



Parish Council Meeting MEETING MINUTES

March 2018

Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	St Joseph's Parish Council
Chairman:	Fr Michael Spain
Date:	Tuesday, 6 th March 2018
Time:	8:00pm
Location:	St Joseph's Priory

Invitees/Attendees

Name	Role	Present
John Bates	Chairman Health & Safety and Safeguarding	Apologies
Fr Michael Spain	Parish Priest	Yes
Fr Bob Davies	Carmelite Community	Yes
Kevin Murphy	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	Yes
Paul Rayner	Youth Activity Group	Apologies
Doreen Pooley	Mass Representatives	No
Joan Barham	Secretary	Yes

Agenda Items

Item	Subject	Presenter
1.	Opening Remarks	John Bates
2.	Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 21 st November 2017	John Bates
3.	Review of Action Items	Joan Barham
4.	Health, Safety & Safeguarding	John Bates
5.	Parish Council Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Election of Vice-Chairman ▪ Terms of Office 	John Bates Joan Barham
6.	Holy Week & Easter	Joan Barham
7.	Evangelisation – Communications Facilities	Sally Taylor
8.	Pastoral Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diocesan Year of Prayer and Vocation ▪ Synod of the Family in Dublin August 2018 ▪ Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool September 2018 	Fr Michael Spain
9.	Update on Premises Improvement Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disabled Access to St Joseph’s Church ▪ St Joseph’s Cemetery ▪ Parish Centre/Hall Consultation 	Kevin Murphy/John Bates
10.	Parish Website Makeover	Joan Barham
11.	Miscellaneous Updates for Awareness	Fr Michael Spain
12.	Matters Arising from Activity Group Reports	Fr Michael Spain
13.	Closing Remarks	John Bates

Meeting Notes

1. Opening Remarks - Fr Michael Spain

- The meeting began with a welcome from Fr Michael who chaired meeting in the absence of John Bates. Fr Bob then led everyone in the opening prayer.
- Fr Michael welcomed Kevin Murphy to his first Parish Council Meeting. Kevin has taken over from John Forte as Chairman of the Finance Committee.
- Apologies were received from John Bates and Paul Rayner.

2. Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 21st November 2017 - Fr Michael Spain

- There were no matters arising from the Meeting Minutes of 21st November 2017.
- At the AGM the issue of parking for 11am Mass was raised. This was discussed last meeting and Fr Michael said he would take responsibility for monitoring the situation to see if we need to change this Mass to a later time. He is still undecided and said we should actually start all our Masses on time. It was agreed that we will look at this topic again at our next meeting.

3. Review of Action Items - All

- **Action Items** – A new action list was created – see “*Parish Council Action Items (as at 06Mar18)*”.
- **M026** re: *Evaluate new sound system with 3/4 readers* – The church’s sound system and acoustics still seems to be problematic for many parishioners. After some discussion, it was decided that we should see if we can do anything to make further improvements. Action was re-assigned to Fr Michael who will contact Françoise Forster about getting an evaluation of the sound system and acoustics.
- **M027** re: *Organise training session(s) on new audio system* – Following on from discussion of M026 above, it was agreed that training/practice sessions should be provided to all our readers to help them get the optimum out of the existing situation. Therefore, if the system/acoustics can be improved, the situation similarly improves for our readers. Action was re-assigned to Fr Michael and Ros Burton.
- **M028** re: *Instruction leaflet on hearing loop system* – A decision was made to leave this action on hold pending completion of action item M026.
- **M034** re: *Recruiting more helpers for parish groups* – After some talk about whether to have another “Sign-Up Sunday”, it was concluded that the most effective way of getting people involved is via personal invitation.
- **M040** re: *Erect CCTV monitor in Reception* – This action has been incorporated into work being carried out by Malcolm Johnstone in relation to security. No update this meeting.
- **M043** re: *Work out how best to inform parish about disabled entrance works* – This task has been completed. However, at this point it was mentioned that the damage to the new wall and handrail needs to be repaired and we may need to change the door so that it is not just glass, perhaps slatted wood.
- **M046** re: *Care of, and supplies for, the kitchen area in First Committee Room* – This space has become somewhat of a dumping ground, especially in the kitchen area. There appears to be little or no communication between the various groups using the serving facilities and cupboards. Everyone agreed we really need to do a proper clear out, ideally by Easter, and get rid of what is no longer required/used. Then perhaps we can put up some signage to encourage users to keep the area tidy.

4. Health, Safety & Safeguarding - Update provided by John Bates

Health & Safety

- The disabled entrance needs completion by the installation of new internal doors to the church, repairs following damage to the external ramp area and by installing a hand rail on the church side of the ramp. The exit sign notices need to be upgraded to reflect the new disabled entrance.
- The handrails for each of the entrances/exits to the church need to be upgraded and be on both sides. They should be accessible to the user from the lowest ground level through steps to the uppermost level.
- A question was asked about provision of disabled car parking spaces near the new entrance. Our understanding is that three spaces will be allocated adjacent to the new ramp which will be marked up as designated disabled spaces with a drop-off point. Joan to check with David/Malcolm/Celia about this.
- Risk assessments seem to be in order except for updating the next review date for services/maintenance.

Safeguarding

- Sterling work has been done by Mary Forsyth to bring and keep our records keeping and DBS checks up to date.

5. Parish Council Membership - Fr Michael Spain /Joan Barham

Election of Vice-Chairman

- The position of Vice-Chairman has been left vacant with the retirement of John Forte from the Parish Council. Nan Jacobson nominated Fr Michael for this role and this was seconded by Kasia Misiewicz. Fr

Michael accepted the nomination and the Council voted unanimously in favour of his appointment to this position.

Terms of Office

- Paul Rayner, having completed his second term of three years, is now required to step down as the Youth representative as per the guidelines set out in the constitution. He needs to discuss with his Working Groups and they need to elect a new representative.
- Ros Burton (Liturgy & Church) and Stephen Forster (Outreach) second terms of office are due up in October this year. They also need to discuss with their Working Groups and elect new representatives who will join the Council at our November meeting.
- Doreen Pooley continues for another year on behalf of Mass Representatives (and congregations).
- The eligibility and terms of office for the Chair of the Parish Council and Chair of Finance as set out in the current constitution was raised. It was felt this could be made simpler and clearer to understand. Stephen Forster undertook to look at this and present proposed revision(s) at the next Council meeting.

6. Holy Week & Easter - Joan Barham

- Planning and preparations are underway for Holy Week and Easter. Mass and Service times follow the same format as last year (copy distributed to those present). As in previous years, there will be reduced Masses on the weekdays after Easter. Statues will be covered in the Church as from weekend of 17th/18th March, with St Joseph being uncovered for his feast day on Monday, 19th March. At the Easter Vigil we will be welcoming RCIA candidates into the Catholic Church.
- There will be a second collection for Easter Flowers on weekend of 17th/18th March. The Good Friday Collection is for the Holy Land Shrines. The Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday Collections are for the clergy of the parish.
- As we did for Christmas, we will produce a booklet of Easter Mass times for the five parishes in our Pastoral Area, detailing services during Holy Week and Easter. This will be distributed to congregations in each of the parishes as well as families in the two schools. Easter Mass times in our own parish will also be emailed out to everyone in advance as well as posted on the notice boards and website.
- The Parish Office will close on Holy Thursday, 29th March at 5:30pm and will not re-open until 9:30am on Monday, 9th April. No Parish Centre or Hall bookings will be taken during this time. There will be no "regular" Newsletter on Sunday, 8th April.

7. Evangelisation - Communications Facilities - Sally Taylor

- With regards to communication, the facilities are tricky here. A year ago we identified that we needed blinds when showing DVDs in Parish Centre because of the daylight coming in the windows. At the time we resorted to using black plastic bags. This year for our Mass course, Malcolm has found some black throws and is hanging them up/taking them down each session, but it really doesn't look nice. Bringing it to Parish Council as it is a genuine need and may of course be linked to the future of the building. Another frustration is that if your machine "goes to sleep" it interrupts the signal to the projector and that needs someone technical to get it going again.
- Similarly, the First Committee Room has the same light issue when showing DVDs in the daytime; you simply cannot see the picture. This means that to put on something that requires a DVD is not a simple affair.
- When wanting to show something in the Library there is a large TV with in-built DVD player but the remote control is now broken, so the equipment is not easy to use.
- Showing DVDs in the church is also complicated and cumbersome. The new way of evangelizing is using modern technology and communication channels such as videos and social media – Pope Francis releases regular digital videos and Bishop Peter is also doing this (DVD not Pastoral Letter for Advent). We need to look at ourselves and figure out how we solve these issues. We acknowledge it is not simple but we must try to make it a lot easier/better. We need to make it possible in the church – last time someone had to bring their own laptop, set up the projector/screen, put the microphone up to the laptop

speaker so the congregation could hear the sound. They also attended all the weekend Masses to set the video going. We are in a dilemma.

- The catalyst for raising this is the Synod of the Family...there is a three minute DVD affirming families and marriage with an open invitation to attend. Mass is the best time to share this with people, so how can we make this happen?
- Fr Bob suggested perhaps having a large TV screen affixed to the wall linked to a DVD player. Sally suggested the Christian Resource Exhibition as they have lots of different suppliers offering many products for use in churches, including audio/visual equipment. It was agreed we look into possibilities. It was also decided that see what might work blind wise (for example, simple blackout blinds) in the Parish Centre and First Committee Room. Fr Bob and Sally agreed to action both of these items, liaising with Kevin regarding finances.

8. Pastoral Plans - Fr Michael Spain

Diocesan Year of Prayer and Vocation

- The Year of Prayer and Vocation continues but without great heart or energy. The official prayer hasn't really been embraced; we have many, many cards left untouched at the back of the church. After some discussion Fr Bob proposed he compose a prayer which we could pray on a regular basis. It was suggested that we have this ready by Easter if possible and perhaps pray it all Masses on Sunday, 22nd April as it is Vocations Sunday. We continue to include a Bidding Prayer every week as well as highlight the prayer theme and saint to accompany our personal prayer every month.

World Meeting of Families

- The World Meeting of Families takes place in Dublin from 21st-26th August 2018 and it is expected that Pope Francis will attend.
- Fr Michael is keen for families to go and is has extended a personal invitation to a few families who he thinks might be interested in attending. We also plan to show the short DVD (if possible) on Sunday, 22nd April at all Masses – this is both a proclamation about the family as well as an open invitation.

Eucharistic Congress

- There will be a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in Liverpool from 7th-9th September 2018. Currently Sally Taylor, Maureen Connell, Malcolm Johnstone and Christine Cornwell are going. Fr Michael would like people who do Eucharistic Adoration to go; people who are committed to this devotion. Fr Andy Ollard in Chesham Bois is our Diocesan Representative. There would be more than our allocated five places available if we want, and if we don't use our quota they can be given to another parish. We will try our best to communicate what we know as more information becomes available. Bishop Robert Barron, a renowned speaker, will be there.

9. Update on Premises Improvement Projects - Kevin Murphy/John Bates

Disabled Access to St Joseph's Church

- Discussed under Agenda Item 4, Health & Safety.

St Joseph's Cemetery

- We are making positive progress on the Cemetery Wall project. Within the next week we should be able to put the full programme to the Diocese and get their approval. We would like to do the build in the summer. It will take 12 weeks and it will have an effect on the Furniture Market so we will need to discuss this with them nearer the time. A wall with vaults will replace the existing hedge. There will be a separate entrance that will be suitable for disabled access. The main gate will be replaced with a much nicer one.

Parish Centre/Hall Consultation

- The parish consultation did not yield a large volume of responses – 28 in total. The feedback was fairly well spread between a new centre versus a re-model versus make, do and mend. Don't think we should stop improving the current facilities like adding blinds (per Agenda Item 7), sorting out the

kitchen, etc as we have to keep the premises in working condition. Raising money for a large project here will be a challenge, given the other things we need to do. For the foreseeable future we will carry out essential works.

Infant of Prague

- We are still awaiting sale of the Infant of Prague Church in Chalfont St Giles. The sale is being handled by the Diocese but has been unsuccessful thus far. It has been complicated by planning.

Mortuary/Lady Chapel

- The cleaning of the mausoleum and lady chapels in the church will be very expensive projects as the space is listed. The Diocese is keen for us to do it and hopefully will help us with the funding for it. It is something that we will have to do because the space is listed. It is not a project that can wait 5-10 years, but we can't do it without the money.

Car Park

- Car parking remains a problem that needs attention. The civil Parish Council is asking the church to provide more spaces for car parking. The neighbours do not necessarily want this as it may encourage yet more cars. There is a problem when something is going on both at the Church and at the school.
- We recently had a meeting with some of our neighbours from Priory Road, Priory Way and The Rowans. It was a very constructive and illuminating session. We have committed to work together to improve our communications; they will get an email distribution list together and we will notify them in advance of special events, big funerals, etc. We also talked about getting together a group of volunteer stewards who can help man the car park and road when a large crowd is expected – one of the neighbours present volunteered to join this group. There is a follow-up meeting arranged for mid-May. Please be mindful of our neighbours and the parking situation when organising events and, if necessary, be prepared to recruit stewards to help out.

10. Parish Website Makeover - Joan Barham

- We are just at the beginning of a project to "makeover" our parish website. We want to update it, refreshing both the look and feel as well as the content. The design also needs to be adjusted to make it more responsive when viewed via tablets or smartphones. The plan is to continue using the content management system to make updates straightforward. Things we are looking into are a calendar feature, form functionality as well as ability to link to social media. We are also evaluating use of online payment functionality for simple donations or event payments.
- The current site went live nearly eight years ago. It has served the parish well but now it looks outdated and tired. The website is an important communication tool; it functions as a "brochure" for the parish. Also, the current server upon which the website is hosted is due to be decommissioned in the next few months. This means we need to move the site to another server.
- This will require investment of both of time and money (for which approval has been given). We will rely on the co-operation and support of all Working Groups for the following tasks:
 - ***Survey of Existing Site*** – Complete a short questionnaire to help us identify how the website is used, what is useful and what works well in addition to any bugbears. Activity Group/Committee Leaders to circulate to their Working Groups/Committee Members upon receipt as a quick turnaround is required.
 - ***Review Existing Content*** – Take a good look at the existing content and decide if what it says about your organisation, group, ministry, etc is still applicable and up-to-date. We welcome any re-writes, updates, addition or removal of text as well as photos or images.
- The team working on this is Joan Barham, Mary Forsyth and Mike Burton. ITQ Solutions (the same supplier we used last time) is providing the technical expertise and creating the site structure which we can then customize and populate with our content.

11. Miscellaneous Updates for Awareness - Fr Michael Spain

- **Cleaning Contract for Parish Centre/Hall** – Having been out to tender we have appointed new cleaners to look after the Parish Centre and Hall. They will clean the building four mornings a week.
- **Gardening Contract for Priory Grounds** – Having been out to tender we have appointed new gardeners to look after the Priory grounds. They will be overseen by Fr Michael.
- **Vacant Roles** – The following roles still need to be filled, with the first two now being urgent:
 - Gift Aid Co-ordinator (circa ½ hour per week and ½ day twice a year).
 - 200 Club Administrator (circa ½ hour once a month and 1 day annually).
 - Marriage Registrar
 - Events Co-ordinator

12. Matters Arising from March Activity Group Reports - Fr Michael Spain

- Refer to the following reports received for information about each Activity Group:
 - "Evangelisation Report Mar18"
 - "Outreach Report Mar18"
 - "Liturgy & Church Report Mar18"
 - "Pastoral Report Mar18"
 - "Social Report Mar18"
 - "Youth Report Mar18"
 - "Finance Report Mar18"
- No update was received from Mass Representatives.
- Looking though all the reports the absence of Youth Worker was identified as our biggest gap.
- **Altar Servers** – We had 16 (of 21) servers attend a refresher session last Sunday afternoon. We have pulled together a guide for our altar servers, which we walked through on the day. It has been vetted by Fr Michael who wrote the introduction. At the session Fr Michael, Fr Bob and Alex Trillo provided input to the children and young people. Three parents came along to help, with one mother organising a craft. We have 4 new servers who are being trained and will start serving at Mass mid-March. Many thanks to Mary Forsyth for organising this very worthwhile session.

13. Closing Remarks - Fr Michael Spain

- The meeting concluded with a prayer and blessing by Fr Michael.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, 17th July 2018 at 8pm in the Priory.

*After the meeting, whilst everyone was preparing to leave, someone asked about the new data privacy rules. GDPR stands for **General Data Protection Regulation**. It's the biggest change to UK data privacy law for 20 years and, as a result, all organisations will have to review how they manage personal data to ensure they meet GDPR requirements. This was discussed at a recent Diocesan Trustees Meeting and we await instructions from the Diocese on actions to be taken. We envisage doing a census (like we did in 2015), which would go out with Parish Day Raffle Tickets, whereby people can validate their details held on our database as well as confirming how they wish to receive communications from the parish (or not).*