

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING OF STRATFORD AND HENLEY CHURCH HELD VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2023

The meeting opened with prayer, together with the sharing and discussion of readings into four break out groups allowing time to reflect.

PRESENT

Rev Iain Ballard, Deacon Jane Mills, Graham Collins, Jan Grant, Liz Walker, Kath Fraser, David Dumper, Lim Ho, Evelyn Ho, Rev Jim Dobson, Brenda Birnie, Alan Cumming, David Loader, Trevor Pethick, Gillian Edwards, Adrienne Peacop, Andrew Steele, Margaret Blakemore.

APOLOGIES

Sheila Brown, Sue Rimmer, Janet Mee, Mike Ledgard

Malcolm Smith, Steve & Margaret Farmery tried Zoom but had technical issues

RATIFICATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes of the meeting were signed as a correct record with no amendments required.

CONSTITUTION –APPOINTMENT OF A SECRETARY

Going forward Graham Collins and David Dumper are prepared to act as Church Council Secretary to share the role to ensure cover at future meetings. This role is specific to the Church Council only and involves circulating members prior to the meeting and issuing minutes.

David Dumper was keen to confirm that the important role of the appointment of a Church Secretary remains unfilled. The Church Secretary is a key role in the running of the Church and needs to be a trustee—ie someone either on the Church Council or whom will be appointed to the Church Council in due course.

David added that a Secretary needs to be appointed to ensure continuation of our bank mandate with HSBC---HSBC must have a distinct person appointed as Secretary.

Iain stated again that the Church cannot function without this role being filled.

REPORTS

A] HENLEY

Andrew and Margaret reported—no major changes since the November Church Council Meeting. The membership stands at five. The members at Henley enjoyed being part of the Circuit Covenant Service and they look forward to the Circuit Services in March.

The Library remains as a tenant with valuable rental income received. A grant has been received towards the running and operation of the Community Larder. There is a good link with Henley Churches Together which include the Baptist and Anglican Churches.

The Memory Lane Café meets every other Tuesday. Henley Churches Together meet every other month, in addition there will shortly be Lent Courses

The long serving minister at the Anglican Church has just retired after 30 years plus and they are currently in interregnum. The Quinquennial Report was in order and just pointed out some minor repairs which are being addressed.

Currently there is only one booking—a Yoga class—there is an opportunity for Colette to promote bookings at the Church premises.

B] RESOURCES

Report issued prior to the meeting. However last week there was another issue with the toilets not flushing in the New Room. Martin Malone promptly attended for the second time in three weeks. The problem looks to be connected to the Rainwater Harvesting System. We are hoping that our contract plumbers Warmingtons will be able to resolve the issue. If not we will need to call upon the specialists Stormsaver but this could take time and will probably be expensive. However we have to resolve this one.

Additionally The Church Council was asked for flexibility in relation to the four point finance action plan agreed at the November meeting. The recently formed Business and Finance Committee, supported by Resources has already taken action and requires the flexibility to take account of circumstances as the weeks and months move on.

B2] LETTINGS

Encouragingly lettings continue to steadily increase, assisted by increased marketing and ease of on line booking and availability access. Currently each hirer has to complete an 18 page lettings licence agreement. We have approximately fifty regular bookings per annum plus one off bookings. This results in a total of 900 pages plus being printed. Each licence agreement once completed has to be countersigned by two trustees.

Having spoken with TMCP, Colette is going to be the first in the UK to trial an electronic licences system which will significantly reduce admin and support our Eco credentials.

Each completed licence agreement will be held securely in the Cloud and will be GDPR compliant. Colette will hold draft agreements which will then be populated with each hirers details and issued. Trustees can electronically sign each agreement. A small number of people in due course will be given secure access to download the full information as a backup and Adrienne kindly volunteered.

Colette will trial with irregular bookings at the outset. She will adapt Pandadoc software which is free but not perfect. Docusign is available at £240 should this be required in due course.

B3] FINANCE

Report from David previously circulated. The next meeting of the Business and Finance Committee is taking place tonight—Wed 15th Feb—nothing else to add.

C] STEWARDS

Jan commented that the stewards team is working better and is moving forward at a faster pace with plans etc. Work is ongoing towards the Vision Day on Sunday 5th March and Jim added that currently 26 people have signed the sheet confirming attendance. Iain encouraged us to spread the word and to publicise the Vision Day.

Jim appealed during the service last Sunday—Feb 12th—for volunteers to come forward to fill the many vacant posts within the Church with everyone in the congregation being given the job vacant sheets. A key part of Vision Day is to hopefully see some progress.

We are grateful to Kath and Margaret for coming back as ‘interim’ stewards to help out in the short term. David Loader raised the issue of ‘interim stewards’. However Iain confirmed that all stewards are only appointed to serve until the Annual Church Meeting which has to be held before September. The meeting confirmed the appointment of Kath and Margaret as stewards -Graham proposed and seconded by Lim.

C2] ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

Discussions took place on the best dates and times to hold this meeting to suit our Church.

Some Churches have the meeting after morning service to include lunch, whereas in the past we have held ours on a Saturday morning which has generally worked well. However Saturday is Jane’s day off.

The Stewards will consider thoughts, a guideline date of late June/early June was suggested possibly after the ordination of Rev Sallie Jones—see below.

C3] EVENTS DIARY

The stewards are working on setting up a calendar of events to be available to all. An annual year, together with events coming up in the next few months. We are all encouraged to inform Adrienne of any upcoming events even if they are to take place sometime in the future. Communication is key.

Iain added that a Circuit Administrator is starting in mid March. In due course this will aid communication throughout the circuit.

D] PASTORAL

Report previously circulated from Liz---nothing else to add

Margaret Blakemore is Senior Steward and Pastoral Visitor for Henley

E] SAFEGUARDING

Report previously circulated from Liz.

DBS Checks -- Adrienne will source the information required and Jane and Liz will verify the DBS documentation.

DBS—Henley—Although an additional Safeguarding Officer is not strictly required as we are one Church it is helpful that Margaret Blakemore has knowledge of the specific issues relating to Henley Church .

F] CIRCUIT STEWARDS

Report from Trevor—previously circulated—plus see below.

G] GREEN GROUP

Report from Lim-- previously circulated

In addition Lim added that five Churches in Stratford now have Eco Status with Holy Trinity having recently achieved Silver Award Eco Status.

Lim was keen to stress that the Eco Chat programme concentrating on ' Net Zero in my neighbourhood' will be the main theme of the group this year and that three councillors will be addressing meetings in the next three months.

H] ENERGY

Report from Lim—previously circulated

The consumption of energy is being controlled where possible and that the heating controls are effective and in order. Our energy consumption is similar to 2018/9, the last comparable full year before Covid. In the table of energy costs our overall usage compared to 2012 is significantly reduced, the last year before the Church Redevelopment Programme.

Iain congratulated Lim on all of the hard work which he has done to address energy usage and to promote Eco programmes in our Church and across the Circuit and to be an Eco ambassador.

David Dumper stated that the energy costs were £1630 and £1800 in the last two months.

6] PASTORAL CHARGE FROM SEPTEMBER 2023

Rev Tina Brooker will be appointed as a probational presbyter and will become minister serving Dale Street, Cubbington and Kineton as from September 1st 2023.

Rev Sallie Jones will be ordained at Coventry Cathedral on June 25th and we are all encouraged to support this special occasion and celebration.

The above appointments will result in some changes in Iain's current roles and far reaching workload.

As from July 1st after the ordination of Sallie, she will take over the responsibility of Pastoral Charge for Stratford and Henley and will attend and oversee the running of the various committees in the Church, including Church Council, Resources, Pastoral etc

Consequently no date at this stage will be set for the next Church Council until diaries have been checked etc but Sallie will take the next Church Council meeting after July 1st, unless Iain needs to call an interim urgent meeting before July.

Iain stressed that he will be very much available as Superintendent.

7A] PRESIDENTIAL VISIT—Kenilworth Sat 11th March

We are all encouraged to support the workshops at Kenilworth Church on Saturday 11th March. Please book tickets which are free asap, via the link on Trevor's report. High value speakers and workshops.

Lim raised the point that the various events and workshops did not include Eco.

Trevor stated that the Circuit does not have any input on the workshops and that these have been specifically selected by the Presidential Team. Trevor added that he also raised the point of the events lacking an Eco theme. However there will be a strong Eco emphasis at the District Synod on 22nd April. We are all welcome to attend the event but we cannot vote.

7B] PRESIDENTIAL VISIT—Stratford -Sun 12th March

Circuit Service plus Stockton at Church. The Circuit are organising a coach.

Liz asked who will organise the order of service. In due course the Presidents office will e-mail Liz with the order of service, together with the input required from ourselves for readings and prayers etc.

We are anticipating that 150 to 180 people will be attending the service. The Wesley Hall will be used. A detailed discussion took place after which it was decided that the Circuit via their contacts with Prontaprint will pay for the publication of an order of service—similar to the format used for Audrey's retirement. Adrienne will assist in the design of the order of service etc. Therefore everyone will have a 'memento' of the event and it will assist if there are any difficulties with some members of the congregation having difficulty in seeing the various screens. Gill Edwards added that it would be helpful if all of the Circuit Churches were given details of our Zoom Connection. AV and the screens will be used as usual, including the AV screen in the Wesley Hall.

Jim proposed that an order of service is to be made available for everyone and that Zoom and the three AV screens will be used as well. Seconded by Liz and agreed by the meeting.

The event will help to promote our AV/Zoom facilities and the order of service can also promote our Eco status etc.

After Brunch on Saturday morning on Saturday 11th there are no bookings. Therefore a task group/working party is sought from around midday on Saturday to open the Wesley Hall screens and to layout chairs in both the Sanctuary and Wesley Hall etc.

There is a meeting after the Ash Wednesday service on 22nd February to hopefully launch a Task Team/Working Party, depending upon interest and numbers then this event will be the first main task for the team.

David Loader will ask Maureen Beckett to see if we can use the Conservative Association car park which we have done in the past. We will probably need car park marshalls and a good number of meeters and greeters etc.

8] EDI TRAINING

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Conference have made the decision to roll this out and in due course there will be on line training for leaders in the Church including ourselves as managing trustees on the Church Council. Some support may be required in due course, in particular for those whom are not comfortable in using on line training and courses etc.

9] AOB

Shirley Dumper has resigned from the Church Council. We thank Shirley for being a member for many years and for the continuing large number of roles and considerable time which Shirley gives to the Church –many of which are not always seen.

10] Date of Next Meeting

Will be in July—Diaries to be checked with Rev Sallie Jones

11] CLOSE

The meeting closed with the grace at 9.35 pm

Graham Collins

15/02/2023