

Walton Churches Partnership Council

Minutes 2nd February, 2022: 7.30pm on Zoom

The AGM will be in-person: please let your congregations know

Present: Ruth Gookey, Ann Beaton, Matt Trendall, Lynn Atkinson, Carolyn Sanderson, Jonathan Bailey, Stephen Potter, Susan Ringsell

Apologies: Ayokunnu Otunla, Sue Wilson, Ruth Maxey, Emma Tyler, Klaus Reidel

Opening Prayer: Ruth Gookey

1. Approval of minutes to last meeting (1st December, 2021) and Matters Arising from these minutes not covered by the Agenda

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

2. Review of CIO

Watling Valley have submitted their application and Mike Morris has sent us a copy. Ann suggested that the CIO group meet in the near future. She will send round some dates/times.

3. Safeguarding

i **Training:** It was proving difficult to get people to undertake the training on-line. C0 the basic course and C1 the foundation course have been on-line for some time. Matt said that there was new training on domestic abuse which we should all do. Ann would write to Rebecca Bulpitt-Norris, the Diocesan person responsible for safeguarding training, to see if it would be possible to have an in-person training session for the Partnership or to do it in a group environment being led by a qualified person.

ii. **Living in Love and Faith**

Gill Barrow-Jones was hoping to organise some Deanery training on this which would be ecumenical. Parishes are enthusiastic about having a Deanery wide conversation. Carolyn has sent Ann a link to the Diocese which invites you to register and gives an introductory video which is well worth watching.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith/living-love-and-faith-learning-hub>

4. Finance

Ann told the meeting that Emma's situation has changed and she will not be able to attend evening meetings anymore. Emma was very keen to remain as the WCP Treasurer and Ruth G. and Ann had told Emma that this would be fine. The meeting agreed to this. Emma has also decided to step down from the Guidance Group but she will continue to be the Treasurer for CWW.

Emma would give a report on the financial situation but her family had been ill with Covid so Ann felt it wasn't fair to ask for a report this for this meeting.

i **Financial position to date**

CWW have paid £12,925 of their share for 2021 which is a shortfall of £2,075. Matt said this was a good result for CWW. *(Emma is working on the end of year accounts.)*

Matt reported a surplus of £5K this year for All Saints after an amazing response from the congregation in the last quarter. St. Mary's had broken even; an excellent result all things considered and Christ the King budgeted for a deficit but ended up with surplus of £5k.

Steve said that monies had been received from the on-line congregation and Matt said we are also receiving money this way.

iii **Budget and shares for 2022;**

This was discussed at the last meeting.

5. **2022: The outlook for this year and beyond**

Ann said that as Ruth M's contract finishes in 2025 perhaps now is the time to begin planning for this. Steve said that this is overlapping with the CWW Reference Group and this is being explored at this time.

CWW are preparing a report for this Partnership. It was felt that CWW should begin this conversation but then bring their ideas to this meeting. Steve said that Ruth M and CWW are aware of this but they want to advance this to a point where others can be brought in. This is what they are currently doing.

Steve said that the idea of another minister being appointed is not expected to happen but there are resources for other types of appointments, for example a family or youth worker may be more appropriate. Would this be a good idea across the partnership as a whole. Ann said that this would impact on Matt and Ruth G and Matt said he had reservations about a full-time person working across the partnership. Once time is divided over 5 churches it ends up with 1 day a week and difficult decisions. Steve said this is just an example and Carolyn said this is a long-term process. Ann asked if we could have a full report from CWW as we need to be discussing it with a wider audience sooner rather than later. Carolyn and Steve will take this back to CWW.

6. **CWW Reference Group**

Steve said that John Robertson has stepped down now that the Mission Partnership has closed and Pauline Barnes has retired. Steve said they are thinking of how to restructure the reference group membership. There should be representation from the wider MK. Matt said that Alison Drury would be a good person to be on it if she was willing to accept this. Steve said he would contact her.

7. **Ministry**

i. **Lent plans:**

Ruth G said they were hoping to run partnership wide Lent groups. Matt asked if there was any suggestions for topics. Steve suggested HOPE and Matt suggested Tom Wright's book Surprised by Hope which had a six session study guide. The different aspects of hope sounded fabulous.

Ruth G suggested we do a mix of zoom and in-person groups.

ii **Week of Guided Prayer:**

Ruth M reported that she had been in contact with the Prayer Guides and is waiting to hear back from them all. She asks that the Partnership agree a budget of £300 (£200 in order to give a £20 voucher to each Prayer Guide for their time and then £100 to cover travel costs. There will be some income that may cover things. All agreed the budget figure of £300.

iii **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

Matt said he feels this should be at local community level. There were street parties being organised! All agreed that local level was best.

8. **Environmental Update**

Jonathan said he had been looking at the eco-church website. Shouldn't we be starting a self-assessment? Lynn said a group of people need to do this: it is a lot of work. Every building and situation is different and so will the answers be.

9. **Closure of Mission Partnership**

Matt reported that the Mission Partnership is being wound up. The reason is that the Partnership itself is being dissolved and hence no employees. What is left of the finances and reserves will hopefully provide a good redundancy payment for John and Ann Harries. Ruth G said that there was a meeting tomorrow for clergy and lay leaders to share how we felt this situation had been handled. It is also looking at how things will go forward. The ecumenical churches are not the only churches in MK.

The partnership is voluntary, so there are practical outcomes:

1. There will be a request for continued subs to MP - would we be happy to support this? The meeting said yes they are happy to support this, which is just over £1K, for a year to see how it works out.
2. Churches Together have to be consulted. Lynn said if we go our separate ways it can be really hard.
3. Do we also need an informal association too?

10. **Congregational Round Up**

Community Church - Christ the King

Ruth is looking at basics. Jesus, mission, God's Word and Commitment Sunday

A lot of people coming in, which is very positive.

Renew is every Tuesday and numbers are building.

CWW (Churches Without Walls)

Ruth M reported that CWW held their first dinner church last Sunday, relaxed teens and zoom kids going well.

St. Mary's, Wavendon

Jonathan reported that numbers are coming back to in person services. Still masking up etc.

Quiz night on zoom

Coffee mornings are starting again too.

All Saints, Milton Keynes Village

Carolyn reported that All Saints news was similar to St Mary's and they are starting coffee after services.

Roman Catholic Church

Klaus was not able to be at the meeting.

11. Denominational Representation (there are vacancies on the Anglican Deanery Synod and the URC Synod)

Matt said that there was only one Deanery Synod rep at the moment and we should have three. Ann said she would stand if that was ok : it was good to network with other churches. Jonathan said he would think about it too.

Ann asked about where the URC Synod met. We need a little more information from Ruth M. It may be significant travel.

12. Any Other Business

Ruth G. said that the Regional Baptist ministers are retiring. The whole regional team will be changing in the next couple of years.

13. Date/Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be our AGM: 6th April at 7.30pm in-person at St. Mary's Wavendon.

The meeting ended with the Grace.