



CHAPTER MINUTES

Minutes of the 201st Chapter Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday 22nd April 2020 at 11:00 am

Present: The Very Rev'd Joe Hawes (Chair)
Stewart Alderman (SA)
Canon Tim Allen (TA)
Sarah-Jane Allison (SJA)
The Rev'd Canon Philip Banks (PB)
The Rev'd Sarah Geileskey (SGK)
Dominic Holmes (DH)
Mrs Barbara Pycraft (BP)
The Rev'd Canon Michael Robinson (MR)
Elizabeth Steele (ES)
The Rev'd Canon Matthew Vernon (MV)
The Venerable Sally Gaze (SGZ)

In Attendance: Anna Elliss (Minute Taker)

1. Prayers and Welcome

The Dean opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence

Michael Shallow

3. Conflicts of Interest

- The Auditors are content with the forms they have already been sent.
- JH declared the St James School site as a potential conflict on his form.

4. Notification of AOB

- SGZ's report is included at the end of the Dean's section
- Christine Stokes joined the meeting at 12.30 pm.

5. Correspondence

- None received

6. Minutes and Reports

a) Review the Action Points from Chapter 11/03/2020

- The Actions log was reviewed and updated.

b) Approve the Chapter minutes and Confidential Chapter minutes from 11/03/2020

- Amendments were made and the minutes were approved.

c) Matters arising from the Chapter minutes and Action Points 11/03/2020

- BP noted that the Management Team Terms of Reference were not satisfactory. SJA has since amended these and will send out to Chapter, to be approved at the May meeting.
- TA requested Chapter be sent the notes of the Management meetings to capture any decisions taken. BP and SGZ stated that there is enough Chapter material to deal with already. JH expressed reluctance as providing too many papers could cause important things to be missed, and reiterated that strategic decisions are always referred to Chapter. He noted that this is not common practice in other Cathedrals. **It was agreed** sending out these notes is not necessary.

d) Notes of informal Chapter Covid-19 Briefings

- SGK was commended on her notes from these briefings.
- It was noted that some decisions are taken at these meetings which should be formally agreed at a full Chapter meeting. **It was agreed that ‘Any urgent actions taken since last meeting’ would be added to the Agenda, at least during this time.**
- **It was agreed** that from now on these briefings would occur fortnightly, unless rapid changes in the situation require more regular meetings.

7. Finance

a) Losses report

- Chapter was provided with a copy of the Losses Report prepared for Michael Minta and Carol Fletcher from the Church Commissioners. This represents the worst case scenario.
- A deficit of £154,000 is expected, but this picture will continue to change.
- The £20,000 grants for Pilgrims’ Kitchen and the Shop have already been received; Andy Thompson was commended for his efficient work on this.
- The money for furloughed workers is not expected until June. Lovewell Blake are applying for this on the Cathedral’s behalf as they run payroll. Tuesday was the first day they could apply.
- The Church Commissioners are expected to provide a grant but the amount is not yet known as they need to assess the position of all Cathedrals before a decision can be made.
- Cash is available until December at which point investments will have to be liquidated – this is not ideal as their value will have dropped and will likely only keep things going until April.
- However much the Church Commissioners give us there will be a shortfall. This means fundraising efforts need to be repositioned with the aid of Christine Stokes.
- Other ways to get people to give small amounts are also being investigated, such as donate buttons on social media and purchasing systems like The Giving Machine.

b) Planned Giving

- There has been a small drop but not as much as was expected. This may still change.
- Some people have been dropping off envelopes at the office which have not yet been included with the totals – this will make a small difference.
- LS noted that Good Box are offering a discount of 25-35% on boxes – nothing needs to be paid yet but we do need to sign up soon to get the discount. LS will investigate further.

c) Going Concern

- TA challenged some of the assurances proposed to be given by Chapter to the Auditors to support the conclusion in the amended Annual Report that Going Concern should be our accounting policy going forward. SGK presented the following:

(1) SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) from the Charities Commission, issued in light of Covid-19 on 23/3

Pg 4 *“Trustees must ensure that changes are made for post balance sheet adjusting events...”* e.g. we now consider that the accounting policy “Going Concern” is no longer relevant for the period of the accounts in question. However, the SORP adds: *“as the*

Covid19 crisis developed in 2020, it will be the case that Dec19 year end accounts are far less likely to be subject of an adjusting event.”

It also notes that trustees need to consider including disclosures on a non-adjusting balance sheet event (e.g. a material loss in the value of assets subsequent to the reporting date.)

(2) FRC (Financial Reporting Council) general reporting standard (2016)

Pg 7 section 3 *“companies are required to adopt the going concern basis of accounting, except in circumstances where directors determine at the date of approval of the financial statements either that they intend to liquidate the entity or to cease trading, or have no realistic alternative to liquidation or cessation of operations”.*

Pg 7, para 3.1 *“the threshold for departing from the going concern basis of accounting is very high, as there are often realistic alternatives to liquidation or cessation of operations. Such realistic alternatives can exist even if they depend on uncertain future events.”*

(3) Conclusion

- We are not being misleading in our reporting of 2019;
 - We have been open about the risks and uncertainties for 2020;
 - We have taken into account the FRC document and the updated SORP for Covid-19
 - We have disclosed future risks in the narrative of the reports;
 - Going concern remains an appropriate accounting policy because there is a *high threshold* and there are *‘realistic alternatives’* available to us (The Cathedrals Sustainability Fund, central government support, Christine Stokes’ work etc.), even though these are dependent on *uncertain future events*;
 - The Auditors’ opinion following these updates still believes this to be a ‘true and fair’ view of the financial position of the Cathedral. Auditors have no basis to challenge management decision to adopt ‘going concern’ as our accounting policy’.
- In light of this **Chapter agreed to continue on a going concern basis.**
 - TA suggested two revisions to the Annual Report:
 - (1) ‘paying only necessary overheads’** is perhaps not strictly true as we are supplementing the 20% of furloughed staff’s salaries that the government are not paying.
 - (2) ‘We are able to significantly reduce our ministry costs’** may also not be entirely accurate or demonstrable.
 - SJA will discuss these amendments with Rebecca Frost at Lovell Blake and circulate an amended report for Chapter to approve by email.

d) Finance Minutes

- BP asked whether Chapter are required to make a decision on whether accommodation or housing allowance would be provided to any new Director of Music. PB confirmed that Chapter would need to decide at some point but, especially with the Covid-19 situation, decisions about the shape of the Music Department and how it fits with changed finances and wider vision are now some time away (see Music Review notes).

8. The Dean

a) Beaumont Review

- Responses to the draft report are being collated by Anna Elliss and will be sent to Judge Peter when they have all come in. She is also doing some work around compliance which might otherwise get lost as Chairs and Officers may not realise they are not compliant.

b) Covid-19 Update

- MR noted there is no significant change to guidance, although there may be some changes coming up about funerals. This should be available on the Church of England website. In general the pace of change is slowing.
- The Diocese have set up a 24 hour NHS support line for those on the front line and in care homes. This is staffed by clergy and some lay people with experience of hospital settings. It currently seems to be the only 24 hour helpline available.
- LS confirmed the hospitals in the area are actually doing quite well with small numbers of cases but the support line is appreciated as deaths do knock the staff.
- JH attends a weekly meeting with the Diocese on a Friday. They are working with St Nicholas Hospice about creating a community approach to bereavement that will go beyond the lockdown. He is also considering how memorials can be offered for people whose funerals were constrained by Covid-19 and resourcing other churches in the area who may experience a surge in requests, as well as an All Souls style service for the whole county. He is working with the Lieutenancy on a county service.
- The expected increase in need for funeral cover elsewhere has not happened as there are fewer vacancies than expected.

9. Archdeacon for Rural Mission

a) Opportunities for Engagement

- SGZ presented a paper summarizing ways to make the most of this opportunity where people are engaging more with services online. This involves giving people chances to engage further such as a button to make further enquiry, chat rooms, and prayer courses – the options need to be refined to just a few, otherwise people will be overwhelmed and will not engage at all.
- She hoped the Cathedral would be involved with this, putting resources on the website and social media and engaging with the Diocesan team to monitor success. It is important to move quickly or the window of opportunity will be missed.
- MV agreed this was a very attractive proposal for Chapter but noted it would need further discussion on an operational level.
- **It was agreed that SGZ (or a representative from her team) would discuss with MV and MR how this would go forward.**

b) Catching the Fire

- Catching the Fire would have been held in the Cathedral on Pentecost. The team would like to provide an online event where people can share their experience of mission and God's presence in their lives. This is an opportunity to do something together, albeit online, and to demonstrate practical ways the church is helping.
- Lightwave leaders volunteering in the community can film people doing things in response to Covid-19 and this will be interspersed with a range of styles of worship. JH noted that people at St Peter's Pantry in Brandon would be happy to film their activities.
- This year they are keen to have a younger age profile. Some different methods of engaging young people are being trialled already and younger people will be included in the testimonies.
- SGZ noted that Red Lodge is one of the Lightwave projects and is relatively close to the Cathedral – their foodbank may need donations. **SGZ to send information to JH so donations can be encouraged.**

c) Thy Kingdom Come/Benedictine Resources

- Thy Kingdom Come is a national initiative, comprising 10 days of prayer from Ascension Day to Pentecost. This is a good opportunity to expand the initiative as there is more engagement with prayer initiatives at the moment. A zoom planning meeting next week will be attended by PB and MV when questions about Cathedral involvement will be discussed.

- It would be good to put the Benedictine resources online as part of the Thy Kingdom Come offering from the Cathedral. SGZ will discuss this offline. **MR will be invited to the Thy Kingdom Come meeting. Chapter is happy to proceed with the Diocese on these initiatives.**

10. The Administrator

a) Safeguarding

- SJA is in regular contact with Karen Galloway as other Safeguarding Staff have been furloughed. SJA is making sure DBS checks stay up to date as some will be expiring soon.

b) Staff Update

- SGK and MV are keeping pastoral contact with furloughed staff with regular phone calls. There is also a Wellbeing Zoom on Wednesday mornings.
- Most of working staff are currently joining part of the Management meeting, giving an opportunity to catch up each week.
- The staff not furloughed are: Anna Elliss, Rachel Clover, Sarah Friswell, Andy Thompson, Sarah-Jane Allison, Richard Cook and Matt Foster. MF cannot be furloughed as he is paid by King Edward VI School.
- **Chapter formally approved the furloughing scheme.**
- It was agreed earlier that two days holiday per month would be deducted from furloughed staff. SJA has sent out a formal letter and spoken to all staff about their holiday entitlement. All are positive and happy with this. **Chapter formally approved this decision.**
- **Chapter formally agreed to top up the 20% of staff salaries not paid by the government.**
- Some furloughed staff are finding the circumstances challenging so MV and SGK's pastoral work is vital. Some staff are anxious to volunteer – they cannot volunteer for us but can volunteer for others so are being asked to pick up food donations and deliver to Gatehouse and St Peter's Pantry as they are experiencing a greater volume of requests. Requests for donations are in the Sunday Bulletin.

c) Policies

- **Chapter agreed** to adopt the Zoom Safeguarding Policy.

11. Cathedral Curate

a) Youth and Young Family Update

- SGK was commended on her work in this area. JH particularly thanked SGK for her work on the Godly Play stories.

12. Canon Precentor

a) Liturgy Update

- PB expressed thanks to Rachel Clover, Richard Cook, Sarah Friswell, and Anna Elliss for making the services happen.
- The use of Zoom for virtual 'coffee' and services is being explored.
- Social media is being expanded, including things like mindfulness and virtual pilgrimage.
- Consideration about new dates for ordination services will be required when there is a better idea of when the lockdown will end
- There are three areas of consideration for worship at the end of the lockdown:
 - (1) Remembrance for those who have suffered loss
 - (2) County and Diocesan thanksgiving to the people who have kept things going
 - (3) An 'En Famille' service. The Choirs are already preparing for this
- Very little can be planned at the moment until we have a clearer picture of when it will be possible to re-open.

- TA commended the livestreamed services which had been produced already and suggested Chapter should not be afraid to spend on things like better kit and training to enable us to provide an even better, more professional output. The Bishop has offered to assist with costs for improving livestreaming.
- Streaming will continue when services are able to happen as normal again in light of the high level of engagement with online worship.

b) Fabric Update

- The Cathedral architect's monthly report was received.
- PB and Philip Orchard are working on the Fabric Needs Survey.
- Most fabric projects are on hold.

c) Music Update

- Recent note from the Music Review Group were received.
- Richard Cook and Matt Foster were thanked and commended for masterminding so many different projects to keep up engagement with the choirs and musicians.
- The musicianship surgery has been particularly successful, being quite a unique offering and attracting a wide audience.
- Richard Cook and PB carried out a virtual interview with a candidate for the Choral scholarship joint appointment with County Upper school. They need to give an answer to the candidate soon. The appointment will start in September and will be effectively zero cost to the Cathedral, on the same basis as the organ scholar appointment with King Edward VI School.
Chapter approved the appointment.
- The Covid-19 crisis has opened up a window for considering how to replace the Director of Music. A like for like appointment may not be the best way forward. Further thought is required – for example, some cathedrals have a Director of Music focused on outreach, recruitment and school relationships, with someone else to run the day-to-day (see Music Review notes).

d) Events Update

- No events are happening. Re-bookings can only be provisional as 2020 events will have to take priority. A strategic approach to the diary will be needed when the Cathedral re-opens.

13. Canon Pastor

a) 2020 Update

- There is no change. Some events have been postponed and the situation is being monitored to see how many will have to be postponed to 2021.

b) Coronavirus Pastoral Care Update

- Staff Pastoral Care was mainly covered under the Administrator's items above. There is also ongoing pastoral support of the congregation.

c) Bury St Edmunds and Beyond

- Chapter received the most recent agenda, minutes and accounts.

14. Confidential Items

- Chapter adjourned to Confidential Chambers at 1.43 pm.

15. Any other business

16. Future Meeting Dates

a) Dates of next Formal Chapter Meetings

- 12 May 2020 (Tuesday, 11.00 am)
- 10 June – 11 June 2020 (Chapter Day/Night)
- 15 July 2020
- 9 September 2020

- 14 October 2020
- 12 November 2020 (Thursday)
- 9 December 2020

b) Next informal meeting

- 6 May, 11.00 am

c) Chapter away day

- SJA requested guidance on whether to cancel or postpone the away day. **Chapter decided to postpone rather than cancel.**

Meeting closed at 2.00 pm.