

**Minutes of Whitehaven Circuit Meeting on Wednesday 14 March 2018  
at 7.30pm at St Bees**

**Present** (22): Grace Adamson, Philip Adamson, David Andrews, Cyril Atkinson, Alistair Bell, Katie Bell, Gillian Bounds, Alan Coyles, David Davies, Jackie Davies, Margaret Hargreaves, Wendy Kilworth-Mason (chair), Andy Lennox, Doug McDevitte, Linda McDevitte, Katrina MacEwan, Jean Millie, Dorothy Nevinson, John Pryde, Nan Pryde, Mandy Taylor, Michael Watts

**Apologies** (10): Alec Bounds, Ian Coates, Barbara Coyles, Gwynneth Everett, Allison Hanshaw, Karen James, Sandra McAdam, Gill Mitchell, Maureen Pyke, Mary Snape

1. **Opening devotions** including remembering Ron Head, former circuit property steward, were led by the Chair.
2. **Constitution of the meeting:** the list circulated with the attendance sheet was confirmed and it was agreed that circuit safeguarding officers become members of the meeting in their own right.
3. **Minutes** of the meeting of 6 December 2017 were agreed with the addition in minute 7 b after first sentence: It was brought to the meeting's attention that one church in the circuit is paying £23,000 towards circuit funds. This is one third of the circuit share and the equivalent of £500 per capita per year.
4. **Matters arising** minute 7 c iii It was clarified that the Staff and Stewards meeting, in line with the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church (CPD) consists of the circuit stewards and ministers who include supernumerary ministers who are able to attend.
5. **Future of circuits** Following discussions at previous meetings, there was a report of a meeting with Keswick and Cockermouth circuit leadership team. There was considerable discussion which included concern at specifying at this stage the location of the superintendent.  
It was resolved to give permission for formal talks between the leadership teams of the Whitehaven circuit and the Keswick and Cockermouth circuit to enable the merger of the two circuits in September 2019 with a Superintendent based in Cockermouth. These talks are further mandated to make proposals to future circuit meetings about how the mission of the church will be enabled, how the circuit will be structured and managed and how staffing needs will be addressed including any stationing proposals for 2019.  
The Invitation Committee was asked to look at both scenarios (merging circuits and staying as we are). The June circuit meeting would need to make a definite decision if a merger is to occur in September 2019. Church councils were asked to provide input for any profiles.
6. **Resources**
  - a. **Finance**
    - i. **2016-17 final accounts** Mandy Taylor reported that these have been independent examined with no issues raised except for the form in which they are to be submitted.

- ii. **2018-19 budget** Some share offers have been received but currently we are around 7k short which would require around an 18% increase from all churches except Egremont. Rather than offers Mandy will circulate a formula based on attendance (25%) membership (25%) and net income (50%) and it was agreed to apply it in 2018-19 (from August 2018 shares), limiting any change to 5% a year. Mandy will circulate details to church councils.
  - iii. **Reserves policy** Last year's policy was agreed.
- b. **Property**
  - i. **Moresby Parks** David Davies reported on progress with the sale process which will be dependent on TMCP approval and on Moresby parish raising the money. The meeting authorised Alistair Bell, David Davies and Gillian Bounds (any two of the three) to execute documents under section 333 of the Charities Act 2011 (previously section 82 of the Charities Act 1993).
  - ii. **Manse** Ian Coates had reported that a new fence panel has been fitted and shrubs and hedges trimmed. The fence and shed will be painted. Uneven paving slabs will be levelled, moss removed and gutters checked again.
  - iii. **Quinquennial contract** Ian Coates had reminded the meeting that this is the final year of the five year contract with Day Cummins for our quinquennial reports with Cleator Moor and the manse being reported on and therefore circuit stewards will investigate a new contract with them or another company.
  - iv. **Sintons** David Andrews would attend the meeting with Sintons at Tebay on 12 April at 1030am on behalf of the circuit.
  - v. **Property returns** Part or all of the following returns are outstanding: Hensingham, Kirkland (as far as it applies), Moresby Parks and St Bees (all return), Frizington (finance) and Cleator Moor (sign off) and churches are asked to complete them.
- c. **People**
  - i. **Sabbatical** arrangements 15 March-14 June: in her absence Wendy has authorised Nan Pryde to chair circuit meetings and committees and the circuit stewards church councils. Link people have been asked to liaise with Nan or Ian Parker if in need of a minister or the circuit stewards.
  - ii. **Children and families worker** The annual report from Katrina MacEwan was received with thanks for the work she is doing and her contract was extended by a further year until August 2019. Staff and stewards were asked to review her salary.
  - iii. **Annual renewal of authorisations to preside** for Alan Moore and David Andrews (third year) have been agreed by the District Policy Group and were endorsed by this meeting.
  - iv. **Property steward** vacancy
  - v. **Circuit steward** We need a new steward for September to replace Alistair Bell.

- d. **Administration** General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): new procedures will need to be agreed by the circuit meeting and church councils when connexional guidance is received. Immediately we should start the process by auditing what records are kept of members and other contacts.

## 7. Mission

- a. **Moving mountains** was briefly reported on and was felt to have been successful and helpful, with contacts made with a number of people not currently linked with churches. All those involved were thanked for their work. We would like to see follow up meetings in each mission community (already organised in Whitehaven).
- b. **Public issues** report on universal credit from Alec Bounds was received and he was asked to write to our MP.
- c. **Safeguarding** Jackie Davies brought an amended circuit policy. Points raised (eg on risk assessment) would be clarified with the district safeguarding officer and it would be looked at again in June together with the draft church policy before it is recommended to church councils. Leadership training is now being extended to positions of responsibility in churches eg pastoral secretaries.
- d. **Mission priorities** St Bees reported that they have completed their priorities.
- e. **Easter offering** It was noted that envelopes will be distributed on 25 March and offerings dedicated in each church on 6 May or another convenient date before being brought to the June meeting.

## 8. Worship

- a. **Leaders of worship and preachers' meeting** There had been no meeting because there were too few members available.
- b. **Circuit memorial service** St Bees have offered to host this in November and this was agreed.

## 9. Networking

- a. **Synod** 28 April – we will be hosting Representative Synod at Cleator Moor. Please let Gillian Bounds know if you can help with serving tea at 3.00pm. All members are welcome to observe synod.
- b. **Circuit fundraising** Afternoon tea at Cleator Moor on 26 May at 2.00pm (note change of date).

- 10. **Dates of meetings** 20 June at Frizington (Katrina agreed to take minutes), 19 September at Cleator Moor and 19 December at the Meeting Place all at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 10.02pm

da 15/03/18

**Please send items and reports for the June meeting to David Andrews by 20 May  
Copy date for *Link* is 6 June**