# Minutes SF Council Meeting - 02/07/2021

Meeting Subject: Draft Constitution

Attendees:
Terry Baxter - Chair (TB), Andrew Briant (AB), Jim Crossley (JC), Richard Dunstan-Meadows (RDM), David Foster (DF), Sue Foster (SF), Roger Harrison (RH), Annette Lowe (AL), Ginny Smith (GS), Peter Smith (PS)
Apologies for Absence:
Gill Gray (GG), Marguerite Jackson (MJ), Peter Jackson (PJ), Bruce Petter (BP)

| Item | Notes | Action | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | TB opened the meeting with prayer | | |
| 2 | TB checked that members had received copies of various emails relating to the constitution. | | |
| 3 | TB expressed his view and desire that the final constitution should be, not only a reflection of what we´re currently doing, but also a statement of intent that the church should be open and transparent to all; not only the congregation and those within but also to the outside world. | | |
| 4 | TB asked the attendees for their views of the draft constitution | | |
| 5 | JC expressed his view that a lot of work had gone into it already and that the draft was OK as it was. We should accept it as it is. | | |
| 6 | GS raised the issue of the draft´s paragraph relating to church membership which states that it is a requirement for members to be either resident in Spain or live here for at least 3 months in a year. This would preclude those who have left Spain but still worship via Zoom. This would exclude her and PS and TB from membership and also the Worship Team.<br>DF raised the point that also Zoom should not be specified as alternative virtual meeting platforms may be used in the future.<br><br>It was agreed that these were valid points and that the paragraph should be re-written. | Paragraph 7 to be re-written. | |
| 7 | DF expressed his view that the wording of the constitution should state firm and definite policies and that we should aim to make it a document that requires a minimum of revision over time.<br>This was generally agreed.<br>TB suggested that we ask BP to re-draft the constitution document in line with the views expressed and that we meet again to discuss this. | | |
| 8 | TB suggested the addition of a clause in the constitution that only allowed the appointment of non-stipendiary clergy. The objective being to preclude the appointment of anyone who may want to change or use the church to their own personal view or style and to maintain | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | its allegiance to its membership.<br>RDM agreed but thought that there could be such a danger from any individual, ordained or lay, with sufficient influence and persuasion. We need to ensure, in the constitution, that we maintain a sense of order so that issues are discussed and debated.<br>TB asked if we should not invest as much powers we can with the committee (sic Council) and as little as we can with the Rector. In his experience, the majority of problems with the way churches ´work´usually come from ´the top´. Somebody who is ´running´ the church sees Worship or the organisation in a particular way<br>AB suggested that Bishop Carlos should be consulted first on the issue of future appointments and that he may have inputs into the candidates and the procedure. We don´t know the typical vacancy process of the IERE (Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church / Iglesia Española Reformada Episcopal).<br>TB advised that the constitution as a whole would need to be signed off by Bishop Carlos anyway. His is very keen that we make sure that this church should be able to govern itself and not be pushed into a direction that it doesn't want to go.<br>GS stated that, in the past we have been victims of secrecy, not being informed or allowed to comment on what is going on. Our constitution should combat that and everyone should be informed about what's going on and be able to question it and that that level of control can never happen again.<br>TB agreed, highlighted the difficulties of doing that but said that we must not let the minority be left behind and should do our utmost to ensure their needs are met. | | |
| 9 | TB advised that there were inputs from BP regarding corrections to errors in the script of the draft constitution that need to be made. | | |
| 10 | RDM said that each section of the constitution would lead-on to different ´policies´. We cannot put everything into this document (the constitution) but a policy document that could be given to newcomers could be created which would give them an understanding of who we are and how we work. | | |
| 11 | RDM asked if anyone had found any omissions in the draft underlining that there was no mention as to how we work and align with other churches. A discussion ensued. | | |
| 12 | RH suggested, a ´way forward´ in that he had taken notes of the comments made and would send them in a revision of what we already have to BP and RDM for their review and then present it back to Council.<br><br>This was agreed. | **All** to send notes, comments and revisions to RH for inclusion | ASAP |
| 13 | The meeting closed with the Grace | | |