

Parish Annual General Meeting
St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodford Green
Sunday, 14th July 2019

Item 1 Welcome

Fr. Quentin welcomed around 50 members of our Parish to the AGM.

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer.

Item 2 Minutes of last AGM

The Minutes of the 2018 AGM were presented for approval. Clarification about item 4, 3rd point was sought, and it was confirmed that the reduction in the administrative costs was due to the contribution received from the Friars and the departure of one member of staff in November 2017.

Following this amendment, the minutes were approved.

Items 3 & 4 Chair's Annual Report

The Chair's report was received as presented. It was noted that it had been available on the website.

Questions were raised in relation to the big issues: -

Roofing – The roofing is a work in progress, this includes insulation and guttering. The Parish are due to contribute £88k from the reserves.

Heating - A considerable amount of money has been used in the last 4/5 years to keep the heating working in the Church, Friary and Becket Centre. A specialist company has now advised that it needs to be fully replaced at a cost estimated to be in the region of £900k. The system been looked at will require two boilers one for the church and friary from the existing boiler room. One for the Becket centre and offices from a new location which may be in the current flower room. Further investigation on how to heat the church is being looked at.

The Parish will be called upon to fund 50% of the cost. It was noted that the Friars will pay the remaining 50% cost. To support the Parish contribution, we will be establishing a Special fundraising committee, which will be mentioned in the next agenda item. The working estimate has three elements: the first is for VAT, which we are not exempt from, the second is a contingency allowance which is moveable and the third is for professional fees. Following the tender process these may all reduce.

Comments were noted about solar panels, but these were not pursued as part of the roofing works due to the conservation status of the buildings.

The timescale will be that by this autumn plans will be finalised, there will then be a tendering process with the aim of awarding a contract by spring 2020.

Partnership – In response to a question about the consolidation of the Parishes Kit said that the Bishop's plans were that there will be two Priests servicing the three Parishes of STOC, St Anne Line and Our Lady of Lourdes and that a plan was due to be presented by this advent setting out how we would be working across those Parishes.

It was noted that meetings have taken place and that there were diverse views as to what the partnership should entail. The Bishop has provided examples of how this has been taken forward in other parts of the Diocese e.g. some are merging, some are agreeing on ways to work together such as sacramental programmes and others have agreed to retain their individual status. From the PPC perspective we have been getting to know the other PPCs and learning and sharing things about each other such as our Bereavement Group.

There were no further questions from the floor regarding the Chairman's Annual Report.

Item 5 Parish Finance

Jim Hoban presented the accounts and handout on behalf of the Finance Committee. The accounts are available on the website and at the back of Church.

It was reported that Bernie Bourdillon and Andrew Dodd had now joined the Committee to assist with the future fundraising requirements that need to be addressed to support the heating and other Church projects. It was also noted that Kit and Brian Martin had been working closely together on the major roofing and heating projects and would continue to do so.

Referring to the handout which set out the income and expenditure it was noted that

- The costs had increased slightly but that this now included courses
- Premises continued to consume resources to keep the building functioning
- £88k from the reserves had been assigned to the roofing costs, which was the Parish responsibility to fund
- The campaign last autumn had seen some increase in contributions and gift aid
- Social events continue to bring in money as well as enhance the church's community life
- Investment income was not pursued through the Diocese due to the acknowledged need for the contingency to be used for the roofing and heating
- Although the contingency stands at £334k, which is one year's operating cost, this will be needed to pay for the current major projects so we will be looking at initiatives to raise significant funds
- This is not as simple as the roofing and heating we have to look at the long term needs of the thriving Parish we have and want to see exist for future generations so the big picture will look at as a starting point and to enable Parishioners to know what we will be asking for and why
 - The Car Park
 - The Porch

- The Sacristy
 - The Huts (Brownies, Guides, Scouts etc)
 - Mention was made of the Becket Centre decoration and chairs
- To take this forward Andrew Dodd is to lead a fundraising group who will look at what the big fundraising amount needs to be and how to start filling the gap. If anyone has skills that could assist or knows anyone please let us know
 - A question was raised about the offertory per head. Jim commented that they will start analysing data to inform the campaign which is likely to commence in the autumn
 - A comment was made that there was a feeling that not all were involved in Parish social life and would any efforts be made to change this. Kit commented that The PPC itself had concentrated on the Fabric elements of the church and perhaps needs to take time to look at the parochial aspects. He is planning a half day when a more strategic view is taken which will then lead and support any fundraising/ social campaign that will be taking place.
 - A question was raised about who would be liable if a claim of constructive dismissal to an employment tribunal was made. Would it be the Parish or the Diocese? Jim agreed to look into this and respond when he had an answer.¹
 - A further question was raised about public liability and it was confirmed that insurance was in place.

Item 6 Elections

The following were elected to the Council for a period of three years

Michelle Spears

Paul Turpin

Kit Tranmer

Rob Fernandes

Mike Eggleton

Lorna Spears

Item 7 Vote of thanks

Fr. Quentin thanked Isabel Evans Parker and Paul Dobson for their contribution to the work of the Parish Council.

Any other business

Kathy Wilson wish to raise her request that In Touch be funded to continue on-line at a cost of £60 per annum. In doing this, she expressed her and Ranjika view at the way in which the magazine closed down, particularly the withdrawal of the remembrance issue without contact with any on the editorial team. The follow up

meetings were, in her view unsatisfactory, which was not acceptable. Kit responded that the issue had been on sale for 3 weeks before withdrawal. An article was divisive it is content to many Parishioners. He decided to take the decision to withdraw until the matter could be discussed at the PPC meeting. They gave their full backing to the action he had taken. Following this a meeting was held and a compromise reached, and the magazine was put back on sale. He stated that if during the meeting they felt he was rude for which he apologised but stated that it was a full and frank discussion on all sides and a reasonable compromise was reached. Kathy also stated that the article alleged to be divisive to some was not divisive to many others. The PPC should have invited Kathy & Ranjika to their meeting to hear the full facts, including the magazine contractual obligations to their advertisers.

Fr Quentin stated that Kathy had made her statement and thanked her for her contribution. The matter had now been dealt with and concluded under any other business.

Tess Thompson stated that this is a Christian parish and four members of staff have left. She said that she was concerned about what happened in the future and would like to see some form of reconciliation as she feels that, as a TELCO parish action needs to be taken against any form of social injustice. Kathy Wilson said that three members of staff felt the need to resign. They felt badly treated by the PPC and ignored. The ex-employees were all parishioners, not just personnel. They were our people and should be treated as such. The PPC "is supposed to be a pastoral Council".

Quentin closed the debate stating that members of the Parish Office are employees of the Diocese who were looking into matters further.

The meeting closed with a prayer.

ⁱ Subsequent to the meeting, the Diocese confirmed that the Parish would be Liable for any employer's costs.
Approved July 2021