

Minutes of Christ Church Council Meeting

30 July 2013

Chair: Canon Angela Townshend

Present: Judith Bishop, Dylan Blackshear, Margaret Burrows, Sarah Kerr, David Rawlings, Bob Siderfin, Andrew Sillett, Alex Soboslay, Brenda Wall (secretary).

1 Opening Prayer

2 Apologies from Morny Davison, Mark Elliott, Angela Soboslay, Malcolm Wall.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting accepted.

4 One matter arising from them: Lewis Boyd is willing to continue as Safeguarding Officer. An evening of Safeguarding training will be held on Monday 2 September.

5 Trustees

No matters referred from the Trustees because they have not met since the last Council meeting. To clarify: only Trustees have the legal power to administer Christ Church funds. The Church Council can have its own bank account. To clarify: bequests have to go through the Trustees. AT will find an official wording for bequests.

Budget reform proposal

Alex S has been doing some research on regular giving. Per capita the Christ Church congregation give well above average already. According to statistics published by the Church of England, the average direct giving per week per electoral roll member in the Church of England in 2011 was £6.40. The average in the diocese of Bath & Wells was £6.00 per person per week. The figure for Bath Abbey is £7.95 and for Christ Church the average is about £8.75 per electoral roll member per week.

Andrew S asked if there is a case for income to come to the Council and suggested we need to prepare a budget so that we know exactly what we are going to have to fund in the future.

It was suggested that the Trustees be invited to the next Council meeting to discuss and progress the proposal.

Aim for any new arrangements to start with the new accounting year in January?

6 Mailing List

Dylan B reported that he has been working on the mailing list and it is ready.

7 Farewell to David Wrigley

A vote of thanks was proposed to Judith, Mark and Angela for the organising of the splendid farewell to our retiring organist, David Wrigley. AT is to write to Jo Howe, to thank her for her contributions over the years.

The position of organist will be advertised in the Autumn. The process for the appointment, and the role, need to be discussed with the Trustees in September.

8 Harvest

Agreed to invite donations of fresh fruit and auction what we get. The Harvest Supper will be the night before Harvest Festival... Hospitality Committee have all under control. There will be an auction of promises, and donations will be requested to cover the cost of the supper.

Rebekah Cunningham is going to produce material on United Society and there will be a retiring collection over several Sundays.

JB requested there be a list of charities and which Sundays we will be collecting for them. This to be placed at the back of Church.

9 Reordering & Building

Disabled access

A concrete ramp is proposed from the north (near the choir door) to the existing door north of the tower. Some work would need to be done inside to make room for wheelchairs to get around the staircase etc.

David R queried whether such extensive work was necessary. The law requires only "viable access" for the disabled with reasonable dignity, and nothing at exorbitant cost. VAT can be reclaimed on work for disabled access and grants are available, but only if there's money left in the specific fund.

The disabled toilet needs enlarging to allow a wheelchair inside, and the paper etc would need to be positioned at a reachable level for wheelchair users.

West end

Agreement that the West end and porch should be a priority. The Working Group has in mind oak panelling and glass doors with oak surrounds and transparent seals. Now that we have use of the Lower Mews, a glassed-off area at the back of the church is less of a need. The outside lanterns have been taken away for refurbishment. A

bequest from the late Audrey Sheppard could be put towards the cost of this.

Priorities for further work? Ideas included shortening the pews to make the interior more spacious; bringing the organ blower inside so that it uses warm air instead of cold air from outside; a glass screen around the former sacristy.

East end

It's difficult for the choir at the moment as more staging is needed to put their pews on. Distributing communion has proved rather cramped on the dais, with some congestion; would "sheepdogs" to guide communicants out again help? Further options and changes need to be tried.

Bells

Money for refurbishment may be available from Bell Charities. We may have details of costs at the next meeting. There were concerns that fundraising for the bells might clash with fundraising for other priorities. AT expressed her feeling that Christ Church needs to let the public see and hear that we're alive. The question was raised whether we can afford not to do the bell work, just to make things safe. In any event, we also have to decide where the bells are in the list of priorities of work. AT suggested asking Andy Piggott for an extension of our re-ordering licence. Alex S said he doubted that it was within the Archdeacon's power to do so.

It was suggested that we should go to Bristol in September to see more re-ordered churches to spark ideas for Christ Church.

10 AOB

Should we have a retiring collection every second month? A list of suggested charities to be drafted.

11 The next meeting will be 17 September 2013.

12 The meeting closed with prayer at 21.30.