**MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Held on Tuesday 1 March 2016 at St Joseph’s Church**

**Prayer: Reflection from “Here I Sit”**

**Present:** Peter Hancock, Fr Danny McAvoy, Elizabeth Fisher, Steve Scott, John Cole, Shaun Howard, Alick Barretto,

**Apologies:**  Mary McNab, Catherine Collery, Bernard Oneill

**Absent: David Howes**

**Approval of Minutes from meeting held on 26.01.2016:**

The Minutes were read out to the Committee. Living our Faith should read £3000 not £300

The Minutes were approved.

Matters arising from previous Minutes:

John Cole’s report:

Car Park

The ‘Exit’ bollard has been struck by a parishioner who immediately reported the incident to the parish office and admitted liability. Damage to the bollard was minor, when repairs are complete the parishioner has agreed to reimburse the parish.

**Action: Open**

Car Park CCTV

Installation by GCD Security of CCTV to monitor car park usage was completed and commissioned into service on Friday 29 January 2016.

**Action: Closed**

An undertaking from the committee that persistent access offenders will have their car park access withdrawn and their money refunded. John explained the advantage of installing alligator teeth as a future improvement especially with regard to speeding, tailgating, etc., which are the biggest offences.

**Action: Open**

Car Park Income:

As reported to this committee on 26 January 2016 and with no further car park income expected until the 2016/2017 renewal period I am reporting an operating deficit of £7776.42 for the year 01 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 this is with all invoices to date paid in full. We will be in profit in the coming year with 93 short termers, 20 long termers

**Action: Open**

Garden Machinery: Wheelbarrow needed for Alex. All the machinery to be repaired by reputable companies.

The lawnmower, petrol strimmer and petrol leaf blower were recently sent away for service. After inspection the lawnmower was deemed an uneconomic repair, a suitable replacement has been purchased together with the other items servicing costs the invoice total was £610.00 incl Vat.

**Action: Open**

Presbytery patio:

John Cole’s Report:

This report is to explain the decision taken to re-lay as a matter of urgency the entire patio area which surrounds much of the presbytery at St Joseph’s Church.

Presbytery Patio/continued:

Areas of concern regarding the above were raised in the quinquennial inspection report which took place in July 2015. On pages 64 & 65 it was noted that the supporting raised brick perimeter wall underneath the slab bed area had moved outward allowing the slabs to become dislodged, cracked and live.

The recommendation in section 6.3 was for localised lifting of the edging slabs for the walls to be tied back into the sub base and the slabs to be relayed and re-pointed, together with other similar localised lifting and rebidding throughout the patio area.

Upon initial inspection to generate quotations for this work to be carried out it was found that a remedial solution to this problem was not appropriate for the following reasons, these would have been evident to the naked eye during the inspection leading to the quinquennial report.

Lifting of the perimeter slabs exposed areas beneath with little or no sub base present, in some areas the slabs were bedded on dabs of mortar in the corners and centre of the slab only, this was particularly noticeable with most of the loose peripheral slabs overhanging the brickwork. The supporting brickwork had been laid on top of the existing lower garden wall this would have been acceptable had the original garden wall been predrilled to allow fixings bonding the new brickwork to the old and the newly laid brick course tied into a strong sub base. The subsequent brick courses were in fact not tied into any of the existing structure nor were there any supporting piers along it’s almost 10 meter length affording stability. This has allowed easy rainwater penetration together with subsequent dilution and subsidence of the limited sub base which has moved to push against the untied brickwork forcing it forward thus causing separation as described in the quinquennial report.

Further lifting of slabs in other areas of the patio revealed no sub base whatsoever, the slabs having been laid on bed of sharp sand only, which itself was directly on top of uncompacted earth, this has suffered from water penetration leading to the washing away of the sand leaving the slabs rocking completely unsupported.

Commencement of work to re-lay the entire patio took place on Tuesday 09 February 2016. Upon lifting the main area of patio surrounding the presbytery it was found that there were little or no signs of this area having been properly prepared for the laying of a patio. Indeed some slabs rested on unlevelled hardcore, whilst others covered empty voids with only mortar pointing holding them in place, evidence of pre-compaction was limited, some areas were in danger of collapse should the slabs have broken.

The specifications for the new patio are: All of the slabs are to be lifted reclaimed where practicable and cleaned of existing mortar. A new layer of sub base (some 3 metric tons in weight) fully compacted and raised to a level including the re-layed slabs to not less than six inches below the presbytery damp course will be put down. The live peripheral courses of brickwork down to the pre-existing wall will be removed and reclaimed for reuse or discarded into the new sub base as hardcore as practicable. A new surrounding wall will be built to a maximum height of twelve inches above the slab height level with piers and drainage slots at intervals along the entire length, at its returning termination points it will be tied and concreted into the newly formed sub base creating integrity and strength. For safety and as a visual aid the new brickwork will be topped with white coping stones, the piers will be capped in a similar fashion this will it is hoped better define the patio boundary to all that use it. Where new bricks are used they will be mixed in with the old to weather over time.

The slabs will be laid inside the new boundary wall on a continuous mortar bed, re-cut as required back to the existing building line, the slabs will be pointed in with matching mortar. The purchase of replacement slabs exactly matching the existing will be difficult it is anticipated that new will be layed alongside those reclaimed with a view to them also weathering in over time.

The accepted quotation for this work from Wells Landscapes was £3000.00 this sum is VAT exempt.

Presbytery Patio/continued:

Furthermore, I would ask the committee to explore ways in which we limit the need to unnecessarily re-do costly work that has as in this case not stood the test of time. I would welcome a discussion that generates our own guidelines for choosing those carrying out work St Joseph’s, making it a point not to use contractors from whom we are unable extract a reasonable period of guarantee, we must henceforth out of respect for those who donate so generously to our parish pursue those that do a less than satisfactory job.

I ask for this additional report to be included in the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 01 March 2016.

The renovation of the patio was completed on the 29 February 2016, the cost to the parish upon completion is £3000.00.

**Action: Closed**

Main Gates

Removal for repair of the damaged ‘Entry’ gate is now not necessary. Thames Forge advised the repairs can be affected with the gate in situ during February/March. It is hoped this will reduce the final repair bill.

**Action: Open**

Disabled Access:

Alistair Lloyd (Abracad Architects) is continuing to liaise with ‘Stannah’ stair lifts to bring about a site visit to discuss the operation, logistics, type and site of the proposed wheelchair lift from the main body of the church into the hall. Action: Open

Other configurations for the access must be considered other than the church/hall corridor. This was discussed at length.

**Action: Open**

Main boiler Replacement:

Currently in abeyance, to be discussed by this committee as to how and when replacement is to take place given other ongoing projects.

**Action: Open**

Church shop:

Currently in order to heat the shop there is an electric 2KW hot air blower which is inefficient and costly to run. In principal will the committee consider extending the heating pipes from the last church body radiator closest to the shop to inside the shop itself. The existing pipe work is adequate and has valves in place to which the necessary extension pipe work would readily fit making this an easy task. The new radiator would be mounted on to the wall which the shop door opens onto, the approximate radiator size to correctly heat the shop area would be 600mm x 800mm. A quotation for this work will be available at the next FCM if the committee is in agreement. Committee agreed to the radiator suggestions.

I shall update last month’s shop income at the next FCM.

**Action: Open**

Quinquennial Inspection:

See John’s attached report regarding the Presbytery Patio. Fr Danny said that the patio is excellent and can be used for various events, ie, First Holy Communion children’s party, etc.

**Action: Ongoing**

Other items for discussion

Bamenda:

Cheque given to Chris White. Bamenda people refused the donation. Chris had a fantastic experience and has taken a video of all the achievements that our funding has helped with. He will make this available to the parish.

**Action: Ongoing**

Lenten Project:

**Action: Ongoing**

Living our faith: very generous £250 (per month) into fund £150 into parish fund and £100 into living our faith fund, this was agreed. Concluded by next meeting. Fr Danny explained Phase 2 which he has deflected, this is the continuance of the payment by extending the 5 year which goes into the parish fund.

**Action: Ongoing**

Chairman: Peter took a Chairman’s decision to donate £300 to Ellie a teacher in Slough Secondary School. Ellie went away with the children for confirmation weekend and helping with the childrens progress, she’s wanted help to give every child a book to celebrate St Joseph’s day to encourage reading for Year 7, 30 children at £10 per book. This was accepted by the committee.

**Action: Closed**

Multi AV Monitor System Proposal:

The system will be networked and centrally managed consisting of 4 ceiling suspended ultra-thin LED monitors: Two 58” monitors suspended both sides of the sanctuary and two 40” monitors suspended part way down each side of the church. In addition, a 40” monitor will be installed in the porch above the double doors on the right hand side as you enter the church.

**Cost: £4625.00 + VAT**

This is of course a very large sum of money and in determining whether any parish project is a priority in terms of financial expenditure, we should take into account all of the costs and benefits that will likely result. However, in this case, the benefits are pastoral and largely intangible and do not therefore have clear monetary values. This can make a decision more difficult:

* The benefits may be intangible but intangibles deserve more respect! Look at the power of *brand image* in business today, for example. That’s an intangible; as are the pastoral, emotional and spiritual benefits that we, as a community seek to provide; not to mention identity and belonging.
* The expansion of technology has been rapid in recent years. Our parish is also vibrant and moving at a fast pace. We should take full advantage of technology and embrace it as the basis for our worshipping, formation, communication, outreach; the list goes on. Using technology in a smart way will help us to provide more hospitality, increase our ‘visibility’ and quickly and effectively communicate to parishioners and visitors alike.
* A digital system could be used as an interactive bulletin; for example, rolling information between the Sunday Masses: encouraging volunteers to come forward; personalising a message for visitors; sharing last minute information; promoting fundraisers etc. At other times, the monitor in the porch could provide information about ‘What’s On?’ in the parish to those who ‘pop in’ during the week, including those who are ‘curious’ about what we are all about.
* The system is totally configurable to our needs. We decide what information is displayed and when and we manage that ourselves.
* During Mass, hymns and prayers could be displayed which would hopefully increase audience participation! As somebody on the PPC commented, it would mean that everyone is ‘hands free’ and looking UP instead of DOWN into their hymn books. Makes for a more inclusive experience; more of a sense of belonging and community? (Please note: hymn books/missals will still be available for those who prefer to use them!).
* We could also use the system to – for want of a better word – advertise the charities or projects that we are supporting e.g. our two current Lenten Projects. This would help to inform our community and any visitors, potentially increasing financial offerings as well as volunteer participation.
* Communication with those who are hearing-impaired could be improved with the use of digital display units.
* Children and Young People could feel more engaged and participate more; use of animated displays including sound; more eye-catching and memorable.
* When promoting multiple events, additional paper copies of posters or notices would not be required – saving money as well as saving the planet!

**Other elements to consider:**

* A process for keeping the information as current as possible needs to be implemented and clear ownership identified.
* ‘Historical’ information e.g. lyrics of hymns, prayers etc., will need to be uploaded into the system.
* A ‘technical lead’ will need to be identified as responsible for the maintenance of the system.
* A ‘technical’ liturgy team will need to be in place if the digital displays are to be used interactively during services/events.

Bracknell Regeneration/Church Frontage

Fr Danny has met with the Bracknell Regeneration team who are going to replace the flooring in the Piazza outside our site. It was proposed that Fr Danny should enquire whether, when that work is being done, handsome steps could be added to the job making our site more inviting and allowing access to all direct from the shopping precinct. Additionally, we could get rid of those railings across the front that make our site look as though we are preventing people coming in to our church even though the front doors are open. Finally we might be able, with this work, to get rid of the grass at the front which is ugly and difficult to cut due to slopes. We could maybe trade a small piece of our site if Bracknell Regeneration would help us on this.

**Action: Ongoing**

Any Other Business:

John apologised to Steve Scott for not replying his email regarding the CCTV memory and advised this can be upgraded if needed at a nominal cost.

Closing Prayer: by Fr Danny

Date of Next Meeting: last Tuesday of every month – Due to the Easter season, next meeting Tuesday 5 April 2016.