

## SAINT PHILIP NERI PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

#### The Meeting was held in the Dining Room at St. Joseph's

**Present:** Lynn Ireland (in the Chair), Andrew Collins (Vice Chairman), Father Niall Mullaley, Father Samuel Thotamala, Sr. Catherine Bibby, Rev. John Birch, Rev. Gerard Boyle, Mike Flynn (Secretary), Andrew Davies and Graham Lysaght.

**Apologies for Absence:** Rev. Pat Regan, Steve Goulding and Stella McGann.

Opening Prayers were offered by Father Niall.

#### 1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023

The minutes were approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### 2. Parish Priest's Update

- The Council welcomed Fr. Samuel Thotamala from the Diocese of Khammam in India to his first meeting as Assistant Priest at St. Philip Neri Parish. His presence would be of great help both in the Parish and beyond. It was also noted that Fr. Febin Thomas was now living at St. Joseph's as Syro – Malabar Chaplain for the Wirral.
- The meeting between the Divine Renovation UK Team and Frs. Niall and Michael Coughlan would now take place virtually on 26<sup>th</sup> September.
- Regarding the Old Presbytery at St Michael's a scheme has been received from the Surveyors, and we are now waiting for the Insurance Loss Adjusters to respond before we can go forward. The delay is not uncommon given the extreme weather conditions from last December. These delays will be followed up directly with the Insurance Company in a conference meeting that is taking place soon. The position regarding the payment of Council Tax and Business Rates for the building would also be clarified.  
**[Action: Fr. Niall]**
- Regarding the vandalism at St Michael's, things seem for the present to have calmed down and repairs have been carried out. CCTV will be installed which will enhance protection. The access gates are now combination lockable, but the fencing around the site still needs repair. The Diocesan Property Manager is to advise about consulting the Historic Churches

Committee concerning fitting reinforced glass in the broken windows. **[Action: Fr. Niall/Andrew/Graham]**

- With regard to the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds, a meeting of existing Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion was proposed, and re-introduction of the practise was imminent. Further guidance would be issued on the consumption of Altar Wine.
- The arrangements for Masses in adjoining Parishes were described, and this would be greatly aided by the presence of Fr. Samuel. Fr. Niall also described his many commitments as Regional Dean and on behalf of the Diocese, so that the Council might be better aware of his commitments and daily engagements. Once again he was wished well in all of this activity which extended well beyond the Parish of St. Philip Neri.
- It would be very important to pull together as a Parish, to help and support each other in the spirit of Christian service, and to share the Gospel of Jesus in this place.
- It was recognised that some people are very keen to take up Children's Liturgy again and that this would be pursued. It was noted that leaders would need DBS Certificates. **[Action: Fr. Niall/Gerard]**
- The Wirral Heritage week was operating, and both Churches would be open with Stewards on 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September. Specific events would take place at both Churches, to include exhibitions, musical events involving the Choir and the banners at St. Michael's.

### **3. Health and Safety Issues**

With regard to the installation of handrails at the Sanctuary and Raiswell Room at St Joseph's, the approval of the Historic Churches Commission was still awaited. Fr. Niall was liaising with Richard Crawford (Diocesan Property Manager) over the issues.

It was noted that Steve would need to reduce his H&S commitments over time, with a view to final withdrawal at the appropriate time. In addition, the overall position at St. Philip Neri would need to be reviewed with Julie Tinsley from the Diocese. Small groups would be established at both Churches to ensure help

and caretaking, and to involve those who are maintenance orientated. The Clergy Team might be involved in taking this forward.

**[Action: Fr. Niall/Les/Graham/Andrew]**

#### **4. Safeguarding**

It was agreed that the two Church's Safeguarding representatives should be invited to the next meeting of the Council to discuss the issues in general.

**[Action: Mike]**

The intermittent attendance of Altar Servers at St. Josephs was a concern although a clear 'Sacristy Policy' was still being developed, where a parent or guardian stays with their child before and after Mass; this was already taking place with most of our regular servers. A consent form together with a description of both Sacristies would be produced. **[Action: Fr. Niall]**

#### **5. Strategic Vision and Objectives for the Future**

There was a further general discussion about the longer term vision for the Parish and beyond. It was noted that the Steering Group was to produce a Development Plan hopefully to be considered in due course.

A wider vision to include the neighbouring Parishes and the Deanery as a whole would need to be produced. There was an imperative to concentrate on many other matters going forward, particularly including access to the whole local community, and it was clear that some previous Church based activities had now reached the end of their time. **[Action: Fr. Niall]**

#### **6. Development of Parish Structures and Teams**

The Finance Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Council.

The Liturgy Team had continued to meet, their last gathering being in early September when the following matters had been discussed:

- dates for liturgical and parish events up to Christmas, including the Hymns Big Sing, Bereavement Service, Holy Days, Advent service and Christmas Mass times. A social event, hosted by St Joseph's Choir has been booked at the Parish centre on Sunday 10th December 2-5 with a Christmas Afternoon tea, raffles etc and carols. These dates will shortly appear in the 'Dates for your Diary' section in the newsletter.

- The theme of this year's Heritage Week included creativity and led to discussion on the creative input of parishioners and groups in St. Philip Neri Parish. St Joseph's church now has displays highlighting bookbinding, candle making and vestment design and making. The banners at St Michael's were also discussed, but it wasn't possible to include them in this year's display.

Social Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Council.

The Fundraising Group had been convened and met on 31<sup>st</sup> August under the Chairmanship of Andrew Collins, the details of their agenda had been circulated. The Group was next due to meet on 14<sup>th</sup> September and a more detailed report would be submitted to the Parish Council in due course.

### **7. Lourdes Pilgrimage**

a) It was understood that 33 people from a range of Parishes had come forward to join the Lourdes Pilgrimage in December, and that one extra day had been added. There was a total eligibility of 52 participants so Tangney Tours might add more. Any further proposals to Graham as soon as possible, noting that the final date for confirmations was 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023. **[Action: Graham]**

### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 7.30pm at St. Joseph's.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Mike Flynn, Secretary