

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Combined PCCs
of St Matthew's Harwell with All Saints' Chilton
held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 7.30 pm**

Present

(J) Denotes Joint PCC member. There were thus 12 voting members including the Rector at this meeting - all resolutions refer to Joint PCC votes

Peter Cox	Rebecca Lewis (J)	Jan Radford (J)
Sid Gale	Allan Macarthur (J)	Pam Rolls (J)
Stuart Gibson (J)*	Patrick Moseley	Judith Russell J
Gordon Gill	Carol Pigott	Jane Woolley (J)
Tony Hughes (J)	John Pigott	The Rector (J, Chair)
Phill Johnston (J)*	Alex Reich (J)	

* Present from the middle of item C5.2

By Invitation:

Judy Gold, Acting and Deputy Safeguarding Officer for items A1 - A6 and C3.
Sarah Barrett and Melanie Shields, Children and Families Workers

The items are minuted here in agenda order, but they were taken in the order shown below, which was proposed by the Rector and agreed at the meeting: A1-6; C3, B5, B3 and B1.

The remaining items were held over, some with papers tabled but not discussed.

A Preliminaries

A1 Opening & Prayer

Jane Woolley read Luke chapter 5 verses 1 to 11.

The Rector said that this was the lectionary reading for today. There was a time of silent prayer, then the Rector asked for people's thoughts on the reading. A number of those present contributed.

The Rector read Psalm 96 and led the meeting in open prayer.

The Rector thanked the Secretary for managing the agenda, uploading the papers and writing the minutes, then he thanked all involved in providing papers and other input.

A2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Hazel Benton, Yvonne Sanderson (J) and Eliza Wheaton.

Phil Corbishley, Andrew Keene and Michelle Walker were absent.

Jean Barton and Helen Brook had also been invited as members of the SLT, but were absent.

A 3 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Paper J refers: February 2021 Combined PCC Meeting Minutes.

The Rector thanked the Secretary for writing the minutes and said that anyone who could not access them should contact him.

There were no corrections. The minutes were approved.

As this meeting was held on-line, the minutes will be signed by the Secretary and Rector in due course.

A4 Actions / Matters arising

Paper H refers. The Rector said that the paper is self-explanatory. The matters arising are:

STATUS OF ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING AS OF 27th APRIL 2021

FROM APRIL 2019 MEETING:

ITEM B 2.4.3 Didcot Emergency Foodbank

Heading 2: Response to Emergency Appeals.

Action: World Mission Group to consider giving to disaster appeals, and restricted giving to World Mission,

Status: In hand.

FROM THE JULY 2019 MEETING:

ITEM B 2.4.2. CAP Centre

Action: Rector to circulate CAP Centre Accounts.

Status: 2018, 2019 and 2020 accounts circulated April 2021.

Action: Rector to discuss SOFEA Oxford with Liz Roberts and Sue Bright.

Status: Not yet done

ITEM B 4.2 Proposed Albania Partnership

Action: World Mission Group to submit a paper on the proposal to support the Mission in Shkoze to the October Combined PCC meeting.

Status: In hand.

ITEM C 1.3 Annual Re-Adoption of Data Protection Policy

Action: Rector and Church Administrator to adapt policy in discussion with Chris Pollard.

Status: to be deferred.

FROM JANUARY 2020 MEETING:

ITEM C 2.1 Fundraising strategy

Action: Jonathan Mobey agreed to co-ordinate the following approaches:

General giving:

Audiences: Congregations of both parishes.

Timing: Incorporate gentle references into services. Presentation by Treasurers in run up to Annual Meetings. Review in the autumn.

Status: Revised plans; Giving Day proposed 25 October 2020.

Update: Giving Day was held; plans now in progress to write to church members directly.

FROM FEBRUARY 2021 COMBINED PCC MEETING:

ITEM C 4.3 Change in Church Administrator

Action: Rector to make announcement of change of Church Administrator in Rector's Letter.

Status: Done.

A 5 Annual Schedule Items

The annual schedule items on the agenda are items B4, C3.3 and C3.4. It was stated that item C1.3 Data Protection Policy is also an annual schedule item.

A6 Other Joint Issues

There were none.

B Mission Strands

B 0 2020 Vision

Item held over.

B 1 Children, Youth and Families

B 1.1 Update and Plans

Paper K refers: CFW Report January- April 2021: Activities including Weekly Sunday Pebbles Family Service, Fledgelings and Storytime, Easter Trail, Parent talk course and weekly Praise Party. Also, Professional Development, and Actions for 2021.

Holiday Club

Sarah Barrett said that Harwell School was currently only able to offer outdoor space. So, Holiday Club will potentially be at St. Matthew's Church or Harwell Church Hall.

There will almost certainly be bigger bubbles of children than last year, possibly up to the capacity of a normal year.

Jan Radford thanked Melanie Shields and Sarah Barrett for what they have done during the last year.

Melanie Shields and Sarah Barrett thanked all for their support and encouragement.

B 1.2 Greater Didcot Youthwork Trust and Youth / Secondary Schools Work

The Rector said that the legal work to set up the Trust is almost completed. The Diocesan Development Fund committee has asked for clarification of a couple of issues on strategy which are being worked on. There has been a series of discussions with this committee. Hopefully the application is in its final stages. All communications from the Diocese look positive and encouraging. There is good support locally.

The Diocesan committee will respond to the application within two weeks of submission, and it is hoped that the Trust will be in operation in a matter of weeks.

The Rector answered questions:

- *Is it likely that the application will be successful?* The Rector said that he is hopeful that it will. If not, then the Trust committee would find another way to fund the Trust. The youth workers are already doing additional hours for the Trust, the Diocese has suggested that they could backdate the funding.
- *It was stated that this is an exceedingly good idea, so if there is not enough funding then we and the other churches should try to raise it.* The Rector said that we will need to raise more funding in any case, as the Diocesan funding is time-limited.
- *Will it be a matter of weeks until the Trust is formed and the youth workers start work?* The Rector said that the Trust will be operational as soon as the application is approved. Activities can't formally be started until the funds are available. It is planned that some will start in the Summer and some in the Autumn.

B 2 Evangelism and Discipleship of Adults

All items held over apart from:

B 2.3.2 CAP Centre

These papers were tabled:

A, B, C: 2018, 2019 and 2020 CAP financial statements.

G: CAP Centre Annual Report 2020.

B 3 Pastoral Care

Paper N refers: The paper conveyed thanks to all who carry out Pastoral Care, and covered recruitment of a new leader for Harwell and of more carers, visiting and staying in touch, Holy Week home communions, Funerals and Bereavement care and Generation Gold 'Easter-in-a box'.

Pam Rolls highlighted the need for someone to lead the Harwell team.

B 4 World Mission

The Item was held over.

B 5 Worship Services

B 5.1 Fresh Expressions and Future Worship Services Formats / Patterns

Paper I refers: Services for 2021 and Beyond – Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Proposal for the Combined PCC

The Senior Leadership Team is composed of the Rector, Churchwardens, Children and Families Workers, Licenced Clergy, Leader of the World Mission Group, the Homegroup Coordinator, and Church Administrator groups.

The paper explains the background to a new schedule of services, expanding on those that were run before and during the pandemic and proposes trying some new ideas.

The proposed new schedule of services in Paper I includes:

- **Sunday Morning Chilton 9:30am:** "front facing" Services of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, and occasionally other styles. Followed once a month by shared refreshments with the 10.30am congregation (see below). **Service to include Festivals and baptisms (see below).**
- **Sunday Morning Chilton 10:30am (2nd Sunday)** in Church Hall. Informal worship with groups around tables including lively family-friendly songs and craft activity. Preceded by shared refreshments with the 9.30am congregation (see above).
- **Sunday Morning Harwell 10:30am:** Interactive service, of various formats including all together at start for songs and prayer, then split into age specific groups adults, teens and children for discussion, prayer and activities e.g. look at videos, crafts, etc. Holy Communion occasionally. Service to include Festivals and baptisms (see below).
- **Sunday Evening Harwell: 6:00pm** "Front facing" service. Services of Evening Prayer and Holy Communion and occasionally other styles.
- **Mid-Week Communion service** late morning or early afternoon, alternating between All Saints' and St Matthew's, either Common Worship or BCP, with hymns or 'said', and possibly followed by refreshments. Fortnightly or weekly (i.e. once or twice a month in each church)
- **Baptisms and Festivals** e.g. Remembrance, Harvest, etc.: Front Facing or Interactive services and other formats.
- **Online Services** – To continue at least until September.
- **8am services of Holy Communion and quarterly Chilton Evening service** – to be discontinued.

The Rector said that the paper had been through a few drafts and had been discussed at a couple of SLT meetings. It had been very closely reviewed. He was asking the CPCC to agree the broad-brush pattern rather than the detail at this point.

The Covid lockdown and break from normal services have provided the opportunity to experiment. There would be a phased roll-out of the different services over the coming months. There would be a range of services but the idea is to plan together as a Benefice.

The Rector continued that he expected a broad range of opinions in the PCCs as in any family, and there will be a broad range of views in the wider congregations. The Combined PCC is making decisions not only on behalf of the wider congregations and those we currently reach, but also on behalf of those we do not. A recent survey said that 95% of people are not reached. Our Benefice may be the exception but there is no lack of spiritual hunger here.

Half of those present are on the SLT so have already had a chance to discuss the proposal.

A lengthy and wide-ranging discussion ensued. Comments are gathered together here under the following broad headings; they were made at different points throughout the discussion:

General Comments

- A number of those present, both SLT members and not, agreed enthusiastically with the service formats, schedule and timing, and focus on families.
- There were some favourable comments about the focus on families in the morning services.
- There were some favourable comments about the new Midweek Communion service.
- PCC members thanked the SLT for putting in a considerable amount of work to compile the proposal.
- People may have got out of the habit of attending church during lockdown.
- We cannot assume people will want to continue, we will need to re-engage them and consider what should continue as before and what should change.
- A sizeable congregation of 50 to 60 people attended the family services run when permitted during lockdown. Some of these were people who had not normally attended church before, but who could be part of the future of our churches. The proposal is to bring them into the core of the church.
- There is a particular focus in the proposal on working as a combined Benefice, with different types of services in different locations, to encourage people to consider not just attending their parish church. However, people may have problems with transport and we should offer help.
- It was pointed out that the Generation Gold service already alternates between Harwell and Chilton and has some interactive elements so that the congregation is already getting used to this format.
- Harwell was selected as the location for the interactive service as the flexible layout and seating at St. Matthews' suits interactive services better than the layout at All Saints' which is more suited to front-facing services.

Chilton Morning Service Congregation

- Concern was expressed that the young families who attend the All Saints' services would transfer to attend the Harwell service, leaving All Saints' bereft of younger people and the congregation would slowly drop until the church closes.
- A CFW said that she understood the concern, but the families were likely to transfer away from All Saints' anyway, as the Chilton services do not serve their needs any more. They may leave the Benefice completely to attend church in Didcot or Oxford. With the proposed services, people will stay in the Benefice. They would try to counteract the loss at Chilton by having more Benefice-wide activities.
- The proposal does though have the Pebbles family service at Chilton once a month.
- There would be no fewer front-facing services at All Saints' than before, and the number of front-facing services would go up across the Benefice as a whole.
- The philosophy behind the proposal was that the current services inadequately meet the needs of all the different groups in our congregations, because each service is trying to meet the needs of too many different age groups. By having different services aimed at each group or at a few similar groups, their needs could be met more precisely. The interactive service is aimed at families but not exclusively so, and people of all ages would be welcome whether with children or not.
- Families may change churches, but trying to change too much pleases no one. Hopefully at some point Chilton may be ready to take the families back – either by changing the current 9:30am service at Chilton to interactive, or by growing the interactive service at Harwell so that a second interactive service can be started at Chilton. Planting back from Harwell into Chilton could happen.
- An interactive service at another church had grown enough to plant several more congregations.
- In-person family services in lockdown had been good from a teaching and child point of view because all the children from both churches were together, and could see they were part of something bigger. If families turn up at Chilton morning service, there will still be something there for them to do.

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- The numbers in each age group change - there was a really big Sunday School a few years ago, now the Pathfinders group is quite big. It would be nice to do something as a Benefice and keep the critical mass of children together.
- There is a lot of work to do to make sure the services meet the needs of people who attend and that they all flourish. It may be that as children grow up, they do not need child-focussed services and feed into the 9:30am service so it grows into something different. Hopefully the Chilton service does not just carry on as before, but also changes to meet the needs of the congregation in a vibrant way.
- Holy Communion is very important and we should try to create a bond across the Benefice. There could be really good nurturing and growing at the Chilton Services so when we meet together as a Benefice we are all on the same page. We should join up themes across the Benefice and thoughts and prayers are welcomed.

Harwell Morning Service

- There was concern that some of the regular congregation may not be happy with this style of service every week, or feel very uncomfortable in group discussions. They may change church, or may stop attending completely, without saying anything.
- Perhaps the interactive service could not be every Sunday.
- Some members of the Harwell morning congregation may see St. Mathew's as their village church and don't want to go to an interactive service or to All Saints'. They may see this proposal as really hurtful. There is an active choice for the Chilton congregation but less so for the Harwell congregation, especially if they can't travel easily.
- The ages of children in some families would mean that they would all be in different groups in the interactive service. Could there be some joint activities for all age groups on some weeks so that they worshipped together? The Rector said that there would, for example as has been done at Christingle. A Children and Families worker agreed that the services could vary.
- We want to encourage people to think that we are part of a Benefice and the wider church, not just one village.

Harwell Evening Service

- This was popular under lockdown with about 30 people attending, the new attendees appreciated attending church in the evening. They are aiming to raise its profile; it and this congregation will not be neglected.
- We are aiming to make the 6pm service more significant.

Communications

- The proposal is quite complicated and care will be needed with communications e.g. to explain the nature of the interactive service.
- The new services may put regular attendees off, so communication will be important so people are taken along. Some people could be put off attending by whatever is presented, and some are put off attending traditional services. The aim is for a mix of "interactive" discussion and "front facing" traditional services.
- We should emphasise in communications that there will be a weekly front facing evening service at Harwell, which is intended to be equal with the morning service.
- There was discussion of communications channels. A communications strategy would include emails, the website, facebook, notices in the online services, church broadsheet and the village newsletters.

Online Services

- Several people said that it is good to see that these are continuing.
- There are good materials available.
- These services can be helpful for new enquirers. Over 1000 people had viewed the Diocesan online Easter service.
- Care homes including the new one being built are another opportunity for online services for those who can't travel to church, and also for carers.
- We could consider changing the branding of online services from Harwell and Chilton to include Great Western and Valley Park which fall within our parish boundaries. It is an opportunity to grow outside our boundaries, depending on what other parishes are doing.

Starting Dates of Services

- The starting dates of the different services are staggered partly to ensure sustainability and to ensure that each is going well before starting the next.

Preaching and Leading

- There was some discussion of preachers leading the different services on the same day, and possibly having the same sermon at 9:30am at Chilton and 6pm at Harwell, or possibly different versions of the same material across the Benefice.

Start time of Harwell Sunday Morning Service

- There were too many changes at once for the morning service It was suggested that this stays at 11am rather than change to 10:30am.
- People may have got out of the routine of attending church so a new time of 10:30am would be less of a change.
- 10:30am is proposed because that is the start time of the family lockdown Zoom service. It is consistent with the start time for the Pebbles Family service and gives time for people in the rest of the day.
- Another option could be 10:30am for 11am, like the Pepples family service. The interactive service could start with refreshments, then people could arrive at 11am for a more formal worship. This works well in similar services at other churches. This would allow people to attend both services.
- 10:30am is more child-friendly as they will get fractious and want lunch by 11:30am.
- A different start-time helps makes the point that the service is different.
- We could not say that 10:30am won't work if it has not been tried. Starting the new services at 11am then moving it to 10:30am would be one more change rather than less.

Review

- There was a number of comments about the need for review once the new schedule has been running for a number of months.
- There will be review by the leadership groups at their regular meetings: the Preachers and Leaders, the staff team, wider SLT (including churchwardens). There will also be review at the PCC meetings and could also be an Extraordinary PCC meeting. There could be wider feedback and review.
- The summer is a good time to experiment
- The new schedule and services should run until October without making further significant changes.
- There should be a formal review in December.
- It was suggested that the review is important and should be added to the proposal, with consultation and feedback carried out as widely as possible.

Next Steps

- As a lot of issues had been discussed, it was suggested that the SLT takes the comments on board and writes another paper for the PCCs, including the timings and how to present the proposals to the wider congregation.
- There will need to be CPCC approval at some point before the services can start running. As the paper was written for this meeting specifically, there was no need for another one.
- This is the biggest change in services in many years. The SLT has had many weeks to consider this, whereas the paper was only circulated to the CPCC a week ago. More time may be needed to consider the proposal and possible consequences, so fewer false starts are made and fewer changes are required once it is running. People can become disheartened otherwise.
- It would be best to start trying the new schedule soon, because we won't know if it works until we do.
- It is good to be cautious, and not rush ahead, but for how long? The proposal had come from services tried out under the restrictions: The Children and Families workers tried a lot of different formats both outside and inside church in the mornings as the government regulations changed. Similarly, the evening service had to have different formats with spoken word and hymns sung by the service leaders on different occasions. These were appreciated.
- It is important to note that the proposals had grown out of both the services run under lockdown, and what had been working well and growing in the years before that, such as Pebbles Family Service, Generation Gold, and weekday services. The front facing traditional services are under pressure, both the 9:30am and 11am services are in slow decline as people move away or stop attending due to ill health. What is proposed is 2/3 traditional and 1/3 -modern services. There may be a few issues with timing at Harwell.
- We could accept the proposal in principle, with a formal review by the SLT and others in December, then changes in the light of the review as necessary. Following acceptance, the SLT and clergy should meet to work out how to implement the proposals and communicate them to the congregations and village communities. We should make sure nothing is set in stone that is not intended.
- We could state that we are restarting services to an experimental schedule with a request for feedback to the SLT who are open to suggestions and making adaptations. We should consult as widely as possible.

The Rector summed up by saying that he sensed that there was a good degree of support for the general pattern of services by those present, with no major issues, and that this could be taken back to the SLT for consideration of:

- The time of the Morning Service at Harwell – either 10:30am or 11am
- Communications
- The rationale and justification for the changes.

Other than that, the CPCC seemed content for the services to be run for a period with a formal review after a few months.

C 1 Communications and Operations and C 2 Stewardship and Finances

Items held over.

C 3 Safeguarding

Paper D refers, written by Judith Gold, Deputy Safeguarding Officer: DBS Checks, Volunteers Spreadsheet Update, Recruitment of Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Policy, Social Media Policy.

C 3.1 Update and Plans

The Rector said that Judy Gold has been covering Safeguarding single-handedly since Mel Gibson passed away in November. She had been Deputy to Mel until then. The Rector welcomed her to the meeting.

Judy Gold said that her paper describes the current situation. She has done very little as she had only recently been allowed out due to the pandemic, and is awaiting specific instructions from the Rector. She misses Mel Gibson who used to have a plan. The only currently planned task is to update the spreadsheet.

Spreadsheet

The Rector said that the spreadsheet is a list of volunteers with the date of their DBS checks and safeguarding training. Judy Gold has had a look and the spreadsheet needs bringing up to date.

The Rector confirmed that there would be a Holiday Club this year. Judy Gold said that there would need to be more recruits to run it and DBS checks.

It was stated that the Spreadsheet also needs to include those that work with vulnerable adults as well as those that work with children as stated in the report. Judy Gold apologised for this omission.

It was further stated that PCC members also need to be DBS checked, even if they are not dealing directly with children or vulnerable adults. Judy Gold said that all current PCC members have certificates. The Rector and Judy Gold said that the spreadsheet needs a review as PCC members change.

It was further suggested that Churchwardens also need Safeguarding training, which the new Churchwardens will need to complete.

Pam Rolls said that she will mention this at the SLT meeting to start the process off. The Rector said that the ministry leaders will be aware who works in the different areas.

Safeguarding Documents

Pam Rolls said that she had visited Margaret Gibson and picked up the documents held by Mel Gibson. Pam has gone through them and discarded some items, and passed the rest to the Rector. Judy Gold said that it is important that we have them though a lot may no longer be relevant.

C 3.2 Appointment of a New Safeguarding Officer

Judy Gold said that this could be a partnership of the Safeguarding Officer with her, as an alternative to Principal and Deputy arrangement. It was stated that the new person should be from Harwell (as Judy is from Chilton).

Jane Woolley suggested that we need to get on with recruiting a Safeguarding Officer; otherwise we could continue indefinitely with no one in the role. We have also been without a pastoral care lead in Harwell for quite a while. Jane suggested that the SLT spend some time thinking about who might be suitable and to approach some suitable candidates.

ACTION: Jonathan to instigate discussion at SLT of possible candidates for Safeguarding Officer and pastoral care lead in Harwell

Pam Rolls suggested that the SLT think and pray who the next Safeguarding Officer should be. The Rector asked that any suggestions are passed to him.

It was stated that Mel Gibson is still named as Safeguarding Officer on the church website. The Rector said that he had changed the printed documents on the noticeboard and will correct the website.

ACTION: Rector to remove Mel Gibson’s name as Safeguarding Officer from the Website.

C 3.3 Safeguarding Policy

Paper E refers: Parish Safeguarding Policy May 2021.

This is based on a template from the diocese. It is unchanged from last year’s policy.

Judy Gold asked if there had been any Safeguarding complaints. The Rector said that he was not aware of any complaints this year.

Resolution	The Parish Safeguarding Policy in Paper E is adopted.				
Proposed	Rector	Seconded	-	Passed by the JPCC	Unanimously.

The Safeguarding Policy will be printed and signed by the churchwardens.

The Rector stated that he would ensure that the Church Administrator would send the signed policy to the Diocese.

C 3.4 Social Media Policy

Paper F refers: Model Policy on Social Media revised May 2016 (this is the latest version)

Comments included:

- Judy Gold said that the policy appears satisfactory.
- The Rector said that the policy was from the Diocese and had been adopted by the Benefice for several years.
- Page 2 third Paragraph of the policy refers the reader to “para 5” but it is not clear which paragraph 5 is intended. It was suggested that this matter is raised with the Diocese as this will also affect other parishes. The Rector agreed.
- The Rector said that the policy does not need to be signed, we adopt the policy and follow it as good practice.
- It was stated that the policy needs updating as it only mentions Facebook and teenagers use other social media platforms. The Rector said that we should check with the Diocese if it should be updated.

ACTION: Judy Gold to check with Diocese regarding the reference to “para 5” in the Social Media policy.

Resolution	The Diocesan Model Social Medial Policy in Paper F is adopted with amendments if required by the points above.				
Proposed	Rector	Seconded	-	Passed by the JPCC	Unanimously.

The Rector said that this is an important area to get right, it is critical that it is done well. He thanked Judy Gold for her work, and everyone involved in delivering and completing the training.

C 4 Staffing and Leadership

C 4.1 Update and Plans and C 4.3 Permission to Assist at Communion

Held over.

C 4.2 Employment Committee

The Chair of the committee had not submitted a paper as there is nothing to report.

There was a query regarding the CFWs' contracts which the Rector had resolved outside the meeting.

C 5 Wider Church

C 5.1 Deanery and Diocesan Synod

These papers were tabled:

Paper L Diocesan Synod Summary 21st March 2021

Paper G Deanery Synod Report – May 2021.

These were noted.

C 5.2 Great Western Park and Valley Park

Item held over.

C6 Any Other Business

None.

The Rector thanked all present for their contributions. These are exciting times, we are coming into summer and coming out of lockdown.

The Rector closed the meeting with the Grace at 10:07pm.

Dates of next meetings:

Individual PCCs: 1st June 2021 online

Combined PCC: 6th July 2021 online

CHAIR

SECRETARY

DATE

DATE