



Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP)
**Minutes of the Council meeting held on
Thursday, 1 September 2011 at 7.45 pm
at Christ Church, Stantonbury**

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1. Opening Prayer

Revd Andy Jowitt reflected that in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus showed how choices governed future outcomes. He prayed that decisions tonight would enable us to deal with the uncertainties and changes ahead.

3. Bridgebuilder + Christmas and Easter Cracked

Rachel Foster of Bridgebuilder Trust described the packages designed to explain the true meaning of the religious festivals to Year 6 school pupils in a 1½ hour fast-moving multi-media fun presentation in conjunction with local churches. All materials and resources are supplied by Bridgebuilder and the churches provide the personnel to run the event (say 3 presenters plus a small local team to help with welcome and possibly catering arrangements – for mince pies). To progress this idea for this Christmas a decision would be needed before the November SEP Trustees' meeting.

Bob Cross proposed that Church Councils should be consulted and decisions relayed as soon as possible to the Chairman. Revd Peter Ballantine suggested that if the outcome was favourable the Partnership should go ahead with the idea, and this was agreed. Not all churches could be made available and ideally the school should be within walking distance; shared venues/schools may be the answer for SEP.

4. Advance Notification of Any Other Business

Week of Accompanied Prayer
Inaugural meeting of the Methodist/URC Area

5. PCC Meeting

There was no PCC business to be discussed.

6. Minutes of Meeting on 9 June 2011 for Approval

Prue Errington reported that her attendance had not been recorded in the minutes. Subject to this correction the minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters Arising

Youth Worker for the Partnership

Revd Chris Howden said that no response had been received from the potential youth worker, despite several reminders. It must be concluded that the possible contract will not proceed.

VentureFX

Mike Morris reported that this project will commence in January 2012 following the appointment of a leader this autumn. Whilst SEP had agreed to support the venture the financial contribution had not been set. Bob Cross suggested a figure of £500 pa. It was agreed that the overall financial situation (Item 10) should be considered first.

Sharing Agreement for New Bradwell, St James

Revd Chris Collinge said that the Anglican and Methodist solicitors involved were making very slow progress. She had e-mailed Archdeacon Karen to apprise her of the situation. Mike Morris and Revd Andy Jowitt will try to discuss the situation with Bishop John Pritchard when he visits Milton Keynes in November/December.

New Bradwell Community Centre

The MK Community Foundation had awarded £1500 to the Management Committee to enable them to meet the costs of fees for setting up a new lease. Revd Chris Collinge has arranged for herself and Revd Andy Jowitt to hold a conference call on 2 September with Caroline Dyer at the Diocesan Office to seek advice on steps to be taken.

SEP Constitution

Revd Andy Jowitt reported that although the modified modal constitution had been adopted at the Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) in 2010, the Anglican Registrar John Rees had raised objections relating to separation of SEP and PCC interests and ways of resolving possible conflicts of interest. He has drawn up a Memorandum of Understanding to be appended to the LEP Constitution, which would involve the creation of PCC members who were not SEP Trustees. The idea is being trialled in a Reading LEP. Revd Andy Jowitt also noted that although Deanery Synod representatives are ex-officio PCC members, they have not to date been invited to Trustees' meetings.

Bob Cross said that he very much regretted what appeared to be a retrograde step undoing all that had been achieved in the working together in Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership over the last 15 years. He would be writing to John Rees and Bishop John to express his (individual) disappointment.

It was agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding, together with notes from a meeting with Revd Roger Paul (UK Anglican Ecumenical Advisor) would be circulated to all Trustees and that the SEP Constitution would be an Agenda Item at the November 2011 meeting.

Action: Secretary, Team Leader

Membership of the SEP Charity

The Secretary reported that as complete as possible list of all Charity Members had now been compiled. The extent of information varied from congregation to congregation. Next year it is hoped to use a standardised format for collecting membership data, probably based on an Excel file. Revd Andy Jowitt said that although it is a legal requirement to maintain a list of the names and addresses of all charity members, the SEP Constitution only permits the names of members to be released to enquirers.

Collection, Co-ordination and Publicity for Partnership Events

Revd Chris Howden again urged members to let her and/or Paul Brookman have advance notice of all social, artistic or musical events --- "Think Website"

8. Lay Representation on Standing Committee

The Chairman explained that at the ACM the election of Danny Waite as a Lay Representative was invalid as he is not a SEP Trustee. Mary Kennedy volunteered for the vacancy and it was proposed by Maggie Prisk and seconded by Gill Grant that she be elected. Agreed nem. con.

9. Ministerial Arrangements

Mike Morris said that the Lay Deployment Group had met several times and joint meetings with the Ministerial Team have been arranged for 5 October and 3 November 2011. A report on progress will be issued thereafter.

10. Finance

The accounts to date (attached) were presented by Maggie Prisk. These show that the deficit by the year end is likely to be about £20k, almost twice that of last year. This is unsustainable and either contributions to the Mission Partnership must be reduced or the contributions from churches increased. Ways in which income might be improved were debated. Revd Andy Jowitt suggested appointment of "Stewardship Advisers" to talk to individual congregations. Bob Cross considered that this should be a Ministerial role, but Revd Peter Ballantine said that this might be perceived as self-interest. Gill Grant believed that a Lay Trustee appointment would be more appropriate and Revd Chris Collinge said that two people would be better. Maggie Prisk suggested that each congregation should be challenged to increase giving and Mike Morris said that the Methodist concept of a Gift Day might help.

It was agreed that a discussion on financial matters should be an Agenda Item in the November Trustees meeting, to include contribution to VentureFX, costs of the NETWORK Magazine and the appointment of Canvassers.

11. CitizensMK

Revd Brian Howden reported that the Living Wage action day on 15 June at Tesco's stores had been successful and the CEO of the organisation had agreed to discuss concerns with organisation representatives.

Now SEP representatives are needed to attend the Strategy meetings of CitizensMK. Mary Kennedy volunteered and was duly co-opted.

The special Training Day for SEP members is confirmed to be 22 October 2011 at Christ Church. Members wishing to attend should notify Brian before 1 October. **Action: Trustees**

12. Stantonbury.net Website and NETWORK Magazine

At the ACM a resolution had been passed permitting Minutes of Trustees' Meetings to be published on the Stantonbury.net website although with the names of those attending and giving apologies deleted. This resolution is invalid as the proposer was not an elected SEP Trustee. Some trustees were in favour of deleting all names from the minutes i.e. within the body of the text. This would, however, entail re-writing the minutes -- unless blanks were simply substituted for names. It was proposed by Revd Andy Jowitt and seconded by Gill Grant that Minutes be published on the web without showing the names of Attendees and those submitting an apology. Put to the vote there were 10 in favour, 2 against and 5 abstentions. Motion carried.

The second issue of NETWORK Magazine is now available. This features especially the work of New Bradwell, St James' Church and it is hoped to deliver to as many houses as possible in the New Bradwell area as well as to be available for congregation members for promotional purposes. Continuing the special feature concept, the next (Winter) issue would focus on Stantonbury, Christ Church, and redevelopment of the campus area. However, costs for the two issues to date amount to £1905 and income has been little more than £20 in donations per issue. It is not possible to continue losses at this rate and additional funding must be secured ahead of a final decision to publish to be made at the November Trustees' meeting.

13. Reports

Team Leader

In presenting his written report (attached) Revd Andy Jowitt drew attention to the Methodist 'Celebration of Song' service at Downs Barn on 20 October and the Baptism and Confirmation service at Furzton on 20 November 2011. Also the three Advent talks by Bishop John Pritchard.

Chairman of Trustees

Mike Morris had prepared a comprehensive report (attached). He also took the opportunity to remind members of the need to collect statistics on church attendances during the month of October. Further information will be circulated by the Secretary.

Action: Secretary

Creative Arts

No Partnership-wide events had been organised during the Summer holidays, but Revd Chris Howden invited suggestions and ideas for next year to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen's succession.

Evangelism Enabler

Revd Andy Jowitt highlighted selected items of his written report (attached), in particular the initiative for visiting the new housing in the SEP area. Ideally pairs of volunteers from congregations to introduce the Partnership and to distribute the Welcome Pack and the latest edition of NETWORK magazine. Ideas on how the Partnership might contribute to the 'More Than Gold' opportunity at the time of the 2012 Olympic Games would be very welcome.

Children and Families

Revd Chris Collinge said that she had responded to the survey on Safeguarding on behalf of SEP. Over the summer three Holiday Clubs had been run within the Partnership. The Glow in

the Dark party will be held on the evening of Monday 31 October at New Bradwell. It is hoped to be able to appoint a volunteer to take over maintenance of the CRB Register.

14. Any Other Business

Proposals for holding another Week of Accompanied Prayer in 2012 had been circulated to Trustees with a request for support for the venture. Only favourable responses had been received, but not all church buildings could be made available for use by pilgrims. It was agreed that the initiative should be supported.

The need for collection of church attendance statistics during the month of October, already mentioned by the Chairman, was noted.

There will be an Open Meeting of the Deanery Synod on 28 September 2011

15. News From the Churches

Stonework repairs at Great Linford, St Andrew's church are now in progress

There will be a presentation on the Jewish feast of Sukkot at Bradwell Church on 2 October 2011 at 6.00 pm.

16. Dates of Future Meetings

24 November 2011 at New Bradwell, St James }
23 February 2012 at Great Linford, St Andrew's } all meetings at 7.30 for 7.45 pm

9 April 2012 at Stantonbury, Christ Church }

17. Forward Date

The next Standing Committee Meeting will be on Wednesday 12 October 2011 at 4.30 pm at Downs Barn, Cross & Stable.

18. Closing Prayer

Was led by Mike Morris, giving thanks for guidance for the various concerns and recognising that changes must be God's will, not our own desires.