

## Lay posts in MK funded by the Diocese of Oxford

### Notes of Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7.30pm

**Attendees:** Matt Trendall, Ruth Maxey, Steve Potter (CtK CC), Ann Beaton (SM), Ayokunnu Otunla (AS), Larry Kavanagh (CWW)

**Apologies:** Keith Straughan

The meeting began by summarising the present situation with regard to possible significant investment by the (Anglican) Diocese of Oxford into Milton Keynes. We noted that it is a rapidly evolving picture, which has changed even since this meeting was agreed at the WCP AGM a couple of months ago, such that the possibility of bidding for lay posts may not now be offered in 2019 but could be delayed a year or two. We also noted the major investment of the 1980s and 1990s into MK, alongside some of the challenges which came with it, which had led to the relative under-resourcing of ministry currently, and what lessons could be learnt from this.

Reviewing the three broad options, it was strongly felt that another pioneer post was 'too much at once' – with CWW's long-term future as a priority and another plant in Wavendon anticipated in the near future, further church planting risked undermining these existing opportunities. So this option was swiftly rejected.

A specific ministry post such as youth work had more appeal. Youth work remains a priority, and dedicated investment would be valuable. However, we also noted that the dispersed nature of our team of churches, with multiple sites which made creating a 'base' for youthwork difficult. Indeed we failed to recruit a trainee youth worker for 3 successive years (2015-17) primarily for this reason. Good candidates felt they would be pulled in too many directions. This would remain a risk for a similar post, even for a more experienced candidate.

There was strong support for the idea of an Ops Manager, who could release more capacity for ministry among existing ministers. We noted that office space was crucial. CtK remains a possibility, but there are challenges as regards lone working. Matt is investigating the possibility of renting office space from the old Wavendon school site, which solves the problems of lone working (as the site will have numerous staffed offices). Home working is also another option, as long as the candidate lived in, or close to, the parish and was therefore accessible to the churches/staff team.

We noted the importance of a clear and specific brief for the post, to avoid the Ops Manager being drawn into 'everything'. This is not necessary at present but we should be attentive to the value of this if the opportunity arises. Matt will also investigate whether we can roll funding for office space into the bid.

Finally we observed that if the funding is delayed by a couple of years, the role that is right for us now might need reviewing further down the line.

***With those points noted, the meeting agreed unanimously that an Ops Manager would constitute our best 'bid' should we be offered the opportunity by the Diocese of Oxford in the near future.***

#### **Actions required**

1. Feed back our recommendation to the WCP Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019, with a view to it being approved at that meeting (All)
2. Further investigate office space in Wavendon, and clarify if funding can be rolled into the bid (Matt)
3. Review bid if opportunity is delayed beyond 2020