

## **St Bride's Church Fleet Street**

### **Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Wednesday 6 June 2012**

**Present:** Ven David Meara (Rector & Chairman), Christopher Betterton, Gerald Bowey, Geoffrey Burgess, Eric Davies, James Irving, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Beverly Leach, Peter Longland, Peter Silver, David Smith, Janet Smith, Terence Smith, Grace Stedman

#### **1. Opening Prayers**

The Rector opened the meeting with prayers.

#### **2. Apologies for absence**

These were received from: Ian Locks, Claire Seaton, John Smith, Mary Walker and Jerry Wright

#### **3. Minutes of the meeting held 28 March 2012**

Clive Hill-Archer requested that the minutes reflected the reservations expressed at the meeting regarding St Bride's continuing to 'punch above its weight' with regard to the Common Fund.

The minutes were signed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

#### **4. Matters arising not on the agenda**

i. Sports Journalists' Service – this would be held on Tuesday 24 July at 7pm followed by a reception at Stationers' Hall.

ii. The meeting recorded its thanks to Janet Smith for acting as Secretary over recent meetings.

iii. St Bride Foundation Institute. Peter Silver reported that the Foundation had proposed the adoption of new articles in July 2012 wherein the current Trustees would become Directors of a new company. It was also reported that the Rector and two other nominees would be sought from the church, rather than the present arrangement of the Rector and Churchwardens automatically being Trustees. The Rector suggested that two of the current churchwardens continue to represent the church and that the matter be brought back to the PCC when the churchwardens finish their terms of office. The PCC expressed a wish that the links between the church and the foundation be maintained.

iv. The Olsen Lecture would be held on 24 October 2012 and would be given by Peter Hitchens.

#### **5. Appointment of Treasurer, Secretary and co-opted members**

The following appointments were made:

i. Treasurer – Beverly Leach was proposed by Gerald Bowey, seconded by Peter Longland and unanimously appointed;

ii. Secretary – Christopher Betterton was proposed by Clive Hill-Archer, seconded by Grace Stedman and unanimously appointed.

iii. Co-opted members – James Irving, Robert Jones, Claire Seaton, David Smith and John Smith were unanimously co-opted to the PCC.

Peter Silver reported to the PCC that “Levels of remuneration for all St Bride’s staff, including those who are co-opted to the PCC, are reviewed every November by the Rector and Churchwardens and are considered to be commensurate with their roles. Staff are not remunerated for their role as PCC members. Salaries for co-opted members have been and will continue to be published in the PCC’s annual accounts. The number of employees who are co-opted members of the PCC is less than half the number of Trustees and therefore the majority of trustees remain unremunerated”.

## **6. Financial Report**

The Treasurer presented the financial report.

### **i. First quarter 2012 accounts**

a. We have a deficit of £45,067. This is not unusual for this time of year as expenditures are spread evenly over the year and many income items come in the second half of the year. We expect to be back on track later in the year.

b. Expenditure is generally down on budget, although publicity and promotion is £2,317 over budget due to one-off costs relating to podcasting being set up on our website.

c. The capital grants from the City Churches Grants Committee are all in respect of initial costs of the Inspire! Appeal, but do not cover the VAT element on these costs, hence a £3,631 deficit on the capital account. This shortfall will be made good by a transfer from the Appeal Trust, which I am told has already received many donations towards the Inspire! Appeal.

### **ii. VAT**

I would like to thank everyone who signed the e-petition on the Downing Street website urging the chancellor to reconsider extending the standard rate of VAT to alterations to listed places of worship. There were over 28,000 signatures, but it has now closed as a solution has now been offered by the government. I distributed a Telegraph article ahead of the meeting, which indicates that from October the chancellor is going to provide an additional £30 million a year of funding ‘in this Parliament’ for the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This funding is on top of the £12 million p.a. already in the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. It is thought that this will cover the additional costs incurred by listed places of worship following the VAT change, and that part of the additional £30 million funding will enable 100% compensation for repair and maintenance costs eligible under the current Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

This is good news in that previously we could only expect to receive approx. 50% of our VAT back on repairs and maintenance and from October we can expect 100%. However this is only for the life of this parliament. We should be aware of this limitation in relation to the Inspire! Project.

### **iii. Reserves Policy**

I also distributed in my package a proposed reserves policy for the PCC to approve. This is required both by the Charities Act and Accounting practice to ensure that we as a charity are acting prudently, neither overspending or under spending and that we have reserves built up for emergency situations. This will be something that the PCC must review and approve every year.

### **Proposed policy wording**

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds (if possible), which equates to at least two months unrestricted payments net of St Bride's Appeal Trust income, equivalent to £72,000, to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time.

The policy was proposed by Peter Silver, seconded by Peter Longland and approved unanimously.

#### **iv. Common Fund**

I have distributed Common Fund 2013 documents ahead of the meeting: Common Fund Leaflet 2013, Common Fund Presentation 2013, Costs for City Deanery 2013, and Parish Standard costs 2013.

We had a talk about the Common Fund by Richard Antcliffe and Martin Sargeant at our last meeting. Several of you also attended the Common Fund presentation meetings at St Botolph's.

The standard cost for 2013 has risen by 3.6 %.

I shall be proposing a Common Fund Commitment of £71,508 for 2013. This is calculated as follows:

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Requested Standard Cost 2013                 | £70,107        |
| Plus Additional donation 2% of Standard Cost | £1,401         |
| Total Commitment 2013                        | <u>£71,508</u> |

I am also making an adjustment to acknowledge that David spends about 1/3 of his time as Archdeacon

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Less 1/3 Direct Ministry Costs | (£15,413) |
| Donation for David's time      | £15,413   |

We must send our initial Common Fund offer by 2 July. Therefore I am requesting your approval at this meeting.

A discussion followed on whether the church should automatically increase the common fund donation by 2% + RPI without some assurance that the diocese was ensuring that all churches were making a full effort to contribute to the Common Fund. The Treasurer felt that she would be happy for the PCC to agree to this uplift over three years, but not to regard this as a formal policy.

It was noted by the Rector that the expectation from the Diocese was that the first call on any church's funds would be to the Common Fund and that all churches in the City Deanery should aim to be paying their way by 2014. The Rector agreed to reflect to the Finance Committee whether the non parish costs (ie archidiaconal costs) should be formally split from the parish costs.

The Financial Report was proposed by Peter Silver, seconded by Peter Longland and approved by the Council.

## **7. Rector's Report**

The Rector presented his report.

Since the AGM we have had a busy period, with Beating the Bounds, Ascension Day, the Jubilee Concert and the weekend Jubilee celebrations. The wedding season is getting under way, and we have had a number of baptism requests. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the Jubilee events a success. Now we look forward to the congregational launch of the Inspire! Appeal and to the Olympic celebrations, including the special service on 24 July.

As a Diocese we are in the process of launching Capital Vision 2020 and the Bishop would like to involve as many people as possible in formulating the vision for the next eight years.

We are all asked to explore the following questions:

- What is the Spirit saying to us in the life of London?
- Where does the Church invest effort and resources at present?
- In what ways do we need to rethink and act differently?

Responses via the churchwardens by 17 June please. They will collate a response which will be sent to the Bishop.

Clive Hill Archer informed the Council that 'Light the flame, Ignite the Spirit' would be the theme of the Olympic service on 24 July. Sponsorship had been sought from BT and invitations would be sent to national and regional media as well VIPs, including DCMS members and corporate bodies. The Sports Journalists Association were partners and LOCOG had agreed to promote the service. An app for android and apple smart phones would also be developed aimed at journalists. The app would be broadened after the Olympic and Paralympic Games. It was hoped that the app would also become a source of giving in time.

## **8. Electoral Roll Report**

The Electoral Roll Officer reported that the Roll stood at 474, with no changes since the APCM.

The following additions were approved en bloc:

Lydia Alice Barnard, Clear Marie Barrett, Andrew James Coates, Fergus Jarvis, Pamela Melanie Miller-Thomas, Anna Le Breton Prideaux Mount, Douglas Robertson, Rebecca Jane Shepherd, Victoria Yorke-Edwards.

## **9. Architect's Report**

The Architect's report was tabled at the meeting.

The space use study is at an advanced stage and the report will be available later in the month. Most areas have now been assessed and record photographs taken.

At the request of the Inspire! Appeal chairman further professional photographs of interior spaces, many illustrating defective masonry, have been taken and a sample can be seen at the meeting. The photographer has yet to revisit the church for exterior photography when the sunny days return.

Various minor works are at different stages of quotation, processing or completion including some lighting improvements, roof drainage, churchyard drainage, decoration, a stubborn radiator and toilet ventilation.

#### **10. Inspire! Appeal**

Gerald Bowey, deputy chairman and PCC representative on the INSPIRE! Appeal working group, gave a brief update on current activities: The total funds generated into the INSPIRE! Appeal to date is a little under £600,000. The working group is confident that we will breach the one million mark by the end of 2012.

The Wren Talk, to be delivered by Sir Terry Farrell as part of the London Festival of Architecture, is due to take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> June and is the launch event for the congregation and local business community. This will be followed by a reception at the back of church, when a specially commissioned cake [by John Robinson architects] will be cut and, with a glass of wine, enjoyed by all that attend the event.

This will be followed by a dinner, hosted by Sir Michael Bear, Patron of the INSPIRE! Appeal, and attended by Sir Terry and Lady Farrell, to representatives of local corporate businesses that have indicated that they would like to support the Appeal both financially and as “ambassadors” [for the Appeal]. Gerald explained that this would be attended by the Rector and several members of the Appeal working group.

The INSPIRE! Appeal working group has now been formed into small panels (focused on individual members strengths, knowledge and contacts) to work hard to deliver certain elements), for instance the efforts to date on approaching trusts and other heritage funds will be reviewed, analysed and a course of action implemented.

Eric Davies reported on the progress of the Wren Group.

#### **11. Any other business**

- i. Mission Action plan – The Rector and Jerry Wright would be meeting in due course and would report at the next Council.
- ii. Musical Tour trial – Eric Davies reported that this would take place on 7 June with an invited audience. The tour is aimed at the corporate market.
- iii. Summer Party – this would be held on Thursday 26 July and would be promoted by LOCOG to accredited journalists.

#### **12. Closing prayers**

The meeting ended with the Grace.

**The next meeting of the Council will be held on  
Monday 10 September 2012 at 6pm.**

Apologies for absence can be sent to the Secretary ([christopher.betterton@churchofengalnd.org](mailto:christopher.betterton@churchofengalnd.org) or [cmbetterton@me.com](mailto:cmbetterton@me.com)) by Friday 7 September or to the Church office from Saturday 8 September