

Minutes of the Walton Churches Partnership Council Meeting
7th January 2021 at 7.30pm, via Zoom

Present: Rev. Matt Trendall (Chair), Rev. Ruth Gookey, Rev. Ruth Maxey, Lynn Atkinson, Emma Tyler, Jonathan Bailey, Steve Potter, Klaus Reidel, Carolyn Sanderson, Ann Beaton and Ayokunnu Otunla.

Apologies:, Rev. Keith Straughan, Sue Wilson

We welcomed Jonathan as the second St Mary's rep.

Opening Prayer

Was led by Matt

1. Approval of Minutes of last meeting (7th January)

These were approved.

2. Matters arising

- Steve reported that the denominational returns for 2020 had been completed.
- CIO update: Steve reported that we plan to complete our application by the end of the year and that Watling Valley will submit promptly and share their experience with other LEPs.
- LEP Treasurers' meeting update and other financial news:
 - Emma reported that she had compiled the 2020 figures for WCP, and these were yet to be independently assessed. These were shared with the Council Members. Generally the results were positive. Emma was thanked for preparing these.
 - Matt had attended an MK LEP Treasurer's meeting and Walton is in a relatively good position. Overall, we essentially broke even in 2020. Some MK LEPs are facing substantial financial challenges. We could break even again in 2021.
- Safeguarding policy update: Matt noted that he and Rachael have reviewed the draft document and clarified some matters with the Diocese. Hope to have this finalised for the AGM.
- Planning (and reporting) for AGMs 2021: Matt raised the question as to whether this meeting should we have a particular focus. It was felt that at some point we should reflect on what we have learned to go forward post lockdown, but the AGM is too soon. It was agreed we have a basic AGM. Matt said he will be stepping down as WCP Chair after the AGM. The Council thanked Matt for his service as the Chair. Ideally, we would like to find a lay chairperson to replace Matt and it was noted that we could co-opt a secretary to ease Chair's role. Matt is happy to mentor a new Chair and will prepare a short job description.

We should be considering candidates for the post of Chair.

3. Two resolutions to approve on behalf of sponsoring denominations

a. Methodist: The proposal is to change Methodist church provision for leasing and licensing buildings (which are not currently being used for Methodist worship) to another Christian group. Presently these arrangements must be reviewed every 12 months, the proposal is that the period be 'determined by managing trustees by way of a license or a lease' providing that the permission would not offend the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church.

The resolution was proposed Ruth Maxey and seconded by Ann Beaton and was passed unanimously.

b. Anglican: The resolution was *'that from 1st January 2021, church buildings in our Parish (LEP) will not be open for Sunday worship until further notice, subject to regular review.'*

It was noted that this only covers the Ecumenical congregations.

The resolution was proposed by Ayokunnu Otunla and seconded by Carolyn Sanderson and was passed unanimously.

4. Environmental Policy – review LEP-level draft and next steps

Lynn had circulated draft of WCP Environmental Policy. This is based on a URC template. The first stage is to measure our carbon footprint and there are tools available. There are also some promising developments that Lynn has identified. Noted that Zoom has and can continue to cut car travel. The WCP policy is to set a framework for the congregations. These can discuss and explore this among themselves and work out how to apply it at their congregational level.

The draft was approved in principal, with a final version to be submitted to the AGM. **Any comments should be sent to Lynn.**

5. Ministry

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity feedback. We had Daily Prayer and Quiz. The quiz was really good and attracted a good mix of people from all congregations. It was also noted that Father Francis participated in the Community Church online service and Ruth spoke at Sunday RC Mass.
- Lent 2021 update – there is good participation in six groups and shared material for Sundays. Noted that some people have joined because the group was on Zoom, making participation easier.
- Holy Week and Easter – CWW are planning to be online until Palm Sunday and then do Stations of the Cross in St Laurence's Churchyard on Good Friday and (if weather is OK) on Easter Sunday. They are inviting people in the community to participate. The Catholic Church anticipates a Good Friday and Easter Sunday Service. St Mary's and All Saints' will review again, and may not reopen until after Easter. Christ the King Community Church and Catholic Church are planning an Easter Trail for local families. The Community Church are gauging whether to reopen for Easter.
- 'The Vine' initiative for Cluster Groups in MK – This is a significant development across LEPs. The first groups are forming for starting from next month.

6. Moving out of lockdown – feedback from the congregations – This has been covered already. Agreed it was a tricky time.

7. AoB

- Ruth M noted that we should have a rep at URC Synod. The next Synod, on March 27th will be on Zoom. **All should let congregations know about this. Ruth to provide a few lines for us to share.**

8. Date/Time of Next Meetings – AGM Thurs 22nd April at 7.30pm; Council Meeting Wednesday 16th June at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed with the Grace.