

Church Council Meeting

22nd October 2019

Minutes

Council members present: Judith Bishop (JB), Georgina Bowman (GB), Lewis Boyd (LB), Lore Chumbley (LC, chair), Mark Elliott (ME), Matthew Jones (MJ, secretary), Sarah Kerr (SK), Janet Mahto (JM), Jane Nicholson (JN), Alex Soboslay (AS), Jonathan Stead (JS), Brenda Wall (BW).

Apologies: Zoe Bushell, Penny Edwards, Virginia Knight, Sharon Rawlings, Will Willans.

In attendance: Charles Rice (chair of Trustees).

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2019 were read and accepted as a true record with the following corrections:

- a) Under point 7b, Trustees plan to apply for an “application for formal advice” not a faculty.
- b) Under point 7b, the DAC “advised in favour” of the proposed reordering of the east end, it does not automatically get forwarded to the Chancellor.

2. Matters arising

- a) LC noted that there had not been an opportunity at Harvest to talk to the congregation about the need for more Junior Church leaders. This will be done soon.
- b) Margaret Barker will run a Lent course on 29th February 2019.

3. Trustees minutes

Minutes of the Trustees meeting on 26th September 2019 were noted. These had not yet been approved by a subsequent Trustees meeting, but knowledge of their contents was necessary for subsequent discussions.

4. East end reordering

a) Update from Trustees

CR gave an update on the latest developments and plans for this project. The DAC have advised in favour of the plans which were submitted to them, with one major change relating to installing screens around the south chapel which match the existing screens. Therefore, Trustees and the buildings committee have recently been considering quotations for the work, the available budget and how this relates to planning the project.

An application for faculty will be submitted to the Chancellor in December, after a month of formal consultation starting in November. This application will cover only phases 1 and 2 of the proposed work, as these are the only phases we desire to complete in the immediate future. This means there is no need to remove the front two pews in the side aisles, but the application will include removal of these pews in the nave. However, Trustees' plan is initially to remove the front pew, and only remove the second pew if more space is required. If only one pew is removed, a retrospective faculty application will be made in the future to cover this change. The application for formal advice will include new lighting for the chancel and the apse, including the tiles and reredos. A decision on whether to carpet the chancel is required (see discussion later in this meeting).

Trustees have decided to appoint Ellis and Co as the main contractor, as their recent quotes have been competitive and they have delivered work of high quality for us. Two lighting quotations have been received and a third is outstanding. Two quotations for the south chapel screens have been received and it is clear they will be expensive, so a third quotation has been requested.

Treske will be the preferred supplier of furniture, as they have developed the designs we wish to use. LC and CR have visited their factory and reported that they are an appropriately sized company for our order, they do a lot of bespoke work and try to work in a sustainable way. Although the cost of bespoke furniture from Treske is higher than non-bespoke furniture from other suppliers, the Trustees are confident that the price differential is a fair reflection of the bespoke nature of the work and represents value for money. However, Trustees did have initial concerns about the cost of the choir chairs, so Treske have simplified the design and it has been decided to initially order only 20 (instead of 24). However, the long-term aim remains to order another 4 chairs when funds allow, as there are more than 20 people in the choir at large services. The application for faculty will include 24 chairs to cover this eventuality. GB pointed out that some choir chairs could be used in the south chapel and moved into the chancel for large services,

The building work for phase 1 will cost about £30,000 (including the altar rail) and the building work for phase 2 will cost about £4,000. Trustees have sufficient funds to pay for

these phases of the project. This means that fundraising by the congregation is required for the south chapel screens (~£32,000) and furniture (~£54,000).

Trustees are planning for the building work to be carried out in March and completed by Holy Week. There is sufficient money from fundraising to order the sanctuary furniture (altar, credence table, lecture and clergy chairs) for delivery at this time, if council decides to do this (see later discussion).

b) Chancel floor

LC and CR explained the existing chancel carpet was shaped around the former choir stalls and so we must choose either to remove the carpet and have a stained wooden floor, or to carpet the entire chancel. ME said that removing the carpet would slightly improve the musical acoustic of the east end, however AS was concerned that a wooden floor would lead to more extraneous noise being produced as the choir move around. Several people stated an aesthetic preference for a wooden floor, but AS said he thought it would make the building appear less welcoming, JB pointed out that it was easier to clean candle wax from a wooden floor and it was noted that carpeting the entire chancel would be expensive. A consensus decision was reached to choose a wooden floor initially, but to review this one year after completion of the project, when carpet could be installed if desired.

It was noted that we have sufficient spare carpet to cover the floor where pews are removed in the nave

c) Queries from council members

AS asked why the carpet was going to be removed from the new south chapel. He said this was intended to be a quiet area and carpet would help to achieve this. CR and LC said that the design group thought the use of wood throughout the east end and south chapel would give a sense of unity to the project. Leaving the carpet in place would only save about £1,500. It was noted that removal of the carpet would depend on the condition of the underlying floor when the carpet was lifted.

AS asked why £4,000 of building work and £32,000 of wooden screens were required to convert the sacristy into a chapel. He said it was not necessary to remove the carpet and memorial plaques, or install new screens, in order to have a new chapel. As this work was essentially decorative, AS proposed this money should be spent on other projects, such as improving access to the building. CR said that the Trustees proposed spending the initial £4,000 on the building work (as this would lead to a useable chapel). About £2,000 of this sum is for redecoration, which is definitely required. The money on screens would only be spent at a later date (once problems identified in the quinquennial have been rectified) if the money was available and the church desired it. The screens might not ever be installed, in which case we could apply for a retrospective faculty in 3-4 years. LC said that the whole

church had discussed and agreed to go forward with the east end and south chapel as a cohesive scheme. Spending £4,000 on the chapel would produce a space with a sense of holiness and separation.

AS asked about the timetable described earlier – did this include time for statutory consultation with the congregation and amenity bodies? LC said this would take place in November. AS said that consultation needed to be an on-going process, not a one-off event. LC agreed and said this had happened over the past two years, but at this stage we needed an agreed final plan for formal consultation. If sufficient numbers of people had concerns about the proposed furniture designs during the consultation period, Trustees may choose not to make an application for formal advice in December. However, it should be noted that the structural changes to the east end have been widely discussed with the congregation, so it was unlikely that new concerns would be raised at this stage about this aspect of the project.

AS pointed out that moving memorial plaques and removing pews had not been discussed with the congregation and were not shown on the plans currently displayed in church. CR stated that removal of at least one pew was a physical requirement and highlighted the plan to only remove the second pew if necessary (discussed above). ME pointed out that council had discussed removing the pews and voted in favour of this plan. GB stated that everyone in the congregation will have part of the project they don't like, so the end result will inevitably represent a compromise. JB said that moving the memorial plaques had been recommended by the DAC during their visit, although it was noted that this did not appear in the minutes of the visit. MJ said that council had discussed moving the plaques during both its January and March 2019 meetings, but AS said this discussion may have been founded on the false presumption that the DAC required them to be moved.

d) Fundraising

JB reported that £24,000 has been raised for the east end reordering so far. This figure includes ~£4,000 which is yet to arrive.

JS reported that future fund raising would be from three sources: congregational events, trusts and foundations, and appeals to individuals. He thought there was limited scope to raise additional money from the congregation, so we needed to run events to bring in money from people outside the congregation. Time and Talents will run again in Lent and JS hopes we will raise more than the £3,500 raised 18 months ago. JB said she hoped we will be able to host more external events when the new east end is finished and that this would raise more money, but this would require marketing. LC summarised by saying that we had raised £24,000 so far and hoped to fundraise another £5,000-10,000 over the next year.

LC then explained that a donor's brochure had been produced to invite individuals to donate towards individual items of furniture. So far, ~£10,500 has been pledged in this way,

which means we need another ~£20,000 to buy all the furniture. LC was hopeful that a further £10,000 could be raised in donations, which combined with £10,000 of fund raising (see above) would mean that all the furniture could be purchased in a year's time.

e) Proposal

GB then proposed the following motion, which was seconded by LB:

“Council recommends to Trustees that they make an application for faculty for phases 1 and 2 of the east end reordering.”

The motion was passed, with 11 votes in favour and one against.

JS then thanked CR for his wise counsel and professional nature through the process of developing these plans.

5. Deanery synod report

SK reported on the most recent Deanery Synod meeting. Topics covered included upcoming Archdeacon's inspections, the “October count” period, recent appointments in the Deanery and the date of the Archdeacon's visitation.

6. Any other business

- a) JB pointed out that at the last meeting the question of whether council should produce an annual budget had been raised. She report that David Bishop (Trustees treasurer) thought council should do this and he was happy to help if asked. It was agreed that GB and JS would talk to David about this.

Action: GB and JS.

- b) GB reported that the church's electricity supplier now comes from a Diocesan scheme, which should lower the cost.
- c) It was noted that the wi-fi repeaters discussed at the last meeting were now operational.
- d) JB asked if we should install a remote-control heating system such as Hive. She suggested that the heating is sometimes left on unnecessarily, though AS said he did not think this was the case. SK offered to ask Robin Kerr to look into this possibility and report back. It was noted that he should liaise with Angela Soboslay, as she is responsible for the day-to-day care of the building.

Action: SK

- e) Keith Pigot's final service as organist will be on Christ the King Sunday and will be followed by lunch. Council agreed to give Keith a photo of the choir and £350 towards his FTCL exam as a thank you present, and to ask the congregation if they wish to donate further. A bunch of flowers will be given to Marie.
- f) Narinder Tegally's work at the RUH means she is usually busy on Sundays. She has therefore decided to move to Bath Abbey as this will present her with more opportunities for weekday ministry. Her final service will be on 3rd November and it was agreed to buy her a plant as a thank you present.
- g) The bishop has asked churches to open on 31st October for prayer in relation to Brexit. Christ Church will be open for the I Iam Eucharist and we will ask for volunteers to keep the church open until 5pm. We should ensure this is advertised so people know they can come in if they wish.
- h) It was noted that MJ has handed over day-to-day updating of the church website to Zoe Bushell after 11 years of managing this task. Council thanked MJ for his work in the past updating the website.

7. Date of next meeting

It was agreed to move the next meeting to Tuesday 26th November 2019 at 7:30pm.