

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
SUTTON CIRCUIT
LONDON DISTRICT 35/39**

Minutes of the Circuit Meeting Held on 1st March 2016
at Sutton Trinity Church, Cheam Road, Sutton SM1 1DZ

Those present: Revd Dave Dickinson (Chair), Revd Rosemary Richter, Revd Mark Wakelin, Revd Mark Williams, Miss Shirley Breeden, Mr Chee Hong Fui, Mr David Forty, Mr Richard Smith (Circuit Treasurer), Miss Raj Kalsi (Secretary) and 16 members whose names are recorded.

1. Opening devotions

Revd Dave Dickinson led the meeting in prayer.

2. Meeting Membership - confirmation of membership list

The membership list was confirmed as accurate with the amendment: Mr John Miller as Steward and Mr Colin Batty as Elected member for United Church of St Mark's. The Chair explained that when a Presbyterian who is not stationed to but resides in the Circuit and wishes to be a member of the Circuit Meeting, then the meeting needs to agree that the Presbyterian may do so. The meeting accepted the proposal that Revd Philip Richter be added as a member of the Circuit Meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Rev John Amankwatia, Revd Gill Long, Revd Des Williamson, Revd Nik Wooller, Revd Ernest Yu, Jan Angel, Ravi Saravanamuttu, Alan Jameson, Nick White, Vernon Tucker, Audrey Sanderson, John Riley, Margaret Kercher, Christine Asirwatham, Stanley Jeyaraj, Caroline Cook and Tom Styche.

4. Appointment of Scrutineers

The meeting accepted the appointment of Jacqueline John as scrutineer for the meeting.

5. Minutes of the meetings held on 9th September 2015 (previously circulated)

The meeting accepted the minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2015.

6. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

7. Report from the circuit leadership team – Shirley Breeden

- a. The Chair was pleased to inform the meeting that Revd Barnabas Alexander has been stationed in the Sutton Circuit with pastoral responsibility for Wallington and Bandon Hill. His Welcome Service is planned for Thursday 1st September commencing at 7.30pm at Wallington Methodist Church and Revd Jenny Impey will be present for this Service. The meeting accepted the report from the circuit leadership team included in the papers.

Chair gave the meeting an update on the status of the application for a Chinese Minister. An application had been made for a Minister for the Chinese Congregation for initial stationing, which can take two forms: either to come as a probationer to the Circuit or to come to serve in Britain for the first time from an overseas Church. The initial application was unsuccessful which means there was no probationer to be matched. However we have been requested to hold the application open because there is a possibility of a presbyter coming from an overseas Church who might be suitable for the appointment. An agreement has been made to keep the application open.

- b. Circuit Leadership Team Statement of Purpose: The Chair gave a brief outline of this statement, the Circuit Leadership Team spent some time on their away day in October 2015 discussing what their purpose was and as a result prepared the Statement of Purpose, which is included in the agenda papers. The meeting adopted the Circuit Leadership Team's Statement of Purpose.

The Chair reported that part of the Statement of purpose is a commitment to listen to local Churches and he informed the meeting that this exercise has already begun and will take place over the next fifteen months. There is a rolling programme for meetings with the Circuit Leadership Team where representatives from local Churches will be invited for conversations so that the Leadership team can have a sense of the concerns Churches have and how the Circuit can help them.

The Chair also informed the meeting that at the last Circuit Leadership Team Meeting he shared with the Leadership Team concerns he had which he felt need to be addressed urgently. The concerns included: (1) quality of worship, (2) 'shape' of the North Eastern section of the Circuit (Wallington, Carshalton and Bandon Hill), (3) Ministerial wellbeing and 'job satisfaction' with realistic expectations, (4) Assessment of Circuit housing stock so that it meets the CPD requirements. (5) Children's and young people's work in the Churches within the Circuit.

Some steps have already been taken to address some of these priorities, but others will be taken in CLT, staff meetings, circuit stewards' meetings and Local Preachers' Meetings.

8. Circuit manses

The manse report detailed the work done to the manses in the period since the last Circuit Meeting. The Chair and the meeting expressed their gratitude to Philip Sandiford for all the work done in preparing the manses for the Ministers. Philip thanked the Circuit for the money they have made available to him in the past for the Manses. Philip explained that when he first started working on the Manses they were under spec and therefore a lot of money had to be spend to bring them up to spec as per the CPD requirements. There were a lot of large unexpected jobs which resulted in the over spend of the budget. He is hoping in the future these Manses will not require too much money as most of them are now up to spec, although there are two Manses which are still under spec and the Circuit will have to make a decision whether they want to sell or upgrade them. The Manses report which was circulated with the agenda papers was accepted by the Meeting.

9. Circuit finances.

a. Annual Report and Accounts year ended 31st August 2015

Report previously circulated by email to the Circuit members for comments and queries and also circulated with the agenda papers and has been agreed by email by the Circuit. Richard asked the meeting to formally agree to the report at this meeting. The meeting accepted the annual report and accounts.

b. Draft Budget 2016/2017

Richard asked the meeting if there were any questions regarding the budget. As there we no questions the meeting agreed to the budget.

c. Assessments

Richard informed the meeting that the Church Treasurers met in January this year and agreed to the rolling assessments for the next three years. The figures for 2016/17 are the first year of the three year cycle. The proposed assessments for 2016/17 were accepted by the Meeting with none opposed.

There was also question raised from the floor asking about what constitutes a Member of a Methodist Church, as member numbers are used to calculate assessments. Alternative patterns for raising circuit funds, such as voluntary church contributions were mentioned. The Chair agreed that, beside the importance of considering alternative means, there was an important underlying issue about the nature of membership. It was suggested that this discussion should take place at a future Circuit Leadership Team meeting and feedback reported back to the Circuit meeting.

10. Circuit appointments and Representatives to Synod 2016/2017

Circuit Appointments

Circuit Treasurer

The Meeting took a balloted vote on the proposal that '**Richard Smith be re-appointed as Circuit Treasurer for the Sutton Circuit for the financial year 2016-7**'. The results of the voting were: 24 for, with none against the proposal (25 present). The Meeting therefore duly re-elected Richard Smith as Circuit Treasurer.

The Meeting adopted the remaining appointments.

Representatives to Synod

Chair informed the meeting that Chee Hong Fui is no longer able to represent our Circuit at Synod and Alan Jameson is already a representative at Synod by virtue of District office. As there are two vacancies for Synod, the Chair asked the meeting to forward any names of those who would be willing to represent our

Circuit at the Synod. The Meeting reappointed Mr Alan Jameson, Miss Shirley Breeden, Mr Philip Sandiford and Miss Jacky Waite as Synod representatives for the year 2016-7.

11. Leaders of Worship and Preachers

Nick White sent his apologies to the Meeting. The Leaders of Worship and Preachers report is included in the agenda papers. The Chair asked if there were any questions regarding the report, as there were none the report was accepted by the Meeting.

12. Safeguarding

a. Circuit Safeguarding Policy

Copy of Circuit Safeguarding Policy previously circulated with the agenda papers. There was recommendation by Revd Mark Williams to add to the policy the statement that Safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of the Methodist Church. The adoption of the policy was agreed by the meeting, with the amendment to paragraph three: 'The Sutton Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable is paramount. This is the responsibility of every member of the Methodist Church.'

b. Training Update

Raj informed the meeting there will be three instead of two Foundation Module courses taking place this year, dates of the training are included in the agenda papers. The reason is that those who were trained five years ago and are still in their roles will need to attend the training.

The Chair was pleased to announce that we have a newly trained, Trainer in the Circuit.

c. List of people required to attend Foundation Module Course

There was a brief discussion about whether the local Church Councils should 'require' or 'encourage' the people listed in Group B (list included in the agenda papers) to attend the Safeguarding Foundation Module. The meeting agreed by majority to the proposal that the Circuit Meeting recommends that local Church Councils should encourage people in Group B who have direct contact with vulnerable groups to attend the Safeguarding Foundation Module.

13. Reports from Circuit committees

Reports from the Circuit Model Trust Fund Committee and the various mission funds, included in the agenda papers, were accepted by the Meeting.

14. Good news from Churches

The Chair thanked the Churches for sharing their good news reports included in the agenda papers, and asked if there was anything else the Meeting would like to add to the good news reports. Richard informed the Meeting that the Book Sale at Epsom raised £32,000 and they will be making payment of £20,000 to various charities.

15. Date and place of next meeting

18th May 2016 (Wednesday) at Cheam Methodist Church, Coffee at 7.30pm, meeting at 8.00pm.
8th September (Thursday), Venue to be confirmed.

16. Closing devotions

The meeting was closed by sharing together the words of the Grace.