

# Progressive Christianity Network Britain

Management Committee at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, London

7<sup>th</sup> May 2011

## Minutes

**Present:** Kevin Albone (KA), John Churcher (JC, chair), Terence Cooper (TC, treasurer), Philip Goodwin (PG), Sandra Griffiths (SG), Mary McMahon, (MM, vice chair), Paul Onslow (PO), Richard Tetlow (RT)

**In attendance:** Andy Vivian, (AV), admin assistant

### 1. Apologies and welcome to new members

Adrian Alker, Sonya Brown, Helen Fisher, Angela Smith sent their apologies. JC welcomed Kevin Albone to the committee, and, in her absence, Helen Fisher.

### 2. Minutes of residential committee at St James's Piccadilly on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2011

These were accepted with no amendments.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### 3.1 Insurance

TC advised the committee that PCN's current policy, with Aviva, provided no built in cover for events, since it was an "office" policy. He had received a quote from Masterpolicy which chimes well with our needs. The annual premium based on our current level of activity would be £543 per annum. This contrasts with the current Aviva policy which is £373 per annum. To gain event cover, Aviva would require an additional premium of £105 per annum. The Masterpolicy would, therefore, still mean an increased overall premium of £56. TC said that the extra premium was worth it "to gain greater assurance that our insurance really does cover our needs". On the recommendation of TC the committee agreed to switch to Masterpolicy. TC pointed out that it would be too expensive to extend our insurance to cover all local group events with Masterpolicy and therefore it would remain the case that groups are responsible for ensuring that meetings they hold are covered by their own or the venue's insurance. **[Action TC]**

#### 3.2 PCN West of Scotland Website

JC read to the committee the text of a letter he had sent to the Chris Vermeulen in Glasgow concerning the request to start a PCN West of Scotland website. The letter expressed the committee's concern about use of the PCN logo and initials in a context where PCN Britain had no editorial control. The committee endorsed the letter.

### **3.3 Resources table for Spong events in Glasgow June 2-5<sup>th</sup>.**

PO and AV would liaise with AA over which materials were needed and how they would be transported to and from Glasgow. [Action AA, PO, AV]

### **3.4 The need for a simple pithy sentence about what PCN is about**

JC agreed to mention this in his next chair's e-update. [Action JC]

### **3.5 Study guides**

In the absence of Adrian Alker a full report was not possible. JC reported that Adrian's Christmas study guide was now underway.

## **4. Finance**

### **4.1 Budget for 2012**

TC presented his first draft of the budget for 2012. He forecast that outgoings in 2012 would be £19,950, an increase of 6.5% on the actual spend in 2010, which was £18,723. In 2010 our income was £16,088 which is £2,635 short of £18,723 we spent. So the extra income needed to meet the projected 2012 budget is around £3,900 more than the income we received in 2010, a 16% increase over the two years.

AV explained that based on the paid-up membership of around 450 in 2010, the contribution per member was close to £34.50, on average. Anticipating a rise of paid-up membership of at least 30 by 2012, this would generate an extra £1,035 if the average contribution remained at £34.50. To achieve a 16% increase in income through subscriptions alone would require the average contribution per member to rise to £38.50. Raising the membership rates to £20 for reduced, £35 for full and £50 for donor membership would cover this and provide a margin to cover future inflation.

JC said that the committee should look at costs and other income, before subs.

TC thought it might pay PCN to look at the cost of committee venues – aiming to go to venues that were offered free of charge. Careful choosing of committee locations could also reduce travel expenses.

JC offered to facilitate the St Deiniol's retreat himself this year to save funds.

After discussion, £800 of reductions were made to projected costs and the committee agreed that PCN should aim to make £19,150 the ceiling for the 2012 budget. However, the budget would return to the October residential when more would be known about the impact of current commitments, especially the cost of Website improvements.

### **4.2 Management Accounts to date in 2011**

Presenting his accounts, TC said that the income over expenditure was currently running at £6,000.

## **5. Subcommittees: Strategy, Website, Young People Liturgy, Running a Conference**

### **5.1 Strategy consultation**

JC reported that the subcommittee had not met but that it would do so in the near future. **[Action AS, PO, RT, JC]**

### **5.2 Website redevelopment**

AV referred members to the full report in the committee papers. He said that the cost of the redevelopment had been estimated at between £1,500 and £2,500. The sub-committee was working with Steve Ireland to develop a specification for the work needed. A day long planning meeting had been held at Newnham. PO had already registered PCN Britain with Twitter and Facebook in case PCN decided to go down that route. The committee felt it was worthwhile putting the Twitter RSS feed into the specification from the start. TC felt that the costing was not unreasonable. The subcommittee will continue to develop the specification and put it out to tender. If a decision is need before the next committee it will be referred to the officers.

### **5.3 Young People**

Sonya Brown's report was not discussed, due to the shortage of time. **[Matter referred to a future meeting]**

### **5.4 Liturgy**

Angela Smiths report was not discussed, due to the shortage of time. **[Matter referred to a future meeting]**

### **5.5 Running a Conference Guide**

The final draft of this document was not discussed, due to the shortage of time. **[Matter referred to a future meeting]**

## **6 Conferences**

### **6.1 Progress on Spong Glasgow bookings for June**

MM reported that the officers had been concerned over the lack of ticket sales. PCN Britain has underwritten these events to the tune of £1,000. MM said that the organising committee from the two Glasgow groups, led by Chris Vermeulen, had received advice about publicity and ticket pricing from PCN Britain officers. AV was working on a press release. A greater range of tickets was now on sale and the organisers had undertaken a number of measures to market the event.

### **6.2 Progress on the Crossan Leeds bookings for September**

PO reported that the conference was 42% of the way to the financial breakeven point. 105 people had booked giving an income of £2,400. The church holds 220.

### **6.3 Progress on St Deiniol's retreat, speaker and advertising**

JC reported that, with the agreement of the officers, he was offering to lead the weekend this year. His subject would be Karen Armstrong's book *The Case for God*

### **6.4 Progress on the 2012 "Joint" conference with CRC and possibly others**

JC reported that there had been no further progress. Sonya Brown had discovered that Karen Armstrong was speaking at the World Council of Faiths conference in the UK in December 2011. This might provide an opportunity to approach her. JC hoped that having Helen Fisher of CRC on the PCN committee would help with the planning process.

### **6.5 Progress with targeted keynote speakers**

No progress was reported

## **7 Spong farewell gift and card signing**

MM asked for suggestions for a gift to give Bishop Spong as this was his last visit to Britain. It was agreed that a book about the UK might be suitable. MM agreed to buy one and to work within a £50 budget. All attendees at the AGM had signed his card.

## **8 PCN Britain book sales**

It was noted that PCN Britain has an existing agency with The Book Service. TC said this was established at the time of the Spong 2009 tour, though not used since. Adrian Alker had asked TC to set up a second agency with Marstons. TC reported that he was in the process of doing this.

## **9. Governance – Fit and Proper Persons Form**

PO presented this form to be signed by all Trustees and returned to him.

## **10. Communication:**

- i. PCN 2010 Leaflet – feedback – preparation for next edition
- ii. Committee speaking engagements

Discussion of these topics was deferred to a future meeting due to lack of time

## **11. Membership**

AV reported that the paid up membership was 451. This compared with a paid up membership of 426 at the same time last year. A further 57 were still receiving newsletters and would continue to be regarded as members until they had received a reminder, next month, that their membership was about to lapse. There had been 48 new members in 2011.

## **12. Future committee meetings**

This item had been discussed at length at the start of the meeting in order to ensure that it was given proper consideration by the maximum number of members.

The meetings schedule is now

9<sup>th</sup> July 11am – 4pm St Phillip's Church Leicester LE2 1HN.

16<sup>th</sup> Sept 1pm – 5.30pm St Andrews URC, Roundhay, Leeds, LS8 1DS

8<sup>th</sup> Oct 12.00 noon - 9<sup>th</sup> 14.00 Residential in Yorkshire if suitable accommodation available, PO and SG to liaise. **[Action PO and SG]**

14<sup>th</sup> January 11am – 4pm York, probably St Columba's URC. **[Action SG]**

3<sup>rd</sup> March 11am – 4pm, Birmingham, RT to seek accommodation **[Action RT]**

19<sup>th</sup> May AGM and Committee in York **[Action SG]**