

Minutes of the Christ Church Council Meeting 29 April 2014

Present: Judith Bishop, Margaret Burrows, Morny Davison, Mark Elliott, Rebecca Nicholson, Martin Palmer, David Rawlings, Bob Siderfin, Alex Soboslay, Angela Soboslay, Brenda Wall (Secretary), Malcolm Wall.

In the chair: Canon Angela Townshend.

1. The meeting opened with prayer.

2. Apologies were received from Sarah Kerr and Andrew Sillett.

3. Minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 7 January 2014 were formally approved (proposed Bob, seconded Martin).

The minutes of the meeting of 25 February 2014 were accepted and approved (proposed David, seconded Malcolm). There were no matters arising not already on the agenda.

4. Trustees' report

(1) As Mark has announced, the Trustees decided to make a contribution to Ned's nursing home costs.

(2) A planning application for demolition of the "garden wall" at the back of the church has gone in.

(3) Parking lines have been repainted.

(4) Diocesan contribution (Common Fund contribution): Trustees have agreed that the amount to be given by Christ Church is now Council's decision. (Discussion later.)

(5) The new Bishop of Bath and Wells is coming for our Patronal Festival in November, and will preside and preach.

(6) Keith Pigot has accepted the position of Organist and Assistant Director of Music. David asked about the procedure for appointments of this sort, and shouldn't Council be made more aware of discussions leading up to them, or even be consulted? Mark agreed to keep Council informed.

(7) Trustees have agreed boiler replacement, and voted funds for it. Funds have also been voted for work on the entrance lobby. (More about buildings on the agenda below.)

5. Contribution to the Diocese

Last year the full Parish Share, if we were a parish, would have been £30,000. We paid half this amount. How much do we want to pay this year as a contribution/donation, given that we are not required to pay anything?

Do other proprietary chapels pay anything? Magdalen Chapel reportedly doesn't. Nor do cathedrals. What does our contribution pay for? The organisation and broader work of the Church of England. Pensions? Apparently these are now paid out of general funds. Alex asked, in view of the fact that we have a lot of work and therefore expenditure ahead, when do we need to decide? Should we consult the congregation? The consensus was no, and the Diocese would like something as soon as possible.

David proposed a third of what our Parish Share would be if we were a parish, or £10,000, to be paid in two instalments. Seconded by Bob. It was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Trustees an initial payment of £5,000 with the promise of a further instalment (at some point...).

6. Buildings

(1) Procedure. Bob asked whether we should set up some method of communication or system of decision-making about the work that is going to be done, because there is going to be so much of it. He reported that the architect said there was only enough space for two toilets, and offered copies of the architect's comments to anyone interested.

Alex asked when Council would see the plans because we haven't formally approved them yet. He was concerned that details were being decided without referral to Council. Bob explained that no such decisions have been made. Alex and Martin mentioned aspects of the bells restoration tower work – the bell hatch and disused ventilation system – which they felt had been concluded in such a way. Mark explained that aspects of the work were not finalised and could be reviewed as part of further works. Alex proposed, and Mark seconded, that the petition for a faculty for the bells work, when it goes in, include a note on it that the hatch/floor plan may be changed. Passed without objection. Otherwise Mark confirmed that the bells restoration faculty paperwork was being done and would be submitted soon.

(2) Entrance. Bob reported that BANES had turned down our pre-application for the proposed entrance works on the grounds that it changed the character of a listed building. After some discussion it was agreed that we won't change the plans at this stage but will appeal the decision, particularly on the grounds that the changes are being made in order to improve disabled access.

(3) Consultation. Questionnaires about the reordering will be made available to the congregation at the AGM. They were passed out to the Council. It was agreed that the minutes of the Buildings Working Group discussions be circulated to Council for the record.

(4) Boiler. Robin Kerr is getting estimates and comparing quotes for a system with two zones (not a straight like-for-like replacement). Things will have to move quickly if we are to get the boiler work done before the winter. Council was asked if we will give the Buildings Working Group the power to go ahead, but Alex warned that this might be taken as a precedent. Instead, David proposed and Margaret seconded that Council pre-approves the boiler proposal from the Buildings Working Group, so that it goes direct to Trustees. This was passed unanimously.

(5) Bells fundraising appeal. There was a launch for the appeal at the Mayor's Parlour. £69,000 has now been raised. Thanks were given to Rebecca Nicholson for her help with the design of the appeal booklet.

7. Sidespersons' duties

Angela S. tabled the sheet setting these out, which had had input from her, the churchwardens and the Priest-in-Charge. Angela T. will put it up at the back of the church and make sure it is distributed to all sidespersons.

8. Inclusive Church

Brenda presented a discussion paper, after her research. Bob urged caution about joining. Morny said we should not rush to a decision, and maybe invite someone from the organisation to speak to us. David said he does not like anything about it and doesn't see what good it will do Christ Church. Margaret thought we are already very

inclusive and we could be in danger of splitting the congregation. Malcolm said that because we are the only truly independent and inclusive church in the Diocese, then we don't need to join such an organisation and risk putting our future in its hands. Angela S. saw no need to join and it didn't feel quite right. Bob asked how our LMG partners would feel. Angela T. suggested that we have a joint meeting with St. Stephens with an invited speaker from Inclusive Church and leave a decision until we are better informed.

9. Safeguarding

Canon Angela tabled the updated policy from Lewis. Alex had raised some queries. Deferred to the next meeting.

10. Bishop's Installation

The new Bishop of Bath and Wells is due to be installed on Saturday 7 June, and we have two invitations for laypeople. Names will be drawn from a hat at the AGM.

11. AGM

The Christ Church AGM is on Sunday 4 May. Alex presented a draft agenda for approval. Angela T. will chair it. Martin and Rebecca are due to stand down as Council members. David suggested that Rebecca stay on the Council as a co-opted member until she goes to university. This was accepted by acclamation. Margaret suggested that Junior Church should be on the next agenda.

12. AOB

An anonymous donor has offered to replace the bushes either side of the front doors.

The next meeting (first meeting of the new Council) was set for Tuesday 10 June at 19:40.

The meeting closed with prayers at 21:40.