

THE THIRD ORDER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS

European Province

CHAPTER MINUTES

13th – 14th June, 2014

Present:

Trustees:

Averil Swanton (Minister Provincial) **(AS)**

John Reynolds (Provincial Treasurer) **(JR)**

Howard Mcfadyen (Provincial Secretary) **(HM)**

Jackie Alexander (Link Tertiary, Central and Eastern England) **(JA)**

Tim Higgins (Link Tertiary, Wales, Severn, W. Midlands and Marches) **(TH)**

Jan Davies (Link Tertiary, Yorkshire and East Midlands) **(JD)**

Carol Robertson (Link Tertiary, Scotland and Ireland) **(CR)**

Roger Healey (Link Tertiary, Central Southern England and the Channel Islands) **(RH)**

John Wiltshire (Link Tertiary, London and South-East England) **(JW)**

Hazel Sharp (Link Tertiary, South-West England) **(HS)**

Jeremy Plummer (Link Tertiary, North-East and North-West England) **(JP)**

Peter Dixon (Provincial Novice Guardian) **(PD)**

Paul Bodenham (Provincial Formation Guardian) **(PB)**

Chris Petrie (Provincial Communications Coordinator) **(CP)**

Non-Trustees Present:

Jan-Eric Jonsgarden (representing Sweden Area) **(JJ)**

Jennifer Robinson (Minutes Secretary) **(JRob)**

1. Minister Provincial's Introduction and Preliminary Matters:

1.1 AS welcomed all those present, particularly **HM**, after his recent illness. She opened the meeting with prayer. **JA** volunteered to write the summary report from Chapter to TON.

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from: Christer Sall (Area Minister, Sweden) (**CS**)

1.3 Minutes of the last Meeting: Approved by Chapter and signed by **AS** - one correction made; para.19 on page 9 - words "the contemplatives' newsletter" to replace "Little Portion".

1.4 Matters arising from the Minutes:

Tertiaries moving to new Areas. A "named welcomer" in the new Area –proposed by the LTs' meeting in March 2014 –**Agreed by Chapter** to be particularly helpful if there is a change of Area and ANGs for novices.

LTs to encourage Tertiaries to make contributions to "Little Portion". **Action.....LTs.**

The **Contemplatives Steering Group** - Chapter suggested a copy of their newsletter be sent to **HM**, so that he could forward it to Chapter members. (This action is superseded by Agenda 15).

1.5 Correspondence:

Will Capel, the Archivist, reported he was missing some sets of Chapter minutes. He hoped they might be traced by publicising this. **HM** is seeking to help. **Action.....HM.**

The Chaplain to the Armed Forces is retiring from that office. It is not required under Statute, so it will be determined if there is still a need for that role. **HM** will try to clarify this by contacting Tertiaries, who are currently Chaplains in the Forces. **Action.....HM.**

2.0 Link Tertiaries' Reports:

2.1 London and South-East Cluster and Finland:

It was agreed that a proposal to make Finland a TSSF Area will be discussed at the February 2015 meeting. **Ongoing Agenda item.** **Action.....HM.**

Sweden has decided that it would like to send a representative to every Chapter meeting.

AS suggested that the new Areas in mainland Europe should work together and possibly create a new Cluster, and ultimately a new Province.

JJ was asked to convey Chapter's thanks to Christer Sall for his report. **Action.....JJ**

3.1 Minister Provincial's Report:

AS -proposed **Area Teams (ATs)** and **LTs** be encouraged to review Area boundaries. **CP** is revising a map showing the number of Tertiaries in each Area. Consideration is to be given to Area communities; size and urbanisation of areas; transport linkage etc. Two **LTs**, **JP** and **HS** agreed to take this forward. **CR** offered to take over from **HS** after she steps down from Chapter. **Action.....JP & HS.**

AS suggested the provision of support material for Local Group Conveners (LGCs). She proposed a pilot scheme in Devon. To be discussed at a future meeting.

Ongoing Agenda item

Action HM.

AS understood the handover and induction to Chapter was unsatisfactory for some Provincial Officers. After discussion **Chapter unanimously agreed** that there should be a longer handover period. The discernment process to be put in hand after a person's seventh Chapter meeting (unless a Tertiary has reached a personal decision before then), and the outgoing officer should provide support for the new incumbent for one Chapter interval. To be included in the job description, as an expectation of Office.

Action . HM &CP.

It was agreed that future Chapter Minutes should be more concise. They should include key points in a debate, any actions required, and any resolutions passed or decisions made. Key points from **LTs** reports should be included. **Action HM & JRob.**

AS had attended a joint Chapter meeting with the First Order. At this it had been decided that **PEG** should be dissolved and that the work it did should be done differently. Bro. Joseph Emmanuel is taking over the administration of the work.

AS has signed the renegotiated contract for the **TO's** bulk order of the "Franciscan".

The three Orders are in agreement about the Bishop whom they would wish to have as the next Bishop Protector, but the appointment has not yet been confirmed.

3.2 Provincial Formation Guardian's Report:

The weekend on spiritual direction in June is heavily over-subscribed. **JP** is seeking a possible venue in northern England for a similar event to be held there. **Action.....JP.**

(see also Agenda items 6, 7 & 8).

3.3 Provincial Novice Guardian's Report:

PD proposes to supply enquirers with a loose-leaf folder to stay with them throughout their life in the Third Order. The aim is to ensure that all are properly prepared and that their progress in formation is recorded incrementally. This revision of the initial formation process is to be further discussed and should be complete in 18 months' time.

The revised version of TANG should include both mention of the central marks of profession and the centrality of the Eucharist. Material for the latter is to be re-written by PD and others. **Action.....PD.**

3.4 Provincial Secretary's Report:

CP agreed to continue as Returning Officer for elections after standing down as Communications Co-ordinator (PCC). **Chapter approved** this delegation of duties.

3.5 Provincial Communications Coordinator's Report:

CP expressed thanks to Roger Marks who had come to the end of his term of office as Editor of TON. He will be succeeded by Sue Charles. **Chapter approved this appointment.**

Third Order Resources have received requests from non-Tertiaries who wish to subscribe to "Little Portion". An annual subscription of £8 had been suggested. **Chapter unanimously agreed** this. **Chapter also agreed** that TSSF publicity material should be available free of charge to Areas.

Prayer requests - **Chapter agreed** that personal details of people's lives should not be made public.

Chapter agreed the web-team should make decisions about its priorities. It was pointed out that not everybody finds the website easy to navigate.

Chapter agreed that Area Officers should run up to 6 months in tandem with their successor, in order to provide practical guidance to the new incumbent. (See 3.1).

Action..... PB; HM & CP.

Chapter agreed the Membership Secretary needs to be informed of people on leave of absence.

Action LTs.....(For Area Teams.)

Areas - to be reminded to reply to Membership Secretary's requests for information and provide the correct information for inclusion in the next intercessions list. **Action...LTs.**

4. Provincial Treasurer's Report:

JR tabled his report. He wishes to relinquish his duties before the end of the next financial year and follow this with a long hand-over period with his successor. **Chapter agreed** that he will help his successor with the handover until October 2015. **CP** will send out a request for Nominations after this Chapter, with TON. **Action.....CP.**

JR is also looking at donations from Tertiaries in the Order to identify those who have not made contributions. Areas will be asked to confirm findings and then follow up with these individuals. **ActionJR.**

A policy is needed for the use of fund 'reserves'. **Chapter Agreed** the requirement. It will be considered at next Chapter. **AS** pointed out that, as a Trust, we should keep sufficient

funds in hand to maintain the Order for six months. To be put on **Ongoing Agenda**.

Action.....HM.

The film project, with the accompanying study guide, will be costly. Grants have been applied for. It was proposed by **AS** and seconded by **JP** that a grant of £10,000 should be given to this project, on the understanding that it is being produced by an entirely independent limited company and is not sponsored by TSSF. **Chapter agreed unanimously** with this.

Chapter agreed that expenses involved in running Sweden as an Area will be supported by a 'financial float' and reconciled with the Prov. Treasurer at the end of the Financial year. Other non-UK Areas will be treated in the same way if appropriate. **Action.....JR.**

JR to seek confirmation from cost centres as to validity of the 2014/15 budget, based on 2013/14 budget outturn at end of this last financial year. **CP** will liaise with **JR** costs which his team is likely to incur during the financial year. **LTs** are to feed-back on expenses of Cluster days. **JR** also undertook to clarify which funds are 'restricted' or represented bequests for a designated purpose.

Action.....JR, LT & Prov. Officers.

The budget will be considered in detail at October 2014 Chapter. **ActionAll Chapter.**

5. Chapter Handbook:

This had largely been approved by Chapter already. **HM** will add an amendment about the changes to his role and the discernment process. **CP** needs to receive any other queries as a matter of urgency. It is also important to know about any mediators within the Order: **LTs** to emphasise this to Area Teams. **Action.....LTs, HM & CP.**

Annual reports on the safeguarding and Complaints and Appeals policies

Chapter discussed activity under these two policies. There were no safeguarding issues not previously noted at Chapter, and no formal complaints in the last year. Nonetheless these discussions constituted the first of an Annual Report on each of these policies.

Action....HM.

6. General Chapter:

PB spoke about the responses received so far to his and **AS's** article in "Little Portion". Two themes seemed to be emerging: mission and convocation. We need to realise our goal of being a "bottom-up" organisation, led by our membership. It might have to be a representative gathering from the Areas, smaller than York, giving more people the opportunity to put forward their views locally. Possibly, there could be a representative from every local group. **PB** suggested General Chapter should be a process resulting in the passing of resolutions, so there would be a legacy from the gathering. A larger gathering, however, required a large number of volunteers to help organise it and would be more expensive.

A further option would be a smaller gathering of Area representatives. People would come to this as delegates, just for a day, which would be more economical.

It may be necessary to have two events, the second one being a mission event; this could be held at a weekend and could be open to all.

TH felt that the two issues of mission and convocation belong together, and we should face the challenge of them both.

It might be possible to use funds from the Order's reserves to finance the day. **PB** agreed to bring some costings to the next Chapter meeting. **Action.....PB.**

Chapter agreed the Steering Group should include one representative from each cluster and should be invited to develop proposals for the General Chapter.

Chapter approved these proposals and endorsed the actions to be taken. **Action.....PB.**

7. Annual Report Form

PB introduced this item as being the annual report by Tertiaries on their keeping of their rule of life. Two points at issue are the confidentiality of the report and the consistency in format used in the different Areas. He explained the concept of the cycle of review, report and renewal. There was discussion on whether the report form should be common to all members of the Order, or whether forms are to be individual to each Area.

The mind of Chapter was that there should be consistency between the Areas, and a suggestion was made that the form could be in two parts: one common to all the Order and the other to differ for each Area. It was suggested that the quote from Ken Norian's pastoral letter, setting out the four marks of profession, should be put on the form.

It was thought that Tertiaries expect that the annual report form is to be treated as confidential, but to whom? This needs to be shown clearly on the form, together with the purpose of the form. It was suggested that the form ask if there were information which individuals would not wish to be shared with the Area Team. **PB & Formation Team** will produce a draft form for the next Chapter. **Action.....PB.**

8. Attendance at Area and Local Group Meetings:

This issue is tied up with the matter of renewal. If a Tertiary is not present at the Francistide meeting to renew, and no renewal takes place for two years consecutively, the Area Team (AT) must then enquire into the reasons for this. The situation could be regularised through leave of absence. **PB** will draw up guidance for dealing with such cases. **Action.....PB.**

9. Provincial Elections:

HM distributed proposed changes to Nominations, Election forms, and guidance, with his report to Chapter. The process of obtaining nominations for successors to **JA** and **HS** is already in hand. Those for **CP** and **JR** need to be started. **Chapter agreed that HM** and

CP will liaise and agree the final detail of wording of the forms; AS will then be notified of outcome. **Action.....HM & CP.**

10. Election to Profession:

The following were elected to Profession, with prayer:

Mary Salter	Herts. and Beds.
Evelyn Cambray	Wyevern
Daniel Berry	Avon
Alan Moore	Severn
David Depledge	Blackmore Vale
Nigel Thomas	Blackmore Vale
Kay Palmer	East Anglia
Ann Maw	East Anglia.

14. JPIC Report

For a future Friday evening discussion. TH will produce bullet points and lead discussion. **Action.....TH.**

15. Contemplatives/Solitaries:

Chapter agreed that a 'call to the solitary life' should involve the whole of a person's life, but all Tertiaries must, first experience and participate in community life within their Area, after profession, before they apply to be considered as a solitary. The Area Team Handbook needs to be revised. **PB** will take this forward. **Action.....PB.**

JD will ask that the solitaries' newsletter is to be sent to all members of Chapter, and this may form a basis for further discussion. **Action.....JD.**

It was agreed that leave of absence is not intended for people who are physically unable to attend meetings. An Area can agree with an individual that a person does not attend meetings for one year, but that does not necessarily constitute leave of absence. **PB** will include this information in the novice training material and make it available to all Tertiaries. **Action.....PB.**

17. Minister Provincial's Brief Summary:

AS reported that Franciscans International is solvent and stable; this is the last time she will report on this organisation as her term of office is coming to an end. The recruitment process for the appointment of a new Director is in hand and **AS** is taking part in it.

She reminded Chapter members that reports for the next meeting, containing key issues for debate or decision, should be submitted two weeks before the meeting and said that it would be helpful if they are accompanied by an estimate of the time needed for discussion of the reports.

18. Summary of Chapter Proceedings:

JA will write a summary of the business of the meeting, which will be circulated to all Chapter members and then be published in TON.

19. Dates and Location of future Chapter meetings: (all to take place at Bishop Woodford House, Ely).

2014

17th – 19th October Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representatives

2015

19th – 20th February MP and Link Tertiaries' meeting

20th– 21st February Full Chapter

12th – 13th June Full Chapter

16th – 18th October Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representatives

2016

11th – 12th February MP and Link Tertiaries' meeting

12th – 13th February Full Chapter

16th June Quiet Day

17th – 18th June Full Chapter

14th – 16th October Full Chapter, with SSF, CSF and OSC representatives.

Future and Ongoing Agenda Items

Size of TSSF Areas & developments in Europe.** Finland as a TSSF Area.	Feb 2015
Training & provision of training material for LG Conveners. Conduct and process of Elections**	
What Areas are asked to Report on at Francistide + LT's reports. Policy for use of TSSF Fund reserves.	Oct. 2014.
Upper/lower age limits for Novices. TSSF General Chapter.**	
Leave of Absence.	Feb. 2015.
Annual Report on Safeguarding and policy	June 2015
Annual Report on Complaints, Appeals and policy	June 2015
** Denotes ongoing items.	