**Minutes of St Peter’s Parish Pastoral Council Meeting 7**

**Tuesday 26 September 2023 Parish Centre at 7 p.m.**

**Present:**

John Smart (Chair), Julian Kuzminski (Vice-Chair), John Lally (Secretary), Frank Fallon, Angela Johnson, Tim Ryan, Steve Blakemore, Cecelia Hubble, Margaret Dance, Paul Hebblethwaite, John Newbold, Liz Lally, Rosina Rutter, Fr Philip Newbold (Observer) (13)

**Agenda**

The meeting opened with a prayer from a time of danger for the Catholic Church and seeking God’s grace and forgiveness that we might always confess our Faith.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Pat Comer, Teresa Kehoe, Adam Billig, Helen Marsh, Mike Hart, Natasha Esparon, Terry Monahan, Yvonne Rendall, Fr Thomas (9)

Since the last meeting Dennis Fannon has tendered his resignation from the Parish Council. Members wish to thank him for his service and receive his resignation with regret.

1. **Agree Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes were approved.

* 1. **Matters Arising not covered in this Agenda:**

**-Parish Directory**

The final proof is ready for printing and the proof has been checked by the Secretary. It was agreed that the directory should be printed at Bromsgrove Printers and, in accordance with the decision of the last meeting, no more than 75 should be printed in the first instance. **ACTION: TK**

**-Parish Secretary**

In view of the decision at the last meeting that the Parish cannot afford the costs of a Secretary, TK has not invited a secretary from another parish to provide information about the role. However, she would wish to put the matter back on the table at a future meeting.

**-Contact Cards**

TK provided examples of what the contact cards might look like. However, the examples appeared to be for Eucharistic Ministers to leave with those who are sick in hospitals or care homes so that they might be contacted when there is need. The understanding of the Council was that the cards should bear the name and contact information of the Parish Priest so that he might be contacted directly when there is urgent need. Those cards would be taken and left with the sick parishioner by the Eucharistic Minister who would inform the care home or hospital of the card and the how and when to phone the Priest. **ACTION TK** asked to go ahead with the contact cards as presented but only with the details for Fr Thomas

**-Car Park Steps**

JS identified the wet weather over the summer holiday period as having prevented action on this matter. It is still intended that the white line will be painted before the winter sets in**.** A provisional date of 11th – 12th October has been agreed for this – again, weather permitting. **ACTION JS/PH**

**-Diary in Sacristy**

The diary is in place and Fr Thomas is entering his relevant engagements and services or other activities in the Church. Others planning activities using the Church should enter the details in the diary, **but only after informing Fr Thomas**. There was further consideration of adopting an electronic diary, but it will be necessary to explore further how this might operate particularly in conjunction with that already used by Fr Thomas which embraces more than his parish responsibilities.

**-Parish Activities and Events**

A day retreat has been booked at Harvington Hall on 25th November 2023 from 10.30am to 4.00pm.

A small party joined with parishioners from Our Lady and All Saints, Stourbridge, on a pilgrimage to Walsingham in May earlier this year. It proved to be very successful both spiritually and socially and a preference was expressed for further visits there perhaps at two yearly intervals.

It is still intended that should any parishioners wish to go on pilgrimage to Lourdes next year it will be arranged with the diocesan pilgrimage. **ACTION JS**

It has been noted that prizes for a tombola have been being collected at the back of church, but there was uncertainty about who was organising this, when or where. The Craft Club and Flower Group will be approached to establish if its members are arranging it and seeking prizes for the tombola draw. They will also be asked if they are planning to do a sale of what they produce near Christmas which the Council thought would be welcomed by parishioners. St Peter’s First School will be asked if it is not having Christmas bazaar as in the past.

**ACTION JS**

LL notified the Council that the annual Carol Service will be at 7.00pm on Tuesday 19th December. **ACTION: LL.JL,MD**

1. **Parish Census:**

TR/SB presented a summary report on the Census. Amongst the matters it raised were the reduction in numbers attending Mass compared with pre-Covid attendance, confusion about the relationship of standing orders with gift aid, the high proportion of the congregation who have some active role in the Parish, many with more than one role. Some parishioners responded to the questions about what improvements there might be in the parish.

**ACTION: (1) all PPC members** to consider how we may respond to the suggestions about improvements

 **(2) TR/SB** to publish a summary sheet for parishioners

 **(3) JN/JL** Any parishioners who have not yet completed a census form, or any new members of the parish, to be encouraged in the newsletter and on the website, where the census form is available, to do so.

1. **Community Centre Refurbishment:**

The refurbishment of the Parish Centre has been split into two: the outside will have two phases, the roof which has been completed in the last week, and the window replacement which will follow. Once that is complete the inside will be refurbished. The work on the roof has been guaranteed for 20 years. **ACTION on next steps: AB/PH**

1. **Heating and Lighting Costs in the Church and Community Centre:**

JN provided information about the current costs of energy compared with that before the rise in prices this year. The costs for 2022 were £7600 and it is looking likely on the two quarters paid so far that the cost for 2023 could reach as high as £30,000. This means that the only way that these costs could be met is by drawing from the Restoration Fund. Questions were raised about how the costs could be reduced in the winter ahead both in the Church and the Presbytery and what the impact of this might be on Exposition and Masses during the week. **ACTION: Finance and Property to take this forward with Fr Thomas**

1. **Church Issues:**

LL raised concerns about access to the toilets in the Centre for those involved in church activities such as flower arranging or attending funerals when children are there during vacation periods. Safeguarding requires that access to the Centre should be locked and any adult who is not responsible for the children should, if allowed into the Centre, should be accompanied by one of the responsible adults. An arrangement was made with the team providing for children during July and August for this access to be permitted, but it will need to be part of any future contract for use of the Centre. **ACTION: JS**

Concerns were also raised by members about safety of groups of children in the Centre when the main exit door is locked and the gates between the church grounds and the school are both locked. The fire exits both lead onto the playground between the locked gates with fences and walls around. Consultation needed on this. A draft procedure will be drawn up to be included in all relevant hire agreements. **ACTION JS**

Training for Eucharistic Ministers and Readers: JN is planning two sessions for these in the near future especially for those new to the roles. **ACTION: JN**

1. The item on the spiritual implications of membership of the PPC was left for the next meeting.
2. **AOB:**

MD expressed concern that choir members who sing at funerals are not paid while those who sing at weddings are paid (a sum of £60 to be shared). This makes it harder to encourage some members of the choir to attend. **ACTION: Funeral directors to be informed that if a choir is requested it will cost £60.**

CH reported on an event at Maryvale, run by CAFOD, meeting seminarians from Oscott. Seminarians are sent out into parishes and CH wondered if a seminarian might be invited to St Peter’s Parish.

TK sent a notice of an ACN pilgrimage/course to take place in July 22nd-26th 2024. It will be based in Durham and will visit Jarrow, Lindisfarne and other places, led by Suze Matthews, an Anglo-Saxon historian from Oxford. The cost will be £160 including accommodation and travelling while there but not including cost of travelling to Durham. Anyone interested to contact Teresa – teresa.kehoe@hotmail.co.uk – as soon as possible.

1. **Next Meeting**: Tuesday 12th December 7.00pm in the Parish Centre.

The meeting closed with a prayer by St John Henry Newman