

Minutes from Council Meeting on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7:30pm on Zoom

Present

Lore Chumbley: Priest in Charge
Janet Mahto (Churchwarden)
Jane Nicholson (Churchwarden)
Georgina Bowman (Council Treasurer)
Jonathan Stead (Lay chair)
Brenda Wall (Deanery Synod rep) (from 8:20pm)
Jude Bishop (Secretary)
Rebekah Cunningham
Mark Elliott
Richard Gabe
Virginia Knight
Sharon Rawlings
Alex Soboslay
Pauline Swaby-Wallace (Deanery Synod rep)

The meeting started at 19.30 with a prayer of Pope Francis by the Priest in Charge.

1. Apologies

Zoe Bushell

2. Minutes

- Extraordinary meeting 8th January.
Corrections –
 - a. Item 2 under Rebekah, point 2 should read ‘The BANES Public Health lead...’
- Council meeting 12th January.
Corrections –
 - a. Item 3, Matters Arising
 - i. item 7, the altar cloth will reach 2/3 down to the floor...
 - ii. Item 10, last paragraph concerning Cedar Tree move to next item 4 Cedar Tree – Operational Guide
 - b. Item 9, under other donations:
 - i. Misspelling of Audrey Sheppard’s name corrected

The Council unanimously adopted both sets of minutes.

Action points

- **Item 3** –Rebekah confirmed that the Altar cloth will have the plain Canterbury Cross and it’s $\frac{3}{4}$ finished. Suggestion from Lore that we present this on our first return to church (yet to be decided)
- **Item 4** – Lore confirmed that the £743 from Cedar Tree funds has been paid into the bank against Christ Church Council funds but earmarked for Cedar Tree. Janet confirmed that she and Nick Wells were looking at the ‘House rules’.
- **Item 9** –
 - Donor Board. Lore confirmed that she has spoken to Ian Hay-Davison regarding our progress with this.

- Sharon, Virginia & Alex have had no time to get together to discuss the West end reorganisation
- Jude confirmed that there was £247.82 left after buying the outside plants and pots. Jane will look for a pedestal for around £250
- Brenda has done some research into a book to record bequests and donations. Huge choice in style and cost. We need to decide on a budget.
- Safeguarding will be covered in item 8 of this meeting

3. Matters Arising

- **Energy Contract**

Georgina reported that she had gone back to the energy agents. There is a company who profess to be able to supply 100% green energy but quite a lot more expensive. In agreement with David Bishop she recommend staying with British Gas which is 10% green and seems sensible with the state of our finances at the moment. Going totally green means a higher standing charge as well as a higher per KW/h charge.

Rebekah had thoughts about green energy. Bath magazine article called "Renewable energy green for less than brown". This is a Bath-based organisation called 'Pure Planet'. A green energy company with high ideals and offering a zero mark-up on the energy they supply. They supply 100% renewable energy and carbon off-set gas.

Georgina – most of what you read in the marketplace is targeted to domestic supply but Christ Church is not a domestic household. Tariffs are different as are the standing charges. CC is on a commercial rather than a domestic footing.

Rebekah has been talking to Nick Wells who is a member of the Trustees building sub-committee and they are doing an audit on CC greenness working with a CofE document looking at our general greenness, not just energy. Aims to decrease energy use and carbon emissions. Main headings are building, heating and lighting and off-set. Asks that the church completes an energy footprint tool annually and reports back.

There are some other Christian organisations running programmes that offer a framework for churches to work towards to improve their environmental friendliness. Organisation called A Rocha who have started 'Eco church'. Specific questionnaire leading to an award scheme (G/S/B) under 5 headings – worship and teaching, buildings, land use, community and global engagement, and life style of the congregation.

A collection of organisations including, CofE, Christian Aid and Eco-church, have put forward a climate emergency toolkit launched on 28th January using headings 'prepare', 'declare' and 'impact'. Another organisation, Churches together in Britain, suggests 'Climate Sunday' to be held between September 2020 and September 2021 with headings 'worship', 'commit' and 'speak up'. Rebekah recommends we engage with one of those programmes to improve our green credentials.

Mark's sentiment is we're all a little complacent and feels we owe it to our children to do something about it.

Lore suggested that Rebekah might like to be part of a group incl. Trustees and perhaps members of the congregation to look into this further. Come back with a structured plan about what we should be doing and how we go about to make changes.

Lore would love to run a season of creation over the summer, both liturgical and secular. It could even end up in Janet's garden picking apples.

- **Decluttering**

Alex hasn't had a chance to look at the items under discussion at the last meeting. He asked Lore if the inventory was back in the church. Lore confirmed that this is on her desk but she would bring it back into church. She also confirmed that she had checked which items are on the inventory but suggested that Alex should check this for himself. **ACTION**

- **Donor Board**

Maggie Willans did this for her job before she retired but she is still very happy to produce the one for us at the same price, £550. There is no significant difference between what was agreed a while ago. The board will be a little smaller but the wording will remain the same as agreed with the Trustees.

Alex wanted to flag correct information. The information in 2016 was 62 donors had donated £162K and this now says £136K. Lore will check which amount is correct. **ACTION**

- **Swift Box**

Alex has arranged with Robin to check the site that Lewis and allotted for the box. He'd like to check with the architect to agree the position.

Lore suggested this had already been done. If Robin is not sure then she will check with Lewis.

Virginia will check the email trail and forward anything she finds to Alex. **ACTION**

4. Trustees approved minutes for information only

5. Christ Church re-opening Services

Lore confirmed that the Diocese has said very little about this.

29TH March restrictions change from stay at home to minimal travel.

The following Sunday is Easter Day and Lore would like to encourage council to consider re-opening then.

Mark – amateur choirs could be considered leaders of worship and therefore could sing. However, he knows of no churches that have used that loophole. Professional choirs have continued singing but not with live congregations. We would certainly not be allowed to rehearse under the current circumstances as this would be illegal. Best estimate for the choir rehearsals to begin again would be the stage 3 lifting of restriction on 17th May. RSCM & CofE are working together to get the government to make a decision for amateur choirs. Stage 3 would bring us back to the where we were in September 2020 when we started singing last time.

Alex – other dioceses have included a single cantor and sometimes two which can work very effectively alongside any recorded music.

Georgina – disappointed about no live singing. She would like to see us back on Easter Sunday with as many members of the congregation as can manage to get there.

Pauline – in agreement. The church has been lost to so many people and she would like us to re-open on Easter Sunday.

Richard – restriction on numbers? Would the service need to be ticketed?

Mark – we can fit quite a few into the church and we'd need a lot of people before we would be breaking the 2m distancing. With the gallery available there shouldn't be a problem.

Lore – suggests we open for Easter Sunday. We'll need a cleaning party beforehand and do all the appropriate risk assessments. For Holy Week we stay on-line as the services are relatively easy to achieve and there are strictions to the duration of services in church. Also it would be a bit of an anti-climax coming in on Easter Sunday. All agreed that this was the right decision.

- **Update on streaming**

Lore – numbers over the last two months are very encouraging:

475 – Ash Wednesday

average of 162 watching each Sunday

average of 152 watching on a Thursday

Mark – pointed out that the numbers include anyone who clicked on the link or watched for a short while but reasonable guesses at actual numbers would suggest that we are getting at least as many who would normally come to church, 30-50. Good numbers.

Jonathan – interested in seeing what the numbers were. Thanks to Mark. People are watching throughout the week as well as Sundays.

Lore - Vote of thanks to Mark and the choir.

Alex – numbers, we're reaching more than our congregation Do we know if these are the same people?

Mark – investigating this. We have done paid advertising through FaceBook.

- **Private Prayer**

Lore – Wednesday afternoons 2-4pm have been successful with Janet and Jane being stalwarts in being available for the sessions. Numbers are small, 7 or 8.

Janet - A combination of CC members and outsiders.

Lore – should we continue even when the church re-opens?

Janet – try for a week or two to see what need there is.

Lore – Thursday mornings would go live as well. It would be lovely if we could have the church open on Wednesday and Thursday and Sunday.

Mark – important that the church is seen to be open for times other than Sunday mornings and might in fact attract a different kind of person.

- **Cedar Tree**

Lore – Assuming all goes well, 17th May or later for opening the cafe. Keep a watching brief.

- **Young people**

Jonathan – keeping his finger on the pulse of when students come back to Bath. Being ready to respond to any requests.

- **Outreach over the summer**

Lore - assuming that we're back over the Summer there are a number of things that we've done in the past. Windrush 20th June just before everything opens up. Should we do another celebration on-line?

Pauline – with so much uncertainty it should be on-line like last year

Mark – there will be a live service and stream

Lore – we've also done a couple of interactive lectures. Is this something we could do again, end of June beginning of July?

Georgina – open Saturdays? Cake & coffee? It would be a wonderful opportunity to showcase the changes in the East End.

Brenda – need to do some marketing

Lore – let's see how many people we can get interested.

Jonathan – to get people's interest you need to offer something, e.g. organ recital, exhibition, talk on history of the church.

Virginia – would be willing to give a talk on iconography of the church windows

6. **Financial report – Georgina**

Georgina - Report speaks largely for itself. Receipts for 2020 are reduced due to Covid and our expenditure was down.

2021 difficult to know what our income and expenditure will be. We need to find another source of income from external events.

Expenditure for Pastoral Care uncertain

Kara – expenses. Lore will manage these perhaps budget £1000. Diocese will pay her travelling expenses from home to the edge of Walcot

Mark – Have we been in touch with Toppings?

Jude – Enquire what they intend. Also touch base with other bookshops. Whatever we can get we need to be able to staff the events.

Jonathan – Thanks for all the previous effort in getting the events to church. We need to re-address this as this was part of the reason for re-ordering the East End. Need to be able to extend beyond the bookshops.

Jude – suggests she & Jonathan get together and sort out a marketing strategy. **ACTION**

- **Payment of Deanery subscription & Deanery Chaplaincy Support**

Additional paper asks for financial support for Bath college chaplaincy, £150 and Deanery enablers £40

Mark – in favour of supporting the Deanery.

All agreed **ACTION**

- **Payment of Parish share**

Georgina – suggests we keep the Diocesan contribution at its current level. Pay £1000 per month and £4000 in December

Alex – proposes we pay £15000p.a., seconded by Mark. All in favour.

Brenda would like us to see if there is anything from the Deanery that would benefit Christ Church.

7. West Wall re-organisation

- **Noticeboard suggestions**

Sharon, Virginia and Alex have not had a chance for a formal meeting

Lore – need to firm up what it's going to look like. Rebekah offered her ideas at the last meeting.

Rebekah – thoughts from the past and what her experience has been in previous places. Her paper describes it all with the following suggestions:

1. Who's who
2. Our different groups
3. Social/special events
4. Dedicated charities board
5. Prayer requests and perhaps other needs
6. Contact details/FaceBook/website, etc.
7. And perhaps space for the many musical events church members are involved in.

Lore suggested that Rebekah join with Sharon, Virginia & Alex.

- **Donor Board update**

Discussed in Matters Arising

8. Safeguarding update - Virginia,

Virginia has done all the safeguarding courses on-line. She has completed all the DBS checks and Lewis has handed over everything to her now. It would be a good idea to have a dedicated contact email address @christchurchbath.org as long as the Safeguarding Officer is the only person who has access to it. Mark will check this. Virginia knows of some people whose DBS check needs renewing and she thinks it right to get other people 'checked' especially if we're hoping to run external events we could offer this cover.

9. DMPG report – Brenda

Brenda is our representative on the newly formed Deanery Mission and Pastoral group

10. Deanery Synod report – Brenda

Brenda – 2 zoom meetings.

1. New sub-committee established by the new Area Dean, Stephen Girling who is based at the Abbey. He sees the way ahead shaping a culture of

Prayerfulness – prayer is a cornerstone

Hospitality – looking for Christ in the other, i.e. being open to everyone

Innovation – taking risks and learning for the future and building on what is fruitful, i.e. where God is working

Christ Church is already shaped like this

DMPG is a group of watchmen and watchwomen made up of representatives from 5 sectors of Bath (Christ Church is in the Central sector)

2. This was about communicating with different churches, e.g. Elim Pentecostal & others. A desire for unity and for us to get together with a strategy of mission. Again Brenda could relate to the fact that Christ Church is practicing this.

Brenda would like to invite other members of the DMPG to Christ Church

In addition, Brenda reported that the church in Bath is running at a deficit of £1.2m and is overpopulated with stipendiary clergy. There are plans afoot to address this.

11. AGM & Electoral Roll

Alex is compiling the AGM report.

The Electoral roll needs updating.

The list of names only will be published on the Christ Church website and will be pinned to the Noticeboard at the back of church. It will also be sent out by email and/or post to everyone on the list.

The AGM is planned for Sunday 25th April (Diocesan requests by 31st May).

There is a change in restrictions on 17th May where rules may change. There is no clear direction from the Diocese yet but the meeting may have to be held electronically.

If the meeting is on 25th April we may choose to have a very short service.

Lore will keep a watching brief on the date.

12. AOB

- Alex noticed from the Financial report that the amount raised through Standing orders had risen and felt a great sense of gratitude to all at Christ Church.
Georgina confirmed that some S/O have been raised and some people have started new S/O.
In all an increase of ~10%

13. Date & Time of next meeting

The AGM is on Sunday 25th April unless we are notified of a change by the Diocese.

Assuming this goes ahead the first council meeting of the new year will be **Tuesday 11th May** with call for papers two weeks before (w/c 26th April)

The meeting finished at 21:44 with the Grace.