

Minutes of a Meeting of St Matthew's, Harwell PCC held at St Matthew's, Harwell on Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 7.30 pm

Present

Eliza Wheaton (Chair for items 1-3)	Phill Johnston (Treasurer; present for items 8-17)	Gordon Gill
Tony Hughes (Chair for item 4 onwards)	Pam Rolls (present for items 1-3)	Hazel Connelly
Jane Woolley (Secretary)	Rebecca Lewis Sid Gale	Liz Roberts

St Matthew's, Harwell and All Saints', Chilton PCCs were present together for Items 1-3. For the other items, only St Matthew's PCC members were present.

Items were taken in the order on the agenda.

1. Opening & Prayer

Pam Rolls read Psalm 134. Pam remarked that we need to remember that we are in God's presence and we need to ask for His guidance during our meetings.

Pam Rolls led the meeting in prayer.

2. The Rectory

Paper A refers. David Tyler of the Diocese has raised the question of whether the next incumbent should live in the current Rectory or in a cheaper to heat more modern Rectory.

Various PCC members expressed support for the recommendation in Paper A.

Resolution	We the PCCs of Harwell and Chilton have decided that we oppose the sale of the Rectory at this point - given that the various options need careful consideration a) to ensure best use of resources and b) in view of the impact on facilities used by our church ministry (i.e. the land between the church and the Rectory)				
Proposed	Tony Hughes	Seconded	Rebecca Lewis	Passed	Unanimously

Action: **Eliza Wheaton** to write to David Tyler to relay this decision and to explain the rationale in more detail – including the additional point raised by Gordon Gill about the possibility of a team ministry and that having a minister living in the centre of Harwell village would fit well with there being a vicarage in Great Western Park and a curate's house in Valley Park.

3. Online Sunday services

Eliza Wheaton relayed that the future of the online service on Sundays is under review now that there are only c.15 devices accessing it. Options being considered:

- Option 1: Online service on the first Sunday of the month and festival Sundays only
- Option 2: One person to create the whole service content rather than a collection of people.

Eliza Wheaton informed PCC members that for the next two Sundays (12 and 19 June) the plan is to trial Option 2. For the two Sundays after that (26 June and 3 July) the plan is to revert to the status quo. What will happen after that is not yet decided.

Sid Gale pointed out that the online service is not mentioned at all in the weekly church news email bulletin. This could account for the drop in audience for it.

Action: Eliza Wheaton to ask Deborah Evans to reinstate mention of the online service in the weekly email bulletin

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Allan Macarthur and Jan Radford.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 1 March 2022 were approved and signed.

6. Decisions made between meetings

In March: to co-opt Hazel Connelly on to the PCC.

In May: to elect Liz Roberts to the PCC.

7. Matters/actions arising from the previous meeting not covered elsewhere

There were none.

8. Parish Representatives for the vacancy process

Papers C and C2 refer. Tony Hughes explained that the Parish Representatives will formally be appointed at the Section 11 Meeting on 23 August. However, it is helpful to agree informally now who they will be, so that the process at the Section 11 meeting can hopefully be routine and so that they can be asked to review Draft 1 of the Parish Profile before this.

Eliza Wheaton indicated that she is willing to be one of the Parish Representatives.

Tony Hughes relayed that Allan Macarthur is also willing to be one of the Parish Representatives. However, Allan has pointed out in Paper C that he is planning to move to Scotland in 2023/24, but that if he is chosen as one of the Parish Representatives this would in no way impact on how he carried out the duty.

Tony Hughes asked if there were any other nominations, or PCC members wishing to put themselves forward as one of the Parish Representatives. None was forthcoming. Tony declared that Eliza Wheaton and Allan Macarthur will therefore be our Parish Representatives, subject to formal confirmation at the Section 11 Meeting.

9. Reminder of duty of charity trustees

Jane Woolley, Secretary, drew PCC members' attention to the content of Paper D: *Trusteeship – An introduction for PCC Members*.

10. Annual appointment of PCC officers

Paper E refers. There being no other nominations for Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chairman the following resolution was passed.

Resolution	To appoint the following people to the following roles:				
	Vice Chair			Tony Hughes	
	Treasurer			Phill Johnston	
	Secretary			Jane Woolley	
Proposed	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

11. Progress with finding a replacement Treasurer

Eliza Wheaton relayed that Tim Roberts has agreed to take over as Treasurer on 1 January 2023 (subject to election, etc.). Phill Johnston confirmed that he is willing to continue as Treasurer until then.

12. Annual appointment of PCC sub-committees

Resolution	To approve the appointment of the following people to the following committees:				
	Finance			Phill Johnston (Chair) Nick Clarke Allan Macarthur	
	Buildings			Tony Hughes (Chair) David Pyke Philip Roberts Rebecca Lewis Allan Macarthur (Churchwarden) Eliza Wheaton (Churchwarden)	
	Church Hall Management			Vacant	
	(The Rector – when there is one - is automatically a member of all subcommittees)				

Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously
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It was noted that the Standing Committee is made up as follows:

- Rector (when there is one)
- Churchwardens
- PCC Vice Chair
- PCC Secretary
- Other clergy licensed to the Benefice (Pam Rolls and Jan Radford)

13. Annual appointment of role holders

Resolution	To approve the appointment of the following people to the following roles:				
	Churchwarden deputies	Tim Roberts			
		David Pyke			
		Tim Paget			
		Rebecca Lewis			
	Bookkeeper	Nick Clarke			
	Electoral Roll Officer	Mike Pepper			
	Deputy Electoral Roll Officer	Jane Woolley			
	Concert/Event managers	Liz Roberts			
		Tim Roberts			
	Jim Sinclair				
	Wendy Sinclair				
Health & Safety Officer	Hazel Connelly				
Stewardship Secretary (envelope scheme)	Eliza Wheaton				
Safeguarding Officer	Sue Greatbanks				
Pastoral Care Lead	(still vacant)				
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

Eliza Wheaton relayed that one person has been approached about being Pastoral Care Lead but they decided against it.

Action: Eliza Wheaton to consult Pam Rolls about who else to approach about being Pastoral Care Lead

14. Annual appointment of sidespeople

Resolution	To approve the appointment of the following people as sidespeople:				
	Peter Barclay-Watt	Gill Gay	Anita Pepper		
	David Pyke	Jim Sinclair	Roger Mawle		
	Wendy Sinclair	Andy Lewis	Sarah Mawle		
	Mike Pepper	Elaine Shrimpton	Mark Johnston		
	Georgina Greer	Kevin Davies			
	Debbie Davies	Ryan Davies			
	Matthew Davies	Mike Chedzey			
	Christine Iacopetti	Sheila Chedzey			
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

15. Event manager job description

No one knows if Jonathan Mobey gave Jim and Wendy Sinclair an Event Manager job description.

Liz Roberts confirmed that she had never been given such a job description.

Liz Roberts said that Jonathan Mobey had sent her a document which he thought might be the current job description. However when Liz had looked at it, she felt it wasn't up to date because it didn't say anything about hire charges. Liz had communicated this back to Jonathan but then heard nothing further.

Sid Gale said that the PCC had reviewed a draft Events Policy in January 2017, which was then passed at the March 2017 meeting. This Policy says that there is a hire charge. Sid therefore agreed with Liz Robert's assertion that the job description she had been sent by Jonathan Mobey needs further work.

<p>Action: Liz Roberts to review the Event Manager job description sent by Jonathan Mobey, identify any changes required and send it to the PCC Secretary</p>
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16. Finance Reports

Papers F & G refer.

Phill Johnston explained that the finance papers show data for January-March 2022 i.e. the first quarter of the year. The income and expenditure report shows a 2022 Budget Year to date (YTD) column and a 2022 Actual YTD column. At first glance, the 2022 Actual YTD column would appear to suggest that we will have a budget surplus of c.£6k by the end of the year. However, this does not take account of several large annual single payment items yet to be paid e.g. insurance premiums. Taking those into account pro rata, we are currently projecting a budget surplus of c.£2k for the year i.e. we are in a fairly healthy-looking situation at the moment.

Phill Johnston raised the issue of using the £12,685 in the World Missions fund which is currently just sitting there doing nothing. This has come from the 10% of any legacies received which we set aside for World Missions capital projects or special projects.

Action: Jane Woolley to contact the World Missions Group to ask them if they wish to put forward a proposal for how the sum in the World Missions fund might be used e.g. for a church building in Albania.

Gordon Gill raised the issue of the Youthwork Trust's finances - it needs some additional funding. It is trying to fundraise via grants, etc. In the meantime, Gordon wondered if St Matthew's PCC might be willing to loan the Trust some money. The Chair advised Gordon that he would need to provide more detail before this could be considered.

Jane Woolley wondered whether the £4,941 in the outreach fund could be used for the 2022 CAP Debt Centre payment. Phill Johnston said this might be necessary so that we can divert the income which would have been used to pay for CAP to cover the likely dramatic increase in heating costs in 2022 due to the world energy situation.

Liz Roberts asked how the money raised during the December 2021 appeal had been used: how much was restricted giving (and what for) and how much was donated for general funds? Liz pointed out that there has been no communication to the congregation about this.

Action: Phill Johnston to obtain the breakdown of the money raised during the December 2021 appeal i.e. restricted giving vs. general giving, and what any restricted giving was specifically for. Phill also to check whether the Bookkeeper has followed up on any giving pledges.

17. Raising £8k to finance the Administrator post

Jane Woolley asked what the plan is for raising an additional £8k to finance the Administrator post for 12 months from 31 March 2022.

Tony Hughes said that he thought that covering the cost had been agreed by the CPCC in principle, so how this was to be done in detail by the individual PCCs could be reviewed at the Combined PCC meeting in July. However, Tony said that the fallback position is that the PCC will underwrite St Matthew's share of the cost – and could do so for example by using or borrowing funds from one of the legacies. Fundraising could be considered in due course, but a PCC member pointed out that fundraising campaigns usually are most successful for one-off specific items.

18. Securing the CollecTin device when no one is around

Paper H refers. This task is in hand and can be removed as an outstanding action.

19. Training sides people on using the CollecTin device

Paper H reports that the device does not always seem to work and there is a suspected software issue. Until that is resolved, there is no point training sides people to use it.

Eliza Wheaton reported that the device had worked well at the service on 5 June. If it continues to work without any issue then it can be displayed permanently for visitors to use (if secured) and sides people can be trained on how it works.

This task is in hand and can be removed as an outstanding action.

20. Buildings Committee Report

Paper I was noted.

21. Porch glass doors

Paper J refers. This recommends that this project be put on hold for several reasons, including that the cost would now be about £24k and that there is no solution to deal with the inner wooden door. There is c.£15k of the Stringer legacy left.

Tony Hughes relayed that the benefactor's widow, in the circumstances, does not now feel that the porch door is the best way of realising something tangible from the legacy. After some discussion, she is enthusiastic about the idea of using the remaining money to restore the five finial crosses on the church roof. The estimated cost, based on advice from the Church Architect, is c.£12k all in. The next step would be to get quotes from stonemasons.

PCC members indicated that they were happy for the Buildings Committee to proceed with this idea.

22. Possible sale of Church Hall

Paper K is a letter from our solicitor dated 6 April 2022. This indicates that the Charity Commission would probably grant us permission to sell the Hall if we go through the steps outlined in the letter.

Paper L is a paper by Tony Hughes who took an action from the last meeting to consider the key questions which would arise to inform the decision about whether to sell the Hall. Paper M is a note from Allan Macarthur stating his view that we should sell the Hall and use the money to improve the main church building.

Sid Gale said that he thought a new Rector would have a view on this matter and should be consulted before we make any decision.

Rebecca Lewis said that she felt that Allan Macarthur made some good points in his paper. Rebecca said that she was in favour of selling the Hall and that we should press on with it.

Tony Hughes said that in his view it is not self-evident that we should sell the Hall without first trying to address the questions raised in Paper L. He also emphasised the section in Paper L which points out that there are various uses to which the funds raised could be put to advance the mission of the church, and that improving the main church building is only one of a number of options. Tony stated that he would not feel able to lead any activity which would involve major reconstruction in the main church building without proper consideration of the issues raised in Paper L.

PCC members did not comment on the relevance or otherwise of the questions and issues raised in paper L, but Liz Roberts suggested that the opinions of donors to the Hall fund from 30 years ago should not be considered. Tony Hughes agreed that this should not be a major factor in the decision whether or not to sell or what to do with the proceeds of any sale.

Tony Hughes then initiated a discussion about next steps. The outcome is covered in the resolutions below.

Action: Eliza Wheaton to talk to Allan Macarthur about the church member he had identified as being someone who he might ask if they would take on the task of dealing with matters relating to the possible sale of the Church Hall. This is with a view of asking that person if they would be willing to take any of the following next steps:

1. Ask Jonathan Mobey for the quotes he obtained from surveyors for a valuation
2. Ask the surveyor named in the solicitors' letter to provide a quote for a valuation
3. Bring the quotes to the PCC to consider funding a valuation.
4. Lead a small group to consider the questions raised in Paper L

There was some discussion about the level of use of the Church Hall, since it seemed that the Scout Group were now using it for three evenings a week, including for the Beavers who had been using the church.

Action: Sid Gale to find out why the Beavers have reverted to using the Church Hall instead of the main church building

23. Health & Safety

Hazel Connelly, Health & Safety Officer, confirmed that there is nothing to report.

24. Evening service on Sunday 24 July

PCC members agreed that there would be no evening service at St Matthew's on 24 July so that the building can be used for the Youthwork Trust event.

The evening service was due to be a Holy Communion service. There are various options for ensuring that a Holy Communion service still takes place in the Benefice on that Sunday. Rebecca Lewis proposed that the decision about this be delegated to the churchwardens. This was agreed unanimously.

25. Harwell Helps Ukrainians – weekly café in church

Jane Woolley relayed that the Harwell Helps Ukrainians group (formerly called Harwell Helps Refugees) were putting on a "tea and cake" social event for Ukrainians and their hosts in St Matthew's on Wednesday 8 June at 3.15-5pm. Jane explained that this is a trial to see how it goes. If successful, the group may ask if it could use the church building for such an event on a regular basis.

26. Future dates to note

Saturday 25 June – CAP BBQ in churchyard/Rectory lawn

Tuesday 5 July – Combined PCC meeting

27. AOB

Jane Woolley said that the Harwell Helps Ukrainians Steering Group was organising various kinds of support for Ukrainian guests and hosts. One area is spiritual support for Ukrainians, who tend to be Orthodox Christians. Jane asked whether the PCC would allow an Orthodox priest to conduct services for Ukrainians in St Matthew's church.

PCC members indicated that they had no objection in principle to this idea. However, they would wish to understand any practical implications before giving consent. Gordon Gill advised that Bishop Gavin's permission may also be required.

Tony Hughes closed the meeting with The Grace at 10.10pm.

CHAIR

SECRETARY

DATE

DATE