

MINUTES OF MEETING, 6 October 2014

Discussion on Allen Associates' October Presentation and its Follow Up

Present: Mick Bastable, Trevor Boyland, Geof Care, Caroline Darvell, Bryan Dedman & Riana Wellman.

The meeting began with an open prayer session focussing on the Church Vision and Redevelopment Project.

1. Introduction

Allen Associates (AA) will be presenting their Feasibility Study proposals to the fellowship at a special meeting on 21 October. The purpose of the present meeting was to review reactions to AA's precursor presentations to the RT and LT in September, discuss the format of the forthcoming special occasion and the next steps to take. Recommendations will be forwarded to the leadership for approval.

2. Review of Joint LT & RT Meeting, 10 September

2.1 Those of us present at the joint meeting felt that the leaders' reactions were encouragingly positive. In particular, none of the costs of redevelopment had attracted adverse comment and it was acknowledged that the priorities in the Architect's Brief had been properly addressed. The presentation itself was relaxed, easy to understand and enjoyable.

2.2 Concerns voiced at the joint meeting about the lack of outreach initiatives and volunteers to run them were repeated in this discussion, with RT recommending that a suitable project team should be appointed by the leadership so that the problems could be addressed with imagination and energy. A list of community engagement programmes obtained from church visits will be forwarded to assist.

**Geof/
Riana**

3. Special meeting

3.1 We recommend that the Church Vision should be the dominant feature of the meeting with Redevelopment seen as vital to its realisation.

3.2 We suggest the meeting should last about two hours, based on the following format:

- Introduction
 - o Church Vision (John Prothero)
 - o Redevelopment: recap and funding (Geof)
 - Allen Associates' Presentation
 - Questions & answers
 - Next Steps
- } 90 Minutes

3.3 The team was firmly of the opinion that the meeting should exclude any attempt to reach decisions. Rather it should be confined to possibilities, with the Q & A session limited to clarification and initial reactions. To reach decisions, members will need time to reflect on the presentation, study the proposals in more detail, pray, engage in further debate and possibly request more detailed consideration of some proposals. In the latter context, AA will bring along approximate costs to progress the various proposals to the next logical stage in the design process. (N.B. these costs are already included in the overall figures for the Feasibility Study).

3.4 AA will be asked to improve the legibility of their slides by increasing font size and colour-coding the main rooms for easy identification. They would also be asked for updated slides ahead of the presentation for inclusion in the hand-outs; revisions include a curved glass partition between Welcoming Area and Sanctuary and possible improvements in kitchen access and children's toilets.

Geof

3.5 To provide a record of the occasion we recommend:

3.5.1 stapled hand-outs (say 40 sets, each of about seven A4 sheets) to be made available immediately after the meeting, each sheet comprising a grey-scale floor plan of a proposal with its associated costs printed on the back.

**Geof/
Rosemary**

3.5.2 A full colour set of slides to be downloadable from the church website after the presentation.

Trevor

We identified some potentially contentious issues likely to be raised by the fellowship:

3.6 Desirable as the proposed alterations are to the ground floor, they would actually leave us with fewer rooms for community groups and activities like Family Church; the only solution is to extend above the Kings Hall. However, we felt AA's proposals in this respect needed revisiting because they were expensive for the space created.

3.7 Modern toilets are essential but they displace the Activities Room into the car park, thereby reducing spaces from five to three. This may elicit opposition, e.g. from those with limited mobility, and could curtail day-time outreach activities where visitors stay on the premises for long periods when public parking restrictions are enforced. However, for dropping off purposes, we are at no greater disadvantage than schools etc. where parking on pavements and yellow lines is unavoidable.

3.8 Pre-school is the largest current outreach activity but brings with it special requirements such as children's toilets and protected access. Some churches prefer to avoid these by favouring mothers and toddler sessions, where mothers rather than resident staff are responsible for children's wellbeing.

4 Next Steps

4.1 To facilitate understanding and discussion we propose:

4.1.1 to display A1-size drawings of the proposals, with artist's impressions, prepared by AA and mounted on moveable screens in the Kings Hall¹. This would be for a period of 2-3 weeks after the presentation. To encourage the congregation to engage with the project, we ask that refreshments are served after Sunday services here rather than in the Welcoming Area. This would impact other activities in the Kings Hall but hopefully to an acceptable extent. The costs and feasibility of this idea will be investigated.

Bryan/Trevor

4.1.2 a follow up plenary session in November at which members can debate the proposals in earnest. Distributing a questionnaire beforehand (but after 21 October) will enable members to indicate their preferences and pose questions in writing rather than verbally, as they prefer. The session should last perhaps 90-120 minutes. The team considers it impractical to combine this occasion with a bi-monthly members' meetings despite the doubling-up that results. To maintain momentum we prefer November rather than January for the session (December is effectively Christmas), recognising that doubling-up would in any case affect both months. Moreover, Geof can be present in November whereas holiday absence will prevent his attendance in January.

Geof

4.2 In addition to the above, we recommend to the Leadership that they:

4.2.1 arrange open prayer session(s) and/or prayers at house groups focussing on the Vision and Redevelopment.

Leaders

4.2.2 arrange an early discussion to address 2.2 above.

Leaders

4.2.3 set up a funding team once the intentions of the membership become known (and assuming this to be appropriate). Proposed tasks include contacting charitable givers with the aim of raising significant loans and grants.

Leaders

Caroline closed the meeting with prayer.

Geof Care
13 October 2014, Version 2

¹ The alternative of mounting them on the party wall between Kings Hall and the kitchen is feasible but would compress the viewing area undesirably.