

Minutes of a Meeting of St Matthew's, Harwell PCC
held at All Saints' Chilton on 15th October at 7.30pm

Present: Revd Jeremy Parsons (Chairman)
Tony Hughes (Vice Chairman)
Jane Woolley (Church Warden)
Tim Roberts (Treasurer)
Liz Roberts
Adrian Bollon
Adrian Rance- McGregor
Rebecca Lewis
Elizabeth Clarke (Secretary)

St Matthew's, Harwell and All Saints', Chilton PCCs were **present together for Items 1-7**. For the other items, only St Matthew's PCC members were present. (Geoff Maughan (consultant) observed for items 1 – 7 and then joined St Matthew's PCC for items 1-8)

Opening and Prayer

Jeremy opened the meeting with a responsorial version of part of Psalm 104 which was all about the glory of God, and led the PCC's in prayer.

1. Update on the Committee structure and Decision making consultation

Jeremy had written and circulated a paper giving an update on the project on which our churches were working with Revd Geoff Maughan. The review process was in its closing stages and a report summarising its findings would be issued in the next few weeks. Implementation and training would follow. If further discussion were needed, this would be done through the Standing Committees as there were no full PCC meetings until March 2025.

2 Children and Families Worker and engagement of part-time teachers

Jeremy had written and circulated a paper which outlined three aspects of CFW work:

a) **Missional Service to the Community** – currently led by Lucy Ryan with her main focus being Fledgelings and some co-ordination of volunteers. Lucy is also training one day a week on a one year Pioneer Mission course run by CMS. Lucy is contracted to the benefice and paid from the current CFW provision. Her place on the CMS course is being funded by the Diocese.

b) **Primary Schools** – two professional teachers, Hannah Walker and Emily Greig Jenkins will be helping to develop links with our schools along with Jeremy and volunteers. They will be external contractors with the costs funded from existing CFW provision.

c) **Church Family** – an advert has just been issued, via ECHO, for a CFW Worker to work half time in the Benefice and half time with ECHO focussing on Great Western Park and Valley Park. It is hoped that someone will be appointed to this role by January 2025 on a 3-year basis. If the ECHO co-recruitment fails then, from February we will need to regroup and probably rethink the role and how to attract candidates where there is a shortage nationally.

In discussion, several PCC members asked questions about the rate of payment for the teachers but Jeremy's reply was that they were below the going rate as had been the payment of our previous CFW's. PCC members asked for more information about Hannah and Emily and Jeremy agreed to write a paper giving background information about them. **Action JP**

One PCC member expressed disappointment that we had paid our CFW's at below the going rate. Jeremy said that the role had been set up about a decade ago and the new advert going out through ECHO stated a going rate of around £28,000 to £32,000 with the actual sum to be agreed with ECHO before the appointment is made. If we are successful in recruiting in early 2025 we will probably exceed available CFW funds so fundraising will be needed. Both churches face deficit budgets so ongoing funding of a CFW will need to be discussed at the Finance Committees. **Action Finance Committee.**

3 World Mission Budget

Helen Brook addressed the meeting, having circulated the proposed missions budgets for both churches. These budgets were slightly lower than last year and prioritised people over organisations. The budgets would be discussed and approved at the individual PCC meetings later.

Helen mentioned that St Matthew's has a fund which can be used for capital projects and the World Mission Group (WVG) suggested that it be used to help build a Leprosy Mission hospital in India. She agreed to go back to the WVG to find more information about this proposal. **Action HB.** Pam Rolls mentioned that The Leprosy Mission no longer accept used postage stamps to help raise funds.

As Helen had mentioned that the Tubakus who serve in Albania had joined a service at St Matthew's via an online link and that a recording had been made for All Saints' Chilton, Revd Rolls asked if this recording could be made available please. Jeremy said he would put a link in the newsletter. Subsequently Revd Rolls contacted Deborah Evans to ask if this could be done. **Action JP/DE.**

4 Fundraising

Jane Woolley had prepared a paper on fundraising which had been endorsed by the Churchwardens and Treasurers. Both churches are facing deficit budgets again this year and it was proposed that a Benefice Fundraising Group be established to address this. We would be looking for people with fundraising experience and people with knowledge of who to message and how.

The PCC's agreed unanimously that a Benefice Fundraising Group should be formed. Further discussion would be needed at the Finance Committee meetings to kick off this project soon. **Action Finance Committees.** It was noted that we could consult the Deanery and the Diocese about people or organisations with expertise in this area.

5 2025 Meeting dates

The dates of 2025 meetings had been circulated by Naomi and Elizabeth.

6 Intergenerational Services

On behalf of the recently formed Children and Young People Steering Group (CYPS), Sarah Mawle presented a paper which proposed that we reduce the number of Intergenerational Services from one a month in both churches to six per year, alternating between churches. There were a number of reasons for making this request, including the fact that there is resistance from children who do not want to attend these services, there is already all age worship provision at the Interactive Service each month, and the current model disrupts the children's groups that meet in Harwell as they only meet twice a month. The children thrive in these groups and are showing signs of spiritual growth.

In discussion a number of points were made:

- a. There is little provision for children's work in Chilton apart from the Interactive Service and the current Intergenerational services. The Chilton congregation is mostly made

up of older people and this needs to be addressed. Sarah said that the CYPS would welcome working on an initiative to improve the situation over the longer term.

- b. The Harwell families who attend the Interactive service in Chilton Village Hall miss the communion service at Harwell that morning. By reducing the number of Intergenerational Services there could be an opportunity to address this on another Sunday.
- c. Parents see their responsibility for nurturing their children's faith in the best possible way as very important.
- d. We do miss having a Children and Families Worker!
- e. Who is on the CYPS? A paper is coming shortly which will include the names of the Group members. **Action JP.**
- f. One person urged that we embrace the Chilton Interactive Service on the 2nd Sunday of the month with All Saints' congregation seeing themselves as co-hosts.
- g. Jan urged that we 'sing a new song' which had recently come to her mind after reading Psalms 96 and 98. We would have a chance to embrace something different and exciting.
- h. In thinking about how to keep children and young people growing in their faith, Jeremy mentioned that he had recently spoken to Yvonne Morris (Children's Adviser for the Diocese) and asked her to provide us with a workshop next year to consider this in more depth.

The PCC's voted almost unanimously to accept the CYPS paper - with two abstentions.

7 Any Other Business

There was none.

The PCC's then separated for their individual meetings.

St Matthew's PCC Meeting (8.50 pm)

Tony Hughes took over the Chair and welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Stephen Manning and Phill Johnston

2 Decisions requested between meetings.

There were no decisions requested.

3 Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 2nd July 2024 were approved and signed.

4 Matters /actions arising not covered elsewhere.

Under item 12 of the minutes Tim confirmed that the monies saved through cheaper insurance had been placed in the Insurance Fund. He also confirmed that the card reader had been given greater prominence.

5 Income and Expenditure Budget 2024

Tim drew the meeting's attention to the Church Hall income which was already over Budget due to the efforts of the Church Hall Management Committee.

The interest on St Matthew's bank account had almost reached its budget due to better rates. Tim drew attention to the transfers from Designated and Restricted Funds, which had already been agreed by PCC. Jane noted the 101% expenditure on church utilities despite having briefed all concerned on zoning the church heating. Tim confirmed all 2024 C&FW costs were covered following the transfer from Restricted Funds. He concluded by noting that although income and expenditure totals showed that the Church was not running a deficit, this was misleading, as this was due to transfers appearing as income, and that there were some outstanding invoices still to be paid.

6 Funds Balance Report 2024

Tim drew the meeting's attention to the £16,187 Mission Giving Fund which represented 10% of legacies received. He also commented that the C&FW Fund had increased by £4,000 despite some money being spent and was enough to cover for the projected expenditure for this year. This reflected the fact that people were continuing to contribute, even though the C&FW position was still vacant. The monies to pay the school teachers contracted to help with schools' outreach could be met from this Fund.

7 Fundraising

The paper on this (B) had been introduced by Jane during the Joint Meeting and both PCCs had been asked to discuss it. She asked PCC if they were aware of anyone with fundraising experience, and a few names were put forward. Tim Roberts said there were two aspects to fundraising: seeking grants and one off donations but more importantly growing regular giving. Adrian Rance –McGregor asked the size of the current shortfall and Tim replied that it was between £7,000 and £10,000 annually. The major expenses of the Church were the Parish Share, people (admin, C&FW), and buildings (big ticket items and general repairs). The target would be an extra £10,000 - £15,000) on an on-going basis which would represent a 20% increase in regular giving. Liz Roberts queried whether it would be better if each church had a separate fundraising committee. Jane explained that a joint committee would avoid duplication of effort. Liz said she was prepared to help with fundraising, particularly on the communications side.

Tim said the next step was for the Finance Committee to sit down with Stewart Gibson (Chilton Treasurer) and work out a plan of action. **Action: Finance Committee**

8 World Mission Budget Paper

The paper on this had been presented to the Joint Meeting by Helen Brook and had been discussed at that Meeting. The 2024 budget for St Matthew's is £6,999.

Resolution	That the PCC accept the proposal from the World Mission Committee as to how the £6,999 budget would be spent.				
Proposed	Jane Wooley	Seconded	Rebecca Lewis	Passed	Unanimously

The Meeting considered the outline proposal contained in the paper that the remaining money in the Mission Fund intended for a World Mission capital project should be given to The Leprosy Mission towards the cost of the hospital they are building in India. It was agreed that before a decision could be made on this, a more detailed proposal was needed. The PCC commented

that the Leprosy Mission was generally well funded, and Tim agreed to ask the World Mission Committee whether they could identify another charity needing support for a smaller, less well funded project.

9 Funding ECHO from C&FW Restricted Fund

Tim said that ECHO was currently only receiving financial support from local churches, and St Matthew's had been asked to provide a short term monthly payment of £150. This payment was anticipated to last six months or until a C&FW was recruited.

Resolution	A short- term payment of £150pm should be made to ECHO for a period of six months unless a C&FW was recruited before that date.				
Proposed	Tim Roberts	Seconded	Adrian Bollon	Passed	Unanimously

10 Building Committee Report

The PCC noted the Report and thanked the Committee for its work.

11 Church Hall Progress, Spend and Budget Request 2024

The proposal to rent the Church Hall to a new Montessori school had been discussed and endorsed at Standing Committee. PCC also endorsed the proposal. The PCC considered the proposed booking agreement paper. Tony confirmed that an alcohol licence is not being requested for the hall. Standing Committee had discussed the proposed revised terms and conditions, that would mostly be in common with those for the Village Hall, and were happy with the details. PCC were happy to proceed.

The additional £1,557 funding requested in the paper was in addition to the £2,000 agreed in March. It is not certain whether it will need paying in 2024 or early in 2025, but we need to be prepared to pay out of 2024 Budget if necessary. Tony commented that the Buildings expenditure is currently below budget.

Jane Woolley asked if the Church could get a financial commitment from the Montessori school as the Church Hall Committee are holding back on marketing. Adrian Bollon offered to check whether this could be obtained. OFSTED approval is still outstanding. The length of notice was discussed and agreed as six months on either side. It will be an agreement between St Matthew's PCC and the school extending items that were covered in the standard terms and conditions. **Action: Adrian Bollon**

Resolution	That the request from the Church Hall Management Committee for an additional £1,557 to pay for additional work on the Church Hall should be agreed				
Proposed	Tim Roberts	Seconded	Adrian Rance-McGregor	Passed	Unanimously

12 Proposal for a Church Fair on 5th May.

Elizabeth Clarke explained that Janette Roberts and Janice Markey had approached the Church for permission to organise a Fair in the church with the proceeds being given to the church funds. As part of the Fair they would envisage stalls, music, a maypole, possibly Morris dancing and games including games of chance. The PCC welcomed their offer, but some members expressed concern about the inclusion of games of chance. The Church is a strong supporter of CAP and this type of game does involve a gamble. A long discussion followed and it was agreed that PCC members should take informal soundings of the views of church

members since, as things stand, St Matthew's does not have a policy over the acceptability of games of chance. Given this situation, it was agreed the PCC would welcome the idea of a fair, but only if there were no games of chance. Elizabeth agreed to go back to Janette with this decision and find out whether they were prepared to go forward on this basis.

Elizabeth spoke with Janette and she undertook to discuss this with Janice. She came back and said they had decided to not to proceed, but might think about organising a tea when the bell tower was open for visitors.

13 Benefact Group – Movement for Good

The PCC thanked the Church Hall Management Committee for the suggestion, but in the light of the discussion under item 18, did not wish to proceed with the idea at present. **Action: Jane Woolley to communicate this to Debbie Greenfield.**

The Meeting closed with the grace at 10.30pm