

**ST. JOHN FISHER
PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

8th April 2019

Minutes

Present: Mr S. Bruton; Mrs P. Lindsay; Father Hyacinth; Mrs J. Brook; Mrs M. Russell; Deacon Fred; Mr J. Golden (Chairman); Mr S. Deane; Deacon Tom; Father Matthias; Mr M. Lobo; Dr. P. Nash and Mr P Spooner (Secretary).

1. Opening of the Meeting with Prayer: Fr Matthias opened the meeting with a prayer and the Chairman welcomed those attending.

2. Apologies for Absence: These had been received from Mrs J.O'Neill-Ford; Mr R. Roy; Sister Catherine; Mrs J. Benedict ; Mr E. O'Connell and Mrs U. O'Byrne.

3. Acceptance of Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting (as notified by an additional paragraph previously circulated) were accepted. Chairman to sign a copy.

4. Matters Arising from the 28th January 2019 meeting:

No matters arising save Simon Bruton raising question of why certain matters to be reported by him were not on the agenda as numbered items. The Chairman clarified that this was principally because the matters he wished to talk about were now effectively Finance Committee matters and outside our remit.

5. Review of Parish inclusion policy:

The meeting was indebted to Simon Bruton for his helpful notes which formed the basis of an in-depth look at this document. This was discussed as a mixture of what needs to change in the Policy document and what needs to change in reality. The Chairman made the point that some changes needed to be made to the document and some need simply to be implemented such as the marking of the car park. Mark Lobo suggested that a scheme be proposed of what they are and how any problem should be remedied.

The chairman suggested he should meet with Simon Bruton to discuss the overhaul of the document for presentation and approval at the next meeting.

Action; Preparation by chairman of a definitive document for the next meeting

Detailed Points:

2.8 This does require some thought as stated above

3.1.4 The toilets and baby changing facilities in the Church and hall need to be reviewed to confirm they are suitable for use by disabled people. Emergency cords may need to be fitted.

3.1.6 Simon Bruton thought that the wording of this clause could be seen as a barrier to some wheelchair users so the words 'invited' to be substituted with 'may wish'. The word motorised was also to be deleted. Pippa Lindsay wished to raise the problem of people parking next to the wall near the hall as this inconvenienced a great number of people particularly those with mobility difficulties.

3.2.1 This has been installed. The day chapel needs to have speaker reconnected but those with hearing difficulties should when possible be directed to the Church where the induction loop system is working well.

- 3.2.3 This question was considered but so far there has been no requests for such. The Equality Act indicates it should be provided only if there is an identified need.
- 3.3.3 Questioned whether the use of braille was needed as such and so it was determined to change the word to alternative.
- 3.3.4 Large print copies of Fishermans Herald are now available and positive comments have been received from the congregation

Additional work on the document needs to be done so that the Chairman can present after consultation a final document to the next meeting for approval

6. Father Matthias Requests

Father Matthias indicated that he was concerned to explore the possibility of hiring the hall commercially and the implications of the same. He believed that this was something he would discuss with the Finance committee. The Parish has had opportunities for hiring out in the past but they have not been taken up. It might involve capital expenditure in decorating the toilets and the like. Hitherto we have generally in the past not hired out the Hall, but it is used after funerals and the like by parishioners for a donation.

There was considerable concern amongst members at the state in which the hall and in particular the kitchen was being left and the accessibility of all the cupboards was being denied as a result of the lack of available keys.

Melissa Russell made the comment that the hall needs to be a fit and safe place so we must sort this out first. The diocese has sent a consultant to advise on Health and Safety who can suggest what we need doing. Fr Matthias indicated that he was writing to all keyholders confirming that there must be copies of all keys in the priests' house so that full access is provided.

Action: It was determined to do what we could to bring the hall up to standard and then to review the situation again. Paul Spooner to ascertain what minimum standard, if any, the local authority would anticipate.

Paul Spooner indicated Precision have provided a template 'Parish Premises Terms and Conditions Agreement' but this will require amongst other things that we adhere to an equal opportunities policy which could mean that we will let the hall to anyone.

7. Update on Parish Website and Facebook:

Melissa Russell indicated that the take up of invitation to the Facebook group was slow but now Lucy Baxter had volunteered to help there was cautious optimism that things would improve

Action: To proceed as previously determined for time being

8. Use of Noticeboard in Narthex:

Paul Spooner indicated that he believed the Noticeboard was overcrowded and needed to be "revamped". He suggested an additional noticeboard (in matching style) on the Day Chapel wall for permanent notices such as rotas which might free up space on the overcrowded main board.

The Chairman said he thought if appropriate for there to be plastic holders for all the leaflets similar to what is found in libraries.

Deacon Tom said nothing should stay up for a limited time and permission for use should be asked from the Parish clergy, but he suspected this did not always happen!

The general feeling of the meeting was that someone should be appointed to monitor and take charge of supervising the situation.

The Chairman thought this could be a task for the communications group.

There was some concern that displaying the minutes of PAC meetings on the window was not such a good idea. However, as they are of a significant size and need to be up for 2-3 weeks this is still the only real site where they can be placed. Simon Bruton pointed out that it was the only place that wheelchair users could read the Minutes as the notice boards are too high

The Chairman also thought we might consider electronic signage in the future and that there should be also consideration for improvement to the signage to the repository.

Action: New noticeboard to be purchased and installed and placed outside the Day chapel. Review the notices being put up and monitored by the communications group

9. *Update on CCTV in Narthex:*

CCTV can now be viewed in the parish office. The Narthex has been found to be open on Fridays as well when this was not agreed. It was agreed to revert to the previous arrangement of Monday to Thursday during office hours until the next meeting. Sister Catherine appears to be principally responsible for handling the keys for locking up and will be asked to ensure the doors are locked on Fridays

10. *Implications of new constitution (election of Chairman & Deputy):*

New constitution is now in place and steps were taken to appoint a new vice Chairman. Julie Brook agreed to stand and was duly elected

11. *Acceptance of reports from current working groups and any feedback from PAM:*

The general consensus was that attendance at the Parish General meeting was dismally disappointing particularly after Melissa had produced such a good buffet of food and wine which was largely wasted. It was determined by the PAC that the only contentious matter from the PAM the sanctuary statues and the siting would not be discussed and the status quo would prevail.

The Chairman tried to talk about the working groups' progress, but matters became confusing.

Engaging Parish Youth – Judith Benedict reported to the chairman that she did not have the time to work on this. She had a young family and for this reason was not able to help in running the youth club. The chairman indicated that he would endeavour to find someone else to take over

Social Committee – Pippa Lindsay indicated she unfortunately had not got any time to work on this and the chairman said he would find someone else

Improving communications – As Davide Buttaci had stood down it would be necessary to find someone else to take over the group

Health safety and Fire – As Eoin O'Connell had been inordinately busy at work for the last 3 months, he had not been able to work on this

12. *Receipt of parish organisations' reports from PAM and any updates:*

There were no reports from the working groups beyond what was contained in the reports sent for the PAM apart from a report from Simon Bruton. A copy of his reports is attached in Appendix A

a.) Hall Users Committee (Simon Bruton)

Simon Bruton said that despite a number of requests he was still waiting for replies from a number of the uniform groups. The general feeling in the meeting was that this could not go on forever so they should be warned that their wishes, if they have any might well be ignored.

b.) Youth Group (Father Hyacinth)

The youth group are planning a disco.

c.) Music Group (Simon Bruton)

The Music group is producing a new white book. There was an element of concern about the costs of purchasing some of the music needed for the new white book as the Accounts were showing that we were running at a loss. There are 12 hymns which the music group would like to use in the white book. Melissa indicated that for such a small number we could use in house desk top publishing. Simon Bruton updated his thorough reports previously circulated and the current version is attached at Appendix A.

There was further discussion about whether there was any Hymns in Hymns Old and New to be produced and added to the new white book. We have no copyright problem with such hymns but this could be lost if we disposed of them. Music in Hymns Old and New is sometimes more user friendly than Laudate and certain members thought it would be appropriate to retain them.

There was an element of concern about what this was all going to cost as the accounts were showing we were running at a loss.

d.) Evangelisation (Julie Brook)

Julie Brook confirmed that there had been one meeting. There is a plan to rededicate the country to Our Lady on the feast of Our Lady of Walsingham next year and a small travelling replica of the statue has been obtained for parishioners to have in their homes (for a while). There is another meeting planned for the 2nd May, but this does not need to be advertised.

e.) Unlock Walk – Low Saturday – 27th April

Chairman confirmed that this was a 7 mile walk round Merton visiting various Churches including John Fisher when the walkers need to have their cards stamped to verify, they have visited. Volunteers to act as “welcomers” and helpers are needed. Peter Nash indicated that he can do 10-12 in the morning and Pippa Lindsay can help Dominic in the afternoon.

13. Any Other Business including Organ update and plans for new outdoor signs in car park:

- i) Chairman reported that he had been told by a number of people that they thought that the priest read too many notices at the end of Mass.
- ii) **Bidding Prayers.** Chairman said anyone may submit a bidding prayer and it is refreshing to have ‘topical’ ones
- iii) **Search for Organ**

Simon Bruton as shown in Appendix A reported that after visiting a Church in Hammersmith, where they were able to see the Viscount Organ in action, that the working group were happy to recommend this one which is in fact the cheapest option that they looked at.

The Chairman asked about dismantling the current organ and taking it away. Simon thought we could recycle the pipes. It might encourage someone to remove the organ for free provided they could have them.

Location of new organ was briefly discussed but Simon indicated that the current location of the console in the choir loft was probably the best place to put it and it was not suited to the side chapel. Our Church had not been designed that way.

Simon did not know what we would find when the organ pipes were removed and what potentially would be necessary to refurbish the choir loft.

Deacon Tom thought it would be good that the full extent of the stained-glass window would then be seen.

Mark Lobo indicated that the next finance meeting would be in early May when the financial implications could be assessed.

iv) **Return to the Car Park**

There was some brief inconclusive discussion about how the car park should be painted and whether any yellow boxes should be painted in. The problem is that people simply ignore them.

v) **Canon O'Donnell's Legacy**

i) Simon Bruton asked what the situation was with ascertaining the provisions of Canon O'Donnell's legacy. Paul Spooner confirmed that the will had been found and had been confirmed as the last will.

ii) Simon asked whether the lights behind the stained-glass stations of the cross could be enhanced using money from the legacy. We need to consider what would be the best way forward. Deacon Tom indicated that they had a good effect at night. The last refurbishment of the lights in the Church had not done a particularly good job.

14. **Date of Next Meeting:** Confirmed at Monday 8th July 2019.

15. **Closing Prayer:** A suitable closing prayer from Julie Brook brought the lengthy meeting to an end.

Appendixes

A St John Fisher – Music groups and Hall users

St John Fisher PAC Music Groups Report

The 9.30am group have by joined by Bettina who is playing the piano accordion. We would welcome any more musicians!

The work on the supplementary/new white book has stopped at present. There are currently 16 hymns identified to go in this booklet and these have all been checked for copyright and the purchasing information for the music identified. No more hymns have been requested yet, awaiting more information from Mary Farrell and St John Fisher School. Mary Farrell has indicated that the supplementary book should be published for Easter. I will send the hymns with the correct copyright information to Sister Catherine through Melissa. Melissa will need to purchase the rest of the music that was identified for these at the beginning of March.

The cost of the music is a concern. To purchase music for 2 hymns 'Clap Gloria' and 'Rise and Shine' is going to be £100 + postage for 4 copies.

We have already purchased the Bernadette Farrell songbook for 4 hymns at a cost of £52 + postage. Other music has been downloaded for varying costs.

11am Music Group

The eleven o'clock is still desperately short of members and despite many requests are still short of singers.

Organ

The work investigating replacing the pipe organ with a digital church organ has almost concluded. The group has now visited 3 manufacturers showrooms and three church installations. A lot of time and effort is going into this research as the decision to be taken is an important one taken for the future of the church and its music.

Following these visits, the group is happy to recommend the purchase and installation of a Viscount organ. The original quote is now over 90 days old and the company has said that they would like to re-visit SJF

Church to discuss and confirm the speaker locations, this will be arranged shortly. The 2 churches visited today both commented on the very good after sales service from Viscount Organs.

The placement of the organ console has been questioned again by John Golden. Consulting with Andy Knap and Kevin Deegan it is felt that there isn't a suitable area to position the console at the front of the church. Ideally the organ would be placed at the side of the church a few rows back from the front facing the altar. This would enable the organist to see the celebrants and also the choir. The choir would be facing into the main body of the church so that they could see the organist. Unfortunately, the space in the church is limited so this isn't really an option.

One way around this would be to place the console in the side chapel but this would mean the choir would have their backs to the organist so a separate conductor would be needed. The console would be taking up space that is currently used for baptisms and this could be a problem.

Once the Viscount quote has been finalized, I will complete my report with the group recommendations for submission to the PAC and the Finance Committee.

Hall Refurbishment/Rebuilding Report

The feedback from the hall users is still not complete as 3 uniformed groups – the Brownies, Cubs and Scouts have not returned the questionnaire, despite chasing 3 times. This has been very frustrating. As time is moving on, we will proceed with the information we have and assume that these groups have no special or storage requirements. In order to clarify some aspects, I am going to ask the members of the steering group to undertake some small tasks to help with the report summary of the responses from the questionnaires. The small committee will need to meet again and discuss the summary, and to decide where we go from here.

The current hall usage is dictated mainly by the fact that we only have one usable space – the main hall area. The uniformed groups use the hall extensively, meeting in the evenings and restricts other activities in the evenings. There are 2 'free' evenings during the week - Thursday and partially Mondays, after 7pm.

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