

Minutes of a Meeting of St Matthew's, Harwell PCC
held at All Saints', Chilton, on Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 7.30pm

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.

Present: Rev Jeremy Parsons (Chairman; present for items 1-3, 7, and 13 onwards)
Elizabeth Clarke (Secretary) (part)
Sid Gale (Deanery Synod representative)
Gordon Gill (Deanery Synod Lay Chair)
Tony Hughes (Vice Chairman; Chair for items 3 - 19)
Becca Lewis
Tim Roberts (Treasurer)
Rev Pam Rolls (items 1 – 3)
Liz Roberts (Minutes)
Eliza Wheaton (Churchwarden)
Jane Woolley (Churchwarden)

Opening and Prayer

The Rector, Rev Jeremy Parsons, welcomed the PCCs to the joint part of the meeting, read from Colossians 3 verses 16-17 and opened the meeting in prayer.

1. Children and Families Worker Recruitment

Jeremy informed the PCCs that, following on from the decision at the June meeting to proceed with advertising the part time job share Children and Families Worker for the Benefice post, low key advertising has taken place and the first candidates would be hosted next week. Due to the shortage of likely candidates, there is no cut-off date and suitable applicants will be seen when they apply to decide whether they will then be interviewed. He also mentioned that there were ongoing discussions with ECHO to look at how we can work together.

2. Wallingford Deanery Synod Report July 2023

Paper A covering the recent Deanery Synod meeting was noted but not discussed.

St Matthew's PCC Meeting

3. Apologies for absence

Rev Jan Radford. Phill Johnston was absent

4. **Decisions requested between meetings. (Paper A)**

Date	Whole PCC or Standing Committee?	Subject	Result
2023-06-29	PCC	Harwell Helpers Fund Redistribution of funds to Schools Hardship funds	13 in favour 1 N/R

The decision was noted. The announcement of the decision will be made in the *Harwell News* with copy having already been agreed by the coordinator of the Harwell Helpers, the Church Wardens and Treasurer. Jane Woolley will submit the text to *Harwell News*.

5. **Minutes of the Meeting on 6 June 2023 (B)**

The minutes would be signed after correction of some possible typographical errors.

6. **Matters /actions arising**

None.

7. **Church Organisation and Decision Making (C)**

Resolution	To appoint a work consultant to reflect on the present structures, and advise as to how these might be improved, enabling the two parishes to work together more effectively to fulfil our Mission.				
Proposed	Chair	Seconded	-	Passed	Unanimously

The sum for the consultant's study was clarified as £1200 (plus £300 provision for expenses) across the benefice (£1000 total, including provision for expenses, from St Matthew's).

8. **Income and Expenditure Report (D)**

Noted with the request that the word 'profit' be replaced with 'surplus' or 'balance'. Tony Hughes advised that Buildings maintenance was likely to underspend by as much as £4,000 due to slippage on securing quotes for repainting the rainwater goods and for wiring the floodlights. There are plans to mitigate the current net cost of the Church Hall which is forecast to be around £3,000. The meeting was reminded by the Treasurer that the Diocesan grant for ECHO is a pass-through sum and is mentioned only annually in the Annual Report.

9. **Funds Balance Report (E)**

Noted. Some of the Gill legacy has been transferred to prepare for eventual Chancel roof replacement. Around £3,000 of VAT rebate on the finials work is expected and this will be returned to designated funds. The Bookkeeper is reviewing the restricted funds to check the true nature of the restriction. There is an intention to review designated funds and to see whether the designations are still appropriate for current circumstances.

10. **Ministry Support**

The Treasurer reported that the appeal in St Matthew's to fund the extra hours for the Administrator raised £9,700. £3,850 of that will be transferred this year into the general fund to pay for the Administrator's extra hours. This will leave a balance of funds to give additional security for 2024.

11. **Buildings Committee Report (F)**

Noted.

12. **Swift Boxes (G/H/I)**

Resolution	To provide four double nest swift boxes to the interior of the south and east facing louvred windows of the bell chamber.				
Proposed	Gordon Gill	Seconded	Eliza Wheaton	Passed	Unanimously

13. **Church Hall**

Rev Jeremy Parsons joined the meeting for this item. Tony Hughes reminded the PCC of the conclusions of the Church Hall working party, presented to the PCC in March, and the intention to take the matter up again once a new Rector was in place. Discussions have now been held with the Rector. The proposal is to establish a project group to explore the options in detail and propose a way forward to the PCC. Proposed membership and scope of the group will be presented to the November PCC. The Rector and Tony have had informal conversations with David Mason, currently Diocesan Director of Property, who would attend and advise the project group.

The PCC agreed to proceed on this basis.

14. **Pastoral Care Lead**

Eliza Wheaton advised the PCC that a potential volunteer had been identified and this person was considering the role.

15. **Concert and Events Team**

Liz Roberts advised the PCC that, as a result of a drop-in workshop in church, the Concert and Events team now consisted of six people, adding to the previous four. They are David Pyke, Adrian Rance-McGregor, Liz and Tim Roberts, and Jim and Wendy Sinclair. All will be deployed for the rehearsals and concert of Didcot Choral Society on 2 December.

16. **Health and Safety Advisor Vacancy**

Jane Woolley advised the PCC that Elaine Shrimpton had agreed to be the new H&SA. Her review of our current documentation is in hand. The H&SA would not be joining the PCC but would attend by invitation.

17. **Regular Safety Review Meetings**

Jane Woolley advised the PCC that a system of reviewing walk-throughs of both the Church and the Church Hall every six months would be instituted.

18. **Approval of Update to H & S Policy (J)**

Resolution	To support the new process regarding managing large funerals.				
Proposed	Tim Roberts	Seconded	Liz Roberts	Passed	Unanimously

19. **Any Other Business**

- The Rector thanked the Standing Committee for engaging with an ongoing review of Standing Committee and PCC ways of working.
- Gordon Gill advised that the Rev Preb Jane Haslam is our new Associate Archdeacon.
- In response to a request for a presentation about the ramifications for the Benefice of Valley Park the Rector advised that there would be substantive information to present to the PCCs in the Spring. He was soon to be working one day a week on, inter alia, researching the support our Benefice could receive from the Diocese and others in establishing itself on Valley Park. It was noted that a new civic parish to be known as Western Valley will encompass the new build development east of the A34 that has been in the current civic parish of Harwell.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.04pm.

Dates to Note

Harvest 24 September

Next PCC (Combined) 3 October via Zoom.

Signed.....

Date.....