

St Bride's Church Fleet Street

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting

Held on Thursday 26 September 2013

Present: Ven David Meara (Rector & Chairman), Emmanuel Adeniji, Gerald Bowey, Geoffrey Burgess, Rachel Corp, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Beverly Leach, Ian Locks, Valerie Locks, Peter Longland, Rosemary Lewin, Ashley Painter, Peter Silver, Ingrid Slaughter, John Smith, Terence Smith, Mary Walker, Jerry Wright

Also attending: Christopher Betterton (Secretary), Claire Seaton

1. Opening Prayers

The Rector opened the meeting with prayers.

2. Apologies for absence

These were received from Eric Davies, Janet Kitchen, David Lowish, Janet Smith, Grace Stedman.

3. Conflicts of interest and non-members in attendance

- a. There were no reported conflicts of interest.
- b. The council also noted that Christopher Betterton and Claire Seaton were in attendance at the meeting as non-members; James Irving and David Smith were unable to attend.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2013

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

5. Matters arising not on the agenda

- a. Memorial for Brian Chappell. The plaque would be dedicated on 20 October.
- b. A memorial service for David Barclay would be held on 20 November.
- c. The shortfall for phase one of the appeal was £250,000 rather than £350,000 as noted in the previous meeting's minutes.

6. Architect's Report

The Architect reported:

- a. That the scaffolding on the spire was being removed and that the structure was looking impressive. There had been a number of unexpected discoveries during the work and the budget contingency had been largely used up, although the works continued to progress well.
- b. That Funding had been made available to support a feasibility study into new lighting in the church, in particular for special events and concerts, although no funds were currently in place to support the work itself.
- c. That the project group for the Wren Centre was developing a brief of standards and procedures to be adopted by a third party agent running of the centre when it was completed. Costs were as yet unknown, although proposals for

professional fees and the like would be presented to the council. Some work had been undertaken on a pro bono basis and the Architect asked for approval for a quantity surveyor to undertake some further costing work, on the assumption that he would be considered for any formal work in the future. The Council approved this approach. The Architect noted that he was confident of funding from English Heritage. It was also reported that it was planned that the centre would be self-funding and would need to be commercially viable.

- d. In response to a question, the Architect noted that plans to light the steeple were included in the later phases of the works, and that it would be prudent to include this with some of the energy saving plans being proposed.
- e. The Architect was warmly thanked for all his work on the project.

7. **Rector's Report**

The Rector reported:

- a. That there was a busy autumn schedule ahead, with many memorials, weddings and baptisms in the diary, as well as a full Advent and Christmas season.
- b. That there were plans to re-instate the City law chaplaincy which had previously been in existence. A curate from St John Notting Hill was interested in developing the role, which could be attached to St Bride's. Although there would be no financial cost to the parish, it was proposed that the Treasurer applies for a City Churches Burial Fund grant to help cover some of the costs. Hogan Lovells, a law firm in the parish, were also keen to contribute.

8. **Safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons**

The Council had received a report from Ashley Painter, who noted that the parish was not fulfilling its obligations in this area. The Council was asked to approve the safeguarding policy which, proposed by Gerald Bowey and seconded by Ian Locks, it unanimously did.

The following were appointed:

Janet Smith, Sue Anne James and Katharine Wilkinson to be Child Safeguarding Officers.

Fiona Hoyle to be Children's' Champion.

Ashley Painter to be Evidence Checker, with a brief to apply for CRB checks for staff and other members of the church family.

Those appointed would be offered training by the diocese.

9. **Financial Report**

The treasurer reported:

- a. That it was too close to the quarter end to provide figures at the meeting, but that it was projected there would be a deficit at the end of the quarter. The treasurer noted that this was not unusual, and that the reserves policy covered and cash shortfall. The Council was also reminded that the bulk of the church's

income came in the fourth quarter, with the church rates (estimated income of between £65k and £87k) and income from Advent and Christmas services.

- b. That the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, whereby churches could recover VAT on capital works had been extended to 2015/16 and would also cover VAT on some professional fees.

10. **InSpire! Appeal Report**

Gerald Bowey reported:

- a. That he had attended meetings with the Construction Youth Trust and Chartered Institute of Building who were keen to develop a 'wanna be a Wren' scheme (similar to a Young Brunel scheme already in place).
- b. That there were plans, with the support of Hoare's Bank, to engage with the local business community after the scaffolding had been removed, to retain their focus on the remaining external work.
- c. That a reception would be held at Marlborough House in 2014 for the church's major media supporters.

Ian Locks reported:

- d. That the congregation appeal had raised £40k to date.
- e. That the 'Wash the face of an angel' scheme had not been as strong as hoped, although this would continue going forward.
- f. That the Harvest Talents scheme would be celebrated in October and an auction was planned for 2014.

Ashley Painter reported:

- g. That a 'wedding cake' project was being proposed, encouraging couples to donate a small sum when their cake was made.

It was also noted that a proposed G&S style 'ditty' remained a work in progress.

11. **Electoral Roll report**

On behalf of the Electoral Roll Officer, it was reported that the roll stood at 261, with two new members since the previous meeting.

The Electoral Roll Officer was thanked for her continuing work on the Roll.

12. **Any other business**

The Council had received a report from Ashley Painter regarding the proposed work on updating the church's databases. Four potential suppliers had been contacted, with a short list of two being identified, one of which had previously been engaged by a large central London church (amongst others) and was therefore sensitive to the needs of parishes. In consultation with the Head of Finance, costs of up to £15,000 had been identified for the work.

There were some concerns whether the church required a new data base, or that the church may end up with too bespoke a platform. The Council was also reminded that it was subject to the Data Protection Act.

It was generally agreed that although the data held had been improved and updated,

the platform on which it was stored was no longer suitable for the church's needs. The council approved the sum of money and agreed that the project should go ahead with a steering group to be formed, consisting of Jerry Wright, Helen Fraser, the Treasurer, a member of the office staff and Ashley Painter.

13. **Closing prayers**

The meeting ended with the Grace.

Next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 November 2013 at 6pm.