

**ST. PETER'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING 14 SEPTEMBER 2020 (ZOOM)**

Present

Fr. Kevin Douglas, Josephine Beech-Brandt (Chair), Liz Brown (Secretary), Joyce Cullen, Francis Katamba, Ros Macaskill

In attendance

Anne Marie Douglas, John Wastle, Mary Wastle, Chris McGill, Marianne Cobb.

Apologies

Salvatore Callea, Annie Royan, Aoife Palmer.

Opening Prayer led by Fr. Kevin

Welcome by Josephine Beech-Brandt, acknowledging that this was the first meeting since Lockdown, and the first by Zoom.

Minutes of PPC Meeting 3 February – action points rolled forward in view of circumstances.

Review of current situation – Fr. Kevin updated us on parish activity since Lockdown.

- Initial flurry of telephone calls from parishioners with various suggestions for action at St. Peter's eased after about two weeks, and Fr. Kevin could settle to a routine of prayer and as advertised, offering Mass privately each day.
- As other elderly priests were required to self-isolate, Fr. Kevin took responsibility for a large number of funerals outside the parish. Those funerals conducted for our own parishioners could not always be advertised in the newsletter, to avoid breaking the rules for gatherings. In the same way, Fr. Kevin took responsibility for visitations to the Sick, in various settings. As far as is known, no one died without receiving the sacraments.
- Once the churches could open again for individual prayer, and then for Mass, there was new and additional admin involved for Fr. Kevin in arranging stewarding and cleaning. (St. Peter's now has a special machine to sanitise the church after use). Also, as per the guidelines, Mass must be said without the support of sacristans, readers, altar servers or any other lay person on the Sanctuary. No one other than Fr. Kevin can enter the Sacristy.
- Fr. Kevin met with Miss Kennedy, Depute Head at St. Peter's Primary School to start to make plans for the children who could not take their First Reconciliation in May or First Holy Communion in June, when churches and schools were closed. A date is in the Parish Diary for Confirmations (21 May), but communications about arrangements will come from the school. The Archbishop is anxious that there is a catch up programme for those waiting to receive the sacraments for the first time. Fr. Kevin is keen to be as flexible as possible in making arrangements for the families concerned.
- It has been agreed that Fr. Kevin will resume visits to the school, but only once a week and to visit only two classes at a time. By necessity, this is much less visiting than normal.
- There is a new chaplain at St. Thomas of Aquin's High School; Fr. Sam from St. Albert's who is very recently ordained.

- The replacement heating project has required much attention once work was allowed to start (see later).
- Fr. Kevin feels supported and encouraged by parishioners, in particular is grateful for continued financial support, especially seen in an increased number of parishioners setting up standing orders and making direct payments.
- It is expected that St. Peter's will open again for weekday services once the heating work is complete, likely end October. Fr. Kevin is still to decide about the timetable of services. It will be necessary to add to the rota for stewards and cleaners to enable weekday opening.
- Numbers at the four Masses available across St. Peter's and St. Columba's, were slow to start with, but have grown steadily; all Masses are now booked out. Set at the allowed maximum of 50 places per Mass, there are 200 places available over the four Masses. Usual Mass attendance across the two parishes is approx. 600.

Finance Council (Anne Marie Douglas and Chris McGill)

- Finance Council has been meeting by Zoom, as needed.
- Income is down by less than £3000 over the period of Lockdown, which is understandable given the disruption. There has been an excellent response to requests for parishioners to set up Standing Orders, and parishioners have also been making direct payments into the bank account. This is a very encouraging development for maintaining income streams over the long term.
- Building Fund currently stands at £29,823.80 (of which £20,588.25 is gift-aided).
- Archdiocese has issued a Finance Council Governance Policy, which is a helpful starting point for deciding on roles within and responsibilities of Finance Council. Chris McGill explained that this would include working in a collaborative manner with PPC, and the importance of sorting out the right structure for the Finance Council and Parish Pastoral Council to co-exist in support of the Parish Priest, especially for long term projects and to cover changes in personnel.
- The parish does have the funds to cover for the committed expenditure (for clearing asbestos and for the replacement heating) and this does include funding from the Archdiocese. Finance Council is currently querying a reduction in the previously agreed and communicated amount of Archdiocesan funding.

Church Heating Project (John Wastle)

- Archdiocesan Trustees approval was given in March to clear the asbestos and then to replace the heating.
- Acron Asbestos (£37,000 + VAT) started on the asbestos removal as soon as it was allowable and completed the work on schedule. Independent contractor confirmed site was asbestos free in time for opening St. Peter's for Sunday Mass on Saturday 25th July.
- Lothian Heating Services (£117,000 + VAT) in turn started on site as soon as permissible, and work is on schedule for completion in mid-October.
- Hardies appointed to provide Project Management Services.
- Full details have been communicated in the Parish Newsletter. All new radiators have been hung and connected to the underground pipework (although one has been returned to the manufacturer as it is faulty), including to the rear of the church (under the arches). Some pipework is visible above ground for the radiators to the rear of

the church. Air curtain has been fitted in inner porch to mitigate heat loss when the church doors are able to be opened and closed during services (in normal times; currently for ventilation they must stay open).

- It is expected when all contractors finish on site that only a superficial clean will be required

Other routine maintenance (John Wastle)

- Our Lady of the Snows has been restored and re-hung.
- Railings outside are in process of being painted; to be completed after heating project is finished.
- Mandatory checks have been completed, when possible.

Fr. Kevin wished to record thanks to John Wastle for his efforts in marshalling this two-year project to replace the church heating.

Membership of PPC - It was noted that PPC AGM would ordinarily have taken place in June. It was agreed that there would be no formal change to membership of PPC for the time being, but that some thought should be given to future key focuses and responsibilities, as well as the working relationship with Finance Council (as mentioned above) and calls for future volunteers. **Action: Fr. Kevin, Josephine Beech-Brandt & Liz Brown**

Digital Strategy – It was noted with thanks, that Trish Dolan will be finishing as administrator of the Parish Facebook page at the end of September. This has seen increasing appeal over the time that Trish has been in role, especially over the period that the churches were closed. Digital Strategy will be a priority for discussion at the next meeting. In the meantime, all were to give thought to future candidates, if possible emailing suggestions to Fr. Kevin **Action: Liz Brown & PPC.**

Any other business

- Saturday Vigil Mass at St. Peter's 5.30pm has been well received, and Fr. Kevin hopes that this will continue into more normal times, as a quiet, no frills Mass.
- Music – Kathleen Dyne is playing the organ at 11.30 Sunday Mass. Fr. Kevin is open to other permissible options.
- Next project for the church building is likely to be restoration of the wooden floor.
- Fr. Kevin anticipates an appeal for all parishes to provide extra funds to the Archdiocese.

Date of next meeting – Monday 16 November 8pm (Zoom).

Closing prayer.