

ST STANISLAUS' PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Sunday 10 March 2019

Present: April Golding (Chair), Jean Hurley, Martin McNeill, Deacon Philip Ogilvie, Frank O'Neill, Simon Rous and Fr Michael Thomas.

1. **Apologies** were received from Ben Williams and accepted.

2. **Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed Simon Rous to his first meeting of the Parish Council.

3. **Election of officers and membership**

It was agreed that Simon Rous should be appointed to the Parish Council and that Martin McNeill be re-appointed, both to serve until 31 December 2021.

The following officers were elected to serve for 2019:

Chair: April Golding
Vice-chair: Frank O'Neill
Secretary: Martin McNeill
Treasurer: Simon Rous

4. **The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2018** were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. **Matters arising**

From 17 May 2015

Item 6 – Register of keys. MT reported that this continued to progress, but was not yet complete.

From 7 February 2016

Item 6 – Analysis of costs. FO'N reported that he had agreed with the Minehead Treasurer that central costs should be shared between the two parishes in proportion to the respective numbers of parishioners in each.

From 15 May 2016

Item 10 – Donations. MT and FO'N were asked to make clear to parishioners that the Parish Council would welcome suggestions of charities or other causes that the Parish might support.

From 28 January 2018

Item 8 – Governance. MT reported that the Bishop was currently considering how the Diocese might best be served by clergy from 2020/21. This was likely to have organisational consequences for Dulverton and neighbouring parishes. The Bishop was currently considering the wider impact of possible changes and no decision was expected for some weeks. It was not his intention to consult the Parish Council on any proposals at this stage.

Members agreed that no new initiatives to promote collaboration between existing parishes should be pursued until the future configuration of parishes had been determined. At that time it might be appropriate to set up a joint

committee which would not only consider the delivery of pastoral care and promotion of evangelisation across the parishes (as envisaged a year ago) but also explore opportunities for more effective resource management.

An immediate concern of members was the good management of parish finances. Members acknowledged that, so long as the Parish continued to have an independent existence, there was a need for a Treasurer to oversee financial management and provide assurance to the Council. It was, however, no less important that financial transactions were competently handled and that books were kept up to date. To that end, MT and the Treasurer were asked to ensure that appropriate administrative support was made available, as previously requested.

Members were satisfied that all other action items had been addressed, were not yet due to be addressed or appeared elsewhere on the agenda.

No other matters arising from the minutes were raised.

6. Treasurer's report

The Council approved the accounts for 2018, which showed an excess of receipts over payments (excluding transfers between accounts) of approximately £6,100 compared with some £900 in 2017. There had been no significant change in income; the only significant change on the expenditure side had been a reduction in repair and renewal costs, following a number of years when these had been at a high level.

The Council also approved the draft budget for 2019, which projected a reduction in income of some £900 (some non-recurring donations had been excluded and tax refunds and electricity feed-in tariffs assumed to revert to average levels). Expenditure was projected to be some £1,700 higher, with increased expenditure on repairs and renewals (including provision for the replacement of the Bridge House boiler) partly offset by a reduction in the diocesan levy. The projected surplus of £3,500 was broadly in line with the surplus budgeted for 2018. It was agreed that this provided a reasonable safety margin.

The Council thanked FO'N for all his work as Treasurer, including the work that he had continued to do after retiring from that role a year ago.

7. Buildings and premises

MT reported that he had been in contact with the diocesan surveyor following the surveyor's visit in February 2018. The roof did not appear to require immediate attention, provided that the gutters were cleaned. MT said that he had this in hand; he had also taken steps to deal with a fly infestation, which would be addressed as soon as warmer weather returned.

It was agreed that the offer made over a year ago to build a new frame for the tabernacle should not be actively pursued.

8. Pastoral matters

The Council considered the written representations that had been received from five parishioners and the views expressed more informally by others on the proposal to introduce a sung English Mass on a regular basis alongside the Latin settings currently in use. Members recognised the difficulty in one,

rural parish with a single weekly mass of accommodating a wide range of tastes and preferences. The priority was to ensure that as many people as possible could participate in the Mass.

The Council considered the suggestion that there should be a vote on any proposed variation but concluded that this would be impossible to administer because of the difficulty of defining the electorate: should voting be confined to regular mass-goers living within the parish boundaries or should other adherents, or even regular visitors, be included?

The Council also noted with regret that there appeared to be insufficient appetite for a sung English Mass to justify the effort that would be involved in introducing it. Members noted that copies of the Belmont Mass had been purchased and could be used at a future date if required.

Following discussion, the Council agreed that the current Latin settings should continue to be used on a majority of Sundays with the following variations:

- the Nicene Creed to be said in English in Advent and Lent and the Apostles' Creed in Eastertide in place of the sung creed (in line with current practice);
- a said Mass in English, without hymns, to be introduced on the fifth Sunday of any month having five Sundays (four Sundays a year); and
- the Taizé Gloria to be introduced for occasional use.

The Council also reviewed the current practice of Exposition immediately before, and leading straight into, Mass and agreed that this should continue, not least because it helped to ensure a period of quiet before Mass.

In relation to the Easter services, members were pleased to learn that Fr Bernard Shackleton had agreed once again to preside over the Triduum. An argument for moving the start of the Easter Vigil to 9.00 pm in 'late Easter' years such as 2019 was considered and rejected, as the 8.00 pm start in recent years was thought to have contributed to a rise in attendance at this important celebration.

9. Future meetings

Members expressed regret that the timetable for the Bishop's visit on 24 March did not allow for a meeting with the parish council in Dulverton. The Bishop had invited members (and other parishioners) to join his meeting in Minehead at 12.30 pm. MT agreed to investigate the possibility of members meeting the Bishop informally on Saturday evening, 23 March.

It was agreed that the next ordinary meeting should be arranged once the proposals for redeployment of clergy (which were not on the agenda for the Bishop's visit on 23/24 March) had been announced.

10. Other business

None

The meeting ended at 11.50.