

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC
held on Tuesday 14 May 2013 at 7.45 pm in St Matthew's, Harwell

Present

Jonathan Mobey (Chair)	Scott Cockburn (Item 5 onwards)	Lizi Bowerman
Jane Woolley (Secretary)	Monika Buxton	Vicki Luker
Gordon Gill	Mel Gibson	Roz Shipp (up to end of Item 13)
Liz Roberts	Anne Gill	Chris Wheaton
Tony Hughes		

1. Opening & Prayer

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read Colossians Chapter 1 v.15-20.

Jonathan explained that the link of this passage to PCC is for us to focus on Jesus.

Jonathan then led the PCC in prayer.

Jonathan welcomed the new/returning PCC members.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Allan Macarthur and Peter Barclay-Watt.

3. Minutes of the March 2013 meeting

The minutes of the PCC meeting on 5 March 2013 were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

i) Advise funeral directors of non-statutory fees for funerals – Jonathan Mobey

Done.

ii) Arrange for Jean & Peter Barton to be introduced when one or other of them is leading a service/preaching – Jonathan Mobey

Done

iii) Electoral roll preparation – contact Mike Pepper to review the list of those “missing” and why and to follow up on any remaining cases – Jonathan Mobey

Done

Further action now required:

Action: Jonathan Mobey to ask Mike Pepper for feedback on the reason why those who were “missing” were missing

iv) Talk to Mandy Birkinshaw and explore in more detail as to whether a coffee urn could be accommodated in the St Matthew's kitchen – Monika Buxton

Monika Buxton relayed to the meeting that she had established from Mandy Birkinshaw that having an urn in the kitchen could cause an electrical overload problem.

Tony Hughes said that he had agreed with Mike Pepper that Mike would ask Anita Pepper (coffee team co-ordinator) to consult with the coffee team members about whether they wish Tony to investigate the option of locating an urn near where the coffee is served, next to the bottom of the stairs to the office. Tony Hughes is still waiting for an answer on this from Anita Pepper. Tony has also talked to Mandy Birkinshaw about this option. Mandy had queried whether it would cause unwelcome noise and aroma to the congregation during services. Therefore, Tony has also asked Mike Pepper to ask Anita Pepper and the coffee making team members to consider this factor in their deliberations.

Monika Buxton advised that Anita Pepper had fed back to her that it would be fine from her perspective if the urn were located near where the coffee is served, and that this location has the advantage of avoiding having to carry hot jugs of coffee from the kitchen. Tony Hughes said that he did not know if Anita had yet to talk to coffee team members. Mel Gibson commented that Margaret Gibson is in the coffee team and has not yet been consulted, the implication being that Anita has not yet talked to all the coffee team members.

Tony Hughes said that he will ask Mike/Anita Pepper for a response before considering further any safety, noise and aroma issues of siting the urn in the above location.

Jonathan Mobey said that he thinks a coffee urn is only noisy at the start of its cycle. It could therefore be put on before a service so that the noisy bit is over before the service starts. Jonathan said that he feels that the main issue is whether it is safe to have a hot urn in that location e.g. might small children tip it over.

Tony Hughes reported that he had looked into the design of coffee urns available. There is one which would fit underneath the kitchen wall units, which has a 30 cup capacity. Such a lower capacity would also help with the potential electrical overload problem in the kitchen. Tony is against the idea of cutting into the base of a kitchen wall unit to allow a higher urn to fit under it, without proper consultation with those church members who were involved in designing the current kitchen. Tony also noted that the kitchen unit supplier, Howdens, no longer makes that design of unit so it is not possible to replace it with a smaller one.

Action: Tony Hughes to ask Mike/Anita Pepper for a formal response on the whether the coffee team would be happy for an urn to be cited near where the coffee is served (if this were to prove feasible)

5. Report on APCM

Jonathan Mobey reported a “good” annual meeting; there was a good atmosphere and it was fairly well-attended.

Jonathan Mobey highlighted to the meeting that PCC election terms are now three years as standard, which was implemented at the 2013 annual meeting.

6. Briefing of new PCC members on role and responsibilities

PCC Secretary, Jane Woolley, reported that she had briefed Chris Wheaton, Lizi Bowerman and Vicki Luker by telephone.

Jane took the opportunity to remind all PCC members that being on the PCC means you are also a charity trustees. In particular, this means members must scrutinise financial reports carefully, and keep the church on a prudent financial footing.

7. Election/appointment of officers

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing officers. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue. They were, with one exception:

- Roz Shipp is standing down as a churchwarden deputy

Jonathan Mobey thanked Roz Shipp for all her hard work as a churchwarden deputy.

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for the churchwarden deputy team. At Vicki Luker's request, Tony Hughes outlined the role of a churchwarden deputy. No other candidates were suggested.

Jonathan Mobey requested anyone who is interested in volunteering for the role, or can think of someone who might be interested, to please let Tony Hughes know.

Action: Tony Hughes, Mel Gibson and Jonathan Mobey to get together to think of someone to approach to be a replacement for Roz Shipp as a churchwarden deputy

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the posts listed. None was forthcoming.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following roles:				
	Vice Chair		Allan Macarthur		
	Treasurer		Peter Barclay-Watt		
	Secretary		Jane Woolley		
	Churchwarden deputies		Allan Macarthur		
			Tim Roberts		
			Ruth Slatter		
	Book keeper		Elizabeth Gill		
	Electoral Roll Officer		Mike Pepper		
	Gift Aid Secretary		Peter Barclay-Watt		
	Stewardship Secretary		Ruth Slatter		
	Social Secretary		Monika Buxton		
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

8. Election/appointment of members of committees

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing committee members. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue. They were all willing.

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the posts listed. None was forthcoming.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people to the following committees:				
	Finance & Budget	Peter Barclay-Watt (Chair) Elizabeth Gill Mel Gibson			
	Buildings Churchwarden deputies	Tony Hughes (Chair) Roz Shipp Mel Gibson David Pyke Philip Roberts Mandy Birkinshaw			
	Church Hall Management	Tim Roberts (Chair) Roz Shipp Anne Gill Wendy Sinclair Monika Buxton			
	Standing Committee	PCC Vice Chair, Allan Macarthur (Rector, Churchwardens, Secretary and Treasurer are automatic members)			
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

9. Election/appointment of representatives to organisations

The Secretary had circulated a list of existing representatives. This list indicated whether or not the incumbents were willing to continue. They were all willing, with one exception:

- Mary Hanley is standing down as Christian Aid collection co-ordinator

Jonathan Mobey said that he would like to review the Christian Aid collection arrangements in any case and suggested that this post is therefore left vacant for the timebeing.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to talk to relevant people and bring a proposal about Christian Aid collection back to the July meeting

Jonathan Mobey invited the meeting to propose or suggest any other candidates for any of the other posts listed. None was forthcoming.

The meeting then voted on the following resolution, which was proposed by the Chair (Jonathan Mobey) and therefore did not need to be seconded.

Resolution	Approve the appointment of the following people as representatives to the following organisations:
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	Our Street Corner	David Woolley			
	Harwell Charities Trust	Peter Barclay-Watt			
	Churches Together in Didcot	Jonathan Mobey			
	Village Hall Management Committee	Monika Buxton			
Moved	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

10. Finance

The meeting scrutinised the financial report and the income & expenditure so far this year. The following queries were raised in Peter Barclay-Watt's absence:

- Income - Church Hall income: Are we really budgeting £2,500 in gift aided donations vs. only £687 in lettings income? Are these two figures perhaps round the wrong way?
- Income - Donations/legacies – Donations gift-aided [Some of the discussion of this item occurred under Item 12 but is reported here for convenience]: Gift-aided donations so far (£4,015.25) look to have exceed the amount budgeted for the year and therefore seem to be at healthy levels. However, the Digital Projection update paper mentions receipt of a donation of £3,750 (including gift aid) to general church funds during the Digital Projection appeal. The paper suggests that, if necessary, this donation is used to help make up any shortfall in Digital Projection fundraising. If this were to happen, and the £4,014.25 in gift-aided donations does include this £3,750 donation (which presumably it must, because where else could it have gone?) then the "donations gift-aided" line would effectively only read £265.25 (£4,015.25-£3,750) for January-April 2013. This would then result in a projection of only £1061.00 in gift-aided donations for the year (£265.25 x 4). By this point in the year, we would hope to have raised 25% of the gift-aided donations budget or £750. If the £4,015.25 does include the £3,750 donation, and we do end up having to use this £3,750 donation for the Digital Projection system, then the "donations gift-aided" income line will in fact be considerably below budget. If this is the case, then it is worrying, as it means our budgeted deficit could be much higher than £6,561.00. Of course, this would also be the case if the PCC needs to dip further into general church funds to make good any shortfall in Digital Projection funding. This shortfall could be £642.79, calculated as follows: maximum quoted cost (£17,122.40) minus the funds raised so far (£12,729.61) minus the donation to general church funds mentioned above (£3,750). This shortfall plus the potential shortfall of possibly £1,939 in "donations gift-aided" income could increase the end of year deficit to £9,142.79 (£6,561.00 + £1,939 + £642.79). This would then mean that our reserves in unrestricted funds could drop to as low as c.£14,000 by the end of 2013 (£23,331 - £9,142). Please could the Treasurer comment as to whether this scenario is correctly calculated, and how likely it is to come to pass.

The following request was also made:

- Please could the title of the left hand column of the income & expenditure report be amended in future to show the actual time period the figures are for eg "Jan-April 2013"? Otherwise new PCC members in particular found it difficult to understand what this column was showing.

Action: Jane Woolley to forward these queries to Peter Barclay-Watt & Elizabeth Gill and ask them for a response.

11. Buildings Committee report

Update Paper H was noted.

The only further piece of news is under item 3 in Paper H – repairs to the rendering commenced this week.

Jonathan Mobey thanked Tony Hughes for the very useful information in Annex 2 about past and possible future buildings expenditure. Chris Wheaton concurred.

12. Digital projection group update

Update Paper I was noted. It asked the PCC particularly to note the funding position and the current cost, and in the light of this agree (i) that the option of upgrading to an HD projector should be included and (ii) that the order to Oak-AudioVisual can now be placed. In answer to a query, Tony Hughes clarified that he would expect less than half of the work to be zero-rated for VAT.

On the financial side, Gordon Gill pointed out that if we reach the fund-raising target without grants, we are required to return any grants subsequently awarded. Vicki Luker queried whether the £3,750 donated to general church funds could remain there if not required for the digital projection project. The consensus of the meeting was that, yes, this is what would happen, rather than turn away grant money unnecessarily.

Chris Wheaton expressed concern about whether the digital projection project is really affordable, given the possible higher than budgeted deficit at the end of 2013 (see item 10 on Finance). Scott Cockburn pointed out that most of the cost has been or will have been raised by designated donations and grants. It is only a relatively small sum, if any, which might have to come from general church funds.

Mel Gibson pointed out that the total projected cost has crept up from c.£15k to c.£17k. Tony Hughes reminded the meeting that the cost of these sorts of equipment just is very high. When the current sound system was installed, the cost was kept down by a DIY approach. But that unfortunately is not an option here because the work involved is too specialist.

Mel Gibson said that he had had a rejection letter from the lottery fund – they said their funds could be used for building work but not for the installation of digital projection equipment. However, Mel is hopeful that the remaining two grant applications will be successful.

Chris Wheaton asked whether there had been a straw poll of the congregation of the perceived benefits of the digital projection system. Mel Gibson said that the need for the system had been well publicised and that the congregation had been encouraged to talk to PCC members about it.

Jonathan Mobey commented that the £9k+ raised in personal donations/pledges from c.30-35 individuals/families demonstrates that there is considerable support from church members for the initiative.

Mel Gibson said that he felt that the meeting should agree that the digital projection project can go ahead because things have gone too far to pull back now.

Gordon Gill said that he feels that the PCC should be thinking of this initiative as part of a wider question about how the church building is used i.e. it would be helping to make it a place that can be used other than just on a Sunday.

Resolution	That the digital projection work should include the HD upgrade option				
Moved	Monika Buxton	Seconded	Vicki Luker	Passed	11 votes for No votes against

					Gordon Gill and Anne Gill abstained
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Resolution	That the order to Oak Visual for the digital projection system can now be placed				
Moved	Mel Gibson	Seconded	Roz Shipp	Passed	10 votes for No votes against Gordon Gill, Anne Gill and Chris Wheaton abstained

13. Church Hall

Update Paper J was noted. Anne Gill thanked those who cleared the grounds and trimmed the hedge.

Anne Gill said that the committee had received a request to donate a party in the hall as a raffle prize for Scouts' fundraising. Anne was concerned about whether this was allowable. Liz Roberts revealed that it was she who had suggested something along these lines to Zara Zimmerman. However, Liz said that she had suggested to Zara that she ask specifically for a 2 hour children's party. Vicki Luker commented that offering such a prize could get valuable free publicity for the hall as a venue.

Jonathan Mobey suggested that Anne Gill go back to Zara Zimmerman to see if a donation of a 2 hour children's party would be acceptable. If so, then Anne to ask the church hall management committee to refer the request to the PCC Standing Committee for a decision.

Jonathan Mobey thanked the committee for all their work.

14. Harwell Feast

Jane Woolley reported that arrangements for the BBQ were all in hand and that almost all the required volunteers had been recruited.

Jonathan Mobey reported that the arrangements for Songs of Praise were being organised by a group consisting of Monika Buxton, Kate Evans and Jonathan Mobey. The decorations have been sorted out. Chairs will be erected by a home group. The stage comes with the marquee. Most of the contributors have been identified and have chosen their hymn. David Evans is organising the Orchestra. The Hands Free band and a number of the Baggs Tree Buskers will also be involved.

Unfortunately Singwell from Harwell School cannot perform because Mr Herrington is away.

Monika Buxton was concerned about whether those gathered in advance of the start of Songs of Praise would get in the way of the groundsman trying to mark out lines on the grass for the Feast.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to ask Zara Zimmerman if Harwell Young singers would be available (although they would be performing at the Feast the following day too).

Action: Vicki Luker to talk to the groundsman to try and ascertain if there will be a clash between his work and Songs of Praise attendees congregating prior to a 5pm start.

15. Welcome to church?

Paper K - about how churches can be made more welcoming - was noted. Due to lack of time remaining at this meeting, Jonathan Mobey suggested discussing the issues raised at a future meeting.

Vicki Luker suggested that Lizi Bowerman (present) might be able to offer some feedback from a newcomer's perspective.

Gordon Gill said that he had already sent Jonathan Mobey documents with suggestions as to how to make church more accessible. Gordon also recommended referring to the Diocesan guide to making churches more welcoming.

Tony Hughes said that he felt that behaviour that was welcoming from church members was the most important aspect and referred to experiences when visiting some other churches.

16. Heating St Matthew's church

Paper L - about the problems with the church heating and possible solutions - was noted but not discussed at any length. It was suggested that heating needed to be considered in the context of the use of the church building, which was in turn determined by the church vision.

17. Any other business

1. PCC awayday – Chris Wheaton wondered if there was ever a PCC awayday. Jonathan Mobey informed him that such an event had taken place last September.

Action: Jonathan Mobey to think about the best timing for another PCC awayday

2. Harvest lunch – Mel Gibson had been asked by Keith Beswick to please ensure that the church booked the village hall in good time so that the usual Monday user knows where she stands.

Action: Monika Buxton to ensure that the village hall is booked for the Harvest lunch

3. PCC members leading services – Gordon Gill reported that a lay chair from another deanery had proposed at diocesan synod that any PCC member could lead a service in an emergency after some modest training. Some of the clergy at the diocesan synod suggested that this could be extended to being the case in any circumstances. So this is under consideration. Jonathan Mobey reported that churchwardens/churchwarden deputies already have permission to step in and lead a service in an emergency.

The meeting closed with The Grace.