

Sheffield Methodist District Leading Team

Meeting on Tuesday 9 July at 7.00 pm via ZOOM

Present

Julie Coates (JC) (Acting Chair); Gill Newton (GN) John Simms (JS); Grace Leigh (GL); Margaret Mwailu (MM); John Henry (JH), Jon Bellfield (JB) (left meeting at 20:00); Dave Burton (DB); Neil Harland (NH) Erica Dunmow; Aimee Roddam joined at 20:10 (non-voting) Katrin Hackett (KH); Vic Loveday (VL)

Opening Business

1. Opening worship

JC opened the meeting with a prayer, and welcomed Gill back from her Presidential Year

2. Apologies for absence

Gill Daly; Claire Rawlinson (sabbatical); Romeo Pedro (Sabbatical); Sean Adair (Sabbatical)

3. Minutes of the DLT on 8 May

These had been circulated and were accepted as an accurate record. JB asked if the Employee Support program was just for Lay Employees or a connexional one to be available nationally. It is just for District Lay Employees at the moment, but if it is seen as a good thing, it could be mentioned to the Connexional Wellbeing Officer as something to consider. Westfield is a Sheffield based company, but there may be similar packages elsewhere.

4. Matters arising

- District Vacancies
Lay Stationing Rep – We have has some interest in this role, but not yet had an expression of interest from these.
Pioneer Rep – Ongoing – **NH will follow-up** DB wondered if Metal Methodist could be seen as a pioneering role, NH to explore further, keeping the lay/ordained balance.
- President's visit – initial plans have been sent in to the Conference office. **KH will follow up on the form to be filled in.**

5. Decisions made between meetings for recording

- There were no decisions to be recorded

Items For Discussion and Decision

6. Treasurers Report

The report has been circulated. .There is a list of grants outstanding. NH is following these up, which may have now lapsed as no longer relevant. The Centralising of Safeguarding Officers may have an impact on District Assessments, although not clear yet on details. The Stewardship Generosity report has a detailed survey of charitable giving It asks some interesting questions. NH is interested in hearing others perspective on this. ED comment that where there is evidence on what the church is achieving, the community is more likely to be generous, as happened at Darnall. Sometimes there needs to be some specific teaching/preaching on money. Asking for something specific (MM gave example of a brick!) GN – we need to be more bold and courageous on this, our faith should touch our pockets. VL shared being in a church where there were cards explaining what it costs for the church to run, and where the money comes from. Have a simple means to give – a QR code or card machines as well as cash and standing orders.

Where to go next – NH will explore sharing with treasurers, but also be aware of opportunities to raise this issue.

DB – Conference have agreed that the contributions to Pensions Reserve will be repaid with interest!

7. Grant Overview

A report has been circulated.

- Persian Ministry progress – Arman is technically employed by the District, but Arman works over a wider area. This was a 5 year piece of work, we are 3 years in. GN – the update makes very encouraging reading.
- The Terminus Application – They have had District and Connexional support in the past. The work which is hardest to fund is that of the Community Outreach Manager. They will have support from the Sheffield Circuit on this (£24,400 over 3 years)..

Jonathan Haigh and Elaine Hollings joined to meeting to answer any questions. Elaine gave an overview of the project at the moment. It is at an exciting stage with the purchase of the old Co-op building. On schedule to be open in September. In Year 1, continue with current ministries, then starting new opportunities – welcoming young mums with toddlers and babies – there is nothing at the moment for this group; A community study also highlighted children and especially children from year 9 onwards, again nothing for that group and become at risk of being targeted by gangs (eg Drugs). Looking for funding to help facilitate this.

Year 2 – exploring further about the Christian faith, belonging leading to believing (Alpha, Discipleship courses), and nurturing leadership.

They will also be taking over management of the Michael Church, this will give longevity to the Grace Food Bank. This will bring in at least £20,000/pa. It can become an income generator for other groups as the building is modernised etc.

Looking at the potential of being a food distribution centre to start with, with the charity shop further down the line. The Coop shop will be owned by the Gavins Foundation, but the rental will be realistic for the Terminus aims (below market value). Jonathan shared that they will be doing a baptism of 3 community members (in the sea at Bridlington) as a result of the work already done.

ED would like to know how they relate to the Meadowhead Christian Fellowship who are also working in that area. Elaine explained about the interactions between the two organisations.

There are 3 estates (Lowedges, Jordanthorpe and Batemoor). They see this as a partnership to share resources, but there is enough need for two services covering the area.

The Gavins Foundation is offering a lot of support with mentoring and contacts.

Simon Copley (URC) is also keen to keep contact.

NH thanked Jonathan and Elaine and they left the meeting (19:55).

- DLT were in favour of supporting this application **NH will notify them of the decision**

8. One Programme update

The report has been circulated. VL shared that this has been such a blessing to run. How do we spread the word across the District that this opportunity is there. VL can't be at every group, but attending circuit staff meetings has helped. Also how can this be future-proofed? GN – can we use the interns as advocates for the future, that they are invited to attend meetings? The interns will be invited to the Emmaus weekend to help mentor young leaders. Need to share the story. This could be something to bring up at 3Generate. One intern is applying for Youth President! Other events are helping to build relationships which helps in the long run eg Hesley Woods.

VL was thanked for her work and the plans for next year.

9. Post Conference report

The reps will be meeting shortly to feedback. DB felt that GNs session "Doing Things Right v Doing The Right Thing" was excellent. GN had asked 4 presbyters to share their experiences, from different contexts and they made a great job. MM – Districts are merging together, they will be covering a large area and will need our prayers! What will happen going forward? Roles will change! The God for All strategy is being extended, with enthusiasm from the Conference. The focus on the Justice Seeking Church is on Poverty this year. There are resources available.

10. Supervision of Lay Employees

This is a work in progress – some circuits have this in hand, while others are starting to explore this. The District Chairs' had a conversation about this, some recommendations have been made. We can be seen to be working towards this.

11. Property Consents update

A paper has been circulated.

Tom joined the meeting (20:20). JC thanked Tom for the work he has put in, and to acknowledge the work that is ongoing in other areas.

Hillstown currently licenced to Freedom, who may be moving out shortly. Staveley and Inkersall may need GN's involvement

Tom has joined the board of TMCP.

12. Permission to Cease to Meet

- Silkstone Common – a paper was sent as a narrative rather than a report. DLT is asked to agree the chapel cease to meet. GN shared that it is right that the chapel is very much a village hub/ NH - there are no other churches meeting in Silkstone Common. Noting that this is a sad and poignant moment, **DLT agreed that the chapel should cease to meet.**

There is a question about what to do with the property as an asset. Tom feels that there may be more opportunities. At the moment it would not meet the criteria to be sold. If there is a want for the community to use the building, the circuit may not have capacity to manage this, although Tom would offer support. This does feel like an opportunity to do something different. DLT agreed that other options should be explored before permission to sell would be given. What other missional purposes might be possible. This may take a mind-set change. There are questions around capacity, finance, resources, but this shouldn't stand in the way. NH has done some work in Barnsley, but not as much as in other parts of the District. Tom has DLT support in taking this further.

- Gleadless Valley – A statement has been issued. Noting that this is a sad and poignant moment, **DLT agreed that the chapel should cease to meet.**

Options are being explored by the Circuit about other possibilities for work in Gleadless Valley.

We paused to pray for the churches and people involved in these decisions.

13. Enhancing Heritage Buildings

A paper has been circulated. A question was asked about grants. There is funding which the Conservation Officer has not been able to use, permission has been given to apply for the grants to employ the officer for 2/3 years. **DLT approve the application and encourage Tom to pursue this.**

Tom left the meeting at 20:45

14. Urban Theology Union

A paper was circulated today, giving background to the formation of UTU as well as some of the interesting conversations taking place to take the work going forward. There are a number of things to be explored. Releasing the space in the lower ground floor of Victoria Hall will help The Foundry with their future lettings.

AR asked could there be some Continuing Professional Development created for the lay employees?

Recognising the calling and the need to resource. VL commented that young leaders are often in need of their own development, but pushed into a church (junior church) role.

This feels exciting. JC suggested sharing this with the superintendents at a later meeting.

15. Mission Enabler update

The update has been circulated. NH highlighted that the amount that we are giving to New Christian Communities is perhaps not enough to get things moving, so will coming back with a proposal about investing more District money, especially given the amount of funds currently in the District Advance Fund.

JH affirmed NH on the way he lead a meeting in Doncaster!

Other Matters

16. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This is a standing item on the agenda. ED is currently stretched with her work at UTU, so is likely to resign from the EDI officer role, but is confident that there are others in the District who may be willing to take this on.

17. Safer Recruitment – role descriptions

The role descriptions for District Officers and Panel members were last looked at in 2017. Over the summer KH will look at the existing roles and amend / update in light of Safer Recruitment. The pack will hopefully come to DLT in September.

18. Dates for meetings 2024/25

These were included in the agenda and are reproduced below.

19. AOB

JC thanked GN for the year, and is glad to hand back to her. It was MM's last meeting, we thanked her for her work as Synod Secretary.

Dates for DLT meetings 2024/25

- Tuesday 3 September (John Henry sends apologies to this)
- Wednesday 13 November (Aimee Roddam sends apologies)
- Thursday 23 January 2025
- Thursday 20 March
- Tuesday 6 May
- Tuesday 8 July

Synod / District Gatherings

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| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 14 September 2024 | Trinity – The Crossing |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 5 April 2025 | Sheffield – Wesley Hall? |
| • Autumn Gathering (Synod) | 13 September 2025 | Doncaster |
| • Spring Gathering (Synod) | 18 April 2026 | Sheffield |

The meeting closed with prayer at 21:24