

# PARISH OF ST STANISLAUS, DULVERTON

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Committee held at Burston Farm, Dulverton on Thursday 5 October 2023 at 5.00 pm

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### **Present:**

Mr Simon Rous (Chair)

Mrs Lindy Head (LH)

Mr Martin McNeill (MMcN)

Very Rev David Savoury (DS)

Mr Benedict Williams (BW)

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### **RESOLUTIONS**

- To appoint Simon Rous, Martin McNeill and Ben Williams as (respectively) Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (Minute 1.2)
  - To adopt the proposed constitution for the Committee, subject to one amendment (Minute 2.3)
  - From 1 January 2023, to pay 20 per cent of the costs of maintaining a parish priest (Minute 3.2)
  - To commission Robin Head to clear ivy and other plants from the back of the church and from the roof and, if necessary, obtain a new padlock (Minute 5.3)
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### **1. Membership and officers**

1.1. Referring to Clifton Diocese's Parish Administration Manual, which had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting, DS explained that every parish was required by Canon Law to have a Finance Committee, comprising parish clergy and at least three lay members. He had established such a committee and appointed the four lay members present. The Manual provided for the Parish Priest to accept nominations for membership of the committee, and DS confirmed that in future he would expect members to be nominated for appointment by the people of the parish.

1.2. The Committee agreed to appoint the following officers to serve until 31 March 2024:

Chair – Simon Rous

Secretary – Martin McNeill

Treasurer – Ben Williams

1.3. The Committee then discussed appointing additional members to ensure continuity and enhance diversity and it was agreed that up to three individuals should be invited to consider joining the Committee, with a view to appointing a further two members to serve alongside the four existing members.

1.4. See confidential minutes

## **2. Proposed terms of reference of Dulverton Management Committee and Joint Pastoral Council**

- 1.1. DS told the Committee that the Bishop wished to ensure a clear separation between the responsibilities of the Finance Committee and those of the Pastoral Council. The terms of reference of the Pastoral Council should not, therefore, imply that the Finance Committee in either of the two parishes derives its authority from or is dependent on the Joint Pastoral Council.
- 1.2. It was nevertheless appropriate for the Pastoral Council to delegate to the parish-based finance committees/ management committees operational decisions relating to pastoral matters that affected only one parish.
- 1.3. It was agreed that the 'Purpose' sections of both bodies' terms of reference should be amended to make clear the independence of the finance/ management committee. The secretary should then work with the Webmaster to ensure that the West Somerset Catholics website showed up-to-date details for Dulverton, including the name and roles of Management Committee members as well as the proposed terms of reference of the Committee and of the Pastoral Council.

## **2. Finance**

- 1.1. The Committee noted that over the first eight months of 2023 parish income had exceeded expenditure by £7,110.50 (taking account of a credit of £141.50 that had not been recognised in the bank statement as at 31 August). LH told the Committee that a further £1,500 had been received from Good Energy since 31 August. She said that in a normal year the Parish might expect to receive some £2,500 from feed-in tariffs, and to pay out some £3,500 in electricity costs; 2023 was unusual as there was still a credit balance on the account as a result of over-payments in earlier years.
- 1.2. DS pointed out that over the first five months of the year the Parish had only been paying 13.4 per cent of the cost of maintaining a priest (12.8 per cent if presbytery cleaning costs were included), with the balance being met by the Minehead parish. Taking account of the relative numbers attending mass in each of the two churches and the number of masses available, the Committee agreed that Dulverton should, with effect from 1 January 2023, contribute 20 per cent of the relevant costs. On the basis of the figures presented for the first five months, this would mean an increase from £390 a month to just under £610 a month. It was agreed that no contribution should be made to the cost of the Parish Assistant (£180.66 a month), whose work focused almost exclusively on the needs of the Minehead parish.
- 1.3. BW confirmed that he would have a full set of accounts for 2023 available for the next meeting of the Committee, which it was agreed should be in February 2024. He was asked to check whether the Parish still held a deposit account in addition to the current account, and if so to include details in his next report.
- 1.4. Turning to the question of Financial Regulations, the Committee was satisfied that sufficient guidance was given in the Parish Administration Manual. Specifically it was agreed that:

- cash collections should be counted after each mass by two independent people and the amount recorded; and
- payments exceeding £2,000 required the authorisation of two signatories (from a list that should include the Parish Priest, the Secretary and another Committee member: DS advised that the Diocese took the view that the Treasurer should not be involved in the disbursement of funds).

1.5. The Committee also agreed that a dual control system separating the preparation of requests for payment from their authorisation should be put in place once the Parish had access to the diocese's OPAS software. In the meantime, the Treasurer would review all payments made on a monthly basis. It was agreed to be impractical to re-instate the dual control system that had been in place when the parish priest had been resident in Dulverton.

### **3. PV Panels and heating**

LH reported that the HeatApp through which the church heating was controlled was proving unreliable. The Committee agreed that specialist advice should be sought and asked LH to put this in hand, contacting South West Heating Solutions in the first instance.

### **4. Buildings**

4.1. The Committee agreed that the main priority in the area of building maintenance was to clear the ivy, brambles etc growing up at the east end of the church and onto the roof. LH reported that the owners of the adjacent property had given their consent for this work. She then withdrew from further discussion of this matter.

4.2. See confidential minutes

4.3. The non-conflicted members of the Committee agreed to ask Robin Head to undertake this work on the basis of the estimate provided and, if necessary, to obtain a new padlock for the gate leading to the passageway behind the church.

4.4. The Committee was pleased to note that the Residential Centre was now in use, although there was still further work to be completed and the contractors did not appear to be on site currently. The Committee asked DS to contact the contractors (through the Diocesan Surveyor) with a view to ensuring that the gutters received early attention when work resumed.

### **5. Furniture and fittings**

5.1. The Committee asked the Chair to ensure that the organ was re-tuned.

5.2. The Committee also agreed that the issue of altar furnishings should be addressed at the next meeting, as some of these were very tired.

### **6. Liturgy, music etc**

6.1. Committee members were of the view that the current pattern of English and Latin Sunday masses, with and without singing, was appreciated by parishioners.

6.2. The Committee also welcomed DS's proposal that there be an evening mass on All Saints' Day (1 November) at 7.00 pm (later changed to 6.00 pm).

**7. Date, time and venue of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting should be in February: the exact date would depend on what was a realistic timetable for the production of the 2023 accounts, and the venue would be decided nearer the time. Following that meeting, the Committee would report (in late February or early March) to a general meeting of parishioners on its stewardship of parish finances. That general meeting would also have the opportunity to consider nominations for membership of the Council from 1 April 2024.

The meeting ended at 6.20 pm

Martin McNeill  
Secretary

Confirmed as a correct record at the meeting held on 21 February 2024

and signed by.....(Simon Rous) (Chair of that meeting)

## SCHEDULE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Minute	Action	Responsible	By when	Progress
<b>5 October 2023</b>				
1.3	Ascertain the willingness of the three individuals named in Minute 1.4 to join the Committee	Chair/PP	31 October 2023	
2.3	Amend 'purpose' section of proposed Pastoral Council Constitution and present to Pastoral Council for consideration	Secretary	31 October 2023	
2.3	Ensure that West Somerset Catholics website includes up-to-date details for Dulverton parish	Secretary with Webmaster	30 November 2023	
3.3	Prepare full accounts for next meeting of Committee, including details of any deposit accounts or other investments	Treasurer	29 February 2024	
4	Obtain specialist advice on issues around HeatApp	LH	31 October 2023	
5.4	Contact contractors for building works at Residential Centre to ensure that gutters are cleared	PP	31 October 2023	
6.1	Make arrangements for re-tuning of organ	Chair	31 October 2023	
6.2	Place consideration of altar furnishings on agenda of next meeting	Secretary	29 February 2024	