

**Minutes of a meeting of Harwell PCC  
held on Tuesday 11 November 2003 in Harwell Church Extension**

**Present**

Chris Stott (chair)	Nancy Preston	Frances Taylor
Jean Barton	Tim Roberts	Marilyn Thomas
Georgina Greer	Clive Silver	Rob Thomas
Clive House	Jim Sinclair (secretary)	Steve Tunstall
Tony Hughes	Wendy Sinclair	Jean Twigger
Allan Macarthur	Ruth Slatter	Tony Ullmer

**1. Opening**

Chris opened the meeting with a reading from Revelation 2, referring to the good and bad features of the seven churches. All churches, including ours, are full of sinners and will have similar mixes of good and bad. This was followed by prayer.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Elizabeth Gill sent her apologies.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 9 September were signed as a correct record, subject to the following minor corrections:

Item 4(e): spelling should be Darke & Taylor

Item 11(d): date should be 20 November.

**4. Matters arising**

- Also for* ||
- a) Church Hall locks: Tony H reported that keys for the replacement locks have proved impossible to obtain. The cylinders ~~will probably~~ *may* have to be changed. *if this situation persists.*
  - b) Projector screen mount: Allan reported that a solution using a low table had been decided, but this is still to be executed.
  - c) Church heater replacement: Tony H reported that the heaters themselves will be replaced free of charge, but installation will be at our expense. Quotations will therefore be obtained for this work.
  - d) Wheelchair for occasional use: Tony H is still looking for a suitable second-hand chair.

**5. Financial report**

Clive H distributed the monthly statement, and reported that the expenditure and income to date were both roughly proportional to the budget. The predicted year-end deficit is approx. £4,000

rather than the £10,000 budgeted. A donation of £1,000 had recently been received from the estate of Cyril and Pearl Horton.

As notified in a memo distributed before the meeting, Elizabeth Gill has asked to step down from the PCC. Accordingly, she cannot continue as PCC treasurer. However, she is willing to continue with the bookkeeping functions. The PCC expressed gratitude to Elizabeth for her past service and for her offer to continue in this way. Clive House was appointed treasurer with immediate effect.

## 6. Discussions following NEAC Conference

Jean B distributed a Note recording a meeting on 6 October of those who had attended the NEAC Conference. This included thoughts on enhancing our outreach and our work with youth and children. It was agreed that the Vision Group should lead in considering how to put these ideas into practice.

Discussion provoked by this report centred on involvement by the congregation in these activities – the level of active involvement varies widely. It was questioned whether there was sufficient awareness of the Vision.

## 7. Vision Group report

Tim reported under the headings of the areas of focus:

**Prayer** – A successful day of prayer had been held at Chilton and the beginning of November, and consideration was being given to holding a similar event in Harwell in the near future. The Prayer Chain has a good contact list, and uses email and telephone to make known needs for prayer. The Sunday service sheets now include prayer items marked with a distinctive (P) symbol. The Saturday morning prayer group has grown somewhat. There is a focus on prayer in November home-groups.

**Outreach (Nancy)** – One home group had held a free car-wash. Another is to provide a free Christmas present wrapping service. The Alpha course had been publicised by a leaflet to every house; one or two 'cold contacts' had responded.

**Structure** – Thought was being given to Chris' sabbatical leave next year. This will provide an opportunity to involve more people in leadership activities.

**General** – The group is trying to be more open and specific about all ventures, for example by publicising targets.

## 8. CPAS consultation on Children's and Youth work

Earlier in the year, the PCC had discussed the idea of employing a helper for work with children and youth. It had been resolved to seek specialist advice. Marilyn now reported on a consultation held in October with Kelly Martin from the Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS). The meeting was with Chris and four youth leaders.

The consultant led the group in analysing the church and its youth and children's work. She emphasised the need for a clear vision of what we want to achieve among children and youth. A major part of the consultation concerned the local leaders of children and youth work – how to select them, to specify their jobs, to train and support them. If there are insufficient leaders, attention must be given to adapting the number and style of the groups we provide. It was emphasised that one employed youth worker could not magically fulfil all lacks and solve all problems! An example of where such a person could provide a significantly different function than volunteer leaders would be in daytime work with school children.



Discussions also covered specific ways to extend our outreach to young people of various ages and to their parents.

## 9. Buildings Committee report

Tony H had distributed a Note on improvement to the Kitchen/Toilet area of the church. The proposed plans had been on display in church since September, but had provoked only a small number of comments. Requests to include a nappy-changing facility were being taken on board.

In view of the general happiness with the plan, the following motion was passed, in order to carry the plan forward:

<b>Resolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That West Waddy be asked to apply for planning permission for the proposed reordering of the kitchen/toilet area at a cost of £110;</li> <li>- that competitive tenders be sought for the work;</li> <li>- that application be made to the DAC for a certificate of approval for the work, with a view to proceeding to apply for a Faculty;</li> <li>- that the PCC proceed with raising funds estimated at £10,000 to £12,000 beyond the £5,000 already earmarked.</li> </ul>
<b>Moved</b> Clive Silver	<b>Seconded</b> Tim Roberts
<b>Passed</b> 17:0 (1 abstained)	

## 10. PCC Members' Length of Service

Following the discussion of this topic at the previous meeting, Chris had distributed a Note providing further information. This broadened the discussion to include the size of the PCC and period of service per election. The Synodical Government Amendment Measure 2003 coming into effect on 1 January 2004 will establish that as a default, the number of elected lay representatives on a PCC for a church with 100 to 200 on the electoral roll shall be 12. Each shall be elected for a term of 3 years, with one-third retiring each year. However, this default arrangement may be overridden by a suitable motion at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

In discussion, it was argued that a 3-year term of election would limit our flexibility, and make it harder for potential candidates to decide in favour of serving, and even harder for them to judge whether to seek re-election after a term of service. No contrary points in favour of the 3-year term were raised. To follow the consensus view of retaining the one-year term will require a motion to be brought forward from the PCC to the APCM in March.

On the question of the number of elected members, our current size accords with the default provision given above. In discussion, some felt that (together with the Deanery Synod representatives, the wardens and the clergy) this made a rather large group, and that we might benefit from a smaller size. Others, however, preferred the breadth of outlook gained by having a large number.

Returning to the original subject of whether to limit the cumulative continuous length of PCC members' service, the following points were made:

- an informal guide would be preferable to a rigid rule;
- although a limit on length of service provides a useful impetus to maintain freshness, it is even more important not to lose key people who are exercising leadership in some area;
- we should be flexible enough to ask people to stay on when involved in some important project or leadership role;
- we are allowed for many jobs to use people from outside the council.

It was agreed to seek to bring these matters to a conclusion at the next meeting. To help with this, Jim and Chris agreed to prepare and pre-distribute candidate motions embodying the range of points of view already expressed.

**11. Preparations for Christmas services**

The Toy Service is on 30 November. Carols by Candlelight services in Harwell will be on 14 December, with mulled wine (Social Committee) and mince pies (PCC members to provide) after the evening service. Carol singing around the village on 22 December. Wardening arrangements are in place for services between 21 December and 4 January (Jim and Wendy and Tim and Liz standing in where necessary for wardens absent on holiday). The Christingle service will be on 8 January.

**12. Other Business**

a) The question was raised of whether offers could now be received to purchase pews no longer required after the recent installation of chairs in some areas. Tony H replied that two long pews were available, and that disposal of them was allowable under the terms of the faculty. It was agreed to give public notice of the position and to seek expressions of interest. In the event of their being 'competition', the wardens were empowered to decide how to proceed.

b) Nancy reported that she was aware of the desire by some that their children be allowed to receive the elements at Holy Communion services. Chris replied that it is permissible for a local church to establish a policy either in favour of or against this. He suggested getting a diocesan advisor to address the PCC on the issues.

c) Tony H requested as a future agenda item the question whether the church's outreach should extend to donating more to local caring organisations.

d) Little Pippins have requested to use the Church Hall for a period in the summer while their own building is being replaced. This was agreed in principle, provided solutions could be found for existing daytime users (Wednesday morning group each week; Evergreens once per month), and provided that the Village Hall committee is consulted.

e) Written comments from Kate Evans about problems with the church sound system were received, and will receive consideration.

f) Chris reported that a Confirmation service has been arranged for the evening of 28 March, led by Bishop Bill Down.

**13. Close**

The meeting closed with prayer at 10.10 pm.

**Next Meeting**

Tuesday 27 January 2004 at 7.45 pm in the Church Extension

..... Chris Stott, chairman

..... Jim Sinclair, secretary