

# **The Parish Council of Our Lady and All Saints Church, Stourbridge**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025

The meeting was opened with a prayer given by Father Philip

Present: Fr Philip Griffin (President); Fr Stephen Pimlott; Deacon Thomas Tranter; Chris Painter (Chair); Anna Morley (Secretary); Sarah Price (Parish Secretary); Ken Baker (SVP); Paul Shannon (Safeguarding); Liam Thomas (Youth Worker); Patricia McGrath (Catechist); Anthony Wilkes (Head of St. Joseph's Primary); Jo McCole (Catholic Life, HCHS)

## **1. Apologies**

None.

## **2. Introductions**

As this was the first meeting of the council with full attendance, the Chairman invited remaining introductions and reiterated that, in accordance with the constitution, the council will act as a consultative body to the parish.

## **3. Parishioner access to the Parish Council**

To facilitate parishioner access to the council whilst maintaining operational effectiveness of meetings, parishioners will be invited to email the Parish Secretary, marking their messages 'For the attention of the Parish Council'. These messages will be forwarded to the PC Secretary, who will liaise with the Chairman before meetings of the Executive Committee and Parish Council. For parishioners without email, a suggestion box for agenda items will be placed at the rear of the Church.

## **4. Draft Constitution**

The draft constitution was amended to reflect the needs of the parish, specifically:

- Article V: appointed members will serve a maximum of six years, with one-third standing down every two years. These members will leave the PC for a minimum of two years.  
Proposed by Sarah Price and approved.
- Article VI: to balance the need for continuity with that of appointing new members, the terms of one-third of members will expire every two years.  
Proposed by Fr Philip Griffin and approved.
- Article VII, clauses 2 and 3: elections of officers to be held every two years with officers therefore serving a two-year term, renewable once for that office.  
Proposed by Paul Shannon and approved.
- Article VIII, clause 2: non-members' contribution to a meeting is subject to prior notification to the PC secretary.  
Proposed by Chris Painter and approved.  
Clause 3: addition of (v) 'supporting infrastructure'. The focus areas are interdependent, but agenda items will be relatable to each area.  
Proposed by Chris Painter and approved.
- Article IX: voting is to be the exception, not the rule.
- Article XII: the parish council members will be invited to vote to approve the amended constitution at the next council meeting.

## **5. The Parish Centre**

The future of the Parish Centre featured heavily at the meeting for parishioners in January. The key issues are whether it should be adapted, or redeveloped to include some architectural features from the existing building, and whether this is desirable, feasible and economical. Plans are well advanced but the cost implication of demolishing the existing

garage and subsequent underpinning of the presbytery has meant that a redesign has been produced, to include a parish hall of 80sqm, a hall of 40sqm and a good-sized kitchen.

Key points: there should be no VAT payable; a portable classroom in the parking area will house existing bookings; the planned time period is for work to start after Christmas and to be completed for the following Christmas; the new roofline will face the sun and the new windows could replicate the existing windows; storage remains an issue.

The possibility of individual, non-gendered toilets will be considered in line with the available space.

Sarah will email a copy of the new proposal to the members of the Parish Council.

The planning team is awaiting approximate costs; the plans will then be submitted to Dudley Planning Department as a pre-planning application, who will advise if the new scheme is viable.

## **6. The Synodal Pathway**

The council considered the synodal pathway 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 meeting notes for information, to avoid overlap and for possible items for future council agendas.

The pathway has held five meetings since the pandemic, open to all parishioners, who are able to give their views and add items to the agenda, and these notes demonstrate that discussed events and activities are already progressing.

The implications of parish clusters are evidently going to be of increasing strategic importance for the future.

## **7. The Parish Survey**

It was noted from the January 2025 summary of results that much is going well in the parish and many comments were positive. The council also noted that there were some areas that warranted further consideration and discussion, marking them out as future agenda items.

This applied particularly to school-parish links; attractiveness of the Church for families and young people; and social activities and outreach. Patricia McGrath discussed the status of catechesis in the parish, which also merited further reflection.

## **8. Future Agenda Items**

Items for July parish council meeting:

- i) Parish clusters: Fr Philip to prepare a short paper outlining the kind of issues that the Parish will need to take on board in due course.
- ii) Catechesis for children and adults: Patricia McGrath will lead a discussion, preparing a short paper on associated issues.
- iii) Youth and family involvement: Liam Thomas will lead a discussion, preparing a short paper on the challenges presented and possible ways forward.
- iv) School-parish links: Anthony Wilkes will lead a discussion, preparing a short paper on how these links might be strengthened.
- v) And for a subsequent meeting, social activities and social outreach.

Papers to be submitted to Parish Council Secretary by 11<sup>th</sup> June.

## **9. Any Other Notified Business**

None

## **10. Proposed Dates of Future Meetings**

The proposed date of Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> July was amended to Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> July, at 4.30pm. The proposed date of Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November was approved, again at 4.30pm.

## **11. Close of Meeting**

The Chairman thanked all members for attending and for their contributions. The meeting closed at 6.20pm.