

St. John Fisher Church Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 21st September 2009
at 7.30pm in the Upper Room

Present: Fr. Kevin Jordan, Edna Arulanantham, Maura Brady, John Brennan, Rob Browne, Michael Glynn, Jessica Gooch, Barbara Jukes, Karen Lury, Brian Morahan (Chair), Hilary O'Byrne, Kay O'Connor

Opening Prayer and Welcome

Fr. Kevin opened the meeting with a prayer.

Apologies for Absence and Welcome

Ann Anderson

As John Billiet has decided to stand down from both the Finance Committee and Parish Council, John Brennan was welcomed to the meeting. John introduced himself to the Committee and gave details of his experience in both building and health and safety.

In his absence deep gratitude was expressed for all of the work John Billiet has done over the past years both officially and unofficially, and the Parish Council wish him every happiness in his retirement.

Approval of Minutes 18th May 2009

Apart from an Action for Brian Morahan, the minutes for the above meeting were approved and signed.

Matters Arising:

Premises Report

Rob Browne reported that the Pre-School had been successful in obtaining a grant of £13,000 for the renovation of the toilets opposite the Social Club area. The next step was to involve the diocesan surveyor, Chris Fanning, to ensure that the works are carried out to the satisfaction of the diocese. Detailed discussion took place as to the necessary legalities required regarding the work to be undertaken i.e. tenders submitted must contain detailed specifications, companies must be VAT registered for insurance purposes, adequate safety measures for the children, parents and staff while the work is in progress. With regard to the lease, Rob Browne is continuing talks with Stephen Peter. Fr. Kevin said that as the parish pays a percentage of its income to the diocese for services such as these, full use should be made of the expertise of Stephen Peter and Chris Fanning.

Further discussion took place with regard to provisional services, safety regulations, funding for these requirements and the original plan of the construction of an outside play area.

It was unanimously agreed that it is now a matter of urgency to commence work on the demolition of the sheds as there are several items which need to be removed from the hall and stored in the new storage area in order to facilitate all hall users.

Action: Brian Morahan, Rob Browne, John Brennan to meet with the Pre-School to ascertain up to date situation with regard to the proposed works.

Upper Floor, Parish House - Fr. Kevin reported that the boiler on the ground floor has been replaced with a new boiler on the first floor of the parish house. Consequently, as the system is now running more efficiently, radiators do not need to be replaced on the upper floor as originally planned. A new bathroom has also been installed. The total cost of these works is £8,000. Windows have also been repaired on all floors. The living accommodation on the upper floor is now of a good standard.

The security lights outside the Social Club area are in the process of being repaired.

Finance

Jessica Gooch had distributed her report to members. There was nothing to add except that the lower weekly income would be returning to normal levels after the summer holidays.

The yearly electrical inspection had been undertaken – there were no remedial works to be done. Hilary O’Byrne asked whether the confessional is being replaced, and if there were plans for a new sanctuary. Fr. Kevin felt that at present there were no immediate plans to carry out any re-ordering. However, it is possible our financial position will be looked at in approximately a year and the situation might be reviewed then. Brian Morahan asked if the confessional was within the requirements of child protection regulations. Hilary O’Byrne and Kay O’Connor confirmed it was; the children preferred the privacy of a room and the door is left open. Rob Browne suggested that a list of future works should be drawn up and prioritized.

Catechist’s Report

Kay O’Connor had distributed her report to members.

At present 54 children are being prepared for First Holy Communion but this figure could rise to 70 – 80.

There have been 47 applications for Confirmation compared to 41 for last year. In theory 60 children should be preparing.

Kay had attended an open evening at Heythrop College to find out more about the foundation pastoral ministry degree course, but as attendance would clash with Saturday classes, she has decided put this on hold for the time being.

While Fr. Kevin and Kay were planning sacramental preparation programmes, they discovered that the parish hall could have been used on several occasions if they had been informed by the relevant group that it was available.

Extensive detailed discussion took place with regard to the availability of the parish hall..

Fr. Kevin stated that at a recent meeting of priests with Archbishop Nichols, the Archbishop stated that priority must be given to catechesis in every parish. Therefore, the main purpose of the parish hall should be for catechesis. It was suggested that prior to the start of new preparation programmes, Fr. Kevin and Kay should inform hall users of the dates they wish to hold catechetical meetings. If given enough notice, hall users could then change the dates or times on which they meet.

Parish Priest’s Report

Fr. Kevin had distributed his report giving details of the duties he had carried out and the meetings he had attended since the last meeting. There was nothing to add.

Parish Council – 3 Year Election Process

Brian Morahan stated that elections will tie in with Annual Parish Meeting. A minimum of 28 days notice must be given prior to the date of the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was agreed that the next Parish Council meeting will now take place on Monday, 16th November, with the Annual Parish Meeting taking place on Monday, 30th November.

Karen Lury asked whether updated questionnaires should be sent out before the Annual Parish Meeting.

Barbara Jukes and Maura Brady are standing down, 4 or 5 members are up for election.

Maura Brady said that she intended to continue with the coffee mornings; the extra session after 10am Mass has attracted more families. So far £670 had been raised for charities and she was open to suggestions for nominations for the coming year.

They were both thanked for their support and hard work over the past 3 years.

Action: Fr. Kevin to give notice of the Annual Parish Meeting and election process in the newsletter.

Any Other Business

Fr. Kevin, as responsible person for the parish, has received a letter from the Diocese giving details of proposed recommendations on risk assessment, and have recommended the services of a company to conduct surveys on the various issues of health and safety in the parish on an annual basis at the rate of £900 per year for 5 years. Fr. Kevin has given John Brennan the details to consider and suggested that, as St. Luke’s, Pinner have had an inspection, he speaks to

the parish secretary there who has had dealt with this company. Diocesan-wide, there has apparently been a very mixed review on feedback.

Action: Brian Morahan, Rob Browne, John Brennan to discuss further.

Detailed discussion also took place regarding the safest method of demolishing the unwanted sheds.

Action: John Brennan to seek the advice of Chris Fanning.

Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting Monday, 16th November at 7.30pm in the Upper Room.

Future meeting dates Annual Parish Meeting Monday, 30th November at 7.30 pm in the Parish Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm with a prayer led by Fr. Kevin.