

The Methodist Church in Wales
Synod Policy committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Newtown Methodist church
Saturday 18 June 2011

Present: Rev Stephen Wigley Chair
Margaret Chapman, Richard Gillion, Brian Ham, Jack Healey, David Hutton,
Graham Illingworth, Andrew Mathieson, Verity Phillips, Sandra Powell,
Trevor Pratt, Chris Pritchard, Gordon Sollis, Ann Thomas, Roy Watson
Ann Cashmore Minute Secretary

Opening devotions were led by Rev Stephen Wigley.

13/11 Apologies: John Atkinson, Pauline Barnett, Pam Cram, Richard Dobson, David Easton, Alan Jenkins, Peter Holwell, Martin Lougher, Richard Sharples, Alf Williams, Linda Woollacott

14/11 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 26 February 2011 including previously distributed amendments were agreed as true and correct and signed by the Chair.

15/11 Extra Agenda Item

Safeguarding Report

16/11 Matters arising

23/10 Visit of Zambian choir

The choir had funds for their flight but needed to raise money here to cover travel expenses which were estimated to be between £4,000 and £6,000. Hospitality would be provided locally and the circuits would bear local meal costs. Income from ticket sales and possibly musical charities could help, but the meeting suggested that funding would be split between Vale of Glamorgan Circuit, the Synod and the Charitable Trust. The meeting **AGREED** to meet 1/3 of the travel costs to a max. of £2k and that in future application should be made to the SPC before such a visit to enable a suitable budget and funding.

06/11 Lay Authorisations to preside at Holy Communion

Verity Phillips reported that Mid Glamorgan Mission Circuit was not proceeding with Eileen Gardiner and Wendy Watts. Roy Watson, Gwent Hills and Vales Circuit, clarified that the paperwork for Eric Smith had been submitted.

17/11 Establishing Synod Policy

Funding for Higher Degrees – previously distributed paper

Funding under CDiM would commence on 1 September 2011.

After some discussion, Point 5 was clarified to read:

‘The maximum amount of funding will be capped at £2k per annum. Should the fee levels rise above this amount, the policy will be reviewed’

APPROVED

18/11 Implementing Synod Policy

(i) Finance

(a) Treasurer’s Review

Brian Ham reported that spending on CDiM was down this year: the new office costs had been covered: Synod Advance Fund was paying £4,000 grant back to the University of

Glamorgan. Standard Form of Accounts must be forwarded to the Synod Treasurer and there were three sets outstanding:

Llanelli & Carmarthen

Swansea & Gower

Wrexham

Stephen thanked Brian on his 'retirement' as Synod Treasurer for his work in both South Wales District and Wales Synod and his cheerful and efficient method of working. He had kept track of a variety of funds and had brought them together successfully, gaining trust and friendship for his help to Circuits. A presentation had been made to Brian at the Synod Leadership Team and Stephen wished him well for the future. Brian responded simply by saying he had enjoyed being Treasurer and had appreciated the collegiality within the Synod.

(b) Youth Work Action Group – previously distributed paper

Verity highlighted the question at the end of Point 3. She felt that the website could be simplified. After some discussion the meeting **AGREED** that Youth requirements be ascertained and changes could be made for a modest budget and a meeting would take place between Jack Healey, Ian Thomas and the web designer to determine the best way forward.

Point 8 – expenses. These could be claimed from the Synod for 2 meetings a year; other meetings would be electronic. Events for workers would be individually considered.

AGREED

Youth events would be held in parallel to Synod on 10 September 2011. A new, one-project worker had been approved by Connexion to work in Cardiff.

(c) Appointment of Assistant Chair – previously distributed paper

Graham Illingworth summarised the paper and gave details of the interview panel. He clarified that the appointment was initially for 1 year with the possibility of an extension for a further 2 years. The present model of Assistant Synod Chairs will be reviewed soon and the long term way forward agreed. That agreed way forward would need to be presented to Conference 2013 for approval

AGREED

Stephen tabled the advertisement for the post.

(d) Plans for feedback of Ministerial sabbaticals

Graham reported that in order to widen the area of benefit of sabbaticals to the Synod, Circuits and churches, presbyters should prepare a 500 word brief on their return for presentation to SPC. SPC would consider how the outcomes could be more widely used within Wales Synod. The preparation of the brief would be added to the Sabbatical Policy for sabbaticals commencing September 2011.

AGREED

GI chaired the meeting for this item of business

(e) Chair's Nomination Committee

Trevor Pratt outlined the time-scale for the re-invitation of Synod Chair from September 2013. A Convenor would be appointed who would ascertain the Chair's preference and report to October SPC. The Synod Invitation Committee would comprise of

9 members with 3 named substitutes, i.e. Convenor, Assistant Synod Secretary, 1 representative from Synod Cymru, 1 other member of SLT, and 5 representatives from the Synod, not necessarily SPC members. Trevor suggested that nominations be spread between North Wales, mid Wales, the West, South and South East.

Graham reminded SPC of the need for gender/age balance and geographical spread. After some discussion, the meeting decided that Superintendents would be asked to propose two names from their Circuit, one lay and one ordained and the SLT would make a selection. Both names to be with GI by NOT LATER THAN 20.08.11

AGREED

Stephen thanked Graham and the meeting for their support.

19/11 Safeguarding Report

Peter Ackerly and Susan McIvor, Synod representatives on the Safeguarding Panel, joined the meeting and presented the annual report. They took the meeting briefly through the report stressing the need for training every 3 years and also CRB checks every 3 years. Reference was made to two web sites with information members may find helpful:

www.nacsas.org.uk

www.diochi.org.uk

A representative was needed for the Vulnerable Adults group. Stephen expressed his appreciation of Peter and Susan's involvement and willingness to attend meetings and represent Wales. Making Synod aware of the work being carried out was important and we should be kept informed of current legislation. Stephen also expressed his thanks to Rev John Barnett for his input to the North group on behalf of Synod Cymru.

20/11 Synod Policy continued

(ii) Property

Jack reported that the Schemes and Grants committee was busy.

(iii) Manses Committee

A meeting had been held in May and inspections were continuing. They should be completed by the next meeting. Some reports were outstanding but all the Quinquennial inspections were to hand.

21/11 SPC business

LEP- Barry, Vale of Glamorgan Circuit

Gordon Sollis requested approval in principal for the formation of an LEP between Windsor Road URC and Porthkerry Road Methodist Church, Barry. A new constitution was in preparation and property issues were to be clarified. **APPROVED**

Memorials feedback

In the absence of the person requesting this item is deferred to the October meeting

ACTION: Pam Cram

22/11 Chair's business

Stationing

SDW indicated the stationing process was on-going and very busy.

23/11 Matters to and from related bodies

(i) Methodist Council

GI had presented feedback to the recent Superintendents/Church Stewards/SLT meeting

(ii) Conference

SDW drew attention to a number of key reports

The General Secretary's Report, The Big Society and Poverty & Inequalities Reports, The Theology of Pastoral Care, Safeguarding Past Review, Resourcing Mission Office and Singing the Faith. All these reports - plus all other reports to Conference – were available on the Methodist Church web site.

(iii) Synod Leadership Team

The annual consultation held in May with Circuit Stewards and Superintendents was briefly discussed and the meeting **AGREED** to hold one consultation and 3 stationing briefings on a geographical basis, North, South East and South West. Circuit Stewards and Superintendents to attend stationing briefings which would be opened up to

interested people. It was considered that this arrangement would save time and travel expenses.

(iv) Diary Dates 2011/12

Stephen tabled a diary for the forthcoming year. Newtown was confirmed as the venue for Synod and SPC meetings. The Triennial meeting of the Covenanting Churches in Wales was added to the diary as 13 October 2012 at the Great Hall of Aberystwyth University.

(v) Y Cyngor

Trevor reported on the recent Y Cyngor meeting, where he was appointed as Y Llwydd (Chair) for a further year, that Synod Cymru reps. reported on their forthcoming special meeting of Synod, 13.07.11, to discuss important matters relating to how Synod Cymru would operate in the future. Rev Patrick Slattery has been re-invited to August 2013

(vi) Wales Training Network

Support was requested for Circuit links to the Network and a name was requested from the Network as a point of contact for consultation.

24/11 Ministry Issues

Plans for a phased introduction of the Connexionally agreed Ministerial Development Review for all presbyters and deacons were in hand.

25/11 Ecumenical Matters

Triennial Gathering of the Covenanting Churches in Wales 13 October 2012, Aberystwyth University

Representatives from the Covenanting Churches in Wales were being invited and the Methodist Church had been allocated 50 places. SDW suggested this equated to both the Policy Committees of Wales and Cymru Synods. It was proposed Wales SPC (or nominated Circuit substitute) attend **AGREED**

Methodist/URC Liaison Committee

Synod representatives to the committee were Gordon Sollis, Philip Poyner and Linda Woollacott. The latest meeting had been cancelled due to illness of the URC representative. The constitution for the new LEP was in preparation and the group involved was continuing. The meeting **AGREED** that the group should continue.

The question of plans for Methodist/Presbyterian Church of Wales LEP was raised. An attempt was being made by Cytûn to try to get a National sponsoring body in place. It was possibly that the Methodist/URC liaison could be used as a starting point for local co-operation between URC and PCW. The model constitution should also apply. Conversations about the proposed LEP at the Lightship were on-going.

26/11 Mission and Social Issues

SACRE religious education in schools

Roy reported that a National Conference would be held on 3 November 2011 in Penarth.

Christian Aid

The National Committee for Wales reported that £104M had been raised. The new chair of Christian Aid in Wales was the Bishop of Swansea & Brecon and he had given permission for the use of Brecon Cathedral for joint services.

Other

Stephen had attended the Senedd service for the opening of the new session of the Welsh Assembly Government.

2/11 Any Other Business

Blaenrhondda

Verity tabled the following report:

“Blaenrhondda received a quinquennial report which required significant work to be done within twelve months of the report. If the work was not done by April 2011, the building would be declared unsafe to use.

The Church Council originally wished to rebuild on the existing site, but found that their plans would be expensive, and that the process could take longer than they first realised. The society left its building after a month of celebratory services in April, having agreed on a venue where they might continue to meet; a local community centre.

In making this arrangement, it was hoped that this would provide the time needed to consider what to do for the best for the future.

Some thought has been given to demolishing the building in the short term, in order to make it safe, before it was realised that this, too, would incur significant expense, and require following a consents process.

The church is currently ‘in limbo’. The Circuit Stewards and Presbyteral ministers are unaware of any further progress being made at the present time. The minister with pastoral charge will leave in August. The Superintendent is due to retire in 2012. The ‘Circuit Stewards and Presbyters Meeting’ requests synod’s consent for the Blaenrhondda Methodist Church to meet on alternative premises, and officially close the Blaenrhondda chapel building for worship or community use while it is unsafe.

It is hoped that a further request will be made at a later date concerning its sale, demolition, repair, replacement (or any other alternative solution to their dilemma).”

PERMISSION was **GRANTED** and good wishes sent from Synod to the members.

Berriew

Andrew Mathieson requested Synod’s permission for Berriew to cease public worship and be removed from the Circuit plan. The Trustees had voted in favour of this move and recognised that the consents process would need to be gone through to obtain permission to sell.

PERMISSION GRANTED

Synod Reports

The SLT proposed that the Annual Synod Report Book published in November. The reports should refer to the year ended August but also give an outline of future plans. A more appropriate title might be “Review and Development”. The report booklet would be circulated under separate mailing from Synod notices. A short review report would be given at annual Synod in September.

AGREED

28/11 Date of Next Meeting

SPC next meets on Saturday 15 October 2011 at Newtown Methodist Church, 10am for 10.30am.

Future meeting dates:

18th February 2012

16th June 2012