

H3 Duffin 16/09/2025



## ***The Parish of Medstead and Four Marks***

### **Minutes of a PCC Meeting**

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025,**

**6.30pm meal at the Vicarage**

**8pm meeting at Church of the Good Shepherd**

**Present:** Howard Wright (Chair), Debby Barnes, David Duffin, Jeremy Griggs, Timothy James, Frank Maloney, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Ian Trotter, Andrew Walters, Jill Williams, David Williams (Secretary)

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Howard welcomed everyone to the fifth PM&FM PCC meeting of 2025  
Apologies were recorded for Jackie Jurd (away) and John Lofthouse (unwell).

#### **2. Worship and Prayer**

Howard led the meeting in songs of worship: 'Yet not I but through Christ in me' and 'Build my life'. He and others led in prayer. Frank prayed for John L's recovery.

#### **3. Declarations of (Financial) Interest**

None

#### **4. PCC – Meeting of 10th June 2025**

- a. Approval of Minutes - *PCC Minutes 25-06-10.pdf* (circulated)  
The document was approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- b. Matters arising
  - i. Item 6 – Treasurer – v. referring to the Variance Schedule spreadsheet of *PM&FM Financial Statement - April 2025.xlsx*, Ian observed that when Jeremy had expressed concern about the April budget column showing a 'planned deficit of £4,233', that figure was 'per calendar month'. (Note: while the budgeted figure for the first four months of 2025 was a deficit of £16,933, the actual deficit for the same period was £6,510)
  - ii. There remained some confusion over how the St Andrew's Church Hall had appeared in the Annual Accounts as presented at the APCM in April and discussed further at PCC in June. Chris and Howard, perhaps with further advice from Andrew Burton-Thorne, will review the 2024 Annual Accounts before the deadline of October 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 for submission to the Charity Commission (CC). We will also take steps in this financial year ensure that assets are reported correctly and in good time to the next APCM and CC.
  - iii. The delay in receiving the 2024 accounts back from the Independent Examiner necessitated moving the date of the APCM uncomfortably close to the Diocesan deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> May. PCC thought it wise to look for an alternative recommendation for an IE, through personal contacts and through the Diocese.

#### **5. Ministry -**

Jane and Virginia – presentation and questions

Howard introduced Jane – *Families*, and Virginia – *Youth and Children*, to restart a practice that had formerly been part of the old COGS PCC, keeping PCC up to date with their ministries.

- a. They took us through the range of their weekly and monthly ministry:

- every Sunday 9.30am service at COGS – children leave the main service for Kid's Church, engaging with Bible stories and related craft activity, returning

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after intercessions and before communion. They are excited to share with the whole congregation what they have learned and made. N.B. adults don't go up and tell the children what *they* have learned!

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday afternoon of every month except August: Messy Church, looking at God's 'I AM' statements and reflecting on who "we are". Next Sunday morning, one baby and four young people will be baptised.
- Monday morning: Baby Group "Tiny Tots" providing support for new mum's and babies. Two 1<sup>st</sup> birthdays this month. Supporting their children and their mental health.
- Monday evening: Youth Club in the church, around 12 young people aged 10-14 attending. Learning from parables of Jesus, games, craft. They eagerly prepare and present the teaching themselves. That preparation is itself a real benefit to those who take it on. Howard emphasised that young people from right across the parish are invited.
- Tuesday morning (usually the 2<sup>nd</sup> in the month): "Tots" toddler group. Last week there were 56 attendees including 31 children.
- Tuesday morning: Collective Worship in Medstead and in Four Marks Primary Schools. Also in June ran a RE interactive Workshop in St Andrew's with 50 children, thinking about church as a building and as a group of believers.
- Wednesdays: Jane goes into the local pre-schools attached to our primary schools. Recently helping with Sports Days and with 'graduation'. Both secular and Bible story telling.
- Thursday: Running a 'pop-up' café alongside the local Community Cupboard which uses COGS building. There families with no previous church connection have found welcome, engaged with Messy Church, open to prayer.
- The new venture in St Andrew's – Medstead Family Church, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday afternoon. We run that as a team. Starting small with a few families.

b. Termly activities:

- End of Term – 400 children, staff and parents; the whole of Four Marks School coming into COGS for a service.
- Similarly for Medstead school, only within the limitations of a smaller building so just the Year 6 leavers, their parents and staff.
- In August, two 'Messy Mondays' – whole-family Holiday Club
- On September 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> mornings: Summer Holiday Club for children going into years 1 – 5.

c. Annual events

- Harvest, Christmas and Easter special events. Four Marks Primary School come to their Christmas services in the COGS building.
- Heydays nursery based at Four Marks Primary School also visit COGS at Christmas. We recognised the logistical difficulty of bringing Medstead Preschool children through the Village to St Andrew's.

It's been wonderful to see children, some of whom have special needs, feeling accepted, engaging and blossoming as they join in with songs, conversation and activities. But there are children who need 1:1 support, together with their whole family.

Jane urged PCC members to be involved in praying for these relationships with families. She introduced some flyers encouraging prayer for individual needs across the Youth, Children and Families work. PCC members are all DBS checked so can visit their chosen activity to become better informed.

Pray also for leaders and volunteers – an ageing body of people. There is a need for younger people to step up to take the place of those who can no longer serve.



After further discussion, Jill led the meeting in prayer for Virginia, Jane, their helpers and for all the children and families they reach.

Howard on behalf of PCC thanked Jane and Virginia for attending. At this point they retired from the meeting.

## 6. Finance

### a. Progress on opening various bank accounts

NatWest have at last recognised the image of Howard's signature, witnessed by David D as acceptable. Now we must get Tori access to the account so that she can begin to transfer funds to the new account and then get Chris Nunn access too so that he can fully operate as Treasurer. We learn that he doesn't have to be a signatory to be granted online access to the new account.

NatWest will not set or enforce limits; we must do so ourselves. We have already agreed an Expenditure Policy of our own (agreed at PCC meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024).

### b. Parish Giving Scheme, registration

Still to be done. For now, the priority is to get the current account operating.

### c. *Diocese of Winchester 2026-CMF-Request.pdf* (circulated). Noted that the request of our Parish is an increase of over £10,250 in 2026.

### d. Financial Statement to end of June 2025

*PM&FM Accounts to the end of June 2025.xlsx* (circulated)

This third Tuesday of July is barely two weeks into the month. However we should keep to the present timetable. It is to be hoped that in future the month-end accounts might even be available a week before the PCC meeting to allow for Chris to deal with individual queries in advance of the meeting.

PCC then reviewed with Chris an entry for income and expenditure on social events, and the amount spent on WiFi and phones. The Parish provides:

- Howard with his phone and WiFi in the vicarage;
- Office WiFi and landline;
- Jane and Virginia own their phones, and the Parish pays the monthly SIM payments;
- Jane's, Virginia's and Matt's WiFi because of the work they do from home.

Chris encouraged everyone to look for ways to invest up front in order to make sustainable savings long term. He suggested as an example some rationalisation of WiFi provision.

He also referred to the work that Bob Moore has done to find an electricity supplier that will give better rates for returning power from our solar panels to the Grid, or appropriate use of batteries to store in daylight what we might use in evenings. He suggested that we might harness the expertise of other members of the congregations to identify areas where we could reduce overheads. We might also look for grants – Frank is exploring contributions towards the use of the COGS building as community space.

Ian then asked about those phone payments, as to whether they amounted to 'payment in kind'. It was agreed that these payments were part of the process as employers of enabling people to do their jobs. To make sure we are acting correctly in this, Howard asked Chris to check with the authorities.

Regarding cost-of-living increases paid to staff from April, it was confirmed that these had been allowed for in drawing up the annual budget. However, staff are also paid according to a 5-year incremental scale. Increments for staff not already at the top of their scale had not been budgeted for.



Ian observed that even with the encouraging drop in forecast deficit for the year compared with the budgeted figure, that still leaves a possible deficit of about £41,000. Having seen greater level of income in the first half of the year than what had been forecast and budgeted for, Howard supported by Timothy and Bob expressed confidence that having taken a conservative view of income, that we would continue to see giving at least in line with what has been forecast. Frank referred to past experience, in particular in October 2024 when things looked bleak. We put the situation before people who responded so that the final deficit was only a small proportion of what we had feared.

e. Understanding our 'funds'

i. Clarity on restricted and designated funds.

Restricted funds are those for which the donor has specified a particular purpose. Identifying Restricted funds is relatively straightforward.

Designated funds are those which PCC decides to protect for a particular purpose. We should be as rigorous in identifying Designated and ring-fenced historic funds, so that we then have a clear idea of the size of the remaining unallocated funds.

It's work in progress to identify Restricted and Designated funds. A proposal was made that monthly statements to PCC should bear as footnote a reminder of the meaning and scope of what is Restricted and what is Designated.

- ii. Clarity on historical funds. We still need to identify those amounts given before the Parish merger which have not yet been spent in the work of the local congregations. We regard those historic funds as *designated* to the worshipping community they were originally given to. For example, the cost of reordering of the front of St Andrew's should be paid out of the funds given to pre-merger St Andrew's. We still run the two historic bank accounts. If a bill for one centre has been paid out of the account of the other, we must rebalance those funds. We want to be sure that neither congregation is subsidising the other out of funds given to the former separate parishes.
- iii. Movement in reserves as a result of activity. A Reserves Policy had been agreed at the previous meeting. Ian asked that activity relating to things for which funds are already designated should not affect the level of reserves.

f. Finance action – see documents

- i. Jill reminded the meeting that we already have proposals from Chris to place some money in funds that will attract interest thus maintaining their real-term value (Note: see Appendix 2 of the minutes of the June meeting).

## 7. Local Church Group – meeting notes

- St Andrew's
  - *Minutes St Andrew's LCG 7 Jul 2025.pdf* (circulated)
  - Review of 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations  
PCC congratulated the organisers of the weekend on a splendid set of presentations and activities.
- COGS
  - DAC response on roof repairs  
email forwarded on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July: we do have DAC permission to go ahead. Andy has spoken to the preferred contractor who should be able to start the work in about a month's time.

## 8. Safeguarding

Nothing formal to report.

One person has expressed interest in relieving Matt of this responsibility, but no significant progress has yet been made.

<p><b>9. GDPR</b></p> <p>Nothing formal to report.</p>
<p><b>10. Health and Safety</b></p> <p><i>25.07.14 Health and Safety Rpt.docx</i> (circulated)</p> <p>Frank's report was noted with thanks.</p> <p>Ian reported that one item at St Andrew's that had failed a PAT test had been discarded. Everything else had been certificated.</p> <p>COGS LCG needs to find a replacement PAT tester for the person who had provided the service for many years.</p>
<p><b>11. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>(to be notified before the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership of the Medstead War Memorial</li> </ul> <p>Frank confirmed that the ownership of the memorial had been transferred to the Medstead Parish Council a while ago.</p>
<p><b>12. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>PCC: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Hall</p>

Howard closed the meeting with prayer at 10.05pm