



Diocese of Nottingham: The Good Shepherd Parish Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 20th May 2021

Attendees: This meeting was again 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 13th May 2021 to the Committee's current membership: Nanette Beaven, Sarah Bray, John Doherty, 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 27th May 2021.

1. Appointment of a new chairperson

It was reported that Michael Dwan had resigned from the Committee owing to ongoing health issues and that consequently a new chairperson will have to be appointed. **ACTION 7/21: Philip** to write to Michael on behalf of the Committee thanking him for his work.

Committee members were requested to let Philip know by email or telephone if they wished to volunteer for the chairperson role. In the event that more than one person volunteers a confidential ballot of members will be held to determine who should be appointed. Appointment would be by means of a simple majority of the votes cast, with Canon Philipp having a second/casting vote in the event of a tie.

ACTION 8/21: Members to volunteer as appropriate; thereafter, **Philip** to advise all members of the Committee as to the outcome of this process.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 4th March 2021

In the absence of any comments to the contrary, the minutes of the previous meeting are now deemed to be accepted as a true record and will be posted on the parish noticeboard and website. **ACTION 9/21: Philip** to action accordingly.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- a) Church mullions-** It was reported that a meeting was held in the parish community centre on 27th April 2021 to identify the next steps and the possible funding opportunities to address the concrete related structural issues affecting the church mullions and the bell tower. A copy of the note of that meeting was circulated to the Committee on 28th April. The next step, supported by the diocese, is to engage a specialist in 1960s concrete to look at the situation and provide expert advice as to the remedial work which needs to be undertaken. Meanwhile, Canon Philipp asked if anyone on the Committee has any ideas as to who the parish might engage as "architectural adviser" for the parish,

replacing the late Bob Reynolds who fulfilled that role so successfully for many years. **ACTION 10/21: Members** to advise Canon Philipp if they have any ideas in this respect.

Canon Philipp also advised that he is in the process of forming a parish ministerial team, one of whose members will have the portfolio for “marketing and funding research”.

b) Database support- Canon Philipp has now met and discussed this with Oliver who is now looking into the situation to see what can be done to improve/update the parish database. Philip has also now contacted Oliver to arrange a separate session at a later date to look at the parish’s Gift Aid database.

4. Annual Return to the Diocese 2020/21

The parish’s draft Annual Return for 2020/21, prepared by Brian, was circulated for comment by the Committee prior to it being independently examined and submitted to the diocese by their deadline of 30th July 2021. **ACTION 11/21: Members** to send any comments to Philip by 27th May 2021. Thereafter, the Annual Return to be finalised and approved by Canon Philipp ahead of it being examined by John and then submitted to the diocese. **ACTION 12/21: Philip** thereafter to draft/publish the usual summary for parishioners in due course.

It was reported that Brian had decided to retire after many years outstanding service, on a voluntary basis, as parish accountant, as soon as we are able to appoint a replacement. **ACTION 13/21: All Members** to consider and advise Canon Philipp if they know of an accountant who might be able to consider taking on the role as a successor to Brian.

5. Parish finances-update

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

- There was a credit balance of £31,222 in the parish’s current bank account as at 6th May 2021.
- As previously reported, the parish debt has now been fully cleared. We have however continued to make monthly payments of £3,950 into the parish’s set-off account held with the diocese bearing in mind that in due course we will need to fund the repairs to the church mullions and will undoubtedly have to seek a further loan from the diocese to cover the costs. The parish set-off account was consequently in credit to the sum of £14,826 at 31st March 2021.
- We continue to make monthly payments as our required contribution to the diocesan quota. The diocese has recently advised that our annual contribution for 2021/22 has been assessed as £29,441.37 (equating to 21% of the total of the parish’s offertory collections and Gift Aid income declared in its Annual Return for the 2019/20 financial year), payable by

monthly charges of £2,453.45 directly debited by the diocese from the parish's current account. This represents a reduction of £930.63 per annum (£77.55 per month) on the 2020/21 payments.

- On top of this, there are the usual invoices (eg for utility costs) we have to meet periodically. There had not been any significant amounts paid out of the parish account since the Committee's last meeting.

6. Analysis of income 2020/21

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

- Parish income has 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 has experienced the first real terms reduction for some years in its "measurable" income sources (weekly offertory donations, bank standing orders, parish debt collections and Gift Aid).
- The parish's income from these sources for the 2020/21 financial year totalled £127,479. That represents an overall reduction of 15% (£21,720) on the total income for 2019/20.
- This analysis does not take into account reduced income from other sources (such as reduced repository income and no income at all during 2020/21 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 or in recognition of the current strain on our parish income.
- Additionally, there are savings of £3,950 per month on debt repayments now that parish debt has been cleared. However, it must be borne in mind that we will in due course have to borrow a substantial sum from the diocese to effect repairs to the church mullions.
- Since the beginning of December 2020, the number of attendees at week-end Holy Mass has gradually increased and is currently running at around 374 in total for the four week-end Masses. This contrasts with the average week-end attendance of 667 in 2019/20 and represents a 51% reduction per week-end.
- In summary, parish income for 2020/21 has been significantly affected by the suspension of public attendance at Holy Mass through the two lockdown periods that applied from March 2020, along with the social distancing restrictions imposed to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. The overall

reduction of £21,720 is significant for a parish of our size but is manageable in the short term. However, over time the severity of the impact on parish finances may increase. It is therefore suggested that the position should continue to be carefully monitored. To that end, reports will continue to be brought to each meeting of the Committee. **ACTION 14/21: Philip** to continue to bring quarterly income reports to the Committee so progress can be monitored.

7. Date of the Committee's next meeting

It was confirmed that the Committee's next meeting will be from 6.30-8.00pm on Thursday, 16th September 2021 with the hope that we will again be able to meet in person in parish premises. **ACTION 15/21: Philip** to book parish accommodation on that premise and circulate the agenda for the meeting in due course..