



Diocese of Nottingham: The Good Shepherd Parish Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 23rd September 2021

In attendance: Phil Bray (Chairperson), Brian Huthwaite, Philip Martin, 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 David Staiano.

3. Appointment of a new chairperson and welcome to colleagues attending their first meeting of the Committee

A warm welcome was extended to Phil Bray, who was attending his first meeting of the Committee and who had also volunteered to act as chairperson in the absence of any expressions of interest from other members of the Committee. Colleagues introduced themselves to Phil. It was agreed that Philip would check the position about the future attendance of Oliver Kuras, Nanette Beaven and Jonathan Newman. **ACTION 16/21: Philip** to action accordingly.

It was also confirmed that Sarah Bray had now resigned from the Committee. This has served to identify an issue regarding the gender balance of the Committee which will need be addressed in due course.

At this juncture, Phil Bray assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

4. Minutes of the meeting on 20th May 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record and will be posted on the parish noticeboard and website. **ACTION 17/21: Philip** to action accordingly.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

- a) Church mullions-** Canon Philipp provided an update. An architect (James Phillips) has been appointed to oversee the programme of renewal required in relation to the church mullions and other concrete related issues affecting the church building. It was reported that a meeting had been held earlier in the day with James, along with a quantity surveyor and a concrete specialist. James

will subsequently be providing a report and proposed costings. In the meantime Canon Philipp has kept Rachael Oxspring in the diocese property department fully informed.

On a more general note, it has not to date been possible to identify anyone 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. Canon Philipp advised that he was currently developing a parish pastoral team, which included a qualified architect, albeit her qualifications were obtained in a European country and are not currently recognised in the UK.

ACTION 18/21: Canon Philipp to keep the Committee informed of any relevant developments.

b) Database support- Oliver (Wastell) confirmed he has yet to advise how to improve/update the parish database. Thereafter, he will contact Philip to arrange a separate session to look at the parish’s Gift Aid database. **ACTION 19/21: Oliver** to action accordingly.

c) Accountancy support- It was noted that it had been hoped that Nanette would be able to replace Brian as parish accountant, in the light of his intended retirement from the role. However, Nanette is unable to do so at the present time owing to family circumstances. Consequently Canon Philipp has approached someone else in the parish who is a qualified accountant and is awaiting feedback from her. **ACTION 20/21: Canon Philipp** to keep the Committee informed.

6. Parish finances- update

Brian provided an update on the parish finances. Key points identified were:

- There is a credit balance of £29,288 in the parish’s current bank account.
- 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 currently in credit to the sum of £38,526.
- We continue to make monthly payments as our required contribution to the diocesan quota.
- There will be a large bill to be paid in due course for the essential work, approved by the diocese, being carried out on the kitchen in the Priest’s House which has been badly neglected over the years. Canon Philipp provided an update on this work which has proved to be more complicated and prolonged than anticipated as dry rot had been found in the kitchen floor and a gas leak had been discovered.

7. Analysis of income 2021/22

This analysis, prepared by Philip and relating to “measurable” income sources (weekly offertory donations, bank standing orders, parish debt collections and Gift Aid), had been circulated with the agenda. The key points identified were as follows:

- Parish income has continued to be adversely affected by the initial suspension and subsequent enforced reductions in public attendance at Holy Mass resulting from the Covid-19 restrictions.
- That said, the parish’s income from these sources is now holding up well and current projections suggest that our overall income for 2021/22 may total £144,873. If correct, that will represent a significant improvement of £17,304 (13.6%) on the 2020/21 financial year total and almost back to pre-pandemic levels.
- In the last quarter £1,300 has been received from on-line donations through the donate platform on the parish website and/or the QR code shown in the parish newsletter. Of this, £988 is eligible for Gift Aid.
- Since the social distancing restrictions at Holy Mass have been lifted the number of attendees at week-end Mass has gradually increased and is currently averaging 444 in total for the four week-end Masses. This contrasts with the average week-end attendance of 667 in 2019/20 (pre-pandemic) and represents a 38% reduction per week-end.
- It remains to be seen whether Mass attendance will recover to former levels as the requirement to attend Mass remains suspended until the the first Sunday in Advent 2021 and it is recognised that some parishioners remain cautious about their return to church attendance during the pandemic.
- Canon Philipp advised that a number of initiatives are in hand to renew the parish’s approach to evangelisation. The newly appointed head teacher at Good Shepherd Academy is to resume the school’s monthly celebration at church and is keen to encourage the active participation of parents. The parish is participating in the Divine Renovation programme (part of this being the forthcoming parish synod). Additionally, the parish RCIA programme has been restarted, involving seven people, and the children’s liturgy group is to recommence as soon as possible supported by a teacher at Good Shepherd Academy.

ACTION 21/21: Philip to continue to bring quarterly income reports to the Committee so progress can be monitored.

8. Any other business

(a) Support for St Anthony’s parish in Calverton- Canon Philipp explained the current arrangements Good Shepherd parish has been asked to make for

celebrating Mass at St Anthony's, supported by the Benedictine hermits. St Anthony's for the moment remains formally aligned with the parish of our Lady of Victories at Southwell, with financial and administrative support provided from Newark Holy Trinity. The longer term position regarding St Anthony's will be clarified in due course and will be subject to consultation before a decision is made.

(b) Second collections- It was noted that these collections were now being taken again during Mass. Phil suggested that it would be helpful to publicise the second collections in advance, through the parish newsletter, the parish website and parish social media channels, in order to help increase the level of donations being received. It was confirmed that arrangements were already in hand to provide advance publicity in the newsletter. **ACTION 22/21: Philip** to pursue the proposal for the collections to be publicised on the parish website and through parish social media channels.

9. 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, 2nd December 2021 in the parish centre. The dates for the Committee's meetings for the 2022 calendar year will be agreed at that meeting. **ACTION 23/21: Philip** to bring the suggested dates for 2022 to the meeting.

10. Closing Prayer

Canon Philipp closed the meeting with a prayer.