

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC held on Tuesday 3 September 2019 at 7.30 pm in St Matthew's, Harwell

Present

Jonathan Mobey (Chair for items 1, 2, and 10-13)

Jane Woolley

Michelle Walker

Tony Hughes (Chair for items 3-9 and 14-22)

Becca Lewis

Pam Rolls (items 1-2 only)

Phill Johnston (present for items 1-9 and 14-22)

Eliza Wheaton

St Matthew's, Harwell and All Saints', Chilton PCCs were present together for Items 1 & 2. For the other items, only St Matthew's PCC members were present.

Minutes are presented in agenda order but in fact were taken in the following order: 1-9, 14-22, 10-13.

1. Opening & Prayer

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read Luke 23 v50-56. In this passage Joseph of Arimathea obtains Jesus' body and places it in a tomb.

Jonathan said that the following struck him in this passage:

- Joseph had not consented to the decision and action of the Council. This reminds us that members of our church councils do not always agree with each other
- Joseph wasn't just a thinker; he was a doer. He took Jesus' body down off the cross – which would not have been pleasant or easy – and made a new tomb available. This was a practical, caring and potentially risky thing to do as a Jewish leader. Our PCC members are a mixture of thinkers and doers
- This whole chapter of Luke has quite a focus on Jesus' female followers
- There is a need to embalm Jesus' body. The women start preparations for this but stop for the Sabbath. They are clearly obedient to the Jewish law despite probably wanting to care for Jesus' body. This is an interesting and challenging balance between a task they needed to perform and Jewish law.

Phill Johnston commented that Joseph would have made himself ceremonially unclean by taking down Jesus' body and it would probably have been literally a very messy job. Jonathan Mobey commented that the full horror of the cross, rather than a sanitised version of events, is right at the heart of our faith.

Jonathan then led the meeting in prayer.

2. Items of joint business

2.1 Parish Share 2020

Paper A refers.

Jonathan Mobey explained that we are being asked to respond to a request from the Deanery to confirm before 3 October that we agree the proposed 2020 Parish Share payment that the Deanery has put forward for us. This is £75,500 for the Benefice (£50,358 Harwell and £25,142 Chilton).

It was noted that the requested amount for 2020 is almost identical to what we were allocated to pay in 2019 (£50,499 Harwell and £25,249 Chilton).

Tony Hughes said that, as far as St Matthew's, Harwell is concerned, he felt it would be very hard to say that we could not afford the amount requested when we have a relatively high amount of money in our reserves. Ideally, we would not draw on reserves for regular expenditure such as this, but we should do if it is necessary.

Yvonne Sanderson (All Saints', Chilton) said that she's concerned that All Saints' never pays the full amount set aside in its budget for mission giving. It could do so if All Saints' did not pay its Parish Share in full. Jonathan Mobey said that it could be argued that All Saints' should reduce the percentage of unrestricted giving it allocates to mission giving instead. For instance, St Matthew's has reduced this from 15% to 10% for the past few years.

Jonathan Mobey said another thing to think about is whether the two-thirds, one-third contribution (St Matthew's/All Saints') to joint regular expenses, including Parish Share, should be altered. Is this still a fair split in relation to income? Jonathan raised other factors to consider, including the difference in capital reserves that St Matthew's and All Saints' hold, the relative size of the electoral rolls and average attendance, and the population of the parishes, all of which have changed in recent years.

Jonathan Mobey remarked that things would be simpler in this respect if St Matthew's and All Saints' were one parish. He said that there are a number of reasons why we might want to consider this at some point – one of which is that it sidesteps the issue of what is a fair division of costs between the two churches. However, we are not discussing this evening this much larger issue of whether or not to become one parish.

Alex Reich (All Saints', Chilton) asked if we needed to give the Deanery a definite commitment or merely an expression of intention. Alex said that he would suggest the latter, if that's acceptable. Tony Hughes said that, strictly speaking, we cannot give a definite commitment until the budgets for 2020 have been drawn up and agreed by the PCCs.

<p>Action: Jonathan Mobey to email the Deanery Treasurer to confirm that our intent is to pay the amount requested for the Parish Share for our Benefice.</p>
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2.2 CAP referrals

Paper A2 refers.

Jonathan Mobey explained that CAP head office has decided not to accept any new referrals from 9 August until February 2020. This is to enable them to catch up with a backlog of cases, and to enable them to implement some system improvements to ensure that they are better able to deal with the volume of cases now coming their way. Jonathan and other PCC members identified the following factors which have led to CAP head office not being able to keep up with the volume of cases recently:

- An increase in the complexity of cases
- An increase in the volume of cases being referred to CAP
- An increase in the regulatory requirements around debt management

Hazel Benton (All Saints', Chilton) supported CAP's course of action by commenting that it is better to suspend taking on new referrals than not to be able to manage cases properly.

PCC members asked where we should refer people in debt in the meantime. Tony Hughes said that there are a number of other national organisations listed on the gov.uk website which offer debt support, including Citizens Advice. Jonathan Mobey mentioned that the CAP website also signposts other sources of support. He also reminded PCC members that he is able to refer people in immediate food poverty to Didcot Foodbank.

2.3 PCC communications

Jane Woolley explained that at the St Matthew's PCC meeting in May, she had taken an action to produce a brief summary or the service notice sheets on the key things discussed/agreed at St Matthew's PCC meetings. After this action was agreed, Jane had then realised that this would not cover what was discussed at All Saints' PCC meetings, which might look a bit odd. Jane also identified

that the proceedings of Combined PCC meetings would need to be reported too in order to convey the full picture to church members.

Jane Woolley then discussed this with Jonathan Mobey, who agreed that it would be best to extend this action to report on All Saints' PCC meetings and on Combined PCC meetings. Jane and Jonathan then agreed that the All Saints' PCC Secretary would be in the best position to write an equivalent summary for the All Saints' PCC meetings – starting with the May PCC meeting which had just taken place – and that Jonathan would speak to the All Saints' PCC Secretary about this. Jane said that she would be happy also to write a brief summary of each Combined PCC meeting, using her own notes of key points in advance of the publication of the draft minutes, starting with the July meeting.

Jane Woolley explained that she had sent Jonathan her proposed summary of the St Matthew's May PCC meeting. The plan was for Jonathan to obtain an equivalent summary from the All Saints' PCC Secretary and then publish both in the service notice sheets. However, this had never happened because the All Saints' PCC Secretary had been unable to do it.

Jane Woolley explained that she had then also forgotten to take any notes at, and prepare a brief summary of, the July Combined PCC meeting.

In summary, Jane Woolley said that a simple-sounding action which she had agreed to had then revealed itself to be a more complex task and one which also needed to involve a contribution from All Saints' PCC or PCC Secretary.

Jane Woolley asked PCC members for their thoughts about the best way forward.

Jonathan Mobey explained that All Saints' PCC is about to consider a proposed new PCC Secretary. If appointed, this person could then take on the task of summarising All Saints' PCC meetings, once they were up to speed generally.

Tony Hughes said that he thought that it is quite important to try and feed back to church members what the PCCs have been discussing in a more accessible manner than via the full minutes posted in the porch or on the church website. Other PCC members agreed.

Jonathan Mobey confirmed that it is quite in order for PCC members to relay to others what has been discussed at PCC meetings, including before any minutes are published, unless a matter has been deemed confidential.

Alex Reich suggested that it would be realistic to aim to start reporting on PCC/Combined PCC meetings from the October Combined PCC meeting onwards.

<p>Action: Jane Woolley to write a brief summary of key points from the October Combined PCC meeting, and to talk to the new All Saints' PCC Secretary about doing so for the Individual PCC meetings in November onwards.</p>

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jan Radford, Allan Macarthur, Andrew Keene, Sid Gale and Gordon Gill.

4. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the PCC meetings on 7 May and on 5 July 2019 were signed as a correct record.

5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

Buildings Committee

Tony Hughes relayed that Allan Macarthur has agreed to join the Buildings Committee, regardless of whether he also becomes a member of the Finance Committee in due course.

6. Decisions between meetings by Standing Committee

Lead Academy initiative (ref Combined PCC meeting July 2019)

The Standing Committee approved expenditure of £233 per year for 2 years as St Matthew's share of the cost.

Church Hall internal redecoration

The Standing Committee approved expenditure of c.£170 beyond that set aside in the budget, in order to repaint the main hall.

7. Matters arising from APCM

Church Electoral Roll – update on progress

Jane Woolley reported that she had communicated with Jonathan Mobey and Mike Pepper about progress. Jane relayed the following update:

- Jonathan Mobey has received a list from Mike Pepper of the 17 people who were on the 2013 Roll and who no longer attend St Matthew's. Jonathan is intending to review anything known about the status of these people with the Senior Leadership Team, after which he will attempt to contact them, if appropriate.
- Mike Pepper's plan is to gradually work his way through the list of 28 people who were on the 2013 Roll and who attend St Matthew's and to do this in earnest starting in September 2019 and finishing by spring 2020 at the latest. Mike's approach is to talk to people about the Roll when he is on sidesperson duty, if appropriate, as part of a more general conversation about how the person is. So far, Mike has spoken to 4 people in this way, all of whom told him that they feel that they are insufficiently frequent attenders to warrant being on the Roll.

Jane Woolley said that she had not yet managed to establish with Mike Pepper or Jonathan Mobey what was happening about approaching people who have started attending St Matthew's regularly since the 2013 Roll. Jane also confirmed that the action by Mike Pepper to give the service leader a supporting oral notice to read out to further encourage active church members to sign up to the Electoral Roll has not yet happened.

Action:

Jane Woolley to continue to liaise with Jonathan Mobey and Mike Pepper about:

- Progress with contacting people in person who were on the 2013 Roll but not on the 2019 Roll
- Sending a letter to anyone in the above category who Mike has not been able to speak to (if necessary)
- Progress with approaching new people i.e. those who attend St Matthew's regularly but who are not on the 2019 Roll
- Giving service leaders an oral notice to read out to further encourage active church members to sign up to the Electoral Roll

8. Appointment of members of the Finance & Budget Committee

Phill Johnston said that he had not yet carried out the action from the May PCC meeting to assemble the 2019-20 Finance & Budget sub-committee. Therefore it is not yet possible for the PCC to pass a resolution to approve the appointment of people to the committee.

Tony Hughes from the chair outlined that he thought that the process to follow is:

- Decide who should be on the committee (normally, but not restricted to, the Treasurer, Book-keeper, Rector, a churchwarden)
- Ask each individual if they are willing to be on the committee
- Send the PCC Secretary a list of the proposed committee members so that a formal resolution can be passed at the November PCC meeting to approve them

Tony Hughes pointed out that the November PCC meeting is due to review the proposed budget for 2020. Therefore, the following needs to happen before then:

- Ask key people what budget requests they have
- Draft a budget for 2020
- Have a meeting of the Finance & Budget Committee to review the draft budget and agree the version to be submitted to the November PCC meeting
- Send the PCC Secretary the draft budget for the November PCC meeting

Action: Phill Johnston to propose the members of the Finance & Budget committee and provide a draft budget for the November PCC meeting (ref detailed steps listed above)

9. Health & Safety

Annual adoption of the H&S Policy

Paper D refers. The proposed Policy wording for 2019-20 is the same as last year.

Resolution	To approve the H&S Policy for 2019-20				
Moved	Eliza Wheaton	Seconded	Michelle Walker	Passed	Unanimously

A copy of the Policy was duly signed by Jonathan Mobey and passed on by Jane Woolley to the Church Administrator for display on the church website and church porch.

Jane Woolley said that she understands from the Health & Safety Officer, Hazel Connelly, that the Policy is being implemented satisfactorily.

Jane Woolley said that Hazel Connelly had advised that there were no particular Health & Safety matters to update the PCC about.

Action: Jane Woolley to check with Hazel Connelly:

- Whether it would be best practice for her to have regular review meetings about Health & Safety scheduled with the churchwardens
- What the regularity and nature of those meetings should be

10. Buildings Committee report

Paper E refers.

North aisle roof

Tony Hughes remarked that the lead theft from the north aisle roof has diverted attention from other building matters. Tony summarised that the Church Architect has prepared a draft specification for going out to tender, which Tony has made a few comments on. Once the specification is finalised, the next step is to go out to tender and obtain quotations. Then Tony will be able to come back to the PCC with likely costs – hopefully at the November PCC meeting.

Tony Hughes said that it would take several months to sort out a replacement roof covering even if we went with a straight lead replacement option.

Becca Lewis asked what the steel replacement option would look like. Tony Hughes said that it would look very much like lead. Tony explained that, like for like, steel should be cheaper than lead but not enormously so due to the more involved process of putting it on. A steel roof is likely to be around 80% of the cost of a lead roof.

Becca Lewis asked whether the temporary tarpaulin over the roof would be up to the job over the winter. Tony Hughes said that it was impossible to know for sure. He and David Pyke are keeping a close eye on it. It might need to be reinforced.

Jonathan Mobey commented that he was hesitant about replacing the extension roof at the same time on two counts:

- The extra cost
- We might develop that end of the church building and so it might not be worth replacing the extension roof if that part of the building were to be altered

Tony Hughes pointed out that unless we have firm plans now for such a development, it is unlikely to happen in the next few years because these things, including the design phases, always take long time to accomplish. The extension roof is not in good condition and is unlikely to last until any such development were to take place. It had a temporary repair last year but some of the wood is known to be in poor condition.

Erection of Christmas tree on the tower

Tony Hughes said that he had organised the Christmas tree and lights to be erected on the tower for ten years. He is happy to do so again this year, but would like to stand down after that. Ideally, Tony would like to find someone now who can shadow him this year. The preparations start in October. Tony has already approached three people to see if they will take the job on but none felt able to do so.

<p>Action: Tony Hughes to arrange for an appeal to go in service sheets for someone to replace him as Christmas tree co-ordinator</p>
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11. Porch glass doors - update

Paper F refers.

There is a delay to this project due to issues raised by a visit of members of the DAC. The donor has been informed.

David Pyke has made some progress with checking the origins of the inner porch structure. The biggest issue to look into is accessibility and possible automation of the doors. Amongst other things this now means that we need to have a proper comparison of the cost and other implications of automated versus manual doors.

12. Church Hall management - update

Paper G refers.

Tony Hughes commented that he was waiting for the utility cupboard to be cleared up before getting an electrician back to deal with remedial actions from the 5 year electrical inspection.

Becca Lewis said that the spare roll of carpet in the church needs to dry out and then be treated for mildew before being stored up in the Church Hall balcony.

13. Paid cleaner - update

Chloe Jackson has been appointed as the paid cleaner. Her work is being overseen by the Church Administrator.

14. Finance reports

Papers H & I refer (Income & Expenditure data and Fund Balances data).

Phill Johnston highlighted that the Income & Expenditure report is projecting an end of year deficit of £1,475.

Tony Hughes noted that planned giving so far is running under budget, but the amount received in one-off donations is higher than budgeted. Since these sums count towards the year's income, it seems that planned giving is running further behind budget than the size of the end of year projected deficit would imply.

Tony Hughes also noted that the "other donations" category on the Income & Expenditure report shows a sum of £5,215.62. Tony asked if this was restricted giving e.g. for the Tower Fund. Phill Johnston said he didn't know and would check.

Action: Phill Johnston to find out the status of the donations/legacies received this year i.e. whether restricted or unrestricted

15. Stewardship Secretary

Jane Woolley reported that Eliza Wheaton has kindly volunteered to take on the job of running the envelope giving scheme.

16. Electronic donations service provider

Phill Johnston reminded PCC members that we had decided at the last meeting to sign up to an electronic donations service provider called "Wonderful" which has zero fees. Phill reported that he had contacted this service to sign up but that it had been over-subscribed and so there has been a delay in getting access to it. He has only just received a link to enable him to set up with them.

Phill Johnston explained that in the meantime Jonathan Mobey had set up Church Insight as a provider so that we had something in place while we were waiting for "Wonderful" to be available to us. Church Insight charges a small percentage fee per transaction.

Action: Phill Johnston to investigate how much money is being donated via this electronic route and discuss with Jonathan Mobey whether it is worth the time and trouble to switch from Church Insight to Wonderful as our electronic donations service provider

17. Publicising Amazon Smile

Phill Johnston confirmed that Amazon Smile had been publicised via service notice sheets.

18. Action to amend Fund Balances report

This action from the May PCC meeting is outstanding:

Action: Phill Johnston to amend the Fund Balances report to clearly label the 10% of each unrestricted legacy which is set aside for world mission projects

19. Generation Gold donation

Phill Johnston confirmed that the Generation Gold donation mentioned at the May PCC meeting was a donation to the Benefice rather than to St Matthew's specifically, and that he has let Pam Rolls and Jan Radford know about it.

Action: Phill Johnston to transfer All Saints' share of the Generation Gold donation to All Saints' funds.

20. Services and seasonal

There was nothing to discuss under this standing item.

21. Future dates

Monday 23 September – Confirmation Service, 7pm, Blewbury

Saturday 5 October – Tear Fund Big Quiz Night, Chilton Village Hall [subsequently cancelled]

Sunday 6 October – Harvest Sunday

Tuesday 8 October (note date change) – Combined PCC meeting, 7.30pm, St Matthew's

Saturday 19 October – Repair Café, St Matthew's

Tuesday 5 November – Individual PCC meetings, 7.30pm, All Saints'

Sunday 24 November – CAP service – now postponed – new date yet to be confirmed

Action: Becca Lewis to ask the next Senior Leadership Team Meeting to come to a decision about what to do with perishable goods donated at Harvest

22. Any other business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm with the Lord's Prayer.

CHAIR

SECRETARY

DATE

DATE