

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday 4th November 2021 – 7.00pm

In Parish Centre

Present: Fr Gordon, Jim Cunningham, David Aaron, Gerry Connor, John Kilgour, Siobhan McEvoy, Martin McLean, Barbara Morgan, Brenda Sanderson, John Turver.

John McGovern – Chair of Parish Club/Centre

1	<p>Apologies.</p> <p>Martina McCollom, Rachel McGovern, Julie Humphrey – Chair of Partnership Development Group</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>Were read and agreed.</p>
3	<p>Finance</p> <p>MMcL thanked BM who has provided a financial update</p> <p>We have £6,935 in the current account, and £220k in the deposit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40A Coniscliffe Road, still to ascertain whether to change it from commercial to domestic. BM to contact the Diocese to enquire about the change of use, meanwhile, to go ahead with the internal decoration (£2K) Discussion followed as to the possible use of the property, to make available for refugees or affordable housing? JK spoke of a parish in Gateshead who have purchased a property through Green Pastures a Charity to use for refugees. This had permission from the Diocese. Although we already own the property to make enquiries as to whether this could be applicable to us. We could also contact the 700 Club or the local authority. To contact A Gillingham to see if this could be feasible and what we need to do.• Have made donations of £200 to 6 charities where we should have taken a mandatory second collection.• Staff furlough – everybody now back to work on their full hours. A full discussion was held around the possible hours available to the keyholder – 35 hrs/month contracted. It is unlikely that we can provide enough work for these hours due to the slow opening up of the Parish Centre. BM to contact HR at the Diocese to discuss the options. <p>The parish has been picked to be one of those to be audited. Cash book sent to the Diocese and waiting to see if we might have to provide additional documents.</p>
4	<p>Parish Centre Update</p> <p>We have been closed ever since March 2020 but have finally re-opened again resulting in a lot of paperwork following the risk assessments and the restrictions in place from the Diocese. Parish groups can now use it subject to a risk assessment and signed off by the Priest. We have taken</p>

	<p>advice from Brian Whelan (H&S) who has been very helpful. Private individuals can now hire it although again they need a risk assessment, a designated leader who will ensure that the restrictions, i.e., face coverings, social distance, access to the kitchen restricted to 2 people and limited numbers (80) are adhered to. Although every event needs a risk assessment, we have tried to reduce some of the paperwork by having a generic assessment for meetings etc. Unfortunately, because of the Diocesan guidelines we had 2 weddings cancelled. A further review will be held in November although our infection rates are still high.</p> <p>We are hoping to resume Sunday Coffees after Mass from this weekend. Carmel students doing the JPPII awards will help wait on tables of 6, no cakes but biscuits individually wrapped allowed. We will ask for donations to be split between charities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simpson Room still needs some work due to the leak from the roof. Contractors who have looked at the job are not interested – to contact AG at the Diocese to see if he has any roofers he could point in our direction. As it seems unlikely to be used as a playgroup again, we need a discussion as to its potential use in the future, i.e., smaller meeting room ... • There had been an enquiry from Food for Thought as to using our Centre for distribution and storage as their current premises will soon not be available. Fr Gordon to make contact to ascertain what storage they need, if we can't accommodate them in the Youth Hall/Simpson Room perhaps in the short term we could look at showing them 40A Coniscliffe Road? • Kitchen and patio Patio doors are in, and the patio is about 90% complete, to finish off when the kitchen extension is done. These have been paid for by the club. The next step is the kitchen extension. We had a reasonable quote from the same contractors as the patio doors/patio. There will be a lot of demolition and the heater in the hall needs to be moved, (this does contain asbestos) to accommodate two serving hatches and a door into the kitchen. There are new regulations requiring 1hr fire resistance so work will need to be done on the wall between the kitchen and the bar. A smaller hatch and door will be included in the bar area. A subcommittee has been formed looking at the layout of the kitchen, we have one plan now and looking for another estimate, this will be based on an industrial style kitchen. <p>Fr Gordon would like to congratulate everybody who has been involved.</p>
5	<p>Sunday Evening Mass</p> <p>Would like to resume the mass on a Sunday evening starting 1st Sunday in Advent. The music group are willing to return, and would it be possible for them to use the projector for the hymn words – yes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will delay the re-opening of Church planned for 14th November until we can have more people back in Church and the Parish Centre. • Peter Gibson MP is coming to Church on the 21st of November and will be available to meet people afterwards.
6	<p>SYNOD</p> <p>We have been asked to discuss/answer 10 questions and to have them complete by the end of April, but the timetable has now been extended to August 2022 and to submit them to the Bishop. We have started by publishing the first 3 small questions in the bulletin and will have meetings next</p>

	<p>week, before and after Mass and Fr Gordon will talk to the parents of the 1st Communion children as well. The other 7 questions will be answered after Christmas.</p> <p>These are to be discussed in the parishes, and then the vicariate. There will be a meeting on Saturday 16th November for 3 partnerships being held at Carmel College.</p> <p>Some comments have been made around the Diocese as to what happened to Forward Together in Hope and all the work that went into that process.</p> <p>One suggestion put forward at the meeting was that it should only be those under 65 answering the questions as it is about the future of the Church.</p>
7	<p>Live Streaming</p> <p>We had hoped that the permanent fitting of the camera in Church to allow live streaming would now be in place but agreed to give a deadline of Christmas to the quote that we had of £2K. If this is not possible, we will accept the more expensive quote of £4K plus £200/month maintenance.</p> <p>Everybody has been very appreciative of the live streaming of masses, and this has brought families together, perhaps watching the mass in different parts of the country. It will continue to be streamed via Facebook. To continue with the use of the projector for the words of the hymns.</p>
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>Two questions were submitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the Parish Council minutes could be displayed on the website? YES, to have a link on Facebook as to where they can find them on the website. If agreement was reached before the next meeting the minutes could be uploaded quicker. • Do we need to have voting for new members of the Parish Council? The Parish Council was set up to have representation from all groups. Perhaps we need some new representation from the Sunday Masses. Would like to see representation from the Indian and Polish communities. Perhaps put a note in the bulletin asking if anybody would like to get involved. <p>Times of Christmas Masses</p> <p>Last year we had Mass at 4pm, 7pm and midnight with the Christmas Day Mass at 10am.</p> <p>Letter received from DA</p> <p>He read the letter out that he had sent to Fr Gordon, where a group that had hired the PC and their event that evening was a life drawing session. He felt that this was not appropriate use of the Parish Centre. Agreed to write to the group in question.</p> <p>The Parish Centre alarm has not worked for some time. A quotation had been obtained for £1.5K to repair or £2.3K for renewing the system. The Parish Centre committee felt a new system was the preferred option with installation as soon as possible. This can be extended into the new kitchen when it is complete. Agreed by the Parish Council that the parish would fund this initially and the Parish Club would contribute 20% as per the agreed shared costs.</p>

	<p>First communion preparation is continuing and a Baptism Course for 17 couples had recently been held for the partnership.</p> <p>Fr Gordon would like to thank all the catechists for the First Communion and Baptism Preparation Courses and JMcG and BM for all the paperwork involved in the Parish Centre.</p>
	<p>Meeting ended at 8.30pm</p> <p>Next meeting date TBA</p>