

Sheffield Methodist District Leading Team

Meeting on Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 7.00 pm via ZOOM

Present

Julie Coates (JC) (Acting Chair); Neil Harland (NH); Margaret Mwailu (MM); McCauley Key (MK); David Burton (DB); Sean Adair (SA); Erica Dunmow (ED)

(non-voting) Katrin Hackett;

Opening Business

1. Opening worship

JC lead the meeting with a short testimony sharing her experience on writing a prayer for Remembrance Day

2. Apologies for absence

Gill Newton (Presidential duties); Gill Daly; Claire Rawlinson; Romeo Pedro; John Simms; Jon Bellfield

3. Minutes of the DLT on 7 September

These had been circulated and were accepted as an accurate record with one change.

Item 13 paragraph 2, final sentence to read: Gill Daly will be representing Gill Newton at the Stationing Matching groups.

4. Matters arising from the minutes.

Jon Bellfield has sent apologies to this meeting, but Julie will still endeavour to meet with him to clarify his role.

5. Decisions made between meetings for recording.

- Loan to Freedom Project
- Lease of new photocopier – this is pending a signature. KH will double-check on this.

Items For Discussion and Decision

6. Treasurer's Report

The report has been circulated.

Not much has changed, papers are with the auditors now, but not expecting much change. The main change is that it looks the amount of money into the Advance Fund will be about £200,000 more than anticipated.

SA asked about a session for the Circuit Treasurers, NH will action this. The Council Tax rebate for the Doncaster flat was more than anticipated due to being back-dated to when tax was first applied.

7. Mission Strategy Update.

The report has been circulated.

This is an update rather than a list of all the activities currently taking place.

Sharing Stories: The podcast is in early stages, still looking for representatives from 3 circuits.

Transforming Mission: Grant application was rejected, due to size of organisation, but this is not expected to stop Warm Spaces from happening.

NPNP funding: It is hoped that the earlier funding application will be sufficient for future grants. A new guide has been written to talk through application process which NH will share when they are out. A suggested team to act in oversight for these projects has been proposed. A suggestion was made that a pioneer might be useful to be added to the list, but there are a couple who are already very involved in these types of projects. NH will be exploring more with Carla Quenet around setting up a District group to support localised projects.

Properties fit for mission: There are a number of different approaches being explored across the circuits around building management. Solar Panel grants are available in Derbyshire, could this be explored further by offering grants to enable churches to install them. DB – Dronfield produces 3 times the amount of energy used, battery storage could enable them to be completely independent. SA asked about the cost of the survey, (currently about £200); also a question about the long-term viability of some of the churches.

Simplifying Procedures: There is still a question about the value of the Annual Property Checklist. Should churches be encouraged to comply? A reminder will be sent out, but there will be no follow-up from the District. The Statistics for Mission collection is now open for church numbers.

NH will be speaking to Circuit Stewards and Superintendents

8. Grant Applications

- Transforming Mission Grant– Trinity Circuit - £20,000

The application has been received. Anne Taylor joined the meeting to help answer any questions. DB and JC declared an interest in this application due to their roles in the Circuit.

The grant would be £10,000 for year 1; and £5,000 for the next two. It was also noted that it is difficult to predict salary increases. Financing is hoped to be mainly through the increased lettings, but additional grants will also be sought if needed. The list of responsibility is both community and building work, hence being a full-time role. This is an operational role, rather than a developmental one.

MK asked about the support network/management team as it will take time to embed the role, rather than let them “get on with it”. The steering group are prepared for this. This is a multi-site post, time will not be allocated evenly, but as the need arises.

Anne left the meeting; JC & DB moved to a break-out room.

This is a unique post at the moment, with the multi-site aspect. The Foundry (in Sheffield) is exploring this with some of the smaller church buildings. The role sits within the context of the Circuit-wide vision. The full-time role would be more attractive. This is an exciting opportunity, it links in with the District Mission plan and the Circuit Operations Manager. If this works, this could be a good example.

DLT agreed to support this application. DB & JC rejoined the meeting and were informed of this decision 😊 NH will formally inform the circuit.

- Edale Chapel loan – Peak Circuit £20,000

The request has been received. The loan will mean the building work could continue whilst the builders are on site. NH had asked if this is sufficient, £30,000 would make the project more secure.

Kate Burnett joined the meeting to answer any questions and give an overview of the work. There is a lot of local support which is very encouraging. Edale has seen a real uptake in diverse visitors since Covid, both individuals and groups, the chapel can be a useful space for those who are not so active. Further delay on building work would lead to increased costs (around 30%).

Given the variety of interests, it is hoped that local people will support this with their time, to have the building open for groups due to being there already, being involved in the garden etc.

Loan will be refunded mainly via grants, although some may come from charged use of the building. Kate is relatively confident in this over the next few months. JC wished her every success in this.

There is a plan for exhibitions in the space, the stories of the valley and history of Methodism is part of this. The Displays budget is in phase 3 of the project, there is already a lot of material gathered for this. The National Trust held the Be Kinder exhibition a few years ago, the donation box raised £700. Any future exhibitions would be on a similar basis, rather than charging for entry.

JC thanked Kate for her time and testimony on this! Kate left the meeting.

DLT policy is that grants would 10%, be up to £20,000, although this can be amended if appropriate. It was suggested that DLT might be prepared to write-off part of the loan if funding isn't forthcoming. Loans have been given on top of grants in the past (eg Greenhill), although this

is a different situation. There is a question about the sustainability of this, should grants not be forthcoming. DLT can set the terms of the loan

The proposal is that DLT give a loan of £30,000 to be repaid within 4 years. *This can be reviewed at a later date.*

This was agreed. NH will convey this to Kate emphasising our support of the project and offering support in accessing grants. They could also apply for additional grants towards staffing in the future.

Given the time, permission was given to extent the expected finishing time of the meeting.

9. District Appointments

Confidential: District Comms officer – working hours

This paper has been circulated.

This was agreed. NH will communicate to this with Sam

Other Vacancies

There are a number of vacancies which need to be filled. Names are sought for the following:

Lay Stationing Rep

Synod Secretary – can be lay or ordained. JC is willing to be the Presbyteral Synod Secretary

Names to be brought by the January meeting, details will be on the Vacancies page of the District website. Please promote these

Lay Representative to 2024 Conference – the current reps are all female and over a certain age

😊 Grace Perkins might be interested, but needs to be a member.

Children & Families Worker Rep to DLT

Young Person Rep to DLT

Vic Loveday is working on these.

Chair's Nomination Panel

Confidential: GN's appointment comes to an end in August 2025. MM has had an initial conversation with GN who has indicated that she will not be seeking re-invitation. The current panel have been informed, but is too small to meet Standing Orders (9 plus 3 substitutes). MM has contacted the names in the directory, is waiting to hear if Barry Parker will still be part of this, the suggestion is that he be thanked and stood down., Mick Neal feels too removed to be part of the panel. The rest of the names are happy to continue.

MM has had conversations with the following who are willing to serve:

- Deacon Annabel Terry (Sheffield)
- Heather Thomas (the Peak)
- Janet Hampshire (Rotherham & Dearne Valley)
- Rev Julie Coates (Trinity)
- Rev Sean Adair (Derbyshire North East)

Still need names for the substitutes, ideally from Doncaster and Barnsley

DLT agree that the above names be appointed.

There needs to be a person specification for the new Chair, MM is seeking advice from Jonathan Hustler (Secretary of the Conference) on procedure and timing on this, which may need an extra DLT meeting. MM will keep DLT informed on this.

This may also include a conversation around District re-organisation. Current thinking is that we would resist this.

(MK left the meeting at 9:15).

The meeting prayed for GN and those who will be involved in the process.

The Foundry – Trustee

Mark North was the Methodist Rep, he has now stood down. NH has sat in as District Observer. They are looking for Trustee appointed and also District appointed. The Foundry will be approaching Richard

Dearden; NH is willing, but this might impact on his role as advisor. Meetings are during the day, although Zoom can be an option. What are the gaps that they are looking to fill?

Other Matters

10. 2024/5 potential President/Vice President visit

The letter has been circulated. There were no ideas at the present that they could be invited to. JC will bring this to the District Staff meeting.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Circuits are getting the training done. The message that it is more than dry learning is beginning to filter through. One church has done most of the training as part of the Sunday morning worship, which has been well received.

Some enquiries are coming from circuits which are around traditional activities which might not meet the current legislation – which is interesting.

12. Methodist Council Report

This has been shared and was received by the members of the meeting.

13. AOB

Dates for DLT meetings 2023/24

- Wednesday 3 January 2024
- Thursday 7 March
- Tuesday 8 May
- Tuesday 9 July

Synod / District Gatherings

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| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 20 April 2024 | Sheffield |
| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 14 September 2024 | Trinity |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 5 April 2025 | Sheffield |
| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 13 September 2025 | Doncaster |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 18 April 2026 | Sheffield |

The meeting closed with prayer at 21:37