lighting 2009 carol services	July PCC	Sid
7.	Put in place support arrangements for the cashiers	ASAP	Tim

Completed and discontinued actions from previous meetings

1. Add agenda item on responsibilities of trustees
2. Circulation of relevant portions of Child protection policy papers and proposed actions
3. Obtain an update on the parish portfolio