

**Manor Park Parish of St Stephens and St Nicholas Catholic Church**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Pastoral Parish Council**

**14 July 2014**

**Present:**

James Jukwey (2013) (Chair)	Tina Amuzie (2013) (Vice Chair)	Julian Gibbs (2010);
Chipo Mautsi (2013)	Chris Anugo (2013)	Lesley Thomas (2013) (Secretary/minute-taker)
Susan Greaves (2013)	Bernard Thiana (2014)	Maria Emilion (2014)
Sally Edozie (2014)	Anthony Fernando (2014)	One Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister (ex officio)
Fr Sean Connolly (president, ex officio);	Sr Dorothy (ex officio)	Sr Breda (ex officio)
Josephine Ndyababo (2014)	Anthony Fernando (2014)	

**Absent:** Hyacinth Anni (2013); Vida Wills (2013); Anne Patrick (2010)

**1. Welcome to all & new members:** James opened the meeting and welcomed the new members.

**2. Reflection and Rounds:** Fr Sean read the reflection which would lead into the topic of the Rounds. The reading was from a minister of an American Evangelical Church who went from door to door asking the inhabitants three questions about whether they were active members of a church, stating that he wasn't selling anything, would not witness and would not convert them. Some of the answers were:

- a) Sermons are not related to their lives
- b) Members were unfriendly
- c) Most churches were wanting money
- d) They wanted quality teaching for their children

This minister closed the conversation by asking what could the pastor do.

The PPC were asked "what did members consider was the role of the PPC?". The responses were varied: develop strong leaders; be a good steward of the parish's resources; serve the parish and act as a go-between; lead and minister the needs of the Church; represent the needs of the parish; follow up on concerns of the parish; support the parish priest; run and help the community; help the clergy develop; serve and be aware of the parish's activities.

**3. Apologies for absence:** Hazel Ringrow; David Prouse; St Kathleen

**4. Acceptance of minutes of the previous meeting (13 May):** these were accepted without amendments.

**5. Matters arising:** The Nigerian Catholic Community Group: This group had not drawn up any objectives and in consideration of the adverse points highlighted by Fr Sean at the previous meeting,

it had been decided by James Jukwey, as the proposer for this group, that this suggestion would be abandoned.

**6. Update on the parish buildings project:** Tim Tholby had summarised the presentations of the three submissions and the advantages, disadvantages, etc. and his report was presented to the Council. Fr. Sean and Tim met recently with Tom King and Chris James from the Diocesan Property Office to discuss the report and plans for St. Stephens. They were broadly supportive of the direction the parish is moving in. The Council confirmed that its preferred proposal at present is from Chapter One. A reminder that the figures quoted are not final and only ball-park figures, and there is much negotiation to be had which could radically change what route the parish follows. Consensus is also required with the diocese.

English Heritage had shown interest in the St Nicholas's site over a number of years because of its age. The Diocese are dealing with this though they are not in favour of listing this building due to the restrictions this would create. English Heritage consider it to be a borderline listing and are preparing a report. The diocese will make a decision if they need to contest this.

**St Stephen's Site:** Architectural drawings that had been done by the school's architect was shown and the various options were elaborated briefly for the new members. It appears that a new bishop may offer some greater flexibility in what might be planned. For example, converting the church to dual use in which the sanctuary would be partitioned off to allow the church building to be used as a hall - this would be considerably cheaper than the other options. Another option would be to use the Nun's house as a priest's house. Newham Council is yet to be approached about the plans for the St Stephen's site.

**7. Readers Workshop:** This had been successfully run earlier in the month and comprehensive notes had been written and circulated.

It was voiced that the microphone system is poor as it is difficult to hear at the back of the Church. The Parish's sound engineer to be asked to check the system but it was noted that the sound system at St Anthony's (Forest Gate) is very good. James offered to do some research on various systems and to make enquiries about the system used at St Anthony's with a view to upgrading the St Stephen's sound system. The lighting in St Stephens also needed to be improved.

**8. Finance Committee Report:** The Finance Committee had met recently and the minutes from that meeting were distributed. The Parish is £105K in debt and Josephine stated that in order to reduce this debt, £100K would need to be raised each year in the Parish. An increase in the monthly contributions from parishioners from which Gift Aid is gained is one way. David Prowse was thanked for his recent campaign in promoting this. The need for fund raising was raised. Fr. Sean suggested that once the parish knew which direction it wanted to move in we would be in a position to ask the parish to raise money for particular things. This would be a more effective strategy.

The documentation for the two signatories is still being finalised: Chris' documentation has been completed, Peter's is still to be completed. Vanessa will also be a signatory.

**9. Health and Safety Audit report.** A company called "Precision Safety Services" had been employed by the Diocese to carry out audits in each parish to ensure health and safety legislation is being adhered to and best practice promoted. Chris had read this report and stated that there were many items that needed to be addressed. Some of the more simpler, straightforward ones could be tackled as soon as possible as there would be a follow up visit in six months and it was important to show that some progress had been made - warning letters are issued if too many items are not addressed. Whilst it is possible for the parish to deal with some issues Fr. Sean felt that it was asking volunteers too much to study the report and make a plan of action. He asked the Council's support in asking the diocese for advice on how to proceed given the common lack of resources and systems in parishes, as well as the reliance on already over-burdened volunteers.

**10. Update on Noticeboard and St Vincent de Paul Society:**

**Noticeboard:** Julian has arranged for a graphic designer to meet her to make suggestions about the back of the Church and the Noticeboard. Fr Sean is encouraging a radical approach. Bernard took fresh photos of all the members to be put up on the Noticeboard.

**St Vincent de Paul:** The launch of the St Vincent de Paul Society event of a multinational bring-and-share luncheon had been very successful.

**The website** was nearly complete and Bernard wanted people to have sight of it before it went live. It had been decided to have a public viewing of the website after a Sunday Mass.

**11. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Services).** Some people have completed the forms for the new DBS and when all the applications had been received, these would be sent in bulk to the DBS office. Anne Patrick, the Safeguarding Officer, has this in hand.

**12. Telco Membership:** Manor Park Parish pays a membership fee to Telco each year which is part of the broad based alliance of London Citizens, affiliated to Citizens UK. What this means for the Parish is the development of leadership and a relational culture. Fr Sean felt that there were many people in the Parish who had not had a 1:1 meeting with anyone which could mean that their particular needs were not being met nor did the Parish community know the skills and talents they may have to offer. He wanted to encourage and develop members of the PPC as leaders and to take on this role so avoiding the same people being constantly called on in the Parish. Tim Thorlby, who had been instrumental in getting the St Nicholas project moving, has challenged the parish to consider raising £5K to pay for someone to do administrative work in the Parish one day a week. Money had also been raised by Rev. Angus Richie, director of the Contextual Theology Centre in order to allow Fr. Sean to support a parish in West London for two days a month in developing a relational culture. These roles could be combined if necessary, but raised important questions for the parish. Fr Sean suggested that the PPC should be considering what the parish was trying to do and what the role of the Council should be in facilitating this. It was agreed that an extraordinary 90 minute PPC meeting be held to discuss this and a date to be decided and objectives set by James, Tina, and Fr Sean, probably in September.

**13. New ambo:** as the meeting was over running, this item to be deferred to the next meeting.

**14. AOB:** None (a reminder that AOB was for emergency/urgent items).

**15. Date of next meetings: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

agenda items: preparation for the AGM

: car parking outside the Church for Masses

**26th September 2014:** extraordinary meeting : objectives/plan for PPC

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2014: Annual Parish Meeting**

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

The meeting closed at 9.25pm