

Our Lady Immaculate and St Cuthbert's Parish Council

Tuesday 16th July 2019 7.00.p.m.

Minutes

Present: Fr. John, Duncan Reed, Ann Callan, MariaLuisa Massagli-Gallagher, Anne Smith, Susan Hall, Peter Fleming, Brian Rinaldi, Eugene Brady, Sr. Mary Jane, Anne Berry
Apologies: Maria Crawford, Sr. Paschaline

Opening prayer

1. Appointment of Secretary – MariaLuisa to continue
2. Minutes of the last meeting (Finance & Buildings) & matters arising
 - a) Presbytery renovations & redecoration – ongoing. Kitchen is fitted, awaiting decoration
3. Finance Report

Ann Callan reported on the current finances pointing out the increased costs re heating & lighting – this is due to the heating being on longer thus giving us a warmer church and new contracts for utilities which are now more expensive. Ann was thanked for her dedication.

4. Building issues
 - a) Diocesan Fire Risk Assessment Report – ongoing
 - b) Diocesan 5-year Inspection Report – a draft copy of the Report has been received, but it is not finalised. There was a further inspection of the Tower and other buildings today. So far the estimated costs for the areas marked ‘Urgent’ total over £15,000. Once the report is completed the PC will prioritise the most urgent issues. In the meantime, guttering for both the Presbytery and the Church is to be cleared to prevent dampness – **BR** to ask window cleaner for estimate. The Convent repairs to windows are ongoing. Most urgent is the problem of Japanese Knotweed in the Convent garden. Diocese to be contacted for advice (**MMG**) There was also a query about the ceiling in the convent boiler room- had it been tested for asbestos? It was suggested to find out if Nelsons would be able to check this or find another company who could. (**AC/MMG**)
 - c) Repairs to Tower – re-inspected by Minnie Fraser from the Diocesan Property Dept with Brian Duffy, roofer. Either a temporary repair can be made to the tower roof or a more permanent one - which could be partially funded with a grant - Ms Fraser would be willing to help with any such application. Decision to be made when final report arrives
 - d) Sacristy – Nelsons have again inspected the floor and do not think there is a problem with damp. Recommend a new carpet with good quality underlay and fit an extractor fan in one of the windows
 - e) Lighting in church – new bulbs have been fitted in the porch and cry room. Two more spot lights in main body of the church need to be replaced. Electrician to be contacted (**MMG/AC**)
 - f) Outside pillar – disabled entrance. Advised by Diocese to leave at present but to monitor & report back to Diocese Prop. Dept. Corrosion thought to be due to salt on roads in winter

- g) Handrail on altar – agreed to proceed with plan to use ‘spare’ benches to make 2 handrails for the sides of the altar. The wood would then match the rest of the benches and the wooden flooring on the altar. **BR** to contact - Staples Woodcraft, Stanley, Crook. Bespoak – Bishop Auckland. Paul Burnip - request quotes.
- h) Cemetery paths – Reg Savory has this on his job list. Price agreed - £3000. Noted that the area where Father parks his car a lot of gravel is loose. Check that re-laid cemetery paths will not do the same - **AS**
- i) Reordering the back of church and redecoration – the re-arrangement at the back of church appears to be successful. Parishioners are going into the porch to collect bulletins, papers etc. Consensus of opinion was that in the light of rising costs regarding **planned** work and **probable** work as a result of the Diocesan 5-Year Inspection Report, it was agreed to cancel any further plans for the extension and alteration of the church porch. Noted that Anne Smith asked for it be recorded in the Minutes that she did not agree with this decision.
Redecoration of the church was then discussed. The process (**MMG/AC**) will begin with
 - i. contact the Diocese and refer them back to our original application and estimates in Sept 2016
 - ii. Contact Historic Churches for advise on colour scheme
 - iii. Contact Novotec ask for confirmation of former price agreed
 - iv. Scaffolding companies to be approached for estimates
- j) Letting of St. Joseph’s Lodge, Crook – tenant still there but planning to vacate. Robinsons will continue to oversee the property

5. Partnership issues

Susan Hall & Fr John have attended Partnership meetings. It appears all parishes within the Escomb Partnership are being asked for Property & Community reviews – this information had previously been gathered by the Diocese at the start of FTiH. We are also being asked for 10-year financial forecasts regarding parish expenditure. PC considered these to be unreasonable requests

6. Justice and Peace and Churches Together Report

Anne Berry was thanked for her report. A lot of good work is being done through Churches Together in Crook - sadly Holiday Clubs and Lunch Clubs are becoming necessary rather than optional. Anne acknowledged the generosity of Durham County Council and other bodies which enable such projects to go ahead. A note will be put into the bulletin asking for more volunteers to help.

7. Evangelisation Issues

Fr John was pleased that the Pentecost Prayer was well received and said the month of November will see the next initiative – Mass for the Deceased during the last 12 months

8. Liturgical Issues

Fr John has been making enquiries into the possibility of an organist for the church. It was agreed that travelling expenses should be offered. In any event – the organ should be opened and played regularly in order to keep it in good working condition

9. Garden Fete

Eugene Brady was thanked for taking on the organisation of this year's Garden Fete – it all went well and was indeed most successful. Eugene thanked everyone for all their hard work – but all of us are getting older! It was noted that when the school children are involved, it is always successful. There will be a review meeting, Wednesday 24th July and a Mass of Thanksgiving is to be arranged.

10. Roger's Legacy

It was felt that something lasting and permanent would be befitting of Roger's generous legacy of £5,500. Fr John suggested the Priest's Chair and the Ambo could be replaced with something more befitting our beautiful altar, perhaps incorporating Saint Cuthbert's Cross. Father will contact a stonemason

11. Fundraising

Brian Rinaldi will be organising an event once the alterations to the Centre are completed

12. I.T. issues

Aaron Cowen has contacted the office regarding St. Cuthbert's Facebook page. He has set up a new Facebook page which is more accessible than the previous one. However, after discussion it was decided to thank him but ask him to take this down as the Facebook page is a public group in the name of our church and it would be difficult to comply with Diocesan guidelines regarding GDPR regulations. (AC) At present Ann Callan looks after our Website and follows the guidelines of the Diocesan Policy

13. Any other Business

- a) Eugene Brady asked if there was any progress on the sale of land (George Terrace field) as discussed at previous PC meetings. We are still awaiting information from Andrew Gillingham, the Diocesan Surveyor
- b) Hedges around presbytery garden are very overgrown and need cutting back to approx. 5ft in height. Brian Jones is obtaining estimates for the work

Date of AGM – Sunday 13th October

Date of next meeting of the Parish Council – **Tuesday 12th November 7.00pm**

MariaLuisa thanked everyone for attending

Closing prayer