

Minutes Of the Parish Advisory Council Meeting. Monday 10th. June 7.00 p.m.

Attendees: Fr. John, Tom Jones, Linda Jones (Joint Chairpersons), Barbara Lamberton, Alan Lamberton, Dennis McGeachie, Stephen Aguilar-Millan, Joanne Aguilar-Millan, Sue Hudson, Ian Hughes, Edwina Hughes, David Richardson, Elizabeth Utting, Anne Poole, Sr. Susan, Colin Andrews, Marie Andrews, Stephen Badcock (Treasurer).

Apologies: Sylvia McCallum, Catherine Richardson, Angela

LJ took the minutes.

Tom welcomed everyone and Fr. John opened the meeting with a prayer. Tom reviewed the minutes of the PAC held on the 29th January. There were no matters arising.

Treasurer's Report

Stephen used a power point presentation to give a summary of the parish finances.

1) Although income from standing orders is holding firm, the amount given in the weekly Offertory is steadily falling. The Dona machine in the porch is still a new concept although income from this source is gradually going up. Outgoings have, however, increased significantly. Utility bills have doubled in two years and there has been considerable expenditure on necessary repairs. This has led to a deficit.

On a positive note, the current high expenditure consists of several expensive "one off" items rather than regular outlay.

2) There are restricted funds available from the Alive in Faith campaign. As well as supporting Seminarians and retired Clergy, it allows parishes to give outreach help to the vulnerable and to fund specific projects. The reordering of the Sanctuary in St Felix Church was an earlier example of how these funds might be used.

We currently have on deposit savings of £28,000 available for an appropriate project.

3) Looking ahead to future expenditure, the recent Fire Risk assessment has identified the need to update fire alarms and emergency lighting and to provide mitigations to prevent the spread of fire. Since the Church is a listed building this has presented some difficulties. The Finance Committee aim to get quotes and report back later in the year.

4) There has also been a Quinquennial structural survey. No immediate emergency action is required but we have been presented with a list of ongoing necessary repairs, some of which must be completed within two years.

There was an appeal for volunteers to help with the management and administration for this.

Both these reviews are obligatory and essential to secure adequate insurance.

In discussion, there was recognition that we need to do more fundraising within the parish, not only to improve our finances but also to build a sense of community which may have been dented by the recent pandemic.

Other practical points could include a “push” on gift aiding and using the Dona machine. Stephen suggested putting a note in the parish newsletter where he would offer a tutorial to anyone who was unsure how to use it.

Fr. John's Items

1) Following the recent overhaul of the nave windows, Fr John has taken advice on the state of the Rosary Window. He reports that there is significant deterioration to the glass and lead with worrying bulging. There is also water leaking and trapped in the interspace between the window and the perspex sheeting on the outside. This perspex needs to be removed and a full re-leading may be necessary. He has received a quote of approximately £60,000 to include scaffolding and VAT (we may be able to get this back).

Fr John suggests that this may be a suitable project for Alive in Faith funding shared 50/50 with a fundraising campaign similar to that for the nave windows.

He has prepared a poster inviting sponsorship of a “Mystery”.

There was considerable enthusiasm for the idea. The Rosary Window is generally seen as a unique and valued part of our church, well worth protecting and restoring.

David Richardson formally proposed that the restoration of the Rosary Window should be put forward as an Alive in Faith project. The motion was seconded by Stephen Badcock and was unanimously agreed by those parishioners present.

2) Due to a new translation being authorised, as of the 1st Sunday of Advent this year a new Lectionary must be used at Mass. We will need to purchase 4 volumes at £695 a set for the altar. This is not a matter of choice.

As far as the congregation is concerned there is greater flexibility and the following options were identified:

- a) phase in a gradual purchase of Mass books, less expensive if bought in multi-packs of 100
- b) use Mass sheets rather than books; these could include the weekly newsletter
- c) parishioners buy their own copy of the Sunday Missal
- d) parishioners with a smart phone use a QR code to access the readings.

3) Fr. John made reference to his retirement and departure as of 8th September. There is no news yet concerning his replacement.

After the closing prayer Fr. John withdrew to allow parishioners to discuss how to celebrate the years that he has given to the parish. Since Sunday 8th September has already been earmarked for the annual late summer barbecue, it was agreed that it would double up as farewell party. More details to follow.
The date of the Autumnal PAC meeting is to be arranged.