

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 13th JANUARY 2020

13.30 PM IN ST COLUMBKILLE'S PRESBYTERY

MINUTES

Present:

Rev Fr Patrick A Hennessy
Rev Fr Bernard Mournian
Rev Deacon William McMillan
Margaret McGrath (Chair)
John Anderson
Paul McNeil
Monica Toner
Patricia Kennedy

Apologies:

None

Item 1 – Opening Prayer

Father Hennessy opened the meeting with a prayer.

Item 2 – Minutes and Action Points from the last Meeting

The last two meetings each had a singular focus- the Review of the PFC on 2 September and THE EGM on 11 November. The Committee agreed that all Action Points listed be carried forward to the next meeting. The Action Points therefore cover “historical” points as well as those from the Review and the EGM.

The Action Points from those meetings were then considered:

- Action Point 1 c/f from previous ordinary meeting. The ladders still need to be inspected and John Anderson advised that this will become part of his H&S Action Plan.1
- Action Point 2 c/f from previous ordinary meeting. Work has begun to increase the number of Passkeepers and we now have sufficient. A paper has been produced on the roles and responsibilities of Passkeepers. John advised that this may well include the need for Fire Safety and First Aid training – which is discussed at item 3. The clergy need to meet to discuss the issue of ongoing communication etc for Passkeepers – **action carried forward.**
- Action Point 3 c/f from previous ordinary meeting. This action is ongoing and will be **carried forward.**
- Action Point 4 c/f from previous ordinary meeting. John advised that this issue is part of a wider issue concerning the walls between the church and the carpark. Discussed at item 3.
- Action Point 5 c/f from previous meeting – this point was discussed at Item 4.

- Action Points 6 c/f from previous ordinary meeting-is cleared – plumber has been identified and P McNeill will arrange for an estimate to be provided.
- Action Point 7 c/f from Review meeting – this is cleared.
- Action Point 8 c/f from Review meeting – Fr Hennessy has not yet identified an appropriate parishioner for ad hoc legal advice – **action carried forward.**
- Action Point 9 c/f from Review meeting is cleared – John Anderson is the new Lay Member.
- Action Point 10 c/f from Review meeting – Deacon Bill reported work on the Asset Register is ongoing – **carried forward.**
- Action Point 11 c/f from Review meeting. This item is cleared, Christmas collection taken up with appropriate arrangements for Gift Aid members.
- Action Points 12 & 13 from EGM – Cleared – Mr Tudhope’s family were provided with all details of his belongings held here and have provided written confirmation that there is nothing outstanding pertaining to our contract.
- Action Points 14 & 15 from EGM – both Cleared. Information provided and letter issued to the Guy Logan. Response received and discussed at Item 4 (i).
- Action Point 16 from the EGM – item Cleared and further discussed at item 3 (i)

Item 3 – Health & Safety

- (i) Margaret explained that Fr Hennessy had written to G Logan and copied Diocesan Finance, querying the invoice received for H & S compliance services. The reply from Guy included details of the visits made to both the house and church for H & S inspections. We have further queried this as one of the visits shown was in fact in another parish. Margaret had then attended the Diocesan Finance Committee meeting where the issue was raised by another parish. The invoice represented the cost of the work done by Ellis Whittam for the Diocese over a three year period. The Diocese felt that the only way to share the costs amongst parishes was to base it on the visits undertaken. After some discussion at that meeting, it was agreed that some of the advice supplied to the Diocese from Ellis Whittam will be shared with parishes, and that the Diocese will advise if parishes are to expect further charges in the future over what period they will be charged – to enable budgeting for this within parishes. The Committee agreed that, once our outstanding query of the share of the costs is cleared, we should pay the amended invoice. **Action Point: M McGrath to follow up on payment of invoices (when amended) and to ensure this matter is included in future budgets.**
- (ii) John Anderson has now considered all of the Health & Safety issues which need to be addressed in the Parish. He has taken advice from Ellis Whittam, the company which provides advice on H & S matters to the Diocese. John will now prepare an action plan and send it to Fr Hennessy for consideration and then to pass on to Guy Logan, Diocesan Estates Manager. When the plan has been received it will be circulated to PFC members for comment prior to Fr Hennessy sending it on to G Logan. **Action Point: J Anderson to submit H & S Plan for consideration by members. Action Point: M McGrath to ensure H & S Plan circulated to PFC**

members for comment. John explained that the plan will cover a number of issues including the possible need for a new step ladder and the specific issue of safety of those working at heights to change light bulbs. John suggested we employ a specialist to do this as the bulbs do not require to be changed very often, however, the meeting was of the view that a nominated person should check/change the bulbs but the at least two people must present for H & S purposes. **Action Point : J Anderson to liaise with Deacon Bill and P McNeill re requirement for new ladder and discuss with Accounts Manager.** John also raised the issue of the wall between the House and the Car Park. He has measured this on a plumb line and is concerned that it is dangerously bowed. It was pointed out that we had previously taken advice from G Logan and Ellis Whittam on this and were advised no action is required. John is concerned, however, and the meeting therefore agreed that this issue should be included in his report and we will write to G Logan again. **J Anderson to ensure full detail of concerns re the walls to be documented to enable Fr Hennessy to write to G Logan.** John then advised that he is also working on a Fire Emergency Plan for the Parish. There are issues around signage to the muster point during an evacuation, the side door emergency exits in the church being locked and issues around the need for a fire door between the house and the church as well as an Evacuation Plan. John has already begun his weekly checks of the fire equipment. John will outline all of this in the plan which will be circulated to PFC members for comment and then Fr Hennessy will send it on to G Logan at the Diocese. **Action Point : J Anderson to submit Fire Emergency Plan for circulation to PFC member. Action Point: Following receipt of any comments, Fr Hennessy to send to G Logan.** Other issues being considered from a H&S perspective are:

- Plan for cascading H&S information and responsibilities to Group Leaders of all Groups who meet/work in the church and house.
- Choir Loft – new sockets have already been arranged to be fitted, but some work required to “tidy” the. There may be a need to extend the height of the brass rail on the front of the loft.
- In the Carpark the 5MPH sign has been covered by an advertisement from one of the groups using the Hall – this needs to be removed. No parking signage is required on the hill at the entrance to the carpark.

All of these issues will be set out in the Parish H & S Plan.

Item 4 – Ongoing Maintenance of the Church and House

- (i) Margaret provided a new Maintenance Matrix for 2020 and reported that all works e.g. PAT Testing, fixed wire testing and gas testing as well as regular checks on central heating and alarms systems are ongoing as per the Matrix. She has added the twice yearly tuning of the Church organ and advised that arrangements have been made for the gardening company to supply and spread salt across the church and hall grounds when the weather requires it. The Company will automatically do so and will also be available to be contacted in emergencies. This work has been added to the matrix.

- (ii) Margaret provided an update on the work undertaken to secure a new company to complete the refurbishment of the side altar ceilings. Following the sudden death of Mr Tudhope, Telfer Graphics had been approached and had provided full details of work to be undertaken, cost, insurance cover etc. Unfortunately, due to health reasons, Telfer had to pull out of this arrangement. Fr Mournian then explained about the quote he has now received from The Conservation Studio. Margaret advised that response from G Logan to Fr Hennessy's letter, following the EGM has provided full details of what we need to do before entering into any new contract. It also advised that the contract would be between the Diocese and the company. The meeting considered that this estimate and workplan would meet our needs – we still need a copy of the insurance certificate and to sort out training for the erection and dismantling of the scaffolding. Once these two issues are cleared, the Committee is in agreement that we can ask the Diocese to finalise a contract to allow the work to go ahead. **Action Point : Fr Mournian to obtain copy of Insurance Document.**
- Action Point: M McGrath to liaise with G Logan re scaffolding training.** Fr Mournian also raised the issue of obtaining proper lighting to the ceilings – Margaret advised that there is additional room on the rail already provided since the church refurbishment and that we should investigate whether this would be sufficient for our needs without the need for further work. **Action Point: M McGrath to check with electrician re additional lighting for fresco ceilings.**

Margaret provided a draft updated Table of Future works in the Parish Estate. She pointed out, in particular, that all work required on the Church Organ has been finalised and Fr Mournian noted that it is in very good condition. The only work now required is the twice yearly tuning and this will therefore be shown on the Maintenance Matrix. Hymn No Boards and Box for Hymn Nos have been finalised – we just need to agree to bring them into use. The Committee agreed they would be used for Sunday Masses (not weekday) and will show different Hymns for each Mass. **Action Point: P McNeill to arrange procedure for this.**

Work to install a new shower cabinet has begun – Paul confirmed that it is possible to do this and he has now identified the Plumber to take this forward. **Action Point : P McNeill to arrange for Plumber to visit and provide estimate.** Only two items in the work on the kitchen require to be completed – repair to the floor and new splashback. We had arranged for a joiner to visit and provide an estimate – but had been let down as no estimate has been forthcoming. M McGrath is organising a new joiner to look at the work. **Action Point : M McGrath to identify new joiner and arrange for an estimate.** We still have Phase III works on the Ongoing Maintenance Plan – all agree that although we don't foresee work starting in the near future, we do need to consider how to start planning for this in order to estimate funds required. The final project concerns work to plasterboard etc the tower at the choir loft. No evidence of water ingress has been found. P McNeill has contacted H McBeth and work is underway to obtain an estimate for these works. **Action Point: P McNeill to pursue estimate for this work. M McGrath to move this issue to high priority on the workplan.** Margaret then advised that she had two new issues which could be included in the ongoing works plan – the gas fire in Fr Hennessy's sitting room had been condemned when the annual gas safety check was undertaken. The central heating is more

effective now since the new boiler had been installed and Margaret suggested the gas fire be replaced by an electric fire which would be easier to install. This was agreed. **M McGrath to add this to the work plan and look at options for fires.** Margaret then pointed out that the broadband we use is really not sufficient and that it would be worthwhile getting companies in to check how we can obtain good coverage throughout the parish estate. Fr Mournian had suggested that new telephones may be required as the current set do not always work. **Action point: M McGrath to add telephones and broadband on to the workplan and take action to obtain details of service which could be delivered – including a new telephone system if possible.** Margaret advised that the Diocese has requested information for plans for work etc over the next three years to be these details of the request from the Diocese for information of work plans over the next three years – to assist the Diocese in planning. Margaret will provide a response to this request including possible feasibility study for Phase III works.

Item 5 -Budget Monitoring

- (i) Margaret provided information on actual income and expenditure against budget for the 2019 year. Things are going well with no issues of concern. We had seen a significant increase in activity in terms of income and expenditure, mainly due to the Ordination and Golden and Silver Jubilee celebration. Although costs for e.g. printing, postage etc had risen, we had made sufficient in our fundraising efforts to cover these. Income from votives had reduced this year, due to the material including candles being sold during the services for St Therese this year and because one of the votive stands had been removed during work on the side altar ceiling. We are still, however, covering costs. Margaret then explained that she plans to develop this year's budget based on actuals for this year (the current interest rate is 0. is 0.75% - and due to be reviewed on 30th January) unless we know the costs (e.g. council tax). The Committee can then review how this is working through the report at each meeting on actuals against budget.
- (ii) Margaret then raised the issue of a future Strategy for creating an ongoing savings plan for the Parish. We need to ensure that we always have sufficient reserves to deal with unplanned spending as well as beginning to think about when and how we plan for Phase III works. She suggested that we re-introduce our use of the Parish Investment Fund (with the Diocese). In the past, prior to paying for Phase II works, the Parish had deposited money in the PiF each year – it not only allows us to save funds, but also can assist other parishes in the Diocese. The Committee agreed that this is a good idea and Margaret will consider how and when best to begin depositing funds in the PiF.

Item 6 – Financial Information to Parishioners

- (i) Margaret outlined plans to prepare an Information Sheet for parishioners in line with that produced last year. This will show highlights from our Income and Expenditure in 2019 and plans for 2020 and beyond. Margaret also suggested giving a presentation at all Masses as we did last year and also that this should take place the week prior to P Kennedy attending all Masses to prepare for Gift Aid. The Committee agreed to this

approach. **Action Point : M McGrath to draft Information Sheet and presentation notes for clearance by the PFC.**

- (ii) Gift Aid refunds from HMRC this year were again acceptable but the volume of parishioners who are members of the Gift Aid Scheme is still disappointing. The Information Sheet will therefore contain information about Gift Aid and a carefully worded section on encouraging people to join, or current members to consider raising their contribution. **Action Point : M McGrath and P Kennedy to agree text within the Information Sheet relating to Gift Aid.**

Item 7 – AOCB

No further items of business were raised.

Item 8 – Date of next meeting

The proposed date for the next meeting is would be Monday 14th April to continue our 3 monthly cycle. However as that is Easter Monday and a Public Holiday, the Committee agreed to delay our meeting until **Monday 20th April 2020**

Item 9 – Closing Prayer

Father Hennessy closed the meeting with prayer.

Post Meeting Note

Minutes have been circulated and moved for approval by P Kennedy and seconded by M Toner.

January 20200