

St John Fisher Church Parish Council
Minutes of meeting held Monday 22 February 2010
At 1930 hrs in the Upper Room

Present

Fr. Kevin Jordan, Edna Arulanantham, John Brennan, Rob Browne, Karen Lury, Brian Morahan (Chair), Hilary O'Byrne, Kay O'Connor, Chris Thoumine, Ann Anderson, Glynn Jones (for Jessica Gooch), Stanislaus D'Souza, Dolores McLean-Boyd, Neville Ransley, Penny Ransley

1 Opening Prayer and Welcome

Fr Kevin opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 Apologies for Absence

Michael Glynn, Jessica Gooch

3 Introductions – New & Existing Members

Brian Morahan (BM) explained that in line with the Constitution the Parish Council had completed its first 3-year cycle and that some members had stepped down and new volunteers had come forward to take their place.

The membership of the Parish Council is as follows:- Parish Priest, Pastoral Workers, Elected Parishioners, Parish Priest appointees, co-opted members, Finance, Premises, Child Protection Officer, Minutes Secretary.

BM welcomed Stanislaus D'Souza, Dolores McLean-Boyd, Neville Ransley, Penny Ransley as new members of the Parish Council. BM will document the structure of the group and distribute to all for reference.

4 Minutes (16/11/2009)

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

5 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

BM and Rob Browne (RB) stated that they wished to stand down as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. They both felt that the group would benefit from a change of leadership to take the Parish Council through the next 3 year period. However there were no candidates to replace them and both agreed to stay on for another year.

Fr Kevin thanked both for all they had done over the years.

BM requested Fr Kevin (KJ) to summarise what projects he felt the Parish Council should be looking to tackle over the next 3 year period.

KJ said we would need to look into the possibility that the higher windows in the Parish Hall were causing heat loss and would need to be replaced. He said there was no further significant ground work for the Parish Hall. The sheds, etc, would be covered by the Local Authority grant to the Pre-school.

There was a need, he said, for a fixed, stone altar and ambo. It was assumed that the Church had never been consecrated as it had never had a fixed altar. The diocese has no record of a consecration date.

6 Premises Report

John Brennan (JB) spoke about the ongoing work concerning the Pre-school area and the Local Authority grant. Work on the Toilets and Lobby Area is complete. JB confirmed that the Local Authority would put in the gulleys, etc. The Parish would have to decide what it wanted out of the current works: the possibility of a second shed; replacement of Toddler Group shed; choice of colour scheme; etc. It was agreed that

when the Parish had decided what it wanted, it should share the details with the Pre-school people for them to incorporate into the planned works. It was emphasised that before any start is made the Parish must think through what it wants otherwise it would be too late for changes to be made. There was much discussion on where equipment would be stored, and where the sheds would be placed.

RB updated the group on the proposed lease between the Pre-School and Diocese. Whilst this had previously been considered necessary to protect both the Parish and the Diocese RB had since received written confirmation from Harrow Council, via the Pre-School, confirming that a formal lease would not be required to support the grant process. RB will advise the Diocese of this development so they could stop the process of drawing up a lease.

JB raised the matter of clearing the greenery and vegetation on the Imperial Drive side of the property as this was causing increasing damage to the low boundary wall. It was decided that he would discuss later with Mary Evans and a decision would need to be made as to what vegetation and trees could be cleared. JB advised a total removal.

7 Finance Committee Report

In the absence of Jessica Gooch, Glynn Jones (GJ) gave the finance report. The Offertory income was down a little on previous years. The funds were in good order standing at around £135,000 but bank interest rates were down. There was a suggestion of putting some funds elsewhere to attract higher interest. However, KJ reminded the Council that a parish is not normally allowed to have more than one account.

The Finance Committee should also keep in mind that funds would be needed for the fixed altar, the ambo, perhaps a baptismal font, and other unforeseen expenses like a leaking water tank in the Upper Room.

8 Catechist Report

- - As attached.

Kay O'Connor (KO'C) added that the current confirmation group is the best they had ever had.

9 Parish Priest Report

- - KJ tabled a written report, attached.

KJ wished to add a further item, namely that he visited the senior citizens Christmas meal which had been organised by the Social Club. He thanked the Committee of the Social Club for the work they had done to organise the event.

With regard to his duties at Harrow School, (this had come from the Diocese) his salary is paid to the parish and is "non-assessable" income, which means the diocese would not take its one-third percentage.

In addition KJ mentioned that ring-fenced funds (eg from a fund raising event to help finance the upgrade of the Sanctuary) are non-assessable by the Diocese.

10 Any Other Business

Gift Aid There was some discussion on whether enough standing orders and envelopes were attracting Gift Aid. Some members felt that this should be encouraged more regularly in the weekly Newsletter. It was pointed out that parishioners do not

read the Newsletter, and that those who do did not read the back page. The website would be a suitable means for such information.

There was clearly a need to overcome the lack of information being picked up by parishioners if they did not read the Newsletter. All such details should be on the website, but people who don't read the Newsletter wouldn't know the website address. The parish's own publication *Rough Guide to the Parish* was awaiting a final screed from the Parish Priest. There was some discussion on the frequency of this new *Rough Guide* and how it should be distributed. It was noted that the Parish would be getting a colour photocopier.

Another point discussed was the possible revamp of the weekly Newsletter. It was suggested that it may be a suitable project for an IT student to undertake.

Odd jobs (handyman) Neville Ransley (NR) mentioned that he frequently tightened screws on the kneelers in the pews, but lately he had been finding kneelers which were actually broken and needed nails, hammer and glue. JB said that at a Finance meeting Mary Evans had been asked if there were an odd-job man available. KJ said there was a list of people willing to do such occasional jobs. No action was decided.

Suggestion Box There had been nothing in the box.

Music The Music Group had responded well to the idea of providing a more mixed selection of music (old hymns and new hymns) during the Sunday masses. A couple of people in the group offered to run workshops to help those who cannot read music and to get to know the new hymn book. KJ was investigating the possibility of providing new, larger hymn number boards. This would enable the written handouts to be stopped.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2105 hrs with a prayer.

Date of next meeting 17 May 2010

Future meetings 20 Sep 2010
 15 Nov 2010
 29 Nov 2010 APM

Signed as a true record
17 May 2010