

Minutes of the Christ Church Council Meeting 3 August 2017

Present: Judith Bishop, Revd Lore Chumbley (chair), Mark Elliott, Rowena Hall, Matthew Jones, Sarah Kerr, Virginia Knight, Janet Mahto, Jane Nicholson, Sharon Rawlings, Alex Soboslay (secretary), Brenda Wall, Malcolm Wall, Will Willans.

1. The meeting opened with a prayer. **Apologies** were received from Georgina Bowman and Penny Edwards.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting (6 June 2017) were accepted with some amendments as a true record (proposed Mark, seconded Jane).

3. Matters arising

(1) Buildings. (a) Paper towel dispensers and lower mirrors are still to be put up in the lavatories. Could we fix soap dispensers to the wall? Rowena mentioned that bins should not be pedal-operated in the accessible loo; Jude and Mark will continue looking for suitable bins.

(b) Repairs are being made to the ringers' door, for which Robin was thanked. A motion to approve this (proposed Brenda, seconded Jane) was passed unanimously. Alex will seek the proper permissions.

(2) Pastoral. "Where to Turn", our guide to sources of advice and practical help, is progressing.

(3) Sound system upgrade. This is still awaiting List B permission from the diocese. The work was provisionally rescheduled to 14 September.

4. Worship

(1) Reordering. Our licence for the trial reordering is valid until 31 March 2018. Following our open meeting on 2 July, Lore has been in touch with Sarah Williams at the DAC, who said we'll be legally okay if we have started the process for a faculty by March. Our architect, George Chedburn, is coming at 9:30 on Thursday 10 August to advise and discuss possible costings, which will help firm up what we're fundraising for. Furniture makers Treske will provide some ideas of how we might dispose a choir of up to 30 people. Anyone interested was invited to join the working group. Jude asked whether we're obliged to use Chedburn's. It was recognised that their advice would be useful, as would their understanding of the DAC, but we can certainly seek other perspectives such as Hugh Conway Morris's. Alex reminded the meeting that we need to allow time for the legal process of formal decisions by Council and Trustees.

(2) Fundraising. Malcolm gave a briefing on plans for fundraising. He emphasised the need to be clear on what we are raising money for and how much we're seeking, and what the overall vision and strategy are. We'll then need to tailor the case we present appropriately to each body we approach.

He suggested we'll need to demonstrate the commitment of our own congregation to the project, and Lore said she hoped it would bring us together over a shared vision, of which the work we have already done – on the lavatories and entrance as well as the east end – forms a part, so we can honestly say to potential donors that we have done Phase I with our own resources. The new bells too are a form of evangelism, so fit into this vision. Fundraising activities will go along with seeking grants and donations.

5. Finance

(1) Request from Deanery for contributions to Deanery costs and chaplaincy at Bath College. It was confirmed that we have contributed to the chaplaincy costs before. Jane (as one of our Deanery Synod reps) spoke of the value of being united in prayer and praise, and urged us to support the Deanery. It was agreed that chaplaincy was important, but questions were asked about why the role was not centrally funded like the chaplaincy at Bath University, and what the other roles we're being asked to fund actually do. Mark said the amounts requested were not huge, we are financially okay, and we could be generous now and ask more details later.

Sharon proposed and Janet seconded that we pay the amount requested for the chaplaincy at Bath College (and ask why it has to be funded this way). Passed (9 for, 1 abstention).

Mark proposed and Jane seconded that we pay the £75 requested for the Deanery roles, with a request that the Deanery then tell us more about what they do. Passed (9 for, 1 against).

The Treasurer to make the required payments.

(2) Alex asked whether we have paid a Diocesan Contribution for 2017. Have we been asked? If so, for how much?

6. Charities

We previously agreed to support a specific USPG project, and looked at details of 8 to choose from. We need to make clear that we cannot commit to regular giving or continuing support. After discussion, with that proviso, Matthew proposed and Rowena seconded that as a one-off we make the USPG Malawi Community Development project our Charity of the Month for November. Passed (8 for, 2 abstentions).

7. Ministry to young people

(In the course of the discussion of this item, Lore was called out of the meeting for a pastoral matter but returned later. Brenda and Malcolm were absent for the rest of the meeting.)

Council was asked to approve a draft "Welcome to children and young people" document and consider how the church might better serve children and young families.

Comments on the document included: it's a bit long for parents arriving with kids – should there be a pithier version? Is it clear that there are areas of the church we keep special? Mention pew bags for older children. Suggesting that children light candles may not be appropriate for all ages. Pity it's a piece of paper and not a welcoming person.

In general discussion, Mark suggested we need to improve the sense of welcome in our corporate attitude and behaviour but had no specifics to suggest. Lore mentioned that she has received comments from members of the congregation about the behaviour of children, and she and Mark made it clear that such comments would not be welcomed. It was noted that the choir vestry is not at present a particularly welcoming space for Junior Church and perhaps we could look at improving it. Mention was made of the annual diocesan children's festival.

Jane proposed and Rowena seconded that we approve the draft document, to be amended along the lines discussed. Passed (11 for, 1 against).

A request was made for people to support our ministry to children by helping occasionally with Junior Church. There are two age groups. Jane and Rowena volunteered to help. The question of DBS checks will be discussed with our Safeguarding Person.

We agreed to come back to thinking about a space for the children.

8. Bells

On Saturday 29 July Christ Church had agreed to host a group of bell ringers visiting Bath for a sponsored ring in aid of Strike Back Against Blood Cancer. In the event, 100 of them turned up. Will passed on thanks, particularly to Jane and Rosemary, who stayed to help well past the Open Morning.

Will asked about our set of 47 handbells, which are not in a playable state.

We don't know of any interest in handbell ringing at present, but when there's any interest we'll look at restoring them.

A prayer was said for one of our ringers, followed by one for a member of the congregation who has fallen ill.

9. Work plan

Council was asked to approve a schedule of topics for discussion for the rest of the year, and a set of forms to be filled in by the relevant people to set out information so it can be circulated to Council members in advance.

Matthew explained that this is simply to help structure discussions and make clear what is being asked; one sentence might be enough to provide a framework. Some things will be on the agenda for every meeting and other matters can be raised as required, the idea being that nothing's a surprise and everything comes around.

It was agreed to add "evangelism" (= outreach) twice a year, and to review the Deanery Mission Plan in September.

Matthew was thanked for his work on the forms. It was agreed to move the discussion of Cedar Tree from the January meeting, but otherwise the programme of topics and the forms were approved by acclamation.

10. Dates of future meetings

These were accepted as proposed: Tuesday 19 September, 14 November, 23 January 2018, 20 March. The church AGM is on Sunday 22 April 2018. The first meeting of the new Council will be Tuesday 22 May 2018.

11. Any other business

(1) Council approved the addition of Jonathan Stead to the list of people

authorised to administer the chalice. Lore will submit his name to the bishop.

(2) Judith agreed to e-mail the readings rota to interested parties.

(3) Mark will investigate whether Christ Church e-mail is misbehaving.

(4) Alex asked Council members to verify their contact information and consent to this being shared.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 21:47. **Next meeting** Tuesday 19 September 2017 in the Lower Mews at 7:30pm.