



Diocese of Nottingham: The Good Shepherd Parish Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 17th September 2020

Attendees: This meeting was conducted by email in view of the restrictions on social gatherings imposed as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The documentation for the meeting was circulated on 10th September 2020 to the Committee's current membership: Nanette Beaven, Sarah Bray, John Doherty, Michael Dwan, Brian Huthwaite, Oliver Kuras, Philip Martin, Jonathan Newman, David Staiano, Oliver Wastell and Canon Philipp Ziomek. Committee members were given the opportunity to raise any queries or comment on the documentation by 24th September 2020.

1. Minutes of the meeting on 21st May 2020

In the absence of any comments to the contrary, the minutes of the previous meeting are deemed to be accepted as a true record and will be posted on the parish noticeboard and website. **ACTION 16/20: Philip** to action accordingly.

It was noted that Nanette Beaven has recently joined the Committee. It is hoped that it will be possible for colleagues to meet Nanette and David, who joined the Committee ahead of its last meeting (also conducted by email), in person at the Committee's next meeting. **ACTION 17/20: Philip** to include this on the agenda for the next meeting.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

a) Parish property management- Canon Philipp advises that a successor to Bob Reynolds as parish architectural adviser has yet to be identified. All members of the Committee are asked to advise Canon Philipp if they are able to identify somebody similar that he could approach. **ACTION 18/20: All members** to consider/advise Canon Philipp as appropriate.

b) Church mullions- Canon Philipp advises that we are currently trying to contact Alan Joyce Architects, the architects accredited by Heritage England (HE) who have previously overseen the Church works. There have been three approaches thus far, but it can only be done by email and there has not been a reply to date. Canon Philipp is working with Rachael Oxspring (Diocesan Property Department) and has applied directly to HE for grant aid. A response from this is expected this month. We have also recently responded to another funding opportunity through CaTEW (the Catholic Trust for England and Wales). HE is offering grant aid for Grade 1 & II* listed churches through the Catholic Bishops Conference for England and Wales for which CaTEW is the legal entity. An application through this channel has gone forward, albeit without

an architects' response. **ACTION 19/20: Canon Philipp** to update the Committee at its next meeting.

- c) **Database support-** it has still not been possible to progress this owing to the current restrictions. **ACTION 20/20: Canon Philipp** to make contact with Oliver (Wastell) after the current restrictions are lifted with a view to arranging for Oliver to visit the parish office to assess what improvements can be made to the main parish database; **Philip** to contact Oliver thereafter to arrange a separate session at a later date to look at the parish's Gift Aid database.
- d) ***Annual Return to the diocese 2019/20-*** it was confirmed that the parish's Annual Return for 2019/20 had been independently examined and subsequently submitted unchanged to the diocese. Philip will now, in liaison with Brian, draft the summary of the accounts for parishioners. A copy will thereafter be emailed to the Committee for information. **ACTION 21/20: Philip** to action accordingly.
- e) ***Parish Community Centre: income trends-*** owing to the current restrictions Philip is yet to investigate the background to the 18.4% reduction in income for the hire of the parish community centre in 2019/20 compared to the previous year. **ACTION 22/20: Philip** to investigate in due course and report back to the Committee.

3. Parish finances-update

The usual update on the parish finances was provided by means of a report from Brian and Philip which was circulated with the papers for the meeting. Key points identified were:

- There was a credit balance of £27,726.86 on the parish's current bank account at the beginning of September 2020. This does not however reflect expenditure incurred recently with regard to the installation of the new streaming service for Holy Mass.
- The parish debt stood at £12,111 (excluding interest) at the beginning of September 2020. This reflects the fact that the parish continues to reduce its debt by monthly repayments of £3,950. We are therefore scheduled to clear the current debt in just over three months' time.
- We continue to make payments of £2,531 per month to the diocesan Quota for 2020/21. On top of this there are the usual invoices (eg utility costs) the parish has to pay periodically.
- As previously reported, the diocese has confirmed that it will ensure all parish bank accounts maintain a positive balance during the current restrictions. Funds will be transferred from the parish set-off account, as required, even if this means that it moves into deficit (and effectively has to be covered by further loans from the diocese).
- Additionally, the diocese has asked all parishes to complete a monthly analysis of income over the period April to September 2020 compared to the

same period in 2019 so that the diocese is able to quantify the losses that individual parishes have incurred resulting from the current restrictions on Mass attendance and the loss of rental for facilities such as the parish community centre.

4. Analysis of income 2020/21

An analysis, prepared by Philip, had been circulated with the agenda. The key points identified were as follows:

- Our income has, not unexpectedly, been significantly affected by the initial suspension and subsequent enforced reductions in public attendance at Holy Mass resulting from the Covid-19 restrictions. Consequently, the parish is faced with the first real terms projected reduction in its “measurable” income sources (weekly offertory donations, bank standing orders, parish debt collections and Gift Aid) for some years.
- If the current pattern of such income is maintained until 31st March 2021 our income from these sources for the 2020/21 financial year is projected to total £130,859. If correct that would represent an overall reduction of 12% (£18,340) on the total for 2019/20.
- This does not take into account reduced income from other sources (such as reduced repository income and no income at all to date from the hire of the parish community centre).
- On the other hand, the parish has received several large donations from individual parishioners, including donations towards the cost of the new Mass streaming facility.
- Additionally, there will be savings of £3,950 per month once the current parish debt is cleared in just over three months’ time, albeit we will in due course have to borrow a substantial sum from the diocese to effect repairs to the church mullions.
- Public attendance at Holy Mass was reinstated from 19th July 2020 but subject to social distancing measures. The number of Mass attendees has increased since then and is currently averaging around 315 in total per week-end. This contrasts with the average of 667 over 2019/20 and represents a 48% reduction.

In summary, the current projected reduction in measurable income of £18,340 is relatively large but is potentially manageable in the short term. However, at the time of writing it is not clear how long the current restrictions will last, the concern being that over time the severity of the impact on parish finances will increase. The position will therefore continue to be carefully monitored. **ACTION 23/20: Philip** to continue to bring quarterly income reports to the Committee so progress can be monitored.

5. Date of the next meeting

The Committee’s next meeting will be at 6.30pm on Thursday, 3rd December 2020.