

St Mary Magdalen Ipswich - Finance Committee Minutes

Meeting held in the Guildroom on Thursday 22nd February 2018

1. Present

Fr. Mathew George, Teresa Rose, Declan Moore, Andrew Ford and Chris Croker

2. Welcome and apologies for absence

All committee members present

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meeting of 26th October 2017 were approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising

(a) Inventory of Church, Hall & Presbytery Contents

To be arranged.

5. Treasurer's Report

(a) Outturn to 31st December 2017

Teresa circulated a provisional summary of Income and Expenditure to 31st December 2017. Income amounted to £61.5k and expenditure totalled £53.9k leaving a surplus for the year (including donations of £4.1k) of £7.7k.

Final figures will be confirmed when the Diocesan 2017 Parish Financial Return is completed.

(6) Treasurer & Hall Management Positions

Fr. Mathew reported that he had a possible volunteer to take over management of the hall from Sharon and Terry Barnes. Sharon is documenting the duties in readiness for handover. Tokens of our thanks to be given to Sharon & Terry in acknowledgement for all of their work with managing the hall over the years. A volunteer is still being sought to take over the Treasurer's duties from Teresa.

(7) Council Tax

Following a successful claim to reduce the presbytery council tax banding from D to E an appeal was lodged with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to backdate the reduction to the introduction of Council Tax on 1st April 1993. This appeal was successful. The VOA will instruct Ipswich Borough Council of the outcome and a refund of £5-6k is expected within the next few weeks.

(8) Energy Contracts

The existing 3 year fixed price contracts for gas and electricity with Opus Energy are due to expire within the next 3 months. It was agreed that we should include Inter Diocesan Fuel Management Ltd. (IFM) the consortium for energy management for Catholic Dioceses in England & Wales in our exercise to obtain competitive quotes. 50% of Catholic Dioceses are now in the IFM scheme.

(9) Health & Safety

The Diocese has distributed Interim Health & Safety checklists for completion, these include both Fire Safety and General Health & Safety, the aim being to identify any gaps in our procedures that we need to address. The last Fire Safety inspection was carried out in July 2013 and we need to check that all the actions arising from the report have since been satisfactorily dealt with.

An asbestos management plan and register has been produced and is available to be viewed by anyone carrying out work on parish property. (Guildroom cupboard , yellow property file).

(10) Insurance Claim

The presbytery was unfortunately broken into sometime during the evening of 18th or early morning 19th of January whilst Fr. Mathew was in India. Fortunately nothing of importance or great value was stolen. The police were informed and a claim is being lodged with the insurance company. There will be an insurance excess of £300 to pay.

(11) Alive in Faith

Awaiting an update from the Diocese.

(12) Other Property Matters

(a) Hall

Progress since the last meeting:-

No maintenance activities carried out.

Future work required

Grant funding still to be sought to assist with the cost of replacing the kitchen.

Other Issues

The owner of 2 Highfield Approach has applied for planning permission to erect 4 dwellings on the existing site adjacent to the hall car park.

4 offroad car parking spaces were included in the application whilst the Suffolk County Council Guidance for Parking recommends 1.5 spaces plus 0.25 spaces per dwelling for visitors i.e. a total of 7.

There were concerns expressed by some parishioners that the lack of parking spaces would lead to even more vehicles being parked on Highfield Approach, an already busy area. A meeting was held with the owner where it was decided that the Parish would not object to the development on the grounds of lack of offroad car parking and that if individual parishioners had concerns they should make their own personal representations to Ipswich Borough Council.

Since the proposed development will directly abut the hall car park it was agreed that we need to check party/ access rights etc.

(b) Church

Progress since the last meeting:-

- The gallery wall has been reduced in height and a new wrought iron balustrade fitted.
- All of the gallery wall capping and the balustrade capping has been finished in a colour to match the benches and the gallery walls, skirting and rear wall of the church have been painted.
- 2 refurbished benches have been returned from Hollesley Bay and installed in the gallery. The existing chairs have been removed and stored.
- A new power point has been installed for the organ and the organ has been repositioned so that the speakers face into the body of the church.
- An enclosed and fully insulated confessional has been constructed in the existing Sacristy using the access door from the church. Lighting has been installed.
- A large radiator has been removed and a smaller radiator installed in the Sacristy.
- An expansion joint has been installed in the heating pipework to solve the leakage problem near the altar.

Future work required:-

- A drop down seat to be installed in the confessional.
- The church floor to be industrially cleaned, polished and sealed.
- The sound levels to be checked and system adjustments made to improve volume/clarity.
- The notice board near the entrance to the church drive to be refurbished.
- Gutters and downpipes to be checked and cleared where necessary.
- A sub committee to be set up to produce a proposal for improving the current church lighting arrangements.

(c) Presbytery

Progress since the last meeting:-

- The kitchen has been redecorated.

- The broken cistern in the Guildroom men's urinal has been removed, the pipework modified and an isolation valve fitted.
- The study radiator has been replaced with a double radiator removed from the Sacristy
- A cracked window pane in the kitchen has been replaced.

Future work required:-

- Broken leaded light panel in the hall doorway to be replaced.
- Rear upstairs windows to be painted along with the main garage.
- Guildroom men's urinal to be fitted with a push actuated flush valve.
- The Guildroom kitchenette walls to be repainted.
- Gutters and downpipe drainage to be checked and cleared where necessary.

(d) Grounds

Future work required:-

- The brick pillars at the entrance to the church drive to be demolished to allow for improved vehicular access esp. wedding & funeral cars.

Once again thanks go to the men from Hollesley Bay together with a stalwart group of our own parishioners (you know who you are!) and to all who supported the work carried out on the church gallery, confessional and presbytery whether that involved providing labour, supervision, materials or meals.

(13) Any Other Business

None reported

(14) Date of next meeting

Thursday 12th July at 10.15a.m. in the Guildroom

Minutes approved at the Finance Committee Meeting 12th July 2018

Signed:

Chris Croker - Finance Committee Chairman