**St. Francis Finance Committee**

Draft Minutes of a meeting held in the Presbytery, St. Francis RC Church, Coronation Road Ascot on 19th September 2019

**Attendees:**

Tony Berkeley, Chair

Father Kevin Bidgood

Terry Enga, Secretary

Chris Sowinski

**3 Minutes from Previous Meeting**

The minutes from the previous meeting held on 20th June 2019 had been circulated and were approved.

**4 Treasurer’s Report**

Expenditure Greater than £500 Since Previous Meeting

* Fr. Kevin’s monthly salary and expenses had been paid
* The Easter Offering had been paid to Fr. Kevin which had been held on account pending payment
* 50 new hymn books had been acquired at a cost of £10 each. TB had also negotiated a deal for a further 70 existing hymn books to be re-bound at a cost of £8 each.
* 4 new benches had been purchased for the Friary Garden. After some negotiation, TB had knocked the price down to £250 each from £680 each.
* Daniells Harrison had submitted their invoice for services provided in connection with the Kennel Road site since March totalling £1,470.
* The Friary garage doors had been repaired at a cost of £899.

Work in Progress

* The committee noted the budget for the 130 year celebrations had been set at £2,000.
* TB was awaiting a quote for re-guilding the Exposition Monstrance.
* There was a discussion of the stains appearing on the ceiling of the Monk’s Chapel. It was understood to have been caused by water damage resulting from excess humidity. TB noted that he had asked the diocese to provide the name of a specialist firm to quote for the work. TE was of the opinion that this should not be repaired until the root-cause of the problem was tackled. TB agreed and said that he had been researching the cost of de-humidifiers. TB and TE agreed to look further into this.
* Fences at Kennel Road needed to be repaired at an estimated cost of £2,500.
* Other future expenses were likely to include ongoing fees for Daniells Harrison of £2,500 and Christmas Flowers at an estimated £550.

Future Work

* The main altar was badly in need of repair. This was estimated to cost £24,000.
* Repairs to the ceiling of the Monk’s Chapel £24,000 quote (see above).
* Redecorating the parish office is expected to cost around £1,200 with re-carpeting a further £1,200.
* Fence and back gate repairs will also be necessary at approximately £1,500.
* Boilers for the church and the Friary will need to be serviced at a cost of £1,500 each.

**5 Parish Financial Report**

Petty Cash

* Two payments of £500 had been made garden maintenance and other small expenses totalling £456 had been made.
* The Edmund House account had a balance of £103,222 at the end of the financial year, prior to adjustments of £3,062 and £700 made by the Diocese for incorrectly claimed levies and insurance. The adjusted balance was therefore £99,420. The current account had a balance of £7,276.
* TB reported that a summary of 2018/19 expenditure would be presented at the next meeting of the Finance Committee which would form the basis of Financial Report to be issued to the Parish. **Action: TB to remind Fr Kevin to issue the report.**

**6 Planned Giving Drive**

* TB showed the Planned Giving/Gift Aid handout and said he would arrange for 250 to be printed. CS agreed to consider a Gift Aid appeal later in the year.

**7 Progress on Car Park Re-Surfacing**

TB had obtained 2 quotes, one for £43k plus £7k management fee and one for £56k plus management fee of £7k. It was confirmed that Fr. Kevin would talk to the School Governors about the parish levying a service charge of £5k per annum for the school’s use of the car park. It had been decided to defer the work from the original planned date of the 2019 school summer holidays because TB has had conversations with Hilary Foyle, the Diocese Surveyor who advises that if this were to be undertaken as part of a broader school building programme, it is likely that the parish would qualify for a grant which may result in no cost to the parish. The committee confirmed the deferral but noted that the re-surfacing will need to take place at an agreed future time.

**8 Kennel Road Land**

TB had been in various discussions with the Diocese Surveyor and had agreed a plan of action for dealing with Daniells Harrison to obtain the best value from their services. As TB explained, there are 3 main steps to be taken, but none will happen until the previous step has been completed and Daniells Harrison will be required to report back as each step is concluded:

Step1

Meet with the Crown Estate to obtain their agreement for residential building to occupy the site instead of the current permission for a church and presbytery. Discussions to include the current 50% penalty if the land was not allocated to church use; it is hoped that the offer of a one-off cash payment of circa £250,000 (out of sale proceeds) would be worth exploring as there is some precedent with the Crown Estate.

Step 2

Meet with the housing association to discuss various access issues and options with a view to reaching a settlement, in the knowledge that the housing association is no longer the owner of all the properties that will be required for consent.

Step 3

Approach the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (“RBWM”) to discuss extending the access road and agree an appropriate settlement.

The committee discuss other matters related to the Kennel Road site. TB noted that there are between 80-200 trees on the site, many of which would need to be cleared and whilst he had visited the site with a landscaping specialist, there was no point in getting quotes for this work until all of the above steps had been completed. Fencing around the site had also been damaged and would need to be repaired. Most of the houses surrounding the land are now privately owned, with the housing association now believed to own 4 or 5 properties nearby. The green access area is owned by RBWM which should make negotiations clearer, with the housing association in a relatively weaker position. TB reminded the committee that the RBWM originally sold the access rights to the housing association but the association has since sold most of the properties which attracted the rights.

It was agreed that we should allow 3 months for Step 1 above to be resolved. The current estimate is that without any restrictions, the land would be worth in the region of £3-4 million, with an offer of £2.3 million having been received some time ago. If we were to obtain a sale at £3 million TB estimated that after all costs and payments and setting aside costs for the Parish Centre, the parish should be left with a surplus of £300,000 in the bank account.

**9 Any Other Business**

The date for the next meeting of the committee was set for 7.30 pm on Thursday 9th January 2020.

Chris Sowinski

13th October 2019