

Registered Charity no. 249726

**Minutes of Council Meeting held at Salvation Army HQ, Violet Hill Road Stowmarket
Wednesday 7th March 2018 at 10 am**

Attendance: 39

1. Christine welcomed everyone to the meeting . She thanked Stowmarket & Coombes Branch, for the refreshments and thanks to Diana for setting out her MUe table, for the last time. Christine reported it was good to see Brenda Edrich at the meeting after her illness. Chris Mitchell then led us in worship.
2. Apologies: Margaret Goldstone, Sue Norrington, Sue Olver, Ann Wright, Rev'd Brian Lillistone, Anita Bimpson. Helen Pells St John's Ipswich: Rev Stuart Mitchell, Ann Berg, Jean Leech and Mary Stalley, Pam Ross, Joy Bolwell, Pat Sheppard , Mary Addington, Rachel Parsons, Hilary Pullen, Rev'd Marian Walker, Rev'd Helen Davy
3. Anna Vessey proposed , seconded by Sandra Griffiths, that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2017 as a true record. All were in favour and these were then signed as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising:** Christine informed the meeting that we would not be attending the Suffolk Show this as we had intended because the Show Ground could not offer us a space, Stuart had proposed at the Trustee meeting that we go no further with this and it was agreed by the trustees
5. **President's Report:** (attached)
 - I. A report had been circulated and there were no queries.
 - II. Christine thanked Beryl Mee for taking the Minutes at this meeting and at the recent Trustee meeting and her help in preparation for both meetings. All present showed their appreciation of Beryl's input and it was hoped that she would continue to do this.
 - III. Christine thanked 5 retiring Branch Leaders for the dedication they had given in service to MU ie. Anne Bennett at Westerfield, Maureen Springle at St Mary Stoke, Margaret Lowe at St Mary's Woodbridge, Brenda Edrich at Rattlesden and Linda Cadman at Campsea Ashe. She welcomed Rev Catherine Forsdike to Westerfield, Brenda Simmonds to St Mary Stoke, Jean Cobb and Rachel Jolley to St Mary Woodbridge, Linda Ginn to Campsea Ashe. For the moment Carol Gooderham continues as contact for Rattlesden.
 - IV. The list of vacancies is extensive and Christine challenged us to nudge and persuade candidates to come forward.
 - V. It was time to thank Diana's for her years of managing MUe and supplying our needs for cards, diaries, resources and so much else. Her constant appearance at our events is legend and she was applauded by the meeting and given a card of thanks.

At the AGM we are having a presentation of our Stories and our Heroes and Diane will certainly be among them.

- VI. **Good news** includes 9th August Mary Sumner Day Communion Service is to be a regular event and this special year there may be an exhibition as well at the Cathedral. Suggestions welcome. Liaison with Heather Hann, Schools Improvement Officer for the Diocesan MAT is exploring MU training possibilities for supporting parents. The Head Verger at the Cathedral is acquiring quotes for refurbishment of our Diocesan Banner

6. Treasurers Report:

A detailed report of the accounts had been sent to branch leaders prior to the meeting and copies passed around if required by Keith. Subscriptions were up from last year but this is because we increased the annual amount asked for but in fact, we have 60 less members than 2017. MUE gave 10% of takings to the Diocese – Thanks to Diana and Mike for what they have done.

Conferences were up on last year this is due to MSH having 4 conferences this year compared to 2 in previous years. It is due to the introduction of MULOA which is being run out hoping to increase membership. Some of these conferences are subsidised by MSH. Keith stated that the insurance has been paid; it was not on the account as MSH had been looking at getting a cheaper amount.

- 7. Information Days.** Christine informed the meeting that there were 3 Information Days planned for Branch Leaders and additional interested branch representatives to attend. These would be held in Ipswich, Fressingfield and Bury St Edmunds over the next few months.

The Letter of Assurance, received from MSH has been signed and returned but it was noted that our procedures required updating and policies put in place as a Duty of Care. These policies include Food Hygiene, Risk Assessment for all, including branch leaders completing one for their meeting place. Mothers Union is an organisation that cares about it's members and visitors.

Clare spoke regarding Data Protection and the fact that MSH were requiring member's details for their new database. They requested Names and addresses of members and if members were happy to give their e-mails. Our Diocese will still be able to hold details of members but these must be secure and password protected. Information about the extent of member information to be held at branches will be issued when this is certain. Details of the new Data Protection rules that come in to force in May will be one of the subjects discussed at the information days. We do not know yet all details of how MSH wish to run this out but should know in the next few weeks. The new databases will save postage for MSH as they hope to e-mail members instead of using the postal system but it is optional giving them your e-mail addresses. Val asked if this would stop MSH sending the same item several times over. Christine said it was the hope that this would be the case but at present names are held by individual MSH departments, which is why this happens. Ultimately, it will be a central database holding all details, thus preventing duplication.

The Annual Report from the conference in Edinburgh last year was available on the table at the back of the room for anyone who wished to collect for their branch.

8. Unit Reports:

Linda Ginn - was asked how the numbers for the Retreat are coming in. She said there were 10 deposits paid but they would like to have 15 to make the Retreat viable. Has leaflets available with booking forms if required.

Cathie – Thanks to branch leaders for their returns. There were 4 outstanding. She said she was amazed how much the diocese contributed to donations of knitted hats, neo-natal garments, toys and handiwork of all sorts.

Sandra – Woman's Refuge can no longer take toys, bedding and towels due to the fact they do not have sufficient storage. Other items ie. Toiletries etc. are still required by Ipswich & Bury St Edmunds. Val asked if sheets could be used for the making of drain bags etc. as she had a stock of these it was discussed and decided they would go to a charity shop where they would be needed as sheets.

Beryl – Mentioned Easyfundraising have said they have not had any contact with members lately and Beryl asked if members could please remember to go through the easyfundraising website when buying online. Beryl also said she has been in contact with Heather Hann Diocesan Education Officer with the suggestion of helping schoolchildren whose families find it difficult to allow their young people to go on School outings etc. by using AFIA to help these Families. They would complete the same application forms and would be checked by Beryl as usual to ensure they met the criteria. This is because we are not getting referrals from Social workers as much as we used to.

Chris – Diocesan members Quiet Day – 21st June 2018 All welcome.

Clare – There has been no Faith & Policy Watch from MSH. The new web site is good. Send any info re branches to Clare for input on website. Would welcome photos from branches.

Monica – There are now 39 Indoor members that she will be sending an Easter Card and Lynne Tembey's letter to. Monica thanked members for their support throughout the time she has been producing Pathways. Now handed over to Viv Buckle. Monica was applauded for her dedication to Pathways.

Jean – Prayer chain now praying for 7 members.

Diana – Christine gave Diana a card thanking her for many years' long and faithful service with MUE. Will be sadly missed and not an easy replacement.

Anna – Clergy from Debenham to lead the NSA quiet day. Will be having pop up shop again in July. Anna welcomed good bric á brac, jewellery, books, jams but not clothing.

Catherine – Holding meeting with deanery leaders in next few weeks. Will discuss ideas from Australian MU.

Janice – Plug for Walk with the 2 Bishops in Lent over 3 days.

9. MULOA

Christine gave a presentation regarding MULOA. This year's theme is 'In Mary Sumner's Footsteps' and CEO Bev Julien had told the Swanwick Conference that she had been inspired to join MU by Mary Sumner's radical attitudes. There were 2 unmarried mothers in her household which was unheard of in those days. She told the meeting how Mary Sumner was a pioneer for upping the age of marriage for girls from 12 to 16, also for the equal responsibility men had in nurturing their children in their Christian upbringings. Mothers Union and Children's Society are in partnership helping to make the world a safer place for young people. She said that at the conference she heard that in the London Diocese there was great concern for increase in knife crime and a film may be available, highlighting this issue.

The new constitution that had been signed at the conference divided the world into Zones. The Diocese of Carlisle(Scotland), Newcastle(York) and Birmingham(Canterbury) 3 Diocese had been charged with using MULOA and to report back to WWC to share their experiences, assess the materials and share their outcomes. We watched a DVD showing the DPs and their colleagues discussing what they had done and if it had worked for them. It was hoped that MULOA would be a means to increase membership and encourage a transforming influence in our localities.

Christine asked the members in the room to turn to their neighbour and tell each other 'What Mothers Union means to you', and later to share something that had gone well in the branch. These generated a lot of discussion.

MULOA Information sheet is attached to these minutes.

In MULOA discussion always asks the questions – Who, What and How

MULOA is global – praying across the world and makes for conversations to enthuse, re-energize, revive and creating a positive way forward.

What happens next in the Diocese? Christine would like to form a small Family Group (as they did at WWC) to experience the MULOA material; the group would include some Trustees and some others and meet soon in March. Hopefully this Family Group would roll-out a session with 2 or 3 branches and ask them to report back by the end of June. The MULOA team from MSH would like to know how we do. They have a further MULOA conference In July.

Resources of people and materials will be available to all interested Branches and Groups until 2020. The next move is OURS Christine's pledge at the Conference was gather, engage and grow. We then all said the MULOA prayer.

7. **Correspondence** – Beryl had received no correspondence but Christine had received a letter from Parliament asking Mothers Union to join with MP's in the House of Commons in the bid to get equal rights for both men and women - **Equalities**

Anna then led us in Midday prayers.

8. **Events** – Beryl to send an updated Diary of Events to all branch leaders and trustees.

Viv Buckle introduced herself as the person that will now be the editor of Pathways, asked that we send her articles and photos for the next edition.

5th April 2018 Discovery Day at St Michaels Martlesham Bring your own lunch £3pp to cover drinks.

12th April Lady day and Banner Service at St Andrews Church, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich

11.00am We welcome Lynne Tembey, our World Wide President who will give the address. Hall open from 9.30am for coffee, Bring and share lunch. Our WWP has a cheese intolerance so please flag dishes that contain cheese and the usual nuts warning in case there are other intolerances. There is a large car park at the church and 300 service sheets have been ordered. All Banner carriers are to sit together and be prepared to get up one-step with the banner. There will be time over Lunch for as many members as possible to meet Lynne She will also visit an Indoor member, Mission to Seafarers at Felixstowe, have supper with Trustees and Officers, have Tea and a tour at the Cathedral and visit North Suffolk Area to meet members there.

5th July 2018 AGM will be held at Morton Hall Bury St Edmunds at 7.30pm

18th October 2018 Healing Service at Clare Church 2.00pm

9. **Any Other Business**

- i. **Nomination Forms for new Diocesan President** were available from Beryl these are to be returned in sealed envelopes by 31st April ready to announce or vote for the new president at the AGM. Nominations forms for trustees will be available from 2nd June 2018 for return by 18th August 2018. Any elections necessary and announcement of the new Trustee board to happen at November Council Meeting.
- ii. Beryl gave a plug for the Holiday in Swansea. At the present there are only 10 names and deposits paid we need 25 to make the holiday viable. Please give this your greatest consideration. People do not have to be an MU member to come on this trip it is open to all.

- iii. Monica told the meeting that due to the popularity of the Wedding Fayres she has bought a small artificial tree and will hang hearts on it of couples who are marrying at Martlesham Church and they will be prayed for before their wedding. Chris said they also do this at Clare Church.
- iv. Ann Berg thanked all those that knit hats for seafarers. They are very grateful. There were 1500 knitted in 2017.

10. Christine listed the trustees that will need replacing in 2019:-

Diocesan President - Trustee
Action & Outreach Co-ordinator – Trustee
AFIA rep – Trustee
Sudbury Area rep – Trustee
Diocesan Secretary/Administrator - non voting
MUe (could be job share) – non voting
MU Chaplain -The new DP submits a name to the Bishop for his approval
Faith & Policy rep - Trustee.

11. Date of next meeting – 12th November 2018 at Hacheston Village Hall

Meeting closed at 12.38 with the Grace.

Signed.....

Dated.....