

**Minutes of the Walton Churches Partnership Council Meeting**  
**27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.30pm, via Zoom**

**Present:** Ann Beaton (Chair), Rev. Ruth Gookey, Rev. Ruth Maxey, Rev. Matt Trendall, Lynn Atkinson, Jonathan Bailey (Minutes), Ayokunnu Otunla, Klaus Reidel, Emma Tyler (Treasurer) and Sue Wilson.

**Apologies:** Rev. Keith Straughan, Steve Potter, Carolyn Sanderson.

**Opening Prayer**

Led by Rev. Ruth G.

**1. Approval of Minutes of last meeting (25<sup>th</sup> February)**

These were approved.

**2. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising that are not covered in main agenda items.

**3. Review of the CIO**

Matt reported that Watling Valley churches will be the test with the Charity Commission. We will wait and see their experience. We are ready to go – but it may be the Autumn or the end of the year before we register.

**3. Safeguarding**

We passed the policy at our last meeting. There is nothing further to report. St Mary's and All Saints churches are getting their training and DBS checks up to date.

**4. Finance**

i) Emma reported that as at 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 our current account stands at £15,986 with the quarterly MK Partnership payment to be made shortly. Reserves stand at £78,794. This is a satisfactory position. There will be a meeting of the church treasurers in July to discuss Q3 and Q4 finances.

ii) Our independent examiner has recommended that we have a reserves policy to indicate how we would use the reserves.

**Action: Emma, Ann, the ministers and treasurers to meet to draw up a reserves policy.**

iii) Our annual insurance premium is due: £1,019.16.

**Decision:** to pay the premium. Proposed: Ruth M; seconded: Ruth G. All agreed.

**Action: Emma to check which groups are covered – particularly with reference the activities of Church Without Walls and the Wellbeing Cafe.**

Thanks were expressed to Emma for all the hard work she puts in.

**5. CWW Reference Group**

The group has not met.

**6. Ministry**

i) **Ministerial Supervision.** Ruth M reported that it is mandatory for URC ministers to have six supervision sessions per annum. The cost is £50 per session ie £300 pa which will be paid 50/50 by the denomination and by the local church ie WCP.

Ruth G reported that in the Baptist church there is no requirement for supervision but she valued receiving some spiritual direction and continuing personal development. She will look into this.

Matt has a spiritual director and work mentor at no cost.

The meeting felt that ministerial supervision is important.

**Decision:** WCP should meet reasonable costs. Proposed: Lynn; seconded: Jonathan. All Agreed.

**ii) Renew Wellbeing Cafe.** Ruth G reported that they are working on the plans for this. It will start on 22 June and run on Tuesday mornings at the Community Centre Kents Hill for a trial period of six weeks. If all goes well it will start fully in September. Funding is from an anonymous donor. Church Without Walls are partnering the initiative. Ruth G had a good meeting with Community Mental Health Services.

**iii) CWW Baptisms at St Lawrence Church.** The Churches Conservation Trust, who look after the church, now have a policy to charge £100 for each use of the church; previously no charge. Discussions are ongoing to see if this can be reduced or waived. CWW may decide to use other WCP churches. They now have a Baptismal Book.

**iv) Week of Guided Prayer.** This will be repeated in June 2022. It was worthwhile in 2020 and we want to do it every two years. The guides/leaders receive a £20 book token; there are likely to be 10 guides. Anticipated budget: £300 max. Likely to start the week commencing 19 June 2022.

**v) Thy Kingdom Come – feedback.** Difficult to get feedback as there hasn't been opportunity to speak to people. There were a reasonable number of people for the 12 hours of prayer but CtK was empty for a couple of hours.

**7. Creation Care Group meeting 18<sup>th</sup> May.** There was good meeting with lots of energy. Focus is for activities during September. Minutes of the meeting are attached for detailed information.

**8. Environmental Policy.** This has been sent back to each church for comment.

## **9. Events.**

**i) WCP Picnic - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2021:** No details yet: time, venue etc. It will depend on the prevailing COVID restrictions. It was suggested that a poll be sent to each congregation to get an idea of likely attendance numbers. Suggested venues: Kents Hill park football fields or Broughton Fields. Both will need to be investigated as to whether we can use them.

**ii) Ride and Stride - 11<sup>th</sup> September 2021:** see minutes of the Creation Care group.

**iii) MK Mission Partnership – ‘As One’ national initiative – July or September:** This is being scoped out at the moment. It needs buy-in from MK Council and the churches. The aim is to encourage communities to get back together after the pandemic. MK Mission Partnership are sponsoring it.

## **10. Congregational Round-up:**

**CtK:** currently meet on line and physically. Stewards met last week. Also held a congregational meeting which is hoped will be the last on line. Will hold a litter pick on 13 June.

**Catholic Congregation:** Mass services have been held all year. There are now three Priests. Numbers are picking up now.

**CWW:** Mostly hold in person services. Forest Church is restarting this weekend. Planning for a four week pattern of services.

**All Saints:** Church opened on 2 May for services, but also held online. There was a quiz night last week. On 8 and 22 May there was neighbourhood litter picking. There will be an online art exhibition organised by Rosie to which all congregations will be invited to contribute and view.

**St Mary's:** very similar to All Saints. There's a Crafty Church for kids and Quiz Night.

**11. Diocese of Oxford: 10 Year Deanery Plan for MK:** This will start with a two year consultation. It will be a major investment and will 'have teeth'. It's not yet known how WCP churches will be affected.

**12. Mission Partnership News:** The Report following the Consultation on the Mission Partnership is due out in early June. Their funding may be at risk. There is a Partnership assembly on 23 June where details of the Report will be given.

## **13. AoB.**

**i) ‘Protect Duty’:** the government is undertaking a consultation on an initiative that volunteers who help at venues with a capacity of 100+ people should undertake training on how to spot terrorist activity. If implemented this will have an enormous impact on large churches.

**ii) Change to the way weddings are recorded:** new legislation came into effect on 4<sup>th</sup> May changing how marriages are registered. The church registers will no longer form the legal record, and have all now been closed. The duplicate registers and all blank certificates have been returned to the Register Office. From now on, marriages will be registered via a single sheet of paper called the Marriage Document (Anglican) or Marriage Schedule (Catholic/Free Church). These are returned within 21 days of the wedding to the Register Office, who will now produce all certificates, including replacement certificates. The church will keep a record of marriages, including a register for Church of England weddings, but this no longer has any legal importance, it is just for church records. Matt advised the meeting that all necessary work on this had been done, and we were ready to use the new system for our next wedding.

**iii) Ruth G mentioned that MK councillors** have discretion grants and that their local councillor has some extra. To be used for building communities after the pandemic.

**14. Date/Time of Next Meetings:** The next two meetings will be held on:

Wednesday 14 July at 7:30pm

Wednesday 15 September at 7:30pm

The meeting closed with the Grace.