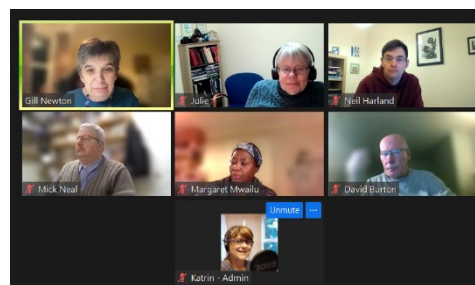


Sheffield Methodist District Leading Team Meeting on Thursday 9 March 2023 at 7.00 pm via ZOOM

Present

Gill Newton (GN); Julie Coates (JC); Mick Neal (MN);
Dave Burton (DB); Margaret Mwailu (MM); Neil Harland (NH)
(non-voting) Katrin Hackett (KH)



Opening Business

1. **Opening worship** : based on Luke 15 – parable of the lost/prodigal son

2. **Apologies for absence**

McCauley Key; Jon Bellfield

3. **Minutes of the DLT on 4 January 2022**

These have been circulated and accepted as an accurate record.

4. **Matters arising from the minutes:**

Presidency Support Group: – the group met again this morning. A supernumerary minister is retiring into the Trinity Circuit in September and has agreed to offer his support. A paper requesting the funding for this, approximately 1/3 stipend, will be going to the Methodist Council. The cost of any additional expenses are still to be clarified with the Revd Jonathan Hustler. This is to ensure that Trinity Circuit are not out of pocket with this arrangement.

5. **Decisions made between meetings for ratification**

Cost of Living Crisis – Lay Employee support. NH & KH moved out into a breakout space while this was discussed. The recommendation of £1000 pro rata was agreed for each lay employee. GN will notify the staff about this. **There will be a discussion at the next DLT to discuss the model for annual staff salary increases.**

Items For Discussion and Decision

6. **Mission Strategy Update**

The report has been circulated. Not many new things are being added at the moment, there will be a time when all current actions are completed so the challenge will then be around how we keep moving forward.

MM commented that Sharing Stories is important, but sometimes we don't know how to begin.

This was modelled at last year's Spring Synod at Cliff College, but not everyone attends it.

DB raised a concern about the Manse requirement to meet EPC level C, which may involve significant costs – eg installing solar panels, underfloor heating. It was acknowledged that in some cases it may be better to sell and buy a more suitable property as the costs involved in upgrading existing properties is prohibitive. This also presents challenges in finding a suitable manse in the right place.

7. **District Staff Team Away Day reflections**

The report has been circulated. There was a comment about the difficulty in accessing it due to the language used and in understanding the purpose of the report. The intention was to start to think about how the District Staff can help and support circuits and churches in an uncertain future. The narrative we use and the stories we tell are important. We need to be realistic but also positive. There are different situations in different churches. How do we protect the green shoots and what is the capacity of those in leadership to do what is important? No immediate answers to this but the reflections from this meeting will be shared back to the staff team.

8. Mission Enabler – Job Description

The paper has been circulated. There were no questions. DLT approved both resolutions. **GN will issue a formal letter confirming this.**

9. Treasurer's Report

The report has been circulated. There were no questions.

Approval of Annual Accounts. These have been circulated. **These were approved**, pending the change of surname for McCauley from Allcock to Key. Thanks were expressed to NH for his work on this.

10. Grant Overview

St Andrews, Psalter Lane – Spire repair: District funding would enable additional funding to be sought which might not be available otherwise. Sheffield Circuit currently has a moratorium on awarding grants, but any grant approved by the district will be conditional on the circuit also offering support. **DLT agreed to support this with a grant equal to that offered by the Circuit, up to £12,000.**

Sprotborough Families Worker: NH would appreciate some support on deciding if the additional funding should be released. MN confirmed that the Circuit finance team have similar concerns, and would not be supporting the project financially beyond the initial 3 years. JC offered to be on the small group that will give this further consideration. MN suggested that Richard Dearden might also be a good person to ask to join the small group. NH will liaise with them.

DLT asked to have sight of all grant evaluations. NH will circulate these as they come in and ask for comments within the week.

11. Connexional assessment – Connexional response

The letter and response have been circulated. How should the DLT respond? Are we the only District raising this as an issue? We are not the only ones who are using reserves and the District Advance Fund to avoid passing the rise onto Circuits. GN has asked how many Districts are having an increased assessment, but has not had a response. NH reported that all Districts are having an increase of between 1 & 9%. MN suggested a response to Chair of Methodist Council, Secretary of Conference, and Director of Finance and Resources expressing our disappointment about the lack of discussion. **GN will draft a letter**

12. Lay Authorisations

a) Sean Worsley (Doncaster) – New: Papers have been circulated. This recommendation was unanimously approved

b) Ed Archer-Siddall (Rotherham & DV) – Renewal: this was approved, pending the change to correct Gill's name on the paperwork.

KH to send the papers on after appending GN signature.

13. Election of Methodist Council representative at Synod

An email was sent to Presbyters asking for expressions of interest. Applications have come from Romeo Pedro; Sean Adair; Jonathan Haigh, Lisa Quarmby; John Simms. There will be a vote at Synod, probably electronically (as for Conference representatives)

14. DLT Membership – proposal

A paper has been circulated and it was noted that KH attends the meeting as a staff member to take the minutes, not as a voting member. Some discussion about the paper ensued and it was felt that further conversation with the Superintendent ministers, to obtain their reflections would be helpful. **GN will have the conversation with the Superintendents to gain a wider view and will circulate a revised proposal to DLT members.**

Other matters

15. Methodist Council Report

The Worship Book is being produced electronically again; CFB are going to tighten up on background checks for signatures which might be an issue for churches.

16. AOB

Would it be helpful to have the meeting with new members in person rather than on Zoom? It was proposed that the September meeting should be in person.

JC will be on sabbatical for the next two meetings, we wish her well with that.

MN will be on sabbatical from April and will then be sitting down. Thanks were expressed for his words of wisdom and the ways in which he has always engaged with the work of this team.

17. Closing worship

GN closed with prayer at 21:03

Dates for DLT meetings 2022/23

Thursday 11 May – on Zoom

Tuesday 4 July