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**Notes of a meeting to implement the Perpetual Calendar for business meetings,**

**held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 9 February 2018**

**Present**

Minister - Rev Andrew Prout

Church Council - Chris Kitchin

Pastoral Committee - Gina Woodhead

Church Stewards - Val Parker (part meeting & Denise Willingham)

Social, Outreach and Events Group - Jan Kitchin

**Apologies**

House Groups - Roy Vivian

Property & Finance Committee - Margaret Quinn

Worship Consultation - Peter Wallace

**Background**

The Worship Consultation had adopted a Lookahead Planner for Worship; the Social, Outreach and Events Group is planning ahead; the House Groups have a well established pattern of group meetings; and a broad outline for committee meetings is set out in the annually adopted Register of Meetings - but the church as a whole does not have a forward planning calendar which brings all this together. As a result Church business does not always flow naturally through the year and decision-making can be slow.

What had been proposed was a perpetual calendar that could be used to determine the dates for church business meetings. This would allow meetings to flow in an order, allowing sufficient time for papers to be prepared for church council meetings. A perpetual calendar had been drafted which demonstrated that this was possible. It would improve diary management and save time.

The Church Council at its meeting in October 2017 agreed to adopt the proposal and implement its use by the Church Council Secretary consulting with Chairs and Secretaries of business meetings and groups.

**Purpose of this meeting**

The purpose of this meeting was to consult those involved and implement the calendar. The following documents had been circulated prior to the meeting:

* A sample Perpetual Calendar
* The Register of Meetings as agreed for the church year 2017-2018
* Regular business of committees/ groups
* Hertfordshire School Term and Holiday Dates for the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

**Process used in the meeting**

The months and frequencies for all meetings were determined first, followed by the meetings where the business flowed to the church council.

The weeks to be avoided were those in which house groups were held. Dates for house groups were determined by taking the dates of school half terms and working both forwards and backwards from them.

The days of the week to be avoided, where possible, were Thursdays (Music Group), Fridays (end of week), Saturdays (family time), Sundays (Worship etc).

The focus for the preferred days was therefore Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Where possible school holidays were to be avoided, and no meetings would be held on public and bank holidays.

**Sequence of meetings and dates**

The sequence of meetings and their dates would need to allow for proper notice to be given for general church meetings and meetings of the Church Council - and for the minutes/notes/reports of meetings and groups to be ready in time to circulate with the Church Council agenda.

Charity trustees cannot delegate their responsibilities without also ensuring that such delegation is effectively monitored. By the circulation of minutes/notes/reports to the Church Council this would save time currently spent on preparing reports. **Initially it would be left to each committee or group to decide how to report in writing to the Church Council.**

Fourteen days written notice was required for meetings of the Church Council at which the business includes annual appointments, the approval of budgets, the appointment of church stewards or decision to be taken as managing trustees of model trust property [Standing Order 502(7)]. In practice this probably meant all meetings.

For general church meetings where the election of church stewards and representatives to the Church Council is included [Standing Order 622(1)], fourteen days notice is required.

The agenda and papers of the Church Council were already published on the noticeboard in the corridor by the kitchen and on the church website.

To make the work of the Church Council even more open and transparent**, it was suggested that a notice should appear in the church notices about four weeks before meetings inviting suggestions for items of business.**

The Church Council normally meets three times a year, and occasionally more often. To enable more time to be created for discussion on general or specific issues **it was suggested that, as there was normally considerable business at the June meetings of the Church Council, that meeting should start at 7.30pm. The Church Council would be consulted on this suggestion and whether other meetings could start earlier.**

The need for more regular meetings would be considered once it was clearer about the size and nature of the responses from the congregation about items of business.

The Pastoral Committee meets in November (prior to the Christmas mailing) and in March.

The Worship Consultation meets in September (in order to have time to prepare for Christmas) January and May. The focus for the Mission Secretaries Action Group overlaps with the work of the Worship Consultation. It was suggested that its meetings should be held immediately before the Worship Consultation on the same evening.

The Property & Finance Committee meets in September, January and May prior to each meeting of the Church Council.

The Social, Events and Outreach Group meets in August, November, February and June and at other times as required.

The annual General Church Meeting was normally held in May, with additional general church meetings held as required,

The staff of the Sunday Club normally meet in October and March, with additional meetings if needed.

**Future dates**

As a result of the above, the attached schedule of dates has been prepared to include the dates to invite business, the deadlines for the receipt of papers and the dates by which agenda and supporting papers for the Church Council should be published.

**Distribution of these notes**

To those invited and to the Church Council.

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|  | **Advance notice in church notices**  **(4 weeks before CC meeting)** | **Minutes / notes / reports from meeting due with Church Council Secretary**  **(3 weeks before CC meeting)** | **Agenda to be published**  **(2 weeks before CC meeting)** | **Date of meeting** |
| **Church Council** | Sun 13.05.18  Sun 16.09.18  Sun 06.01.19  Sun 12.05.19  Sun 15.09.19 | Tues 22.05.18  Wed 26.09.18  Mon 14.01.19  Tues 21.05.19  Tues 25.05.19 | Tues 29.05.18  Wed 03.10.18  Mon 21.01.19  Tues 28.05.19  Wed 02.10.19 | Tues 12.06.18  Wed 17.10.18  Mon 04.02.19  Tues 11.06.19  Wed 16.10.19 |
| **Pastoral Committee** | These committees / groups need to decide their own meeting dates in time to **meet the deadlines in the next column for papers to the Church Council** | Tues 22.05.18  Wed 26.09.18  Mon 14.01.19  Tues 21.05.19  Tues 25.05.19 |  |  |
| **Worship Consultation** |  |  |
| **Property & Finance Committee** |  |  |
| **Social, Events, & Outreach Group** |  |  |
| **Annual General Church Meeting** | Sun 22.04.18  Sun 21.04.19 | Sun 22.04.18 | Sun 06.05.18  Sun 05.05.19 | Sun 20.05.18  Sun 19.05.19 |

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