

St. John Fisher Church Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 5th February 2007
at 7.30pm in the Upper Room

Present: Fr. Kevin Jordan, Ann Anderson, Edna Arulanantham, John Billiet, Maura Brady, Robert Browne (Vice Chair), Michael Glynn, Jessica Gooch, Barbara Jukes, Karen Lury, Brian Morahan (Chair), Hilary O'Byrne, Kay O'Connor, Chris Thoumine

Opening Prayer and Welcome

Fr. Kevin opened the meeting with a prayer.

Apologies for Absence

All members were present at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes 31st October 2006

Minutes were approved and signed.

Constitution of the Parish Council

Following detailed discussion at the meeting on 31st October, the Constitution had been subsequently amended by Fr. Kevin and Brian Morahan. Copies were distributed and the amended Constitution was unanimously agreed by the members.

Action Fr. Kevin: display Parish Council Constitution on the weekend of 3rd/4th March.
Brian Morahan requested that every member supplies him with their email address.

Report of Premises Sub-Committee

Review of Progress on the Church Doors, and Flat Roofs –

John Billiet has received two quotations to replace the six doors at present in place, both of which were approximately £9,000 plus VAT. It was agreed that the company which had carried out similar work at St. John Fisher School should be given the work. Detailed discussion followed as to the exact specification and with regard to materials and colours and it was generally felt that four doors, not six, would be sufficient for our purposes. A revised quotation will be requested which should result in a lower price. It was agreed that the inner doors of the porch do not warrant being replaced but that new bolts and latches should be fitted which would make them more secure.

Concern was expressed with regard to escape should a fire break out in the porch – the only other access in the main body of the Church are the doors going out to Imperial Drive which are screened with curtains (where the folk group are set up). It was felt that push bars should be fitted.

The timetable for the works (before 22nd June if possible):
inner doors – 2 months (March/April)
outer doors - 3months (April/May)

The roof over the Reconciliation room has been cleaned and cleared of debris. The roof of the Church porch is not in good repair and it was suggested that a sloping galvanised or plastic coated roof (which would not be visible from ground level) should be installed. Water damage is evident on the ceiling where the folk group are set up and it is in bad repair.

John Billiet reported that both the escape doors behind the stage and next to the Social Club need urgent attention – new frames and doors are required.

All of the fencing surrounding the Parish House and garage area was generally in bad repair and should be replaced. The garage roof needs attention and the back of the building is falling down and is considered to be dangerous.

Rob Browne reported that consultation has taken place with the groups who use the hall in order to assess the storage space they required and gave details of the outcome of the meetings held. Jessica Gooch reported that discussion took place at the Finance Committee meeting on 29th January regarding the use of the hall and that payments received from the various groups using it did not cover the running costs. It was agreed that although these groups have been established for many years and, in general, operate for the good of the parish, they should continue to have use of the hall but should be made aware of the situation.

Action BM: to draft a letter that can be sent to the groups using the hall to advise that the cost of running the hall and how the various groups might contribute to these costs is being reviewed.

Sheds around the premises need to be cleared in order to store various items that are in the small hall so that it can be used as a meeting area, and a general ‘clear out’ is required.

Detailed discussion took place and it was unanimously agreed that further consultation should take place with the groups in order to gather enough information to finalise some form of agreement and rules with regard to their use of the hall. Barbara Jukes will liaise with Mary Evans for a hall timetable to be drawn up and report back to the Parish Council.

Action BJ: to look at drawing up a timetable for use of the hall

It was agreed that the hall should not be rented out on a ‘one-off’ basis but should continue to be restricted to parish groups.

Report from Finance Committee

Jessica Gooch gave a report on expenditure during 2005/2006. As a result of the Planned Giving drive it was estimated that a rise of 5 – 7% in offertory is expected. There was a profit of almost £4,000 on books, candles and papers. The Social Club had a profit of £4,700 in 2006. Our assessment paid to Westminster was £42,000 - next year this will be £45,000. Expenditure is planned on the Church doors, flat roofs and fencing.

Youth

Members were supplied with a detailed report following a request for Barbara Jukes and Maura Brady to look into the ways in which the youth could be more involved in the parish. Detailed discussion took place and it was agreed that a good majority of the suggestions put forward could be implemented. Fr. Kevin stated that the public celebration of Mass at the usual times should be inclusive of everyone but was happy for the youth to play key roles or have special Masses on occasions. Kay O’Connor already runs youth meetings for Years 7 and 8, 9 and 10, so that young people can meet before catechetical programmes commence and encourages those in Year 11 to help out. Outings to Thorpe Park and other venues are very popular.

Parish Priest’s Report

Fr. Kevin reported that the Office is now celebrated before weekday Masses. The hymn books need to be replaced.

Parents of this year's First Confession children have requested the Sacrament to be celebrated in the Confessional as opposed to last year's who wanted it celebrated with children sitting on pews in the body of the Church. Fr. Kevin stated that bearing in mind child protection issues, if a child goes into the Confessional, he leaves the door open. It would appear that the solution would be to install an 'old-style' Confessional although this does not ensure privacy. One of our parishioners, who is a carpenter, has offered to build a 'foldaway' crib and the crib figures are to be restored.

Two chalices have been donated by a family to be used at weekday Masses.

Churches Together in North Harrow Christmas and Easter cards – Fr. Kevin reported that our contribution towards printing is £200 but because of our allocation of roads and the proximity of parish boundaries with South Harrow and Harrow-on-the-Hill, a large number of cards are not distributed. Fr. Kevin will request the CTNH to [re-assess](#) the allocation of streets.

Any Other Business

Hilary O'Byrne pointed out that the Constitution states that parish groups should provide a report of their activities seven days before each Parish Council meeting. It was agreed that a format for reporting should be drawn up. Hilary O'Byrne and Karen Lury to action.

Action HOB & KL: to prepare a template that the parish groups should use for reporting to the Parish Council.

It was agreed that the minutes of Parish Council meetings will be distributed to members before being displayed on the Church notice board.

Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting Monday, 14th May at 7.30pm. Further meetings during the year to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm with a prayer led by Fr. Kevin.