

## **PASTORAL PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES of the MEETING 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**PRESENT:** Joe Mc Crossan (chair) Elizabeth Barker (secretary), Joe Robinson, John Mc Manus (Safeguarding), Claire Downham, Helma Brown, Lydia Fernandes, Philip Spencer.

**APOLOGIES:** Fr Tom, who was ill.

**Opening Prayer:** Joe led the prayer when he prayed for all those who had died in the two world wars, our friends and relatives who have died recently and all those who grieve.

The minutes of the meeting of October 14<sup>th</sup> had been circulated to all members and the parish office. The chair signed them as a true record of the meeting.

**PARISH CONSTITUTION** A copy had been circulated to members to include updates from the previous meeting, a picture of the Sacred Heart on the front page and photographs of all members on the last page. There were a few changes suggested by the members and these were made to the document. Copies of the Constitution will be available for members of the congregation after each Mass on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November when Joe will address the parishioners at each Mass.

**GRAPEVINE** This is a leaflet giving news of past and future parish events. Lydia has compiled it, and everyone approved the content and photographs. It will be a folded A4 sheet with a picture of a bunch of grapes on the front page next to the title "The Grapevine". Copies will be distributed quarterly. Lydia was thanked for her work.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

Filipino Night with the quiz was a great success with almost 80 people present. A total of £763 was raised. Joe R and the Filipino ladies who provided all the food were thanked for their efforts. However, it was said that this fund-raising money should be for a specific parish project and not just for the general parish funds. A breakdown of church expenditure was needed. It was suggested that Eamonn, Joe and Fr Tom should meet to discuss this.

### **ADVENT FAYRE**

There was a discussion on what the Fayre should include:

- Donations of homemade large and small cakes, and preserves.
- Filled bottles of every shape and size.
- Jewellery, costume as well as real but no broken or damaged pieces.
- A suitable gift from your native country.
- Christmas table decorations and craft items
- Toys in good condition, please ask yourself, would you buy it for your child?
- Grand Christmas Raffle with 3 money prizes £25, £50, £100. Tickets to be sold before and after Fayre. Drawn on Christmas Eve.
- Games for children, games for adults.

- Tea, coffee, mulled wine will be on sale with bacon baps, mince pies, small cakes.

A Christmas tree should be in the hall too. Claire will buy it when she buys the one for the Church. Joe M will give her the name of a reasonable priced supplier. ACTION Claire & Joe

Advert to be put into the newsletter every week from 18<sup>th</sup> November.

MASS for the SICK This will be on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm. Fr Tom will celebrate the Mass and administer the Sacrament of the Sick. Saint Vincent de Paul members will provide transport to and from the Mass and refreshments afterwards.

#### ADVENT TALKS

No speakers had been arranged for this year but Fr Tom intends to show a video on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and talk on the subject as well. Helma said the Scripture group will be following an Advent theme on Zoom for 3 weeks and a note for this should be put into the newsletter. ACTION Helma

#### JOINT MEETING with F&B committee

This is planned for 10am on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Joe will remind Eamonn, the chairman. Elizabeth said she would send the minutes of this meeting to him and point out that we need a representative from the F & B committee to come to our meetings. ACTION Joe and Elizabeth.

FUNDRAISING The Filipino night and quiz had been a great success raising a total of £764. It was said that a specific project should be considered for the use of the fundraising proceeds and it should not just go into the general income fund. The next event will be a BURNS SUPPER with a Quiz on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January. Joe M and Joe R, and Elizabeth will meet to discuss the food. ACTION JOE, JOE and ELIZABETH

Tea party and a Summer Fair will be held at Bluntisham House in 2024. Dates to be decided.

REPORTS The following verbal reports were given.

No report from Health & Safety, or Finance and Building. Hence the need for minutes to be sent to the F& B chairman.

SAFEGUARDING The situation is stable and there have been no reported incidents. A 3<sup>rd</sup> representative has been approved for the safeguarding team. It is necessary for all parishioners to be aware that any complaints need to go to one of the safeguarding team and not the PP. Draw up plan with contact details and diocesan contacts.

In order to restore Children's Liturgy to 11am Mass there needs to be a few more helpers. In the past Safeguarding attitudes have been defensive but are now moving to a more positive approach.

FIRST COMMUNION An Inscription Mass was held on 7<sup>th</sup> November for the 16 candidates who have enlisted for the programme. Parents were there also. The next session is on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 5pm in Church. Claire was concerned that the toilets in the hall are not

being regularly cleaned as the children use them on Tuesday nights. This matter should be referred to the F&B committee.

#### **SVP REPORT**

During October the members made 40 Visits, 30 Lifts and 30 phone calls

In September members organised a Favourite Holiday afternoon when the senior citizens brought photographs and talked about their favourite holiday. David Kerr gave us a trip around Scotland from his photos on his PC.

In October we had a musical afternoon for our Autumn Club theme. Angela Middleditch on flute accompanied by Pat Gildea on guitar led community singing. The 27 who attended had an enjoyable afternoon.

It is with regret that three former members of the Parish SVP have died recently, Madeline Lopez, Tina Franks and Dee Irons. May they rest in peace.

Members are organising the Mass on 18<sup>th</sup> November when Fr Tom will administer the Sacrament of the Sick.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**NEW MEMBERS** -It was said that new members appointed to this committee should be younger as the present members are mostly middle aged.

**ALCOHOL LICENCE** After some discussion it was felt that the parish should apply for a licence to sell alcohol at parish events. Magda, the parish secretary, is asked to contact the Council for the necessary forms.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** This was discussed but felt that there would be minimal impact on the church and grounds as the main new house building is in the north and south of the town. It may mean though an increased congregation.

**EMAIL** A parishioner sent the following email:

Hello Joe,

I read with interest in the parish newsletter of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 the names of members appointed to the PPC, but not aware of the work of the Council until I recently found minutes of two meetings, held in June & July, on the parish website under the link for the "Steering Committee".

Perhaps you could answer queries from the minutes:-

14<sup>th</sup> June – "Resolve signatory with Nat.West" I presume this action was assigned to a member of the F&B, as the initials do not relate to a PPC member and may have been actioned but not reported at July's meeting, or a subsequent meeting, as I understand additional PPC meetings have been held since July, but not reported on the website.

20<sup>th</sup> July – " Finance Committee should have a resolution statement on parish website etc..."

When is this item to be completed as I could not find such a statement on the parish website. However, as the action is within the remit of the F&B perhaps I need to address my query to Eamonn Byrne?

Thanks

Re: PPC- AOB

If not already in place please consider identifying a date in the new year for an AGM (Open Meeting) to include presentation of the annual accounts by the F&B (as stipulated in the Parish Handbook\*), as there's been no information on parish accounts shared with parishioners since 2018.

(Ref: \*Parish Handbook on Diocesan website. Appendix 5, page 41, "Annual Report).

Finally a contentious issue related to the use of the La Salette room. For the PPC to discuss the merits of using the room as envisaged in 2015 following consultation with parishioners, the subsequent design brief and business case approved by the Diocesan Trustees and receipt of a faculty by the Diocesan Historic Churches Committee.

With parishioner involvement and financial support the room was built in 2017 to offer a multi-purpose facility (including Children's liturgy classes, meetings of parish groups, use by parents of `unhappy` infants who may wish to participate in Mass via an audio-visual link and adult RE classes etc.) but is now an expensive store room and unavailable to parishioners other than for the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday evening.

Fr Walton's unilateral decision to change the use of the La Salette room, opened by Bishop Alan Hopes in August 2017, into a storeroom has been a very contentious issue for many parishioners, but could be readily configured to offer its original design and used successfully by parishioners from 2017- 2019.

(NB I can readily identify two possible objections to the re-use of the room by parishioners with a) access to the presbytery but the door to the dining room is kept locked, and b) keys to the sacristy are kept in the cupboard housing the church light switches, but either the cupboard could be locked, or keys moved to another secure location.)

Thank you for considering my queries and additional items & best wishes for your endeavours on behalf of the parish community.

**After some discussion the following reply from the chairman was decided.**

Thank you for your email and for the points you wanted to raise at the last PPC meeting.

Firstly our website is under review and we are looking at building a new one. The minutes of the last meetings were not uploaded because we thought work was being done over the summer. Progress has not been as quick and so we will put the current minutes on the current website, if not done already.

Please see my response following the recent PPC meeting.

4<sup>th</sup> June – Resolve signatory situation with NatWest – This matter has been resolved.

20<sup>th</sup> July – `Finance Committee should have a resolution statement on parish website etc.` This matter is for the F&B committee and will be signposted to them.

AGM – Unfortunately Father Tom was not able to join us at the last meeting so no provisional date was made. However we intend to have a joint meeting with the F and B committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> January and a date for the AGM will be agreed.

This is once again a matter for the F and B committee and your concern will be passed to them. However, the PPC discussed this at some length and as much as they understand the points you have raised our brief is to support the Parish Priest with his duties and responsibilities. Therefore, we are not in a position to tell Fr Tom what to do with the room. However, as I said the F and B will be asked to look into it. I am sorry not to provide you with more concrete answers but hopefully in the new year we will be able to move on with greater clarity.

Finally I have copied Elizabeth into this email as we will record your email(anonymously) in the minutes of our last meeting.

Kind Regards,

Joe

**GARDEN** It was felt that some action should be taken to complete the garden work as the slabs in the presbytery garden were taken up some time ago but no further action to grass the area has been carried out. This matter should be referred to the F&B committee.

#### **CHRISTMAS TREE**

**Joe M** said we should have a Christmas tree in the hall at the Advent Fayre and will send the name of the best and cheapest supplier to Claire so she can order it.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 30<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm to discuss the Advent Fayre and invite any parishioners who wish to come and help with the Fayre.

The chairman led the closing prayer.