



## Minutes

### Ministry Area Council

10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 18.30-20.00 St Luke's Rhydyfelin

These proceedings were recorded in full, a copy of which can be made available for all members upon request.

Item	Minutes	Action
1.Introduction and Prayer		
	Esther was welcomed as the new Lay Chair & she opened and chaired the meeting. She gave a brief introduction of her background. Rev Rachel read from 2 Cor 8 v 1-12 & led us in prayer	
2.Attendees and apologies for absence		
Attendees	Rev Charlotte, Rev Rachel, Elaine Rees, Keith Johns, Babs Minton, Ray Minton, Sheila Nurse, David Morgan, Amber Baker, Ian Sandford, Rev Jeremy Heuslein, Andy Sowerby, Esther Sowerby	
Apologies	Trish Tazzini Lloyd, Karen Murphy, Warwick Butler, Neal Wood, Helen Gulliford, Christine Godfrey	
Absent		
Minutes of the last M.A.C.		
Amendments	None	
3.Proposer	Babs Minton	
Second	Elaine Rees	
4. Matters arising from last MAC		
i. M.A. Staff	CR informed the MAC that there are two candidates for interview which will take place on Thursday, and we pray that God will call forward the right one for us.	
ii. Sale of St David's Church & Hall	The chairs have been sold! Father Michael collected them for his church & has made a generous donation of £1000 for them. By the end of the month there will be a tabletop sale and people will be invited to come	

	& purchase any items that they need, and the RB can take full responsibility for the buildings from February	
iii. The Vicarage on the Graig	No progress on this but CR suggested it needs to be something we need to put onto our return for the charity commission. Babs confirmed it's on.	No further Action Required
5.Finance report	<p>ES invited CR &amp; RM to provide everyone with an update on paying the fairer share.</p> <p>Discussion Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the appeal to reduce our fairer share was partly upheld, in real terms the amount has increased from £124,000 last year to £131,000</li> <li>• CR explained that we need money to make our vision of growth work</li> <li>• RM presented three budget sheet scenarios, the first paying the full £131,00 based on an average of 2019 and 2023 attendance figures, the other two paying £108,064 based purely on 2023 attendance.</li> </ul> <p>Decision: The MA voted unanimously to pay a fairer share of £108,064 this year as set out in budget sheet 10.</p> <p>Action points: RM to wait until CM has spoken to the diocese before paying the first instalment.</p> <p>Full Discussion: CR informed the MAC that the appeal for a reduction in the Fairer Share was partly upheld. The Diocese acknowledged that the closure of St David's has impacted upon our attendance figures which was reflected in the attendance data gathered for Feb 2023. The appeal is upheld as the congregation at St Mary's comes under the governance of Citizen Church.</p> <p>RM provided budget sheets and explained that the top sheet is the breakdown of the attendance provided by the MA to the diocese to calculate our Fairer Share for 2024. It is based on the attendance of 170 regular communicants. This is the average level of communicants across the M.A. in February 2019 and 2023 The second sheet is a proposed budget for 2024. The Scenario 1 budget is the 2024 Fairer Share of £131,000.70 based on 170 regular communicants across the M.A. Although there is a</p>	RM/CR

marked reduction in communicants, this 170 includes St Davids and St Mary's congregations in 2019, highlighted in green the cost that would be allocated to both St Mary's and St David's if the churches remained open.

The combined total for the fairer share for both missing congregations is £11,400, As these congregations no longer exist, the 'cost' must be borne by the other 5 congregations. Although the M.A. won the appeal for a reduction in the amount of communicants to be included in our Fairer Share, we have seen no monetary relief; in fact, the Fairer Share has gone up from. CR, ES & RM recently met to discuss this matter & propose that we consider paying an amount of Fairer Share that does not cause us a significant financial burden. They have created two scenarios 6 & 10 which are based on a Fairer Share of £108,064, which is calculated purely on the attendance figures in the MA as of February 2023. This would create an immediate saving of £23,000 per annum.

To find the Fairer Share and Clergy expenses proposed 'Scenario 6' splits both costs across the 5 churches equally. The Treasurer prefers 'Scenario 10' which splits the costs across each church by the number of services it has and the number of attendees per church - which is the historic approach.

ES asked RM if Scenario 10 is his preferred model and he confirmed that it was.

The decision before the M.A.C. is whether we pay the Fairer Share in full for 2024, or whether we offer to pay the reduced amount which we believe we can afford.

CR added that the Fairer share has gone up by 5% for the whole of the diocese, however we are unique in that we already have a 5-year plan and a vision that we are already implementing. To make this viable we need the money. This M.A. has historic reserves; however, we need to think of ourselves as one church in multiple locations. If we pay the Fairer Share as it stands, she believes that it will seriously impact on our ability to engage in mission which is the only way we can grow and flourish.

Next year the Fairer Share is changing, and each M.A. is going to be charged for 3 full time clergy which means a sum in the region of £195,000. The diocese has acknowledged that not all M.A.'s will be able to afford that, and we will therefore enter negotiations for a realistic contribution. What she is

suggesting is that we are bringing this forward a year. She proposes that this is what we can afford now; and we will spend the next year engaging in mission. In addition, we must create micro budgets for every single location and mission in the M.A. so that we know exactly what our income and expenditure is. We will then have a clear understanding of what we need to grow our churches. The hope is that by next year, we will be in a better position to work out what we can realistically give of the Fairer Share and hoping that we may be in the position to be able to increase our contribution whilst growing our vision.

CR was asked by IS how many churches pay the fairer share in full. She admits that she doesn't know, but what she does know is that we are the 2<sup>nd</sup> M.A. with the largest decline having lost 40% of our congregation with the closure of St Davids and the change in governance of St Marys. The only other area in a similar position is Barry due to the new high school. It was agreed that if we don't take control of our finances now then the diocese will expect the full Fairer Share, which, as we have been many years without the three priests that we have been paying for, feels very unfair. Even with the loss of the rebate for paying the Fairer Share in full and on time, we'll be no worse off going forward with the proposed Scenario. We have appealed against the level of the Fairer Share for 2 years, and nothing has come of it; and we can't afford to pay for a congregation that no longer exists.

ES agreed & points out that RM has worked out the figures in a very fair way.

RC agreed and said that we may be in a better position to be more generous next year.

IS supports the fact that the vision needs to be supported financially.

KJ explained the situation with the sale of St Matthews Church in Trallwn and that there are still funds available. Does that mean that if a grant is awarded to a church, then the funds go into the central pot and anyone can use the money.

CR clarified the situation with historic funds. As a Ministry Area, there is only one fund and one bank account. What we are doing is managing a budget line. As a M.A.C. we have to be good stewards of these historical funds; for example, the money from the sale of St Matthew's closure is held under the budget line for St Luke's Cilfynydd. but it does not 'belong' to Cilfynydd, it 'belongs to the whole M.A.

	<p>We (the M.A.C.) as stewards, decide where the need is and the best use of these funds.</p> <p>It is different with grants. Any grants specific to a location &amp; project and are treated as restricted funds. Legacies are different again. They will not be treated like grants, but form part of the M.A.'s general fund.</p> <p>ES encouraged the M.A.C. to move back to a decision based on RM's proposal of accepting or rejecting proposal of Scenario 10 budget.</p> <p>CR &amp; RM pointed out that our budgeting structure may need to change next year.</p> <p>RM didn't pay the Fairer Share on the 8th of Jan when it was due. He asked who would tell Llandaff of this decision.</p> <p>CR will do that once the draft minutes are ready.</p> <p>RM will pay the reduced amount of Fairer Share as agreed as soon as CR tells him.</p> <p>SN asked for clarification on what St Marys position with the Fairer Share going forward.</p> <p>CR replied that Citizen Church has assumed responsibility for the Fairer Share on 1st January 2024.</p> <p>ES called for a vote on whether we accept Scenario 10, which was unanimously agreed. AS offered her encouragement stating that that we have a positive dialogue.</p>	
<p>6.Matters for discussion/decision</p> <p>i. Fairer share St Marys</p>	<p>CR explained that one of the consequences of St Mary's congregation coming under the governance of Citizen Church is that we (Pontypridd M.A.) will no longer be responsible for resourcing services from 1 January 2024. Amber is aware of this. We will resource tomorrow mornings service.</p> <p>CR said that Sunday morning Mass is growing, and SN confirmed that between 8 and 13 or 14 people regularly attend.</p> <p>AB talked about Midnight mass, which was well attended, around 60 people, including lots of locals who hadn't come to church before.</p> <p>SN &amp; RM asked for clarification regarding the balance in their funds. CR replied that anything from SM from 1<sup>st</sup> January needs to be transferred to Citizen Church and historical funds remain within the MA.</p> <p>RM nothing has been received yfket. CR confirmed that all regular tithe and collections are paid to Citizen Church.</p>	
<p>ii. Communication plan</p>	<p>CR explained that when she arrived, she felt that the M.A. needed one notice sheet to adopt a feeling of unity and mutual encouragement, and Pew's news served us well.</p>	

However, to help us execute our vision, a new communications strategy is needed.

The plan is an update on Pew's News. This means that there will be three distinct modes of communication. From the Front, weekly News Flash and a monthly magazine.

1. From the Front will be notices specific to that location e.g. The cleaning team will be cleaning on Saturday at SC. Other locations in the M.A. don't need to know that Notices of these nature will be given by the priest or verger in the service.
2. News Flash will be our weekly rundown of events across the Ministry Area. It will replace Pews News. It will no longer contain good news stories, just the essential 'need to know' news. CR has found a new free software package which can be converted to PDF, which means that K will no longer have to produce the weekly booklet and instead produce a short, double-sided sheet
3. Monthly magazine will be where we share our good news stories. The Magazine will be an electronic document which will be available on our website as well as being emailed directly to everyone who has come to us for a wedding, funeral or baptism. This magazine focus on our vision and will showcase our MA. It will become one of our outreach tools.

We will invest more in the use of social media.

The appendix models a way in which we could maximize the impact of our communications. It is not a strategy that will be brought online all at once, but rather a strategy that we will grow into. In addition to this, each location should adopt "keep in touch cards" where individuals who are new to church are able to join our mailing list and communicate areas of interest, such as join a team or be informed of bible study groups.

IS asked how this information would be communicated it sound like a lot of work.

CR responded that initially we are concentrating on the News Flash and The Magazine which CR and KM will develop over the coming months. CR emphasized that everyone would need to be involved on some level as good news stories would need to be shared. JH will manage social media.

	<p>Sermons are already shared on the website, Substack and Spotify, and this has already attracted a few followers. CR assured the M.A.C. that streamlining our communications will include making technology working for us, which will ultimately mean less work. An example of this is the use of “Brevo” for the newsflash. It will automatically convert the News Flash into a PDF which means KM will no longer need to produce a weekly booklet, but instead, press a button and the job is done.</p> <p>KJ asked if the magazine would be made available via email and in print? CR and JH confirmed that it will be. There is a need to cut down on printing where possible, as it is both costly and wasteful – the clerics and KM have noticed how many magazines are thrown away each week. We are not looking to exclude people but include more.</p>	
7. Health & Safety	Nothing to report	
8. Safeguarding	<p>My Church People has made massive progress. CR thanked everyone for the lists of those who require Safeguarding training, which she is in the process of loading up all the information into My Church People. CR explained that Safeguarding certificates and DBS checks are automatically updated onto people’s records.</p> <p>RM asked for clarification about where this new software comes from.</p> <p>CR explained that it is from the Diocese, and it holds everybody who has any role within the church. Once we have all the names and roles they are added to the system &amp; they are run against criteria that DBS has provided, to who needs a DBS check.</p> <p>BM confirmed that she has attended module B training and that the rules have changed in relation to all the M.A.C. needing a DBS. CR confirmed that a minimum of three M.A.C. members will require a check along with the Lay Chair and Treasurer. All the clerics will have one.</p> <p>CR confirmed that the DBS system is overwhelmed, and checks continue to be slow.</p> <p>We have potentially found a Safeguarding lead once the system is up &amp; running.</p>	
9. Any Other Business	DM asked for M.A.C. approval for a second toilet to be installed at St Luke’s. CR suggested that as there is already a toilet installed that this is not a necessity	

	<p>and will not support the use of historic funds to install it.</p> <p>DM confirmed that they have a quote and will get two more to apply for a grant for the work, which is estimated at £11k</p> <p>CR will fully support a grant application, which the M.A.C. agreed to.</p> <p>ES suggested that when applying for grants, if there is a small shortfall of funds, we should revisit the matter as the MAC may be able to release some historic funds.</p> <p>RM asked that finances is high on the agenda again next month</p>	
<p>10. Next meeting</p>	<p>21 Feb 2024</p> <p>Closed with Grace</p>	