

# Leeds Methodist Mission Council

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

**2pm, 8th May 2017**

### **1 Welcome and attendance**

*Present:* The Revd Madeleine Andrews, The Revd Tim Boocock, The Revd Anne Brown (Chair), Mr John Goacher, Mr Bernard Neville (Treasurer), Mr Trevor Parker (Conference and Property Manager) Mr Kenneth Tait (Secretary), The Revd Peter Whittaker

*By invitation:* Mr David Quick (District Property Secretary)

*Apologies were received from:* Miss Sarah Cave, Deacon Jenny Jones

### **2 Opening devotions**

Anne read the Gospel for Sunday 7th May 2017 (John 10: 1-10) and then led the meeting in prayer.

### **3 Purpose of the meeting**

The meeting had been called to discuss two reports:

- (i) Fire Risk Assessment Report for the Oxford Place centre (dated 30th March 2017, received 1st May 2017) (Annex A)
- (ii) Management Asbestos Survey Report for the Oxford Place Centre (survey carried out on 3rd, 4th and 7th April 2017)

This is a very long report (161 pages). The Council limited its discussion to pages 15-23 where the recommended actions are set out. (Annex B)

### **4 Fire Risk Assessment Report**

The report had been commissioned by the Council (Item 7(ii) Minutes 7th February 2017) in the light of their being little or no evidence of certain fire safety features.

- (i) *Actions taken or planned in response to the report*
  - (a) Since receiving the report certain actions had been taken. These are listed in the document (Annex C) provided by Trevor along with the area of concern to which they apply. The document also lists a number of actions planned for the near future. All of these actions are zero-cost in that they deal with training staff, and carrying out practice fire drills, and other procedures.

It was reported that a satisfactory fire drill practice had been carried out during Sunday morning worship on 7th May 2017. However, the alarm bell was insufficiently loud.

It was made clear that all actions such as fire drills must be entered in the Fire Precautions Log Book (the 'Log').

- (b) It was reported that the fire doors which had been fastened open at the time of the inspection were all in the Chambers. All means of keeping doors open had been removed. Fire extinguishers had been returned to their correct locations and appropriately mounted.

- (c) The on-going Electrical Inspection which had been carried out at weekends would be completed by the weekend of 20th/21st May 2017.
- (d) *Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)* It was agreed that Alan Firth of the Grove Methodist Church Horsforth be approached as a qualified person to undertake this testing.

[DQ, TP]

Users who bring equipment on to the premises will be responsible for testing their own equipment.

- (e) A monthly house-keeping check had been instituted which among other things would ensure correct waste management.
- (f) The Taybell alarms company had been contacted with a view to their fitting smoke detectors where needed.
- (g) Although the report indicated that gas and heating installations were 'not maintained', the Council was assured that all boilers were tested and a safety record issued on 7th March 2017 and all additional work completed by 5th April 2017
- (h) A draft Evacuation Plan had been drawn up which would be modified in the light of a trial run before being presented to the Council at its next meeting.

[TP]

(ii) *Discussion of other areas of concern*

- (a) The meeting was advised that considering the probable future of the building (Item 5(ii) Minutes 3rd April 2017) there was no need to fit systems that closed fire doors when the alarm sounded and that it was sufficient to ensure that fire doors closed properly and were kept closed. Nor was it necessary to have intumescent strips<sup>1</sup> added to fire doors. All missing or ineffective door closers should be repaired/replaced.
- (b) In the event of a fire door being found fastened open, the person(s) responsible should be told/reminded that this was wrong and a note made in the Log that the advice had been given.
- (c) *The 3rd floor of the Chambers* The travel distance to a safe place is too long and is of major concern. This can be remedied by ensuring that doors opening on to the staircase are kept closed from the suites on ground, 1st and 2nd floors are kept closed. At present the tenants of these suites keep the outer doors open to make a foyer and only the inner doors closed. Both sets of doors need to be closed to ensure that the staircase is protected. An alternative would be to increase the fire resistance of the inner doors.
- (d) *Partition walls* It was difficult to assess the fire resistance of existing partition walls many of which have been relocated over the past 40 years.
- (e) In DQ's judgement the existing fire doors provided 30mins resistance. Modern doors have a coloured marking indicating whether they provide 20, 30 or 60 minutes resistance.
- (f) Signs indicating routes to safe places ('fire exit') signs are to be installed.

[TP]

(iii) *Related matters*

1 These strips inserted in the edge of the door expand when heated so preventing the passage of smoke.

- (a) It was agreed that a fire evacuation procedure be provided to those in charge of sessional meetings. This document would be specific to each room and all participants in the meeting should sign the document, and the document be brought out as the building was evacuated to allow everyone in the building to be accounted for.
- (b) It was noted that groups with special requirements would need extra support and it was suggested that Emma Stuart (a member of the Oxford Place Church congregation) be contacted as she had relevant expertise and experience.
- (c) The meeting was assured that it was not necessary to have any work done in response to the report inspected by the inspector who had carried out the assessment. It was only necessary that the legal requirements were met.
- (d) Trevor was asked to provide monthly reports on these matters.

## 5 Asbestos Survey

- (i) The damaged ceiling boards in the store in the basement of Oxford Chambers require repair and encapsulation by a licensed asbestos removal company, monitored for further damage, and labelled. [TP]
- (ii) Other items of lesser concern are labelled MANAGE in the survey. Advice need to be obtained from the inspector as to what this means. [TP]
- (iii) It was noted that the survey would be valuable when the building was reconfigured.
- (iv) The monthly reports (4 (iii) (d) ) would include these matters.

## 6 Finance

It was recognised that there were costs involved in the some of the work needing to be carried out as a result of the two surveys and the meeting was assured that steps were being taken to determine these costs and how they would be met.

[TP, BN]

## 7 Tenancy agreements

The Council were informed that the Wesley Hotel Group were expecting to begin clearing the building at the end of July 2018 by which time all tenants would have vacated the building. A discussion followed as to the effect of this date on tenants and their tenancy agreements.

- (i) It was important that the Mission maximised its income over the next 15 months.
- (ii) Short term agreement could be offered to new tenants or to extend the agreements of existing tenants.
- (iii) The current tenants of the 3rd floor in the Chambers (who had occupied the space for many years) had expressed a desire to move into the Gallery where they were prepared to carry out work to make the space suitable for their business.  
Their current agreement terminates at the end of April 2018.

As this is close to the time when the building will be vacated, it was judged that a move to the Gallery involving them in costs was unreasonable, and that they should be asked to remain where they are with the fire protection brought up to standard (see 4 (ii) (c) above).

## 8 Other matters

- (i) The Building Development Group would be created in the next week or so and begin taking on the responsibilities for the building. (Item 5(v)(a) Minutes 3rd April 2017).
- (ii) The Leeds Methodist Mission Charity (Reg. No: 1138731) will continue with the current trustees replaced by the members of the Mission Development Group. (Item 5(v)(a) Minutes 3rd April 2017).
- (iii) The meeting was informed that at its Church Council and general meeting held on 7th May 2017, the Oxford Place Methodist Church had agreed to close. The proposed date was 8th October 2017.

## 9 Future Meetings

Summer meeting: 5th June 2017 at 7.30pm

## 10 Close

Anne closed the meeting with prayer.

## Actions

Who	Action	Minute	Target date
DQ, TP	Contact Alan Firth	4(i)(d)	Soon as possible
TP	Evacuation plan	4(i)(h)	By the next meeting
TP	Fire exit signs	4(ii)(f)	Soon as possible
TP	Encapsulation of damage ceiling (basement of Chambers)	5(i)	Soon as practical
TP	Find out what MANAGE means	5(ii)	Soon as possible
TP, BN	Costings etc	6	By next meeting