

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 6th FEBRUARY 2017

12.00 NOON IN ST COLUMBKILLE'S PRESBYTERY

MINUTES

Present:

Rev Fr Patrick A Hennessy
Rev Deacon William McMillan
Margaret McGrath (Chair)
Maureen McNamara
Paul McNeil
Monica Toner
Patricia Kennedy

Apologies

None

Item 1 – Opening Prayer

Father Hennessy opened the meeting with a prayer.

Item 2 – Welcome and Introduction

Margaret welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Agenda and notes for the meeting had been issued in advance.

Item 3 – Minutes and Action Points from the last Meeting

A draft minute had been circulated following the meeting. **The Committee agreed that it could be published on the website.**

The Action Points from the last meeting were then considered:

- Action 1 has been cleared.
- Action 2 has been cleared.
- Action 3 has been cleared.
- Action 4 was taken at Agenda Item 4 today.
- Action 5 was taken at Agenda Item 5 today.
- Action 6 was taken at Agenda Item 6 today.
- Action 7 was taken at Agenda item 6 today
- Action 8 has been cleared.

Item 4 – Lay Employees

Margaret advised that the Statement of Employment for each of our two Lay Employees have been finalised as agreed. A copy had been sent to the Diocese who had no comments beyond advising on the impact of change/retirement of Parish Priest. Both Statements have

therefore been amended to include a statement that conditions on sick leave, annual leave and periods of notice are at the Parish Priest's discretion. Both employees have been issued with these.

Item 5 - Health & Safety (including Security) Issues

Rev McMillan had successfully carried out instructions for those cleaning the Church and all appropriate materials and equipment are in place. The work on the Health and Safety Plan is ongoing – Rev McMillan will be retiring from work shortly and will have more time to dedicate to this matter. He will update the Committee at our next meeting. **Update PFC on status of Parish Health & Safety Plan at next meeting. Action : Rev McMillan**

Item 6 - Ongoing Maintenance of Church and House

Paul McNeill advised that both the central heating system and the central heating boiler for the Church will be guaranteed for one year following the official handover. Again, following this we will then require to institute an annual maintenance contract. Paul advised that, although two different companies were involved, it would seem sensible to have a maintenance contract which covered both system and boiler. He will seek advice from the Steering Committee on this and report at next meeting. **Seek advice from Refurbishment Steering Committee re how this is to be taken forward. Action : Paul McNeil**

Margaret then raised two further issues:

The Church Organ – the company which rebuilt the organ came back at our request as the organist had reported some problems with keys sticking etc. They repaired the cyphers (sticking notes) and got all the stops working again apart from the Swell Gemshort. They have written a report on the condition of the organ – the organ itself is older than the casing which holds it. It is suffering badly from overheating – the motor had been left on over the weekend, inadvertently, which caused the unit to overheat and push more hot air inside the instrument causing further damage. The organ was not designed for modern heating and they suggest we may need to fit a “humidifier” to help alleviate this. There was some discussion on how best to take this matter forward. The organist has already suggested that we call in the organ tuner who regularly tuned the organ prior to the refurbishment work. The committee felt we required some further advice from the Refurbishment Steering Committee on this – what arrangements had been put in place with the organ builders – and would there be any difficulty or even assistance gained by calling in the previous organ tuner? **Seek advice from the Refurbishment Steering Committee on this. Action : Paul McNeill**

The Parish House Boiler – Margaret advised that the boiler in the house required some attention. The firm used was recommended by the Diocese. They had inspected it and fitted a new pump but indicated that there may be an issue around the viability of the current boiler for the size of the house and the number of radiators it supports. They will provide a report on this to Guy Logan, [title] at the Diocese. **Liaise with Guy Logan (Diocesan Estates Manager) and report to next Committee meeting. Action M McGrath**

Item 7 - Budget Preparation, Monitoring and Publication of Accounts

Margaret provided the Committee with a further version of the 2017 budget. This now takes account of further payments due for the Church Refurbishment. She pointed out that it shows a deficit between income and expenditure – but that we did have a positive balance at the bank at the end of December which has to be taken into account. The information note for parishioners has been redrafted – this sets out the Income and Expenditure for 2016 and highlights where money had been obtained and how it had been spent. The note has been extended into a pamphlet form to include details of the Building Fund balance as at 31 December 2016; all expected income to the Fund e.g. Listed Places of Worship and National Churches Trust payments; expected invoices due to be received and the £120,000 loan from the Diocese which has to be repaid. The full details of the “debt” which the parish has in relation to the Refurbishment will then be made clear. The remainder of the pamphlet sets out our plans for raising the fund required to clear the debt and seeks comments/ideas from Parishioners. The Committee discussed this draft in full – overall very content with the information being provided and the tone set – we have much to be positive about and Parishioners can take pride in the achievements to date – made possible by their generosity. Following further discussion the Committee agreed that the pamphlet be finalised and a date should be agreed for its issue. It should be issued at the end of Mass – with a speaker introducing it for a few minutes from the Altar during Mass. The speaker will also indicate our wish to increase our Gift Aid members and that Patricia Kennedy and colleagues will attend all Masses the following week to provide advice and forms. It was also agreed that we should look at providing a visual display of performance in relation to fundraising to clear the debt. We do have a “thermometer” board which can be adjusted for this. Margaret suggested that in addition, we can put a quarterly report in the bulletin of funds raised to date. The Committee agreed. **Check all figures in the draft pamphlet and finalise; agree speaker and date with Father Hennessy; arrange printing of pamphlets. Action: M McGrath**

The Committee also noted that letters to those who Gift Aid will be issued to coincide with the issue of the information pamphlet.

Margaret also advised that, due to the information received regarding expected invoices for this year, apart from paying interest due on the loan at end of January, repayment of the loan from the Diocese cannot begin immediately. **Contact the Diocesan Finance Manager to inform her of this and of expected date for repayments to begin. Action: M McGrath**

Margaret also advised that as the Financial Return for 2016 had been completed and sent to the Diocese, action can now be taken to publish our Return on the Parish website. **The Committee agreed to publication. Action M McGrath**

Item 8 – Any other Relevant Business

Margaret advised that two issues had been raised by Bob McNamara:

- Access to/ egress from the Choir Loft and getting around in the loft. A member of the choir (anonymous) had raised this issue with Bob. The Committee is concerned that all members of the Choir are able to access and leave the Choir loft with ease. Like all Churches (and Cathedrals) of similar age (and older), we are limited in what we can do in terms of access. We have ensured that there are handrails on the Choir

Loft stairs. It was noted, however, that only one stairway is unlocked – the Committee agreed **that both stairways to the Choir Loft should be opened when the Choir is in attendance. Action: Paul McNeil [check]**. In terms of ease of movement within the Choir Loft due to different levels of floor – the Committee discussed this in full. Any work to level the floor of the Choir Loft would have incurred prohibitive costs which we could not manage in addition to the refurbishment already undertaken. In addition, levelling the floor would also be problematic because of the siting of the organ. The Committee agreed to keep this issue under consideration – but that the Choir themselves should look to see if there are any improvements which can be made by e.g. where the seating for the choir is situated. **Keep this issue under consideration and speak to the Choir re siting of the Choir and access/egress using both stairways. Action : Rev McMillan [check]**

- Installation of rails to pillars for use by Eucharistic Ministers. Bob had previously raised the issue of going up to and leaving the Altar to assist with Holy Communion. Eucharistic Ministers had been advised that they should use the side stairs at the Altar and can hold on to the pillar there to steady themselves if they are uncomfortable/nervous using the front Altar steps. Bob however, is still concerned that a handrail on the side pillar would make this issue much improved. The Committee discussed this in full – suggestions were made that Eucharistic Ministers could enter and leave the Altar through the door to the Sacristy passage, however Fr Hennessy noted that he felt we could install a rail on the pillar which would be in keeping with the newly refurbished Church interior. **Provide details and costs of proposed work on the Pillar handrail. Acton : Paul McNeill**

Margaret then advised the Committee that the most recent Ad Clerum provides guidance for parish on:

- Fabric and Planning
- Procedures on Tendering Arrangements for Good and Services
- Leases and Contracts
- Licensed Premises
- Concerts in Churches.

The Committee noted that the guidance is being held in the Parish Finance Committee file for future reference.

Item 9 – Date of next meeting

The Committee had previously agreed to meet every 3 months, on Monday at 12.00 noon. The next meeting will be held **on Monday 8th May 2017 at 12 noon in the Chapel House.**

February 2017