

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 7.30pm

In the Abbot's Parlour



Members present:

Fr. Nick Davies (ND) – Chair, Elizabeth Charman (EC - Zoom), Marcus Charman (MC - Zoom), Paul Charman (PC), Tom Harcourt-Williams (THW - Zoom), Rubin Hart (RH), Robert Hughes (RVH), Peter Ireland (PI), Linda Jeffreys (LJ), James Lancelot (JL), Andrew Maynard (AM - Zoom), Julie Northcott (JN), Nancy Oakes (NO), Joy Pegg (JP), Matt Roff (MR - Zoom), Liz Swift (ES) Rachel Walters (RW).

Also Attending: Will Jones (WJ) – COO, Jess Wardle (JW) – Marketing

1. Welcome

ND opened the meeting with the Collect of the week.

2. Apologies

Les Stamp (LS),

3. Previous Minutes

a. From PCC meetings on: -

- **16th June;** spelling of the names of Milly and Stewart corrected and a duplicated 'the' removed; with these revisions accepted as correct by all those present & Signed.

Matters Arising

(a) Approval of Sidespersons and Hospital Chaplaincy List: The PCC APPROVED the list of sidespersons and hospital chaplaincy circulated ahead of the meeting, and recorded its thanks to those serving in these roles.

(b) Vision, Mission and Values: An update was given on the planned VMV session. Approximately 20 members of the PCC, subcommittees and Senior Management Team were expected to attend. Members indicated a preference for Saturday meetings; the October date would be reviewed in light of this. It was also noted that an all-staff and stakeholder group meeting (approximately 15 attendees, including guests from the Borough Council and the local cultural consortium) was being held the following week, in person not online. It was confirmed that all outcomes from these sessions would be brought back to PCC in due course for review.

(c) Date of October Meeting: Following consultation there was a preference for this to be on the 6th, however it was agreed that this date should be held provisionally pending confirmation of the date of the October VMV should this be moved to a Saturday.

NOTE

4. Events and installations *discussion with Jess Wardle, Head of Marketing*

JW joined the meeting and was welcomed by members, who were asked for their favourite features of the Abbey. JW introduced her circulated report on events, highlighting:

- Continued growth as a music destination, alongside new exploration of drama and performance events.
- Strong commercial performance this year against the TAL budget, expected to exceed budget significantly, though growth is expected to level off next year.

- The value and potential of ticketing data (e.g. from the Moon exhibition) in showing the geographic spread of visitors, including those travelling from some distance.
- The introduction of Entry by Donation, allowing a mix of ticketed and free/donation-based events.

Members raised a range of questions and suggestions, including: widening the sacred music repertoire within the liturgical setting (RVH); developing a heat-map of visitor origin and digital profile data, potentially extended to visitors' home churches (MR); pilgrimage-related activities such as pilgrim passports and stamps; the case for an "artistic policy" to guide the balance of commercial, outreach and mission-led programming (ES) to be developed alongside the VMV work; the desirability of events that attract schools and younger audiences (PC); shining a light on the Abbey's inclusive church status, and the possibility of gospel choir or similar events (JN); a local photography exhibition/competition; and the practical challenges of exhibition display and full-seating changeovers in the side aisles, including access to the ambulatory during concert rehearsals.

JW responded to points raised, noting operational lessons learned from recent exhibitions and concerts, current limitations on data capture from externally-ticketed concerts, and an intention to bring a periodic (six-monthly) update to PCC. The discussion will inform ongoing events planning and the forthcoming VMV and artistic policy work. Members thanked JW for her report and attendance.

5. **Tewkesbury Abbey Foundation**

Receipt of funds from Foundation

Memorandum of Understanding with Dean Close

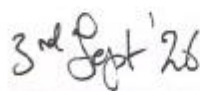
PC, as Chair of the Foundation, introduced his circulated paper. The Foundation's trustees had unanimously resolved, after lengthy consideration, to wind up the charity, transferring its remaining funds to the PCC and to Dean Close Foundation. This replaces the existing funding arrangement with a direct Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the PCC and Dean Close (DCS), to secure the funding of the Schola Cantorum on a long-term basis.

In summary, the proposal is to transfer £250,000 (restricted to choral music) and £45,000 (restricted to children and young people's work) to the PCC, with the expectation that the choral music funds be drawn down at approximately £25,000 pa over at least 10 years, and £250,000 to DCS, also allowing draw down of £25,000pa (this seen against DCS' own contribution estimated at £150 - 200,000 per year toward the Schola Cantorum).

Members raised a number of concerns and questions, including: the loss of the Foundation as an independent body monitoring and growing the funds, and concern at handing a substantial sum to Dean Close (LJ); whether 10 years represented a sufficiently long-term settlement, noting that cathedrals hold substantially larger endowments, and whether an income-only, endowment-style approach might better protect the funds over the long term (THW, recording a formal objection to the proposal on this basis); the adequacy of the reduced DCS contribution, and parallels with cost pressures previously experienced by the Abbey School; and the identity and unanimity of the Foundation's trustees, and the scale of Dean Close's own financial contribution.

In response, PC and ND confirmed: the Foundation's five trustees (they are the PCC's 2 representative members) had reached a unanimous decision after considering the alternatives of rapid depletion or a much more cautious endowment model; the funds are legally restricted so that they, and the DCS contribution, may only be spent on choral scholarships/choir provision at Tewkesbury Abbey, with a mechanism for funds to revert if

the arrangement were to end; and that going forward it will be for the PCC (through a liaison group and, in due course, the proposed Development Group) to monitor the arrangement, oversee fundraising, and ensure the funds are used prudently and not exhausted prematurely. AM and MC spoke in support of the proposal, noting the mutual benefit and long-standing partnership with DCS. Members agreed that a liaison/oversight group, including former Foundation trustees where possible, would be important to maintain continuity and accountability, and that this connects to the Development Group discussion (item 6). PCC voted on the two recommendations as proposed by PC (and seconded by RVH): • That the PCC approve the proposed transfer of funds as proposed; • That the PCC approve the draft MoU, to be signed by the Chair. • Further, that the PCC agree the transferred restricted funds be used to support choral music for at least 10 years in line with the MoU commitments (approximately 10% of the choral music fund to be applied each year), and that the children and young people's fund be available for use over the next couple of years, including potentially to support a new children and youth worker post, with the Vicar to bring specific proposals for such a role to PCC for approval. RESOLVED: For – 14; Against – 2; Abstentions – 1. The recommendations were CARRIED. Action: ND to sign the MoU and to bring proposals for a children and youth worker role to a future PCC meeting for approval.	ND
6. Formation of Development Group - Minutes of the first meeting of the Group had been circulated previously. ND noted that fundraising support currently provided by the Orchard consultancy and the project manager, Jane Bamber, both funded through the Heritage Lottery grant, would end in December, and that the PCC needed to consider how to resource fundraising, including capital and revenue fundraising, going forward. In discussion, members noted the specialist skills required for competitive grant bids, also the importance of not overlooking community-level and legacy giving that had worked well previously (LJ). NO asked whether the return on investment of Orchard and JB could be quantified; PC estimated that approximately £100,000 had been spent over two years, with grant income to date estimated at between £10,000 and £50,000, against a 2-300% return originally hoped for. AM emphasised the importance of clear KPI's, with income-versus-cost figures being brought to every relevant meeting (ES); PI queried the remit of the group, and who determines fundraising priorities in the first instance; ND/WJ thought that this is for PCC, with the Development Group responsible for operational delivery against those priorities (including legacies, the relationship with the Friends, and a stewardship campaign). It was AGREED that the Development Group be constituted as a formal subcommittee of the PCC, open to any PCC member who wishes to attend (current members: PC, ND, PI, AM), that Terms of Reference, including KPI's, be drafted for approval at a future meeting.	WJ
7. Financial Matters The financial report was received and noted; no decisions were required at this stage. PC reported that Stewart (Aylward) had indicated he did not feel able to take on the role of Treasurer; by default this responsibility falls to the Church Wardens, and PC has taken this	NOTE

on for the time being. The Finance Subcommittee is due to meet later in the month to begin work on next year's budget, which will be reported back to PCC.	
8. Chief Operating Officer Report The COO's report was taken as circulated. Members with questions were asked to raise these directly with COO outside the meeting.	NOTE
9. Reports from Sub-committee Meetings (<i>faculty applications, notes circulated previously</i>) (a) Faculty Applications: Two were presented for approval: (i) urgent stone repair works, following on from works carried out to the tower last year; and (ii) archaeological excavation works in connection with extending the Garden of Remembrance. It was noted that approval enables the necessary faculty (legal permission) to be sought and does not of itself commit the PCC to expenditure. Proposed: JP; 2nd: NO, both passed unanimously. (b) Revised Terms of Reference (Fabric Committee): Members APPROVED a revision to the Fabric Committee's terms of reference, to address a previous issue over wardens and the vicar that had left the committee inquorate. The revised terms provide that, in such circumstances, either may nominate a PCC member to act as their representative. (c) Lighting Update (South Aisle): PI & JP reported on issues with the Abbey's lighting control system, following the PCC's acknowledgement in March of the risk that it might fail at any time. Recent extreme heat led to overheating and failure of the lighting control racks in the South Aisle roof space and this remains currently non-operational. The lighting system is approximately 12 years old; wiring and light fittings are believed to remain sound so problems are all with the control system. One quotation received so far for full replacement of this is approximately £55,000 (the original installation cost of approximately £727,000) against the MEP survey estimate of £150,000. Further quotations are being sought from three additional specialist contractors. MR asked whether a temporary cooling solution might be considered; this would be explored. There is an option to of fuse-replacement (circa £3,000), though this could not be considered a durable. AM asked for reassurance that the technical requirement (choice of replacements, relocation, and mitigation of damage from dust) is properly specified before any quotation is accepted. JP asked about the financial exposure of cancellation (re. concert scheduled for 22nd July); WJ estimated a loss of approximately £2,500 plus bar takings, but confirmed that mitigations are in place and officers are confident the event can proceed. Confirmed that fundraising for the lighting replacement (previously flagged to PCC in March) is being accelerated in light of the increased urgency, and that officers will bring a costed proposal to a future meeting once further quotations are received. No expenditure decision was required at this meeting.	WJ/Fabric
10. AOB None	
The meeting ended with the grace at 9.36 pm. 11. Next meeting – Thursday 3rd September @ 7.30pm. Approved as a true record:  Chair;  3rd Sept '26 Date	