

Parish Advisory Council Meeting held on 29th January 2024.

MINUTES.

Attendees: Fr John, Stephen Badcock (chairman) Elizabeth Utting, Barbara Lamberton, Alan Lamberton, Brian Macdonald, Monica Macdonald, Tony Lazell, George Babbington, John Conlon, Haley Dossor, Sr Susan, Linda Jones, Tom Jones, Julian Kowalski, David Richardson (Treasurer).

SB took the minutes.

Stephen welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming out on such a damp and foggy afternoon. Fr John then opened the meeting with a prayer.

There were no specific matters arising from the minutes of the last PAC in October. Several of the items on the agenda were being reviewed and continued this afternoon.

David went through a summary of Parish Income and Expenditure in 2023 and highlighted the notable points:

While the interest earned on our diocesan deposit account increased considerably with the rise in interest rates over the past twelve months, this was negated by the considerable rise in expenditure on gas and electricity.

Other significant expenditure in 2023 included necessary maintenance and repair costs mainly relating to the church hall.

We are going through a period of 'catch up' with repairs and redecoration at the moment and this has impacted on our balance sheet this year, and may well do so for the next few years.

However, we are currently in the process of establishing a rolling maintenance programme to help spread the cost of repairs, and by being more proactive, we hope to reduce the likelihood of serious fabric deterioration occurring.

Ongoing Projects Include:

- Replacement windows for the church hall,
- Repair of the fence in the Memorial Garden.

In the recent storm, part of the fence in the Memorial Garden was blown down. We agreed that replacing this part of the fence with a wire mesh fence with native English bushes growing up beside and through it, would look very attractive and become a 'living fence'.

Inevitably any bushes will take time to fill in the gaps and the garden may be rather open to view initially, but hopefully this will only be for the first season or two.

We also discussed the possibility of using some old canvas sails, or similar, fixed to the mesh, to improve privacy, if necessary.

- Stephen informed the meeting that the Church, Presbytery and Hall are currently undergoing a Quinquennial Inspection.

This is required by the diocese to ensure that its buildings are being maintained.

This inspection is especially detailed because we are now Grade 2 listed and it is highly likely that it will bring to light other repairs and maintenance costs that we had not foreseen.

We can only await the outcome of the inspector's report and budget accordingly.

Chris O'Brien has kindly agreed to help us with planning our maintenance programme.

Safety and Security.

Stephen discussed the plan to install some extra lighting in the passage way between the Church Hall and the Church together with a CCTV camera to improve both the security of the disabled side entrance door and safety for people using the hall or side entrance at night.

We are also awaiting a specialist Fire Risk Assessment for Grade 2 Listed buildings together with an upgrade in the Fire Alarm System in the hall.

Caritas Festival.

This is a festival to celebrate the work of Catholic Volunteers in our community and is to be held at St Mary's Church, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich on Saturday February 24th.

Bishop Peter will be saying Mass and this will be followed by refreshments and an opportunity to meet some local volunteers working with various organisations, such as Helping Hands, Stella Maris and Felixstowe Town Pastors.

Social and Fundraising.

Fr John would like to hold an Auction of Promises in aid of charity after Easter.

He described how successful such auctions had been in his last parish and we all agreed this would be a very good idea and something to look forward to. Fr John also felt that his former parish would be very willing to offer their advice and support.

We agreed that our Social and Fund-Raising Committee could start to work towards organising this event.

Events for Lent.

Fr John described four initiatives for Lent,

- A booklet from Bishop Peter – ‘Walk with me’ – daily readings for use throughout Lent,
- Lenten Hunger Lunches on Fridays,
- Stations of the Cross,
- 4 House Prayer Groups,

The theme being - Christ's encounters in the gospels.

Each Sunday Fr John will provide a Lent Leaflet, Encounters with Jesus.

These can be used in the group or during private prayer if preferred.

New Parish Advisory Council Chairperson(s),

Tom and Linda Jones were warmly welcomed into their new roll as joint Chairpersons of the PAC, taking over from Stephen.

New Treasurer.

After 17yrs of dedicated service David is retiring as Parish Treasurer.

He was warmly thanked for all his hard work over the years as he passes the ‘baton’ to Stephen.

Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer.

Date of next meeting: Monday June 10th at 7.0 pm.