

**Agenda item 3**

*St Albans and Welwyn Circuit, Beds, Essex and Herts District*

Minister: Rev’d Andrew Prout, 16 Gainsborough Avenue, St Albans, Herts AL1 4NL Tel: 01727 851834

Church Council Secretary: Chris Kitchin Tel: 01707 332 470

**Minutes of the Church Council Meeting held on**

**Monday 12 February 2018 at Hatfield Road**

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|  | **PRESENT**  Rev’d Andrew Prout (Chair), Angela Andrews, Eric Bridgstock, Sue Davey, Philip Eaton, Rev’d Rosemary Fletcher, Freda Gray, Chris Hancock, Ros Hancock, Helen Jeffrey, Chris Kitchin (Secretary), Val Parker, Joanna Rose, Lesley Saunders, John Scott, George Selvarajan, Caroline Tough, Roy Vivian, Peter Wallace, Denise Willingham, Gina Woodhead. (Total 16 present). | |
|  |  | **Action needed** |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Marion Eaton, John Scott, Peter Wallace, Lianne Weidmann, | |
| **1** | **WELCOME and OPENING DEVOTION**  The Rev’d Andrew Prout welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with devotions. He referred to the funeral of Joyce Blunden which had taken place earlier in the day and which had been well supported, and to Jim Crotty who had died in December, both of whom had lived their lives putting their faith into practice. |  |
| **2** | **MEMBERSHIP OF THE MEETING**  A list of the membership of the Church Council had been circulated with the agenda. The list was approved in accordance with Standing Order 613. |  |
| **3** | **NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  There were no other items notified. |  |
| **4** | **LETTERS OF GREETINGS AND SUPPORT**  A card of greetings and best wishes had been sent to the Rev Alison Facey.  Rev David Mullins, his wife and daughter had moved to Hatfield Road on David's retirement. A letter of greeting would be sent.  A message of sympathy would be sent to Corinne and Richard Jeffers following the death of Corinne's mother. | Secretary  Pastoral Secretary |
| **5** | **MINUTES**  The minutes of the Church Council meeting held on 17 October 2017 were signed as a correct record. |  |
|  | Vacancies  It was noted that the following vacancies still remain unfilled:  Two Church Stewards, Creche Secretary, Flower Rota, Church Treasurer, JMA Secretary and Justice & Peace Secretary.  A rota for the creche had been created to the end of June 2018. A meeting of the helpers would be held to discuss the future arrangements.  It was suggested that, as there was an open Justice & Peace Group at Marlborough Road, interested members might join that group rather than recruiting a local Justice & Peace Secretary. Ann Scorer was the convenor. **This was agreed.** | Minister  Minister |
|  | **Church Stewards Report**  The report of the senior church steward was noted.  Marion Eaton had stood down as a church steward, leaving the team consisting of only three people. Roy Vivian had agreed to step in until the annual General Church Meeting.  The system of Sunday Assistants working with a church steward in the running of the 10:30am Sunday services, had been working well but there were down sides. When stewarding the 10:30am service in pairs, the stewards could discuss relevant matters amongst themselves. They are now more isolated from each other, with little opportunity for such discussion in between the 4/6-weekly meetings of church stewards.  Marlborough Road  Another joint meeting between the ministers and church stewards of MRMC and HRMC had taken place on 13 November 2018. Each church updated the other on its current position regarding membership, activities and future plans. Joint youth meetings, joint services and the exchange of notices and news sheets continue. Other possible joint enterprises (e.g. pulpit swaps, Compass Course, Lent Series) were considered. A report had also been given on Circuit matters. |  |
|  | **WORSHIP**  It was reported that during Lent the theme of 'Women in the Gospels' would be followed to mark 100 years since the extension of the vote to women.  St Paul's had accepted an invitation to join Hatfield Road for the Maundy Thursday service in which Rev Canon Tony Hurle would take part. Andrew would also approach Pastor Lionel Wallace and Living Waters.  Andrew would be conducting the 6.00am Shenley Sunrise service on Easter Day.  Rev Michael Giles had hoped to be present at the Church Anniversary in June but was now not unable to do so. As an alternative he had offered to visit in April 2019. The arrangements would be left to the minster and church stewards. | Minister & Church Stewards |
|  | **LEARNING AND CARING**  Pastoral Committee  A report had been circulated and it was noted that the current membership was 119.  Safeguarding  In her capacity as Safeguarding Officer for the church, Joanna Rose presented a report. In the light of new connexional Safeguarding guidelines prepared by The Methodist Church it was noted that HRMC was not fully compliant. A list of the roles which required job descriptions and of those who currently needed training was also circulated.  It was suggested that church stewards should be added to the list under *Group 1 - Full enhanced check with barring* and House Group Leaders be added to the list under *Enhanced check without barring*.  The following actions now needed to be taken:  - Prepare a revised Safeguarding Policy;  - Create Job descriptions for certain appointments and fully assess to determine the level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks that would be needed;  - Display information about those responsible for safeguarding in the church and circuit;  - Develop a rolling plan to ensure each DBS check is renewed every four years; DBS checks to be in place before the role can be undertaken.  - Those not prepared to submit to a DBS check would not be able to undertake these roles.  - Those not prepared to attend the required training would not be able to undertake those roles.  In many respects, job descriptions in different churches should be similar and Joanna would contact her counterpart (Judith Heard) at Marlborough Road.  Circuit training would be provided in April or May 2018.  The requirements outline above will be the subject of detailed work and the church council expects everyone to cooperate.  Joanna was thanked for the considerable amount of work involved. | Joanna Rose |
|  | **SERVICE**  **Church Life: Property & Finance**  Presentation of Adoption of Final Accounts 2016-2017  The final accounts for the financial year 2016-2017 had been adopted, subject to independent examination. That examination had now been completed and the required documentation filed with the minutes.  It was agreed that the grant to the Benevolence Fund should read £250 in the budget.  Appointment of the Independent Examiner  It was agreed:  - to thank the Independent Examiner for his work;  - to acknowledge that work with a small token of our appreciation;  - to invite him to undertake that work in respect of the church accounts for 2017-2018.  Property & Finance Committee  A comprehensive report of the work of the Property & Finance Committee had been circulated and a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and on the web site.  The cost of the replacement fire door in the Sanctuary was likely to be in the region of £1000. **It was agreed to authorise expenditure up to £1,200 for this to be achieved.**  Rev Andrew Prout and Lianne Weidmann planned to facilitate the refurbishment of the Upper Room in consultation with Sunday Club using the previously authorised £1,000 donated in memory of Ceri Sheehan.  It was noted that the new windows in the main hall and small hall had been fitted and the external works identified in the Quinquennial Report of October 2015 had all been completed and signed off by the professional advisor Alan Smith RIBA. The actual cost was £25,986.41 compared with the agreed budget of £30,000.  Further investigations had been undertaken in respect of the redecoration and renewal of the main hall. It was estimated that £40,000 would now be required consisting of £18,000 (New Floor – Rustic Oak), Lighting £7500 (New LED Strip Lights for hard lighting plus wall lights for soft lighting), Decorating £7500, Professional Services £5000, Contingency £2000.  A further £15,000 had been received over Christmas 2017 as a donation by Mr Trevor Jones in memory of his late mother. This brought the total of the exceptional gifts and donations being held to £101,000 of which £30,000 had already been allocated to the main Hall and £1,000 to the Upper Room.  This work could be undertaken in July 2018 utilising Alan Smith once again to manage the project and give professional support.  **It was agreed unanimously to increase the budget from £30,000 to £40,000 using a further £10,000 of the monies donated by Mr Trevor Jones.**  **It was agreed unanimously to proceed with the redecoration and renewal of the floor in the main hall and to seek consent for it from the Circuit Meeting and District Consents Panel, and to employ the services of Alan Smith RIBA in seeing the project through to completion.**  The PROD Group had invited feedback in relation to ideas for both the main hall and a possible reconfiguration of the entrance. It was continuing its work and was **asked** to prepare an overview of ideas outstanding, together with costs where possible, for consideration at the general church meeting on Sunday 18 March 2018. Any proposals should be based on evidenced need which should be gathered.  **It was unanimously agreed** to relocate the two war memorials from the main hall into the Sanctuary and to box in the ground heating pipes for ease of cleaning and appearance.  Maintenance of trees was to be undertaken. It was considered that additional or replacement heating in the church Sanctuary would be needed at some point. This would be included in the future review of the Sanctuary area.  The Annual Property Inspection and Check, and the Annual Property Schedule for 2017 were in the process of being completed (deadline 31 May 2018). Matters that had been highlighted which needed further work were in relation to Safeguarding requirements, Lay Employees, and the need for a Health and Safety assessment and should all be done by May 2018 deadline. The P&F Committee would also look at requirements in respect of Fire Safety.  **Towards 125 – Update and Feedback from Consultation**  A summary of the responses received to date had been circulated and these are attached to the signed minutes and on the web site.  Communications  The church website and the need to improve communication were briefly considered and ideas were invited. Chris Hancock appealed to people to forward to him details of events and items for inclusion on the web-site.  Perpetual Calendar  At the last meeting of the Church Council it had been decided to introduce a perpetual calendar and a meeting had been held on 6 February 2018 to begin its introduction. A report had been circulated which contained the following suggestions:  - The June meeting of the Church Council each year always had a full agenda; suggested a 7.30pm start. **This was not agreed**;  - Notice of forthcoming Church Council meetings should be given in the church notices. **This was agreed**;  - Other meetings of the Church Council could start earlier. **This was not agreed**;  - The perpetual calendar showed dates for Church Council meetings and deadline for papers; **These were agreed**;  More time was generally needed to discuss the wider life of the church. The business of any meeting was likely to fill the time available. Meetings needed to be more effectively chaired and previously circulated reports should be taken as read. As charity trustees, the Church Council could delegate some of its work but not its responsibilities. It needed to monitor its delegated work. This could be achieved by the minutes/notes/reports of those meetings being received. Guidance was needed on minutes/notes/reports from other meetings to the Church Council. It was also suggested that a timed agenda should be used. Andrew gave assurances he would review each meeting with the Senior Steward. In feedback he had recently obtained as part of his annual Ministerial Development Review there were some criticisms and suggestions as well as expressions of appreciation in relation to his chairing of meetings. He also noted the pressures meetings and ministers have been put under as a result of significant increases in their responsibilities and legal obligations over the last 20 years.  125th Anniversary 2019  The feedback from the recent church-wide consultation had been included in previously circulated report, a copy of which is on the web site.    Use of Financial Resources (Gifts and Donations)  Ideas for the use of financial resources of gifts, donations and legacies had been received and included in the previously circulated report.  The feedback and ideas for use of resources would be included alongside the report to be provided by the PROD Group for the general church meeting on 18 March 2018. It was recognised the possible employment of any Lay Worker required careful thought in respect of intended outcomes and some further work would be necessary on any proposal, and that there might be some scope for shared employment with MRMC.  **Circuit Staffing / Circuit Leadership Team (CLT)**  It was noted that, with effect from 1 September 2018 a presbyter from an Overseas Conference was likely to be stationed to the Circuit to replace the Rev Nick Young. The Rev Bruce Anderson from the Methodist Church in New Zealand had met members of the Circuit Leadership Team and representatives of the four churches in the Hatfield and Welwyn Section on Saturday 13 January 2018. This appointment would be subject to ratification by the 2018 Methodist Conference.  It was hoped that Rev Ali Facey would be able to begin a phased return to work at Easter. Until her return Rev Andrew Prout was looking after Shenley and Rev Rosemary Fletcher St. John’s in Potter’s Bar.  Both Ali and Andrew were approaching their re-invitation process which would soon begin. They were both stationed in the Circuit until 31 August 2019 and must indicate in the summer of 2018 if they wished to extend their appointment beyond that period and for how many years. In its turn, the circuit had to decide whether to offer any extensions.  The Circuit Leadership Team was continuing to work towards a new vision plan with due regard to enabling mission across the Circuit, future finances, and implications should the numbers of ministerial staff be reduced. An interim report on progress was expected and an additional circuit meeting had been called for 14 March 2018 at Hatfield Road when this one item would be on the agenda.  **Neighbourhood & World Issues**  Mission Secretaries Action Group  It was reported that Andrew had met with Evangeline Selvarajan and Tony Moody in October 2017. A Mission in Britain Service would take place on 11 February 2018 led by Andrew. The group felt it would be good once a month to have a focus on some aspect of mission such as Mission in Britain, World Missions, JMA, our three chosen charities, and other examples of such work.  Andrew was thanked for his approach to celebrating Home Mission locally at the recent Mission in Britain service, and Sue Davey and Joanna Rose were thanked for their personal testimonies.  It was noted that Day Care would be celebrating its 30th Birthday this year. | **Treasurer**  Church Council Secretary  Property & Finance Committee  Minister &  Lianne  Secretary  Minister  Minister |
|  | **EVANGELISM**  **Social, Outreach and Events Group**  A report had received on the work of this group. Highlights included the Fair Trade breakfast, Bowling at Garston, the men's Sausage Sizzle and Louise Bourton's talk at Desserts and Delights about Fair Trade in Ghana was encouraging.  Various Christmas events were attended by members of the community around the church as well as those from our regular fellowship, and the aim is to encourage and extend this attendance during the year.  The Beetle Drive had been lots of fun with a very mixed age range, attracting our own congregation and friends. The variety of events was intended to offer opportunities to meet for fellowship, fun and to further the extension of God's kingdom. |  |
|  | **Events**  The following was noted:  Wednesday 14 February 2018: Ash Wednesday Day of Prayer and Fasting across the circuit. |  |
|  | **Any other business**  The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will apply from 25 May 2018. Connexional guidance is awaited about implementation locally. | **Secretary** |
|  | **Dates Dates of future meetings**:  Sunday 18 March 2018: General Church Meeting (after Morning Worship)  Sund Sunday 20 May 2018 : Annual General Church Meeting (after Morning Worship)  T on Tuesday 12 June 2018: Church Council at 8.00pm  We d Wednesday 10 October 2018: Church Council at 8.00pm.  Gener | **Secretary** |

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