



Parish Council Meeting MEETING MINUTES

November 2016

Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	St Joseph's Parish Council
Chairman:	John Bates
Date:	Tuesday, 15 th November 2016
Time:	8:00pm
Location:	St Joseph's Priory

Invitees/Attendees

Name	Role	Present
John Bates	Chairman Health & Safety and Safeguarding	Yes
Fr Michael Spain	Parish Priest	Yes
Fr Martin McDonald	Carmelite Community	Yes
John Forte	Finance Committee	Yes
Sally Taylor	Evangelisation Activity Group	Yes
Ros Burton	Liturgy & Church Activity Group	Yes
Stephen Forster	Outreach Activity Group	Yes
Kasia Misiewicz	Pastoral Activity Group	Yes
Nan Jacobson	Social Activity Group	Apologies
Paul Rayner	Youth Activity Group	Yes
Doreen Pooley	Mass Representatives	Yes
Joan Barham	Secretary	Yes

Agenda Items

Item	Subject	Presenter
1.	Opening Remarks	John Bates
2.	Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 19 th July 2016	John Bates
3.	Matters Arising from AGM Meeting Minutes of 2 nd October 2016 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ John Bates to review and propose amendments paragraph 6.1 of the Parish Council Constitution. (<i>see proposal</i>) ▪ Charles Watters to arrange meeting with Chris North to look at figures and then follow up with the Diocese. ▪ Fr Martin to explore suggestion re: practice with microphone in church and arrange session(s) for readers. 	John Bates
4.	Health, Safety & Safeguarding	John Bates
5.	The Big Picture	Sally Taylor
6.	Northampton Cathedral Centre	Fr Michael Spain/ Fr Martin McDonald
7.	Advent & Christmas	Joan Barham
8.	Parish Planner	Joan Barham
9.	Meeting Dates for 2017	John Bates
10.	Matters Arising from Activity Group Reports	Fr Michael Spain
11.	Review of Action Items	All
12.	Closing Remarks	John Bates

Meeting Notes

1. Opening Remarks - John Bates

- The meeting began with a welcome from John Bates. He gave a special welcome to Sally Taylor who has taken over from Christine Cornwell for the Evangelisation Activity Group as well as Doreen Pooley who has taken over from Michael Carney for Mass Representatives.
- Fr Michael then led everyone in prayer.

2. Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 19th July 2016 - John Bates

- There were no matters arising from the Meeting Minutes of 19th July 2016.

3. Matters Arising from AGM Meeting Minutes of 2nd October 2016 - John Bates

John Bates to review and propose amendments paragraph 6.1 of the Parish Council Constitution.

- John Bates proposed to amend Section 6.1 of the Parish Council Constitution to read as follows: *"All elected Council members will serve for a period of three years, at the end of which, they may stand for a second term. No Elected member will serve for more than two consecutive terms on the Council without a break of 3 years after which they may be re-considered for re-appointment/election. Members of the Council who are appointed by the Parish Priest will serve until, at the discretion of the Parish Priest, a replacement is made."*

- This proposal was unanimously agreed.
- Joan to update the Parish Council Constitution documentation accordingly and re-publish.
- This clarifies the situation that appointments to the Council are the decision of the Parish Priest and he can continue with those appointed for as long as he wishes or change them at any moment in time.

Charles Watters to arrange meeting with Chris North to look at figures and then follow up with the Diocese.

- John Forte reported that this meeting has taken place and the action has been dealt with.

Fr Martin to explore suggestion re: practice with microphone in church and arrange session(s) for readers.

- Fr Martin said there will be a Readers and Eucharistic Ministers Retreat Day on Saturday, 28th January 2017. This will include guidance for both ministries as well as re-commissioning. A "save the date" will be published in the Newsletter at the start of Advent and details will be circulated when the next set of rotas are distributed at the end of November. Reminders will be sent in January.
- Prior to the retreat, Fr Martin and Robert Barham will have two or three open sessions for ALL READERS. These will take place on Wednesday evenings in January (details to be confirmed) and readers will be able to practice with the microphone in the church as per the AGM:

"...anyone who reads in church comes down and stands at the Lectern and tries out the microphone with someone else sitting in the church. Some people you will hear clearly and some you won't, but by having this practice it might highlight a few improvements that might help..."

- It was highlighted that the lectern microphone does not work effectively. Challenge Management has been asked if it would look into replacing it with one that is permanently connected and/or switched on but to no avail as yet. David Bentley has therefore been instructed to go ahead and replace the microphone on the lectern with one that has a goose neck (enabling it to be easily adjusted) and doesn't require batteries. This is to be done before Christmas.
- The other issue discussed at the recent Finance Committee Meeting was the installation of sound insulation in the Church, similar to that put up in the First Committee Room. This work has been deferred until after Christmas, allowing us to try out the new microphone and monitor its performance over the Christmas period where it will be heavily used.
- The Council was very pleased to hear the lectern microphone would be changed for a more effective one and welcomed the opportunity for readers to practice with it.

4. Health, Safety & Safeguarding - John Bates

- As a result of a generous offer by a donor, we are going to have an Accessibility Audit to ensure that we are in a position to be a welcoming place for those with disabilities. Once we have the findings, we can then prioritise what we can do and when. The Diocese has agreed to this and will send a representative down for the audit examination which will take place on Monday, 5th December. John Bates and Fr Michael will also be present for this exercise. The person carrying out the examination is from a professional company engaged in this activity.
- We have also had a visit from a lady from Chiltern District Council who is responsible for planning, particularly in relation to planning for disability access. Whilst she was of the opinion we were reasonably all right, where she found us lacking was not having a documented audit trail of why we do something or why we don't. She said that our current disabled access to the Church is adequate subject to modifications. However, Fr Michael would prefer (as would the Finance Committee) to have disabled access to the Church from the main car park, near where the disabled toilet facilities are. We therefore plan to go ahead with this. We await feedback from the person who has offered to help us get the appropriate approvals, etc so we can proceed with this improvement in the New Year.
- We have erected eight CCTV monitors, four in the Church and four in the Priory. The reason for this is that we have suffered some thefts from the candle boxes and the bookshop area as well as from the main reception desk. We have also had intruders within the Church and Priory area in recent weeks. We have responsibility to look after our employees. There will be a monitor erected in the Reception area so that the ladies can check the Church before entering. We will also put up signs that say CCTV

cameras are in operation throughout the premises. At the moment the cameras are not remotely monitored although the facility exists; this will become operative within the next fortnight. There are some extra cameras and lights still to be installed as well as improving visibility through the front door. These actions should improve the security of the priests who live in the Priory and the staff who work there.

- A Health & Safety review was held in the latter end of August. There is nothing outstanding as a result. The boilers in the Church and Parish Centre/Hall have been serviced for the winter. We are required to carry out electrical testing periodically, however we have just received the certificates for our re-wiring so this is not required at this time. The fire extinguishers in both St Joseph's and Holy Name have been checked and certified for use.
- With regards to Safeguarding, Mary Forsyth has done a sterling job. We are now all up to date and everyone who needs to be is DBS checked. We are hoping to move to a less bureaucratic method for renewals going forward which will make things simpler and quicker.
- Paul Rayner mentioned that we are looking into a basic First Aid Course for Isabel. Costs vary depending on whether you choose an afternoon, one day or three day course. It was suggested that Paul speak to Celia Tobin as she undertook such a course as part of her preparation for Parish Day.

5. The Big Picture - Sally Taylor

- "*The Big Picture*" is a series of 12 weekly bible study sessions. We will be running this programme from mid-January to early April next year. Sally brought the book and DVD for people to see. We will be promoting it from the beginning of Advent; offering the books for sale, including articles in the Newsletter, posting information on the website and promoting it from the pulpit.
- The format is very simple. You meet together every week and watch a short DVD. You do a little bit of study at home. Every day you are given something to look at and then you can write your own meditation in the book (it is very much a personal thing – a bit like a journal). When you gather every week you share as much or as little as you like. The DVD clips are just 15 minutes long and have been filmed on location in the Holy Land, with some well known names. Fr David Oakley, Rector of Oscott, gives some reflections.
- It would be nice if you engaged with this and talked about it with your groups and fellow parishioners, encouraging them to come along. It is open to anyone. There will be two sessions – morning and evening – which will hopefully accommodate as many people as possible. The book includes the DVD so you can watch it yourself at home and you don't have to worry if you miss a week. This is easy and accessible and gives us the opportunity to grow spiritually whilst sharing our faith with one another.
- Books, which include the DVD, are priced at £10 (discount from £15 as we are bulk buying).

6. Northampton Cathedral Centre - Fr Michael Spain/Fr Martin McDonald

- Fr Michael referred to Bishop Peter's last pastoral letter; where he finished up mentioning a project "very dear to his heart" which is to have a centre in the Cathedral grounds. Fr Mark Floody PP gave a presentation in the Parish Centre a few weeks ago – five people came along, including Fr Michael and Fr Martin! That teaches us a lesson from the word go...this project is not attractive to people so far away from Northampton.
- Fr Michael suggested that these five people get their heads together to consider how we might support Bishop Peter with this initiative. One of the big things that struck those at the presentation was that Northampton Cathedral is situated in one of the five poorest boroughs in England. It is located in a very poor area of the country and there are absolutely no facilities at the Cathedral. When we had our Pilgrimage to the Holy Door the best they could do was give us orange and biscuits in the sacristy...they couldn't even offer us a cup of coffee.
- The priests have invited Fr Mark Floody back to St Joseph's on Sunday, 12th March to make another presentation, most likely after 11am Mass. This will hopefully include people from other parishes in the Pastoral Area as well. At the Pastoral Area Council (PAC) Meeting last week it was suggested we work together to support this as it was agreed it is a worthwhile project.

- Yes it will take an awful lot of money. So far, they have got 25% funding from various groups and they are also applying for grants. Of course they hope for large donations and/or sponsorship.
- Fr Martin suggested that the proceeds from the Parish Christmas Lunch go to this. Fr Michael plans to grow and sell vegetables from his garden next year which will go to this as well. The priests hope an accumulation of small things will help us contribute to the project, rather than getting into big money appeals and ambitious events. There is absolutely no intention of getting the Finance Committee involved! This is the approach they want to adopt, hoping it might gather momentum.
- Fr Michael mentioned the "buy a brick" scheme they had whilst building new churches in Africa; this might be something we could consider. Someone commented that when St James in Gerrards Cross was building their new centre they did this and it was very well received and successful.

7. Advent & Christmas - Joan Barham

- Planning and preparations are well underway for Advent and Christmas, see key dates below:

Advent

- *Sunday, 27th November* Children's Liturgy Workshop after 9am Mass in the Hall
- *Saturday, 3rd December* Senior Citizen's Party from 2pm to 4:30pm in the Parish Centre/Hall
- *Weekend 3rd/4th December* Distribute London Christmas Run Flyer
- *Weekend 10th/11th December* Distribute Christmas Card with Mass Times
- *Tuesday, 13th December* Service of Reconciliation at 8pm in St Joseph's Church
- *Friday, 16th December* Putting Up of Crib and Christmas Tree
- *Sunday, 18th December* Parish Christmas Lunch at 12:30pm in the Parish Centre/Hall
- *Monday, 19th December* London & Slough Christmas Run
Donations to Parish Centre by 12 Noon
- *Monday, 19th December* Christmas Concert at 7:30pm in Holy Name, Denham
- *Friday, 23rd December* Parish Office Closes for Christmas at 5:30pm
(re-opens Tuesday, 3rd January)

• Fr Martin said that this year the Crib will be installed in the alcove between the two confessionals on the car park side of the Church. It can be arranged very attractively in this space with lighting, etc. This allows more space on the Sanctuary and means we don't have to move the piano to and 'fro between Christmas Masses. No final decision has been made on the position of the Christmas Tree, however we will not be erecting a very large tree as we might have in the past.

• Fr Martin added that we will have some outside signs that we are celebrating Christmas, certainly by having lights on the topiary trees on the Priory side of the Church as well as the large tree by the Priory driveway.

Christmas

- Christmas Mass times are broadly the same as last year, with a few tweaks given Christmas falls on a Sunday. As in previous years, there will be reduced Masses between Christmas and New Year.
- Those present were shown the proof Christmas card with Mass times which will be distributed mid-December with the Newsletter and via the School. The image on the front is a photograph of our Crib which was taken last year. This information will also be emailed out to everyone the week before Christmas as well as posted on the notice boards and website.
- Planning for the busy Family Christmas Eve Mass is underway. Once again there will be a relay of the Mass from the Church to the Parish Centre/Hall. Stewards are being organised for the Church, the car park and the Parish Centre/Hall. Like last year, communion for this Mass will be under one kind and extra Eucharistic Ministers will be asked to service the Choir Loft and Parish Centre/Hall.
- The Parish Office will be closed between Christmas and New Year.

8. Parish Planner - Joan Barham

- For our Centenary Year we created an online parish planner to share details about all the activities going on as well as facilitate organising the numerous events. Several people have since suggested it would be useful tool for the Working Groups.

- We have now created a new online parish planner. Its purpose is to help parish clergy, staff and volunteers plan ahead for events and activities. You can access the planner via the following link:

- [St Joseph's Parish Planner](#)

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=stri5g1kitmt4iakug2heiq7uc%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=Europe/London>

- Please note that ***it only covers parish events and activities. It is not an online diary*** and does not include regular bookings, private hires and so forth. Groups can use the planner to help them work out when they might schedule something but they should check with the Parish Office before confirming any arrangements.

Please note the following administration notes:

- **Parish Diary** – The Parish Office manages the Parish Diary. All bookings should be made through the office either via email to office@stjosephs.org.uk, by phoning 01753 886581 option 1 or by calling in person to the Priory. If you need to use a space please make sure you let us know. Do not assume we have reserved somewhere for your activity or event unless you have specifically booked it, even if you host something on a regular basis. To avoid disappointment or inconvenience to your groups and/or your guests, always check with the office first.

- **Office Hours** – The Parish Office is open from 9:30am to 1pm and from 2pm to 5:30pm Monday to Friday. It is not manned outside of these hours so please don't expect a personal response. Equally there are occasions where we have to physically leave the desk whilst carrying out our duties (for example, accessing registers, putting money away, using the copier, going into the Church, etc). If you call and there is no answer please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

- **Telephone System** – We use an automated telephone system at the Priory. This means that when you ring you will hear a message which guides you to whomever you wish to speak to (press 1 for the Parish Office, press 2 for Fr Michael, press 3 for Fr Martin, press 4 for Fr Maurice, etc). If the phone rings, then goes to answerphone, it means we are dealing with someone or something or have stepped away from the desk (see point above). Again please leave a message and we will call you back.

9. Meeting Dates 2017 - John Bates

- The Council agreed that it would continue to meet three times a year in addition to the AGM. The following dates were decided:

- Tuesday, 14th March 2017
- Tuesday, 4th July 2017
- Tuesday, 21st November 2017

- All meetings will take place in the Priory and will start at 8pm.

- The 2017 AGM was set for Sunday, 1st October. It will be held in the Parish Centre from 3pm to 5pm.

10. Matters Arising from July Activity Group Reports - Fr Michael Spain

- Refer to the following reports received for information about each Activity Group:

- "Evangelisation Report Nov16"
- "Liturgy & Church Report Nov16"
- "Pastoral Report Nov16"
- "Finance Report Nov16"

- The Outreach Activity Group confirmed no significant updates since report to AGM.

- No updates were received from the Social or Youth Activity Groups.

- The key issue arising from the various Activity Group Reports is that we need more volunteers. Any ideas on how we recruit more helpers are most welcome.
- Fr Michael mentioned that he joined the cleaning team last week. It was quite a learning experience for him and the ladies really appreciated the help. He now has someone in mind to head up the cleaning team but needs to approach them to ask.
- It was highlighted that the two evening Masses in particular are transient groups and its difficult to get a regular set of people to help with small jobs such as welcoming.
- Paul offered to host a brainstorming session on this topic at his house on Tuesday, 20th December. It was agreed that our ambition is not only to engage more helpers but also to lower the average age of our volunteers.
- All the Activity Groups and Working Groups were commended for the great work that they presented in the Annual Report. Looking through it one sees what a busy and vibrant parish we live in.

11. Review of Action Items - All

- **Action Items** – A new action list was created – see “*Parish Council Action Items (as at 19Jul16)*”.
- **M022** re: *Engaging 12-15 and 15-18 year olds* – Had a meeting about this in September which resulted in some good ideas. This needs to be followed up and reviewed with Fr Michael and Isabel.
- **M036** re: *Broken Wheelchair at back of Church* – A new wheelchair has been donated.
- The Council thanked Joan Barham for producing a very professional looking 2016 Annual Report.

12. Closing Remarks - John Bates

- Thank you to everyone present and all those they represent in the Working Groups for their continuous efforts on behalf of the parish. Everyone is doing a great job and volunteers are to be congratulated on all the hard work that they do throughout the year.
- The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Fr Martin.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, 14th March at 8pm in the Priory.