

## **Minutes of the Walton Churches Partnership Council Meeting**

**11<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 at 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Wavendon**

**Present:** Revd. Matt Trendall (Chair), Revd. Ruth Maxey, Revd. Ruth Gookey, Rev. Keith Straughan Lynn Atkinson, Ayokunnu Otunla, Steve Potter, Carolyn Sanderson, Emma Tyler and Ann Beaton (minutes)

**Apologies:** Sue Wilson, Joyce Fennell, Deacon Klaus Reidel

Ruth M. told the meeting that Sue was not very well but she had wanted to give a public thank you to everyone at Christ the King for the support and love she had received at the funeral of her grandson. She had been overwhelmed by their care.

### **Welcome**

Matt warmly welcomed Revd. Ruth Gookey to her first meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

He then led the Council Meeting in excerpts from Evening Prayer.

- 1. Approval of Minutes of last meeting** – 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2019. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

### **2. Matters Arising**

- **Youth Café Update:** Ruth M reported that she is waiting to hear from the Parish Council. The Clerk told Ruth that little business was conducted over the summer but the Parish Council were going to visit the Youth Café and Ruth is very hopeful that the Café will be up and running in January 2020. The WCP Council have agreed to cover the cost of the venue. As the Café has not yet received the Parish Council's approval, costs will not be needed until 2020.
- **Taize Update:** Ruth M reported that she had taken two families to Taize this summer and everyone had a wonderful time. She said she will take another two families next year (this is all she is allowed to take), probably around the Bank Holiday. She can, though, take an unlimited number of young people in the 18-30 age range and may consider those 15+.
- **Week of Guided Prayer Update:** It was agreed that this will be held every other year so next year's week will begin on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 and finish on either the following Friday or Saturday. Ruth had been in contact with the Prayer Guides and had received a positive response from nearly all of them. The venue will be confirmed nearer the time because the position of St. Michael's Priory is now unclear. Ruth said that it would be very helpful indeed to have one or two people to take charge of the administration of the week and asked that members of the Council publicise this at their churches. We need **to agree a budget** and this would be put on the **November agenda**. We need to factor in *Thy Kingdom Come* in late May and this would also be put on **the agenda for November**.

- **Safeguarding Training Update:** Matt reported that he had spoken to Rachael and others from our churches, as the Safeguarding Handbook we had followed six months ago is already out of date. At the moment church council's and those providing refreshments are asked to complete the 1-hour C0 on-line training. From 2020, Welcomers and Stewards will probably need to undertake the next level of safeguarding training which is on-line C1: it is not advisory but required. This requirement is coming in because the emphasis on safeguarding is moving away from how we conduct ourselves to looking for other people's vulnerabilities. Matt has made his frustrations known to the Diocese as he fears we will lose a lot of people who really don't want to do this level of training. The National Safeguarding Team haven't made it official yet and we will have to review whether we enforce it. For our other denominations there is a high degree of tie-up. Ruth G said that the Baptist's training is:
  - level 1: very basic – everyone's responsibility how we look after people in church:
  - level 2: for people who work with children and vulnerable adults
  - level 3: for stewards and safeguarding officers.

Matt said that for safeguarding training, the lead denomination has been the Anglican church with Rachael going through the Baptist policy and adding words where necessary. For DBS checks, the lead denomination is the Baptist church. Matt said we may consider changing the lead denomination for training to the Baptist Church.

The Anglican Church's training is

- C0: basic training recommended for anyone at church, and especially for church council members and refreshments helpers
- C1: foundation training required for anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities
- C2: equips parish officers to embed healthy parish safeguarding practices
- C3: equips incumbents, licensed and authorised ministers to embed healthy safeguarding practices across their parishes and to respond well to safeguarding situations.

It was agreed that across the Partnership we should organise safeguarding training for vulnerable adults and children as early as possible in 2020. Rachael is looking at booking a trainer to come to us in March.

- **Alpha Course begins Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September: 7.30pm at St. Mary's**  
Matt said he had 7 to 8 people definitely coming on the course and he hoped this number would double by the time the course began.
- **Pioneer Post update – will hear end of September**  
Matt reported that Tim Norwood, MK Area Dean, had reported that the paperwork for the house for this post had been signed by the Archdeacon of Oxford, Martin Gorick, and we should have confirmation of this by the end of September.

Where the stipend for the minister comes from may change. It could come from the Church Strategic Fund and not the MK Deanery. At the moment the MK Deanery post is still available so there is time to see what happens. Ruth M asked when we can start putting the profile together. This is crucial for Ruth as she has a meeting in November re. her two-year extension. Matt said he would speak to Tim but, with the house a definite, we are all committed to this. He hoped we would be advertising in the New Year and would need to form a small group as soon as we get formal confirmation this Autumn.

### 3. Finance

- **Finance Update** – Emma said we needed to appoint an Independent Examiner for the 2018 accounts and asked that David Harbey be appointed to this role.

Proposed by Ruth Maxey  
Seconded by Ann Beaton  
And passed unanimously

She also asked the meeting to re-appoint David Harbey to be the Independent Examiner for 2020 (i.e. reviewing the 2019 accounts next year)

Proposed by Lynn Atkinson  
Seconded by Keith Straughan  
And passed unanimously

Emma then re-presented the 2018 accounts as further work over the summer had corrected some outstanding issues. The adoption of the redrafted 2018 accounts was

Proposed by Steve Potter  
Seconded by Ayokunnu Otunla  
And passed unanimously

The final balance for 2018 was £95,088.71. The accounts looked very healthy and there were no major concerns or issues. We can now do some budgeting and look at projections for 2020 and 2021.

Matt said we owed Emma a huge VOTE OF THANKS as she wasn't in post for the initial work on the 2018 accounts.

Matt said one thing we should do is agree some guidelines for how we steward this money. Mentally, we are ringfencing some of this money for higher ministerial costs over the next five to ten years. Ruth M's two-year extension – where will this come from? CWW will meet this year's share, but the share is going up, and although their aim is to meet it, they may need some help. Once we have clarity over Ruth's post and the new pioneer, we need some firm projections as to how much of our surplus would be required to cover costs of ministry over this transitional period of the next few years.

Across the Partnership, the other 3 established congregations each have c. £30,000 in reserves (in addition to the balance in the WCP account) and we have tried to set congregational share levels to maintain these reserves alongside meeting their true costs of ministry. That is a healthy position but

ultimately, we have always seen ourselves with one pot of money for the Partnership. For example, as last year, we may give Christ the King a £5k rebate to balance their books for 2019, given the long ministerial vacancy.

Two proposals for the Council to consider this evening:

**Bursary Fund:** CWW have over the last two or three years had a £500 Bursary Fund which Ruth M uses for Taize, trips away etc. She said that some people find it very difficult to access these things when they were on a very restricted family budget but the trips were life changing for them.

Ruth M wondered if there could be a Bursary Fund at WCP level of, say, £2,000 for all the congregations to apply for.

It was noted that each church already had a pastoral fund and Christ the King put aside money for outside ministry training.

The WCP agreed the following:

- Each congregation would work out its own way of deciding where applications were appropriate and the WCP would effectively rubber stamp them.
- Guidelines and criteria would be established at WCP level.
- This would be trialled for an initial period of one year.
- It may be that the £2,000 would have to be apportioned £500 to each church.
- Someone from the Council would be needed to administer the Fund and someone from each congregation would administer their application so that when it reached the WCP we know it is ok.
- There had to be a
- Clear need
  - Clear benefit
  - Minimum/maximum request
  - Whether absolute number or percentage of cost

It was thought that this could strengthen the Partnership by reaching out to our communities. Agreement that this was a good idea and would be put on the [agenda for the November meeting](#).

- **Relax Teens:** CWW started this at Easter as part of their youth work across the Partnership. The costs are small and don't need a building: it has been funded by the WCP budget rather than CWW budget.

It costs £30 to hire the venue and probably another £30 for arts, crafts and other resources.

The young people give a £1 when they come in. Is this enough? Could it be raised a little in the New Year?

Do we do youth work as a Partnership? Rock Solid, Youth Club, Relax Teens are all WCP things.

The meeting felt these were organic things: individual churches generally began them and then came to WCP level: it's choosing the transition time but

this is part of the way we work. It is looking for the trigger point: when we can see evidence that other churches are using it. Ruth M reported that two young people from All Saints had come to Relax Teens last month.

Matt said that in view of our finances he was happy to propose that we underwrite this group for 2020 to see if there was a growth in capacity.

Ruth M said it started in May 2019 with 12 young people and they can take a maximum of 30. As numbers rise, costs go down.

The Partnership agreed to this request with a maximum £500 budget.

#### 4. Mission and Ministry

- *CtK Mission Review update* – Lynn reported that the final session was not as well attended as the first two.
  1. Where are we now
  2. Blue-sky thinking
  3. Looked at key themes from the above 2

Four groups were formed:

- unity
- presence in the community
- prayer
- links to local schools.

Ruth G said these four things were things that could be actioned over the next year and then reviewed. Start with what we can achieve.

These were all concrete things to do, but too much to ask of people?

***Links to local Schools:*** Decided to take cakes to school staff rooms to build up relationships: Walton High, Kents Hill primary and secondary. Introduce ourselves and ask what can we offer you?

Get a banner and look to have a Spring/Summer Fair or Open Afternoon and send invite cards to Kents Hill residents.

***Unity:*** more focus on house groups: in the New Year, share a meal at the weekend where house groups were talked about to see if we could get more people into them.

- ***All Saints: Autumn 'Plastic Exhibition' 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> October and tie up with schools for Harvest:*** The Church had a talk on the environment earlier in the year and one focus of environmental concern was plastic. Matt had met up with the Heads of Monkston, Oakgrove and Middleton Schools. The children were then working on producing stuff that will be displayed at the Exhibition. Lots of fun working with plastic! This is Harvest – keying into the plastic debate. This was excellent outreach and working in partnership with local schools. They were tying it in with Go4th and there would be a centrepiece sculpture made of plastic – Come to church to make a rubbish sculpture!
- ***CWW Reference Group Report:*** Ruth M said that her 2-year extension may not be as certain as first thought. She needed to know urgently the position of the Pioneer Minister Post as she has a meeting soon regarding the extension. It will have financial implications for the WCP.

- **Eagles Rest initial work and future plans:** The school is now open to a great start. A brilliant community meeting has been held with 24 people attending and another is planned for 23<sup>rd</sup> September. A weekly coffee morning has been arranged, starting 25<sup>th</sup> September from 9.00am to 10.00am. The Headteacher has been very supportive. We are thinking of some one-off events that we can hold such as a fun day and carol singing on the estate. Information on these will be given to the WCP members.
- **WCP Christmas service discussion:** this was discussed and it was agreed that this year there would not be a WCP Christmas Service but we could hold one in future years when the Sunday fell closer to Christmas Day. Could go back to the regular pattern with Christ the King holding a joint service for the Community and Catholic Churches. There will be three sessions of Carol Singing at Kingston Tesco's; CWW will hold one and the Go4th project will also be holding one.

#### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – on the November agenda**

- **Bible Course Spring 2020? :** This will probably become the Lent Course as it runs through eight weeks. Ruth M. said that it is such a good follow-on from the Alpha Course. This will be put **on the November agenda.**
- **VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020:** Matt said that St.Mary's is holding a 1940's tea dance to mark this event.

#### **5. Other updates/feedback from around the churches**

- CWW are holding a Line Dancing Evening in aid of Henry Allen and the Eagle Project on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm. Ruth M will e-mail the poster to everyone.
- Lynn Atkinson said she felt the WCP should have an Environmental Policy and that we need to think about what this entails. Use of refreshment materials and the environmental footprint of each building. There were Energy and Green Audits available staged at Bronze, Silver and Gold. This would be put **on the November agenda.**

#### **6. Date/Time of Next Meetings**

The next meeting of the WCP Council will be on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.**  
Venue: St Mary's at **7.30pm.**

The members of the Partnership then prayed together using excerpts from Compline, the last prayer of the day, led by Matt.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.