

Minutes of a Meeting of All Saints' Chilton PCC
Held on Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 7.30pm remotely via Zoom conference facility

Present (from All Saints' Chilton):

Jonathan Mobey
Hazel Benton (Chair)
Phil Corbishley
Stuart Gibson
Alex Reich
Pam Rolls
Yvonne Sanderson
John Pigott
Judith Russell
Pat Moseley
Christopher Pollard (Secretary)

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

Joint items with St Matthew's PCC

1) Opening & prayer

The Rector (Jonathan Mobey) read John 16: 5-16. In this passage Jesus is speaking to his disciples about his death and resurrection. Even though we are meeting remotely as a PCC, we are united by the Holy Spirit and our mission continues. Our meeting today is all about continuing that mission. We can only see a little way ahead. Perhaps more than at any recent time we are conscious of being at the mercy of events. However, we know that God is all-powerful and sees everything.

Jonathan then led the meeting in prayer.

2) Arrangements during/due to Covid-19 pandemic (Papers A, B and H)

Paper A (by Jonathan Mobey), Paper B (by the Children & Families workers) and Paper H (by Naomi Gibson) refer.

Jonathan Mobey asked for any comments.

a) Church buildings

No comments

b) Services

- Allan Macarthur said that viewing figures are available from Palm Sunday onwards when we started to publish the Sunday service online using YouTube. On average, each Sunday service is viewed via c.200 unique devices. It is likely that more than one person is watching via any given device. We can't tell who the viewers are but we know from word of mouth that some viewers are out of the parish and some are even outside the UK. The viewing figure for the Good Friday service was higher than the Sunday services, with no obvious explanation.
- Allan Macarthur said that viewing figures were very slightly higher for the initial services. This might be because to start with some people outside the parish were viewing our services because their own church had not yet started broadcasting but have now begun to do so.

- Allan relayed that 90% of online service viewings were on a Sunday; 60% of viewings were via a PC; 25% were via a smartphone and 15% were via a tablet. Some of those accessing services via a phone might be casting from the phone to a TV screen.
- Gordon Gill said that he had viewed various online Sunday services in the Deanery. His view is that Harwell & Chilton's services are excellent. The way they are put together looks professional – with a variety of people appearing in them, the music is well presented and a mixture of indoor and outdoor settings used.
- Gordon Gill said that Harwell & Chilton's viewing figures are very much in line with St Mary's, Wallingford, which is church with a similar sized membership. Gordon said that, nationally, viewing figures for online services are many times higher than physical church attendance. Gordon also commented that an advantage of a recorded service such as ours is that people can view it whenever it suits them. This is likely to increase access beyond the regular congregation. Some churches use the alternative approach of livestreaming their services or use Zoom invitations to view live services. That approach limits the viewers to those who are available at that time.
- Pam Rolls said that it is encouraging that online viewing figures are holding up consistently at around c.200.
- Jonathan Mobey was asked about viewing figures for Pebbles, Kids Church and the Pebbles Family Services. Jonathan explained that these services are delivered live via a Zoom invitation rather than a recording on YouTube. The number attending online has been similar to the face to face attendance.
- Jonathan Mobey said that, looking to the future, he sees online services as supplementing rather than replacing physical church services. Online services can help reach those who are unable to leave the house or who are working on Sundays or who feel uncomfortable coming into a church building.
- Other PCC members reinforced their appreciation of the style, quality and accessibility of Harwell & Chilton online services (e.g. using 'outside broadcasts' not just indoor settings; including recognisably local locations and people; having the words to the songs visible so you can sing along; being able to watch from the sofa in your pyjamas, etc.)
- Some suggestions for improvement were to increase the number of Bible readings from one to two in order to have an Old Testament as well as a New Testament reading; ensuring the speaker is visible wherever possible (or that they are named if not); supplying a printed copy of the sermon to church members known not to have internet access; publicising the online services in future Harwell Helpers or Chilton Mutual Aid leaflet drops.
- Jonathan Mobey said that he is planning to send another email to the church community shortly and that he would ask for feedback on the online services from this wider group too.
- Allan Macarthur said that the online services have been quite time consuming to put together but the team is getting faster at it. Deborah Evans (Administrator) has been heavily involved.

Jonathan Mobey and Pam Rolls to identify church members without internet access and supply a printed copy of the sermon to those who would like one

c) Children & Families work

Paper B refers. Jonathan Mobey said that the Children & Families workers (C&FWs) had also been undertaking some pastoral work among their constituency by telephone.

Pat Moseley said that it was great that the C&FWs have been able to keep all their work going via the use of technology. Other PCC members agreed. Jonathan said that he would feed back this appreciation and encouragement to the C&FWs.

d) Pastoral work

Pam Rolls reported that she and Jan Radford between them have telephoned everyone who attends Generation Gold, plus a few others. Hazel Benton, Joan Impey, Pat Moseley and Audrey Slater have also telephoned potentially isolated church members.

Pam Rolls reported that everyone they have spoken to so far seems in good heart. Many have good neighbours or relatives living nearby and have spoken highly of the practical help they have received from others. Quite a few have viewed the online church services. Others have been using Bible reading notes and accessing church services via TV or radio.

e) Staffing

Jonathan Mobey reported that Deborah Evans has taken to the Administrator role very well and is a pleasure to work with.

Jonathan invited questions from PCC members about the staffing arrangements.

Rector's medical work

Hazel Benton said that whilst it is admirable for the Rector to undertake extra medical duties, she felt that it would have been courteous to have advised the PCCs and indeed the wider congregations of this. Jonathan Mobey apologised for not keeping people informed and agreed that he should have made his absence on medical work more widely known. Pat Moseley agreed that informing the PCCs, even after the event, would have been helpful.

Rebecca Lewis explained that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had found there to be a fast-moving situation around the end of March and in the run up to Easter with Government and Diocese decisions constantly affecting the team's tentative plans. The Rector was making decisions about medical work around that same time and he did talk to the SLT about it at that point.

Gordon Gill commented that he preferred the Rector's low-key approach to communicating that he was undertaking extra medical duties.

Pat Moseley commented that he was glad that the Rector was contributing medically and wanted the Rector to know that people are praying for him.

Children & Families workers (C&FWs)

Rebecca Lewis said that she was delighted that the C&FWs are able to do as much as 15 hours per week each at the moment. Given that they regularly exceed their 20 hours per week in normal times, Rebecca felt that doing less for the time being is not a concern.

Jonathan Mobey invited Hazel Benton, as Chair of the Employment Committee, to comment. Hazel explained that she, Jonathan, Stuart Gibson and Jane Woolley had looked into the furlough option should the C&FWs express an interest in it. But when it became clear that the C&FWs preferred to carry on working as many hours as they could manage, then Hazel recommended that they be allowed to do so and continue to be paid in full, if possible.

Jonathan Mobey confirmed that the arrangement suggested by Hazel was in place at the moment but that he is reviewing regularly whether this is sustainable.

In answer to a question from Allan Macarthur, Jonathan Mobey clarified that furloughed workers are not allowed to undertake activity on a voluntary basis that would have been part of their paid role.

Jonathan Mobey invited Stuart Gibson to comment because it was he who had raised the question of furloughing originally. Stuart explained that he had raised the matter because he felt it was a question that needed debating and not because he was for or against it personally. Stuart confirmed that he was perfectly happy with the outcome.

f) Finances

Jane Woolley said that she felt that we could still write to existing funders of the Children & Families worker post to ask them if they would be minded to continue this funding. Jonathan Mobey said that this contact would need to be made by the Treasurers/Book-keeper because the identity of donors and the sums they have pledged is confidential.

Gordon Gill suggested taking a collection during the online services. Jonathan Mobey agreed that we could consider that. However the situation is delicate because some viewers will not be regular church members, plus some people's finances will have been badly impacted by the Covid-19 situation.

Tony Hughes asked what proportion of giving is collection plate income. Tony pointed out that if it's a minor amount, it might not be worth worrying about it when the issues might be delicate. Stuart Gibson said that plated income is c.15% of giving at All Saints' which he felt was fairly significant. Envelope giving was additional to that. Stuart said that the size of the impact depends on how long this situation goes on for.

Gordon Gill suggested writing to those in the envelope donation scheme to ask if they would consider donating in other ways.

Jonathan Mobey suggested that such questions should be debated in the individual PCC meetings.

g) Other activities

Tony Hughes and Hazel Benton respectively confirmed that Harwell Feast and Chilton Family Fun Day have definitely been cancelled for 2020.

Alex Reich noted that pastoral care of older church members was in hand. He wondered whether we could do the equivalent for teenagers and young adults who might also be suffering from social isolation.

Jonathan Mobey agreed that a lot of younger people are suffering from social isolation. However, we do not have a lot of young adults in our congregation and teenagers will be living with their families. Rebecca Lewis pointed out that safeguarding rules prevent us from making direct contact with teenagers.

Rebecca Lewis explained that Pathfinder sessions for 11-16 year olds are still taking place via Zoom. Those who attended YF but not Pathfinders have been invited to attend the Pathfinders Zoom sessions. Pathfinders translates better than YF to a Zoom format because Pathfinders is more discursive.

h) CAP work

The PCCs noted the proposal to offer online Money Coaching on a one to one rather than a group basis. There were no concerns about this proposal. Jonathan Mobey will feed back to Naomi Gibson about this.

Pam Rolls asked Jonathan Mobey to also express the PCCs' thanks for the heart that the CAP Money Course team have for their work, and to encourage them in it.

i) Future plans

Jonathan Mobey said that he would ideally like to livestream services when physical services are possible again.

Gordon Gill reported that he had been trying to encourage the Bishops in the Oxford Diocese to livestream services for years as part of Gordon's work for a charity that runs 60 care homes. The answer had always been that it was too difficult. But the Covid-19 response has now forced the issue.

Allan Macarthur commented that the technical challenges of livestreaming services are considerable and different to publishing a remotely compiled service on YouTube.

Chris Pollard commented that there are likely to be various intermediate steps before lockdown and social distancing are completely removed. It could be quite a strain on resources to offer both online and face to face Sunday service options. So we need to prepare for that now in some way. Yvonne Sanderson concurred. Jonathan Mobey agreed that there are quite a few possible lockdown exit strategy scenarios.

Jonathan Mobey remarked that he had been keeping an eye on what is allowed in Germany. They are now able to gather in church but are not allowed to sing! Some MPs are petitioning the Church of England to allow funerals in church again. Allan Macarthur said that he saw that the Republic of Ireland has opening churches in phase 4 of their lockdown easing roadmap. This phase also covers opening of museums and other public places.

Gordon Gill said that he had heard of one church with a normal seating capacity of 500 that had calculated that they could only allow 29 people in the building with social distancing.

All Saints' preliminaries & procedural

3) Apologies for absence

Apologies from: Janet Radford

4) Minutes from previous meetings (Papers C and D)

a) Minutes for 4 February 2020 (the previous meeting)

Unanimously approved and accepted as a true record that may be signed by the Rector.

b) Minutes for 5 November 2019 (now with joint PCC section added to minutes)

Unanimously approved and accepted as a true record that may be signed by the Rector.

c) Minutes for 7 May 2019 (missing from archives)

Phil Corbishley had taken these minutes, when acting as interim secretary.

Phil Corbishley to send Christopher Pollard a copy of the minutes. Christopher to circulate the minutes to PCC members for approval. All PCC members to submit any suggested revisions to minutes to Christopher Pollard before Monday 11 May 2020.

5) Decisions of the Standing Committee

a) £1,000 from Church Hall Fund to Chilton Mutual Aid Group ('CMAG')

Stuart Gibson pointed out a correction from the agenda, that the £1,000 is not a loan to CMAG. It is an amount that was put into reserve to be an underwriting for CMAG.

However, circa. £900 has been received in donations so far, therefore the underwriting is unlikely to be required.

CMAG help those who cannot leave the house due to COVID-19 (i.e. the most vulnerable and those shielding c.f. isolating), by carrying out certain tasks on their behalf (e.g. collect prescriptions, do the supermarket shop, etc.).

Phil asked if there was anything more that we could do to help. Stuart responded that the group is already quite a large outfit that is handling it very well. Hazel noted that (in response to the initial leaflet CMAG sent out) more people offered to help than requested help.

Hazel suggested that (as another possible way to help) is to support Judy Goodall's cryptic quiz, as the funds are donated to CMAG.

The PCC wants to thank Stuart Gibson for facilitating the account to assist the CMAG.

6) Matters arising from the previous meeting

a) Christians against Poverty (CAP)

Stuart Gibson clarified that the individuals that previously provided donations over the last three years has now ceased (c.f. the PCC providing money to CAP). The CPCC is committed to pay for the next 3 years (with a split of two thirds, one third). CAP is aware that the PCC may not be able to meet its commitment.

Jonathan suggested that we need to think more creatively for funds. Suggestions were to have Liz Roberts do a talk at the end of an online service with a link to donate, or a virtual plate at the end of the service. Although the online service may raise an issue regarding whether the donations are from the Benefice as a whole (rather than Chilton only).

There's potential that the payment could come from the Missions budget, but this is already hard-pressed to meet.

All members to try to think of ways to raise money for CAP

b) Food donation

This was actually done through Harwell Helpers food bank (rather than through Chilton PCC). There doesn't appear to be a pressing need to have one in Chilton: there is another one in Didcot that is well supported; and there are currently issues with acceptance of food donations due to COVID-19.

c) Chilton Fun Day

Already discussed (above) – the whole fun day officially cancelled.

d) Annual meetings

Continue to wait until COVID-19 passes. New deadline for annual meeting from Church of England of 31 October 2020. It was decided that if we get close to this then we shall have a Zoom annual meeting.

Finance

7 & 8) Finance and income expenditure in light of COVID-19 (Papers E and F)

Stuart updated us that the income looks good on the spreadsheet due to the gift aid claim. But the issue is the loss of the plated income and envelope scheme (shown within the 'pledged' row).

We already approved a negative budget, and COVID-19 is unlikely to help bring the budget into a positive. However, there will be less use of electricity and will save money from holiday schools. We need to keep an eye on the budget over the year.

The PCC would like to thank Stuart Gibson for preparing the papers.

9) Mission Giving

Yvonne updated the PCC that she had a meeting Helen to discuss the budget. A proposal has been prepared (but not yet approved by the others in Mission Giving). Yvonne shared the draft budget with the PCC.

The PCC thought that the budget looked good overall, but need the Mission Giving team to approve and formerly submit the budget for discussion and confirmation at the next PCC (subject to enough money being in the budget).

Stuart would like confirmation regarding the five missions/charities that will receive funds.

Yvonne to confirm the five missions/charities and provide an internally approved budget to the PCC next meeting.

Fabric

10) Ramp and rail

Alex updated the PCC that he applied for the certificate, but eventually found out that the certificate was not needed. A mock-up was due to be trailed on 29 March, but this is now on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

11) West House boundary issue (Paper G)

Alex updated the PCC that a letter had been drafted, finalised and posted to the West House letter box in February 2020. The letter suggested that the owners of the West House, Middle House and East House meet with Alex and Jonathan on 14 or 15 March 2020, but this would need to be postponed due to COVID-19.

A response to the letter was received from Middle House only. It was realised that the owners of West House are no longer living there, and have moved abroad (therefore not receiving mail posted to that letter box). Alex is to try posting through the postal service in case there is a forwarding address, but will need to find an email address as well.

The PCC would like to thank Alex for his perseverance.

Alex (or church office) to post letter to West House as recorded delivery via postal service, and find email address to send a copy of the letter via email.

Health and safety

No items on the agenda, but the PCC would like to thank John Pigott for continuing to check on the church and carrying out the lighting over the Easter period.

Services and seasonal

12) Review of Easter season and online services

Online services already discussed (in CPCC above)

The Easter Season included all the Pebbles classes pre and post lockdown. Phil shared that the Pebble Zoom meetings were going well and occur weekly. Due to the lack of licence it's restricted to a maximum of 40 minutes (but this can be a good thing!).

The PCC would like to thank Judy Burbidge for creating the flowered crosses for Good Friday and Easter Day.

13) Card reader in church services

Pam explained that there is only one reader to share between St Matthew's and All Saints'. It was decided that it would be trialed on the font in All Saints', but this has been postponed due to COVID-19.

14) Future dates to note

VE Day on Friday 8 May 2020

Meeting accidentally ended at 9.58pm by St Matthew's (host of Zoom meeting). Stuart, Judith and Christopher rejoined, but decided to close meeting at 10.03pm

15) Any other business

None; an email was sent to the PCC members asking for any other business, but no responses were received.

Next meeting: PCC meeting 1st September 2020 via Zoom

..... Chairman

Signed