



Diocese of Nottingham: The Good Shepherd Parish Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 15th June 2023

In attendance: Phil Bray (Chairperson), Francesca Lynch, Philip Martin, David Staiano, Oliver Wastell and Canon Philipp Ziomek.

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Philip.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from John Doherty and Oliver Kuras.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 2nd March 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and will be posted on the parish noticeboard and website. **ACTION 22/23: Philip** to action accordingly.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

- a) *Use of the parish community centre-*** At Phil's request, it was agreed that the proposed analysis of the parish centre occupancy levels be carried forward to a future meeting of the committee.
- b) *Parish database support-*** Oliver advised that the new parish database was now ready for installation and that a briefing session for Canon Philipp and Francesca had been diared for 30th June 2023.
- c) *Membership of the Committee-*** Canon Philipp is still to pursue a possible replacement, following Jonathan Newman's resignation from the committee. It was agreed that it would be helpful, if possible, to use this as an opportunity to address the current gender imbalance on the committee. **ACTION 23/23: Canon Philipp** to follow up accordingly.
- d) *Brian Huthwaite-*** It was reiterated that, if possible, Brian's outstanding work over the years as the parish's unpaid accountant should be appropriately recognised and, to that end, Canon Philipp will investigate the possibility of Brian receiving the Benemerenti medal (Papal award). It was explained however that the process involved can be lengthy timewise. **ACTION 24/23: Canon Philipp** to pursue accordingly.

- e) ***New parish website update***- Phil advised that he and Canon Philipp had met with Mitch from Coda Education and that a three-way on-line scoping meeting was to be rearranged for next week following the enforced cancellation of the meeting scheduled this morning. It was confirmed that we were aiming for the new website to be launched in October 2023.

Meanwhile, Phil offered to create a parish document showing the passwords and access/backup arrangements for the parish social media outlets (Facebook and Twitter) as well as the Google business listing). It was agreed that ultimately the ownership of all such outlets should be in the parish's name, with appropriate management arrangements in place. **ACTION 25/23:** (a) **Phil** to action; (b) **Canon Philipp** to support this approach by providing Phil with the parish Twitter account password; and (c) **Francesca** to confer with Carmel Ryan and provide Phil with details of the Google business listing access arrangements.

- f) ***Coffee machine for the parish centre***- Francesca reported that she is in the process of seeking some further quotes for the proposed coffee machine and will bring these to the committee's next meeting for consideration. **ACTION 26/23:** **Francesca** to action accordingly.

5. Annual Return 2022/23

Francesca tabled the latest draft copy of the parish's Annual Return for 2022/23.

It was explained that the parish had migrated to the diocese's web-based on-line parish accountancy system (OPAS) from November 2022. Consequently, the Annual Return for 2022/23 is a combination of data drawn from the parish's own accountancy records for the period April-October 2022 inclusive and from OPAS for the period November 2022-March 2023. Several anomalies have been identified with some of the data thus produced, viz:

- Income- Rents Received- should be £0. The current amount showing on OPAS (£6,127) probably includes hall hire income which is not "assessable" income and needs moving to the Hall Hire line in the non-assessable income category. Otherwise, this income will incorrectly be used in the calculation of the diocesan quota payment for the parish.
- A comparison between the parish's opening balances for 2022/23 and the closing balances as at 31st March 2023 produces a net "surplus" of £94,437 not the £95,691 shown on OPAS. It is not immediately clear why there is this discrepancy.

Francesca is seeking advice from Rheann Byrne at the diocese to see whether these issues can be resolved. There is some urgency to this given the deadline of 30th June 2023 for the Return to be independently examined, signed off and submitted to the diocese. Thereafter, a summary will be produced by Philip for our parishioners.

Meanwhile, it was agreed that it would be helpful if Canon Philipp could invite John Doherty (who acts as the independent examiner of the parish's Return) to

link with Francesca as soon as possible so she can explain the background to this year's Return. **ACTION 27/23: Canon Philipp** to contact John Doherty accordingly.

Canon Philipp also advised that the parish is currently incurring some costs (eg on consumable and repository items) on behalf of St Anthony's and for which we have not hitherto sought reimbursement.

6. Parish finances- update

Francesca provided an update on the parish's current finances:

- there is a credit balance of £23,697.26 in the parish's current bank account as at today's date;
- the parish's separate set-off account (held with the diocese) is currently in credit to the sum of £202,684.93. This account is being built up to help with the cost of repairing the defective concrete affecting the mullions and other parts of the church building and will limit the amount of money we subsequently have to borrow;
- there have not been any major purchases since the committee's last meeting.

7. Analysis of income 2022/23

Philip took the committee through his report detailing income received during 2022/23 from the parish's "measurable" income sources (weekly offertory donations, bank standing orders, parish debt collections, Gift Aid, the Dona contactless donation point and donations made through the "Donate" facility). The main headlines were:

- the parish's total income from these sources in 2022/23 was £163,524. That represents an improvement of £13,754 (9.2%) on 2021/22, reflecting the continuing generosity of our parishioners;
- there was a significant increase (81.6%) in terms of the income from the monthly collections for the parish debt, partly due to a generous donation of £1,000 from one of our parishioners and also probably reflects the steps we have taken to actively publicise these and other collections through the parish newsletter and parish social media channels;
- annual inflation is currently running at 10.1% (as per the CPI data for March 2023)- so despite the overall increase our income shows a real terms decrease of 0.9% over the year.

It was agreed that the parish's income position in this regard should continue to be carefully monitored and that to that end reports should continue to be brought to each meeting of the committee. **ACTION 28/23: Philip** to continue to bring quarterly income reports to the committee.

8. Parish Centre- review of hire charges

Philip took the committee through the report which he and Francesca had produced and which had been circulated with the agenda. In the light of the current levels of inflation and the increased overheads, such as energy costs, the parish has to meet, it was agreed:

- a) our charges for hiring the centre and its facilities should be increased by an average of 10.1%;
- b) this increase should be effective from 1st September 2023 so that reasonable notice can be given to the current regular users of the centre;
- c) The position should continue to be reviewed on an annual basis in the light of inflationary trends and levels of use of the centre facilities.

ACTION 29/23: Francesca to arrange for the charges to be increased from 1st September 2023 and for the centre users to be advised accordingly.

9. Parish website- update

There was nothing further to report on this given the update that had been provided under "Matters Arising".

10. Tea Dance group- statement of accounts 2022/23

The statement of accounts submitted on behalf of the Tea Dance organisers was received and duly noted.

It was agreed that a similar statement of accounts for 2022/23 should be requested from the parish friendship group. **ACTION 30/23: Philip** to contact Pat Faulconbridge or Polly Jarvis.

11. Proposed parish medium term financial plan 2023-2025

Philip explained that he and Phil Bray had recently drafted a set of parish financial priorities at short notice to support Canon Philipp's meeting with a consultant, engaged by the diocese, who was consulting on the diocese's priorities for investment. It was agreed that building on this work the parish should look to develop a rolling three year financial plan to help inform the parish's financial decision making. **ACTION 31/23: Phil/Philip** to draft a financial plan for future consideration by the committee.

As part of this approach, it was suggested that Julie Rawding, the parish's estates management and architectural adviser, should be consulted as she is undertaking a review of areas for repair/improvement in the parish estate.

12. Any other business

- a) **Repair of the driveway to the priest's house-** Canon Philipp advised that the driveway was in urgent need of repair/reconstruction. PJ Towey Construction Ltd had submitted an estimate for this work at a charge of less than the £5,000 (including VAT) ceiling beyond which diocesan approval is required. This was felt to be very reasonable but it was suggested that the parish should if possible obtain one further estimate by the end of June 2023 before the contract is awarded. To that end, it was agreed that Oliver would approach Beechdale Asphalts for a quote. If it was not possible to obtain the additional quote before the end of the month or if the estimate from PJ Towey was in the event cheaper it was agreed that Canon Philipp should engage PJ Towey to undertake the work. **ACTION 32/23: Oliver/ Canon Philipp** to action accordingly.
- b) **Provision of a defibrillator-** David explained that the provision of a defibrillator, to be located on the parish grounds, had been discussed at the recent meeting of the parish think tank. Details are waited from Fiona Mackenzie who has researched this for the think tank but the costs quoted by the British Heart Foundation and the St John's Ambulance organisation were in the range of £775-£990 plus VAT. It was not clear whether the estimated cost included the installation of the defibrillator but, if not, Phil advised that his father had experience of installing one and he could ask him to undertake the installation at no cost to the parish. Canon Philipp confirmed that we should proceed with this on health and safety grounds and that the parish would meet the costs involved. David mentioned in this respect that he was prepared to undertake a sponsored activity to raise funds for the parish, including for the defibrillator. **ACTION 33/23: Philip** to feed back to Fiona Mackenzie so this can be progressed accordingly.

13. Date of the next meeting

It was confirmed that the committee's next meeting would be in the parish centre at 6.30pm on Thursday, 21st September 2023.

14. Closing Prayer

Canon Philipp closed the meeting with a prayer.