

# Leeds Methodist Mission Council

## *Minutes of the meeting held at Oxford Place Centre*

**10th October 2016**

### **1 Welcome and attendance**

*Present:* The Revd Madeleine Andrews, The Revd Tim Boocock, The Revd Anne Brown (Chair), Miss Sarah Cave, Mr John Goacher, Deacon Jenny Jones, Mrs Rachel McCallam (Consultant to the Council), Mr Bernard Neville (Treasurer), Mr Trevor Parker (Conference and Property Manager), Mr Kenneth Tait (Secretary), The Revd Peter Whittaker

*Apologies:* None received.

*Absent:* Mr Tim Newman

### **2 Opening devotions**

Anne led the meeting in prayer.

### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting (16th June 2016)**

These were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **4 Matters arising from the minutes**

- (i) *Web site* It was agreed that the revised and updated web site was a big improvement. [5 (i)]
- (ii) It was reported that The Revd Dean Joe Cortis had, in a response to a letter from the secretary, resigned from the Council. [12 (vi)]
- (iii) *Batcliffe Drive inspection* It was reported that the District Property Secretary (Mr David Quick) had carried out an inspection, but not the District Manses Committee. It was agreed that such an inspection should be deferred until we knew who would replace Jenny as this might effect the letting of the manse. The tenant who had given notice at the time of our last meeting had vacated the property and a new tenant was in place. This tenancy would terminate on 31st May 2017 should the manse be required by the new deacon. If this was not the case then the tenant would be given the opportunity to extend the tenancy. [9 (iii)]

[BN]

*It was noted that property consents for the manse, it being a district property, must be obtained from the Strategy and Resources Committee acting on behalf of the Methodist Council. It was admitted that this procedure had, at times, been (innocently) ignored.*

- (iv) *Licenses and leases* [5 (iv)]
  - (a) There had been difficulties in getting licenses and leases prepared during the preceding 12 months because of various things outside our control. Licences had been signed by the secretary and treasurer about a year ago, but these had not been approved by TMCP in Manchester. Bernard had visited TMCP and discussed the matter with Laura Carnall, TMCP's senior legal officer. Since then new model licences and leases had been posted on TMCP's web site, but these had been in portable document format (PDF)

and hence could not be adapted to our needs. This has since changed. Further delays in producing licences and leases by tenants and other users of the building have occurred because of holidays and sickness at our solicitor (Blacks). Licences and leases for all current tenants and users will be produced shortly.

[TP,BN]

- (b) It was noted that until leases are signed a tenant can vacate the premises without notice. This has already happened.
- (c) It was noted that leases should be issued in cases where the user has exclusive use of the space, and licenses where the use is non-exclusive. Our letting agent feels that if this is followed in all cases then the letting of a small amount of space for a relatively small annual sum can require a lease when, in their opinion, a licence is sufficient. The question of a *tenancy at will* was mentioned, but deemed a grey area and not considered further.
- (d) It was agreed that we must persist until these matters are resolved and completed.
- (v) *Electrical inspection* This was still not complete, but the contractors would be contacted to asked to carry out the work as soon as possible. [5 (iii)]
- (vi) *Other actions* All but three had been completed leaving:
  - (a) Identification of a successor to the present treasurer [BN, TB, SC]
  - (b) Documentation of outstanding repairs and engagement of contractors which is now continuous.
  - (c) Fixing a date for the summer meeting [KT]

## 5 Finance

Bernard tabled a statement of *Income and Expenditure* and a *Balance Sheet* for the year ending 31st August 2016 (Annex A) and clarified a number of matters.

- (i) A deficit had been anticipated resulting from vacant space. If tenants are not found to occupy such space then the deficit for 2016/17 will be greater.
- (ii) The income and expenditure relating to conferencing and to the café were shown separately for 2016/17 rather than the consolidated figures for earlier years, preventing comparisons. However, it was reported that conferencing had brought in around £36,000 some increase of £5,000 on the previous year. The café had over the eight months it had been operating as present had made a small surplus of some £150 (£2,400 had been anticipated for a full year) . As it had been agreed that the café continue until 28th February 2016 in its present mode (Minute 8(ii) 16th June 2016) then a twelve-month analysis will be deferred until then.

Although the present situation of the café is good, it needs monitoring as margins are tight. A number of groups meet in the café. They are not charged, but requested to make purchases. Such uses of the café should be encouraged.

- (iii) The meeting requested that month by month information (both actual and projected) on income and expenditure be made available.
- (iv) £9000 of the grant money from the District Advance Fund had been towards the cost of replacing chairs in the conference and worship area and other rooms.

- (v) The increase in Manse expenses resulted from work required at the changeover of tenants.
- (vi) The situation regarding the payment for energy (gas and electricity) is unclear. The drop in these costs since 2015/16 results from estimated reading for a substantial period being corrected. (Minute 6 (i) (c) 7th October 2015). The new supplier (Extra Energy) has not submitted a bill for twelve months. This has been allowed for in the documents tabled.  
[BN]
- (vii) The architect had submitted two invoices: one for the survey work by Benchmark resulting in details plans of the property, and the other an interim payment for architect's expenses.
- (viii) The meeting agreed that the financial situation is precarious, but it was noted that there is money on deposit which can be drawn on without restriction.

## 6 Architect's Report

Despite a request to provide a progress report, nothing had been received. It was reported that a second interim payment had been requested, and it was suggested that this be not paid until a report was received.

[KT]

## 7 Property

A concern was raised at the recent meeting of the Oxford Place Church Council (2nd October 2016) about noticeboards.

- (i) It was felt that the temporary notice board mounted on the south-east corner of the building announcing that there were rooms and stores to let could be taken by the public to indicate that the building was no longer active as a church. This would be looked into.  
[TP]
- (ii) The noticeboard to the right of the main entrance bears out-of-date information. Tim and Jenny had agreed new wording, but nothing had been done. The time of worship on the free-standing board on the grassed area is also wrong. Action would be taken to rectify this.

[TB, JJ, TP]

## 8 Conference and Property Report

Trevor presented a table of room hire charges for 2017 (Annex B) some of which were marginally greater than the current charges.

## 9 Invitations Group

- (i) A profile of the Leeds Methodist Mission had been produced and accepted by the Diaconate. Profiles of available deacons had been received and would be circulated to all members of the Invitations Group so that they could indicate to Peter (in the first instance) which of the available deacons they deemed suitable for the appointment to Leeds Methodist Mission.

[PW, AB]

- (ii) It was noted that during the process of compiling the profile the Warden and Deputy Warden of the Diaconate had visited Oxford Place Centre. Jenny and Peter had shown them round the building and the centre of Leeds.

## 10 Staffing

- (i) The meeting received a short report from the Staff Consultation group (Annex C). The report highlighted three areas for action from the report from Trevor discussed at the group's recent meeting.
  - (a) Provision of more detailed statistics showing the increase of conferencing over at least 18 months.
  - (b) Clear outlines of daily, weekly and monthly tasks including approximate time taken to achieve each one. In particular, timings for setting up rooms in different configurations would be very helpful.
  - (c) Clarification of how the new role would actually improve things if the new responsibilities were to be absorbed by current staff.
- (ii) In addition it was reported that the Finance Officer (Bookkeeper) had given one month's notice of her intention to leave the position.
- (iii) In the discussion that followed:
  - (a) It was suggested that the bookkeeper's responsibilities were taken on by the Conference and Property Manager allowing the nine hours to be used in a different way.
  - (b) It was agreed that before any substantive decisions could be taken more information – as described in (i) (a) & (b) above – was required. Such quantification would enable informed decisions to be taken.

[TP]
  - (c) It was suggested that as a consequence of offering space for conferencing and other meetings a meeter-and-greeter was required. The present service offered by a small number of members of Oxford Place Church was intermittent because of a lack of sufficient volunteers. If the Mission only offered long-term tenancies then the situation would be different.
- (iv) It was agreed that the month's notice offered by the present bookkeeper be accepted with thanks, and that a strategy for handling this work, possibly involving the Leeds South and West Circuit office be investigated.

[TP, BN, TB]

## 11 Children's Centre

The Children's Centre will cease to operate when it closes on 30th March 2017. A celebratory event for the work of the centre will be held on the following day (31st March), and the staff will be employed until the middle of April 2017.

## 12 Safeguarding

- (i) The report produced by Laura Gallery the District Safeguarding Officer was accepted (Annex D).
- (ii) Deacon Jenny Jones was confirmed as the Oxford Place Safeguarding Representative. (Page 9 of Annex D)

- (iii) The current Safeguarding Policy for Oxford Place (Annex E) was renewed by the Council. (Page 10 of Annex D)
- (iv) The Council was reminded that the Safeguarding Policy should be reviewed annually. This item will be placed on the agenda for each Autumn meeting.
- (v) The licences and lease require tenants and other users to agree to the Oxford Place Safeguarding Policy.
- (vi) The staff of the Children's Centre are due for training (required every five years<sup>1</sup>) but in view of the approaching closure (Item 11 above) it was agreed that Jenny should update the staff rather than require them to attend a full training programme.
- (vii) Concern was expressed as to the recording of key holders and ensuring that they were fully aware of their responsibilities<sup>2</sup>. In particular it was noted that:
  - (a) A register of current key holders for the Oxford Place Centre including Chambers and Basement must be maintained.
  - (b) When a key holder ceases to be employed by a tenant or ceases to have responsibility within an organisation or group then the key(s) must be taken from the person by the Conference and Property Manager and issued to a new key holder (if that is required).
  - (c) Key holders should not hand their key(s) to anyone else unless that person is also a registered key holder.
  - (d) Every key holder whether always or only occasionally in possession of key(s) must have signed Safeguarding Form D (Appendix 10 to Annex D) in order to be registered.

[TP]

- (viii) The meeting was presented with copies of a form from the Charity Commission headed *Trustee declaration*. This form has been updated and now requires declaration to be signed which relate to safeguarding. It was agreed that the role of this declaration be investigated before requiring members of the council to complete one.

[TP,]]

### 13 Review of the Mission

In the light of discussions outside this meeting at District Policy Committee and elsewhere a Review of the present situation of the Leeds Methodist Mission project and its future has been instituted under the leadership of Mr Michael Noble. The meeting was informed that Mr Noble would present his findings to the upcoming District Policy Committee.

### 14 Announcement

Rachel Lampard (Vice President of Conference, and Team Leader of Joint Public Issues Team) will speak at a meeting on 4th March 2017 organised by JPIT at a Leeds venue to be announced.

### 15 Future Meetings

- Winter meeting: 7th February 2017 at 7.30pm

1 It should be noted that this period is reduced to FOUR years from 1st September 2017. (Page 11 of Annex D)  
2 The term 'key' or 'key(s)' includes key-codes.

- A date for the summer meeting will be agreed through an on-line poll. It had been suggested that we find a date in the fortnight beginning 12th June 2017, but with the Methodist Conference being earlier than usual it was suggested the window be widened to include earlier dates in June.

[KT]

## 16 Close

Anne closed the meeting with prayer.

### Actions

Who	Action	Minute	Target date
BN	Inspection of Batcliffe Drive manse	4(iii)	As soon as a deacon has been appointed
BN,TP	All licences and leases to be signed	4(iv)	As soon as practical
TP	Arrange for final stage of electrical inspection	4(v)	As soon as possible
BN,TB,SC	Identify a successor to BN as treasurer	5 (vi) (a)	
KT	Obtain progress report from architect	6	
TP	Investigate changes to the 'Rooms and Stores' to let notice	7(i)	As soon as possible
TP, JJ, TB	Update the noticeboard to the right of the main entrance	7(ii)	As soon as possible
PW,AB	Circulate deacons' profile to Invitations Group and receive responses	9(i)	As soon as possible
TP	Provide quantification of tasks and of use of rooms	10 (iii) (b) and related items	As soon as possible
TP, BN, TB	Accept notice from bookkeeper and look at alternative arrangements	10 (iv)	As soon as possible
TP	Establish and maintain register of key holders etc.	12 (vii)	By next meeting
			<i>Continued on next page</i>

<b>Who</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Target date</b>
TP, JJ	Investigate role of Trustee declaration form from Charity Commission	12 (viii)	
KT	Arrange date of Summer 2017 meeting	15	As soon as possible