

# Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Wymondham

## Finance Committee

20 JANUARY 2021

7:30pm (ZOOM)

Minutes

Apologies; none

Present;

Fr Pat Cleary  
Fr Denis Gallagher  
Nick Williams – chair  
Arnie McConnell – Treasurer (outgoing)  
Martin Mcllroy – Treasurer (incoming)  
Moir White – member  
Ella James – member  
Felix Desira – member  
Jenny Lysons – member (who joined via phone)  
Chrissie Baldwin (Minutes)

<b>No:</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<b><u>Opening prayer</u></b> Father Pat led the meeting with a prayer	
2.	<b><u>Welcome new committee member</u></b> Nick welcomed Martin Mcllroy to the meeting. Arnie has aimed to stand down as parish treasurer for a number of years and is immensely grateful to Martin who has kindly volunteered to step up.  Martin and Arnie are currently in hand over transition at the moment. With Martin taking over as Treasurer circa end March  Nick led a heartfelt thanks to Arnie, who has been a huge support to both Fr Denis and Fr Pat and to the church community as a whole Arnie's professionalism and commitment has made such a difference and will be missed by the whole committee	
3.	<b><u>Minutes of last meeting (May 2019)</u></b> The last meeting was held May 2019, the minutes cannot be located however the summary notes as presented via Nick were agreed by all as they stood.  Minutes are an important part of the finance committee and it was agreed to keep minutes as an integral part of the meeting governance for all future meetings	

4.	<p><b><u>Treasurers report</u></b></p> <p>Arnie gave a verbal update having circulated the following documents with the agenda;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Treasurer notes q1 – q3 2020</li> <li>2. Treasurers Report 2019</li> <li>3. Wymondham Parish Account 2019</li> <li>4. 2020 Finance Comparison with 2019</li> <li>5. As well as the Parish Finances 2020 which was circulated after the agenda and ahead of the meeting</li> </ol> <p><b><u>2019</u></b></p> <p>Arnie reported that there was a slight increase in the offertory, although Standing Orders (SO) remained stationary.</p> <p>There were several larger expenses in 2019;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replacement oven in the Church hall, which failed inspection and had to be replaced immediately to be able to operate legally. This was absorbed as expenditure.</li> <li>• The sound system was installed and although a costly expense it has proved worthwhile.</li> <li>• Safety lights were installed in the sacristy</li> <li>• The door linking the church and the sacristy were made H&amp;S complaint.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>2020</u></b></p> <p>The sound system has been an addition bonus this year when the decision was taken to live stream mass.</p> <p>This year has been incredibly demanding, and the Treasurers notes were discussed. It was decided to limit expenditure to essential items only. I.e. H&amp;S related or essential site works expenditure.</p> <p>Arnie has focussed on digital payments and further digitisation of church finance and the possible use of Visa and PayPal.</p> <p>The committee considered the income and expenditure from this year comparing to last (Circulated paper - Parish Finances 2020). Which even in these very difficult times only shows a small difference to payments and receipts.</p> <p>Arnie gave a community outreach project update including receipts and payments (circulated paper – Parish Finances 2020). Arnie confirmed that it is the aim to make the project self-sufficient, which has been the case in both 2019 and 2020 with receipts covering payments in both years. A significant cost for the budget in 2019 was the purchase and insurance of the community outreach project van (around £4.5K). The money in this project and other restricted funds (such as FEPOW) is ringfenced for the exclusive use of the project.</p> <p>Arnie asked for it to be noted that the ringfenced budgets should be moved to have its own set of accounts outside of the parish accounts.</p> <p>This is being considered to ensure good governance and these funds should be independent of the finance committee which is being considered by Arnie, Fr Pat, Fr Denis and Nick and progress will be updated to the finance committee at a future meeting.</p> <p>Arnie reported that we have reduced the monthly Diocesan Account deposit from £1500 to £50 in order to safeguard cash flow.</p>	Fr Pat, Fr Denis, Nick & Arnie
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	<p>Covid has impacted our income significantly and Arnie reported that the current account stands at around £3k with some months seeing no weekly takings. The money diverted from the diocese to the current account has acted as a lifeblood to the cash flow of the church. The rental income from the hall and meeting room has been widely affected (no change to cottage rental). Ella asked if limiting spending to the essential items only, will this see any impact in future years (e.g. backed up need for essential on non-essential but required projects). It was agreed that prudent decision was taken however, this is something to be mindful of as the future remains uncertain.</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Update from Arnie and Moira on all matters relating to premises since last meeting</u></b></p> <p>Moira and Arnie gave an update on matters relating to premises. 2020 has seen a reduction in hall income by 46% (£9k) (this reflects 2<sup>nd</sup> half). The loss of rental income is the Hall only this does not include the cottage which has remained stable.</p> <p>Also reported that the rent to the nursery has been reduced to help the long-standing occupant in these difficult Covid times. Fr Pat reported that Stepping Stones (Nursery) is important to the community and it is important to ensure that we support it as much as we can in these troubled times.</p> <p>Moira asked the committee view on when we can go back to Pre Covid rents and begin to market the reletting of the Hall. It was generally agreed that we are looking at least 3 months before economic life picks up again and we will review future letting of the Hall at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed to continue with prudent budgeting (no unnecessary expenditure).</p> <p>Moira gave an update on her circulated report (Site Meeting) and updated the committee on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to cottage</li> <li>• Works to car park</li> </ul> <p>Moira updated on items to be considered for 2021 as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reroofing to the hall roof, the estimate is 3k and meeting with another contractor tomorrow, there is further damage and re-plastering requiring attention for kitchen and bar. This work is required due to lack of maintenance and age.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that quotes to be agreed by Treasurer and Chair of Committee along with Fr Pat and Moira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-felting and reroofing of cottage is also committed at around 3k. – Agreed</li> <li>• Pruning to trees on the boundary of church. Prudent to have the tree assessed. The health and safety assessment has highlighted the need for this work to be done. – Agreed</li> <li>• Car park – More than halfway to completing this however there is no current pressure on the car park. The work necessary was discussed as either prudent or necessary. Agreed to do the prudent work of pruning and hold on gravel as necessary but not immediate need.</li> <li>• Notice boards for the front of the church were not part of the car park project. It is not considered essential however as it is the frontage of the church it was considered that refreshing these should be done, Moira to investigate the cost of this</li> </ul>	<p>For next agenda</p> <p>Fr Pat, Moira, Treasurer and Nick</p> <p>Moira Moira</p> <p>Moira</p> <p>Moira</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narthex roof works – Moira is currently getting quotes and assessing need for works.</li> <li>• Replacement of the floor covering part of the Sacristy, as H&amp;S risk it was agreed to do the work.</li> </ul> <p>Martin asked about the need for quotes. Moira confirmed that under 5k we can make decision in finance committee and over 5k we to seek permission from the diocese.</p>	<p>Moira</p> <p>Moira</p> <p>Moira</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b><u>Communication from a Parishioner</u></b></p> <p>Father Pat/Nick gave an overview of correspondence received from a parishioner on transparencies of the finances in the Parish. Although Fr Pat, Nick and Arnie reported that they are confident that all monies are being dealt with appropriately with controls and balances in place around banking; with Nick receiving monthly finance overviews including transparency on weekly giving, and would like to give reassurance to the parishioner that the Churches finances are controlled well, the committee considered how it could improve the communication with parishioners to give greater and wider transparency.</p> <p>Fr Pat has responsibility and overview of the parish finances.</p> <p>Martin and Nick are attending a diocesan finance meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p>The committee challenged the process and agreed that although there have been administrative challenges for validation the committee is surprised that we do not have don't have 2 sigs in place for expenditure. Agreed Martin and Nick will raise this with others to see how they have managed this during Covid.</p> <p>The committee asked that Martin and Nick could circulate to committee following the meeting the lessons learned or bring these back to the next finance meeting for a discussion</p> <p>The Committee also asked that Martin and Nick raise the issue of banking with HSBC including the ethical issues around their operating processes.</p> <p>Weekly giving has been markedly reduced in Covid and so monies are counted and banked less frequently which has meant that weekly figures are not available as they were. Because of Covid, Ella and Oliver are currently the sole counters, and although our gratitude goes to them, safeguarding them is also our concern. Ella reported that the bank is making the deposit of giving more difficult as notes and cheques can be dropped into the box but coinage has to be taken into the bank and with reduced opening hours, and home/school working this provides a further ongoing challenge for our only volunteers. It was agreed to have a full discussion on this at the next finance meeting</p> <p>It was agreed that how the finance committee communicates with parishioners is key. If we agree 5 or 6 indicators that are key to church it was agreed these should be communicated regularly and should include items such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income from the plate</li> <li>Income from standing orders etc...</li> <li>Donations</li> </ul>	<p>Martin, Nick</p> <p>To add to next agenda</p> <p>Nick</p>

	<p>It was agreed that a one pager info sheet giving a financial overview in an easy to read format would give much better transparency to the wider church community. This could link in with and be produced following our quarterly meetings</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Reopening Church Hall</u></b> Discussed risk management and when we can begin to rent the hall out again.</p> <p>Agreed to rent for elections (6 May) but see this as a one off currently Charlie Purves – is the booking secretary for the hall. Moirra and Charlie to consider risk assessment. Look to get someone to risk assess around Covid and as rules relax how we can safely let the hall out again.</p> <p>There is a need to consider the location of the accident book – To go on agenda for next meeting.</p>	<p>Moirra (Charlie)</p> <p>To add to next agenda</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Update on community kitchen and project developments</u></b> The defibrillator donated from the heart foundation with grants from Saffron housing and Wymondham Town Council is in place.</p> <p>55 food parcels distributed regularly; this is steady and growing – we currently have a strong core good if volunteers, helping and supporting those self-isolating.</p> <p>At the moment no financial commitment for the community kitchen or project developments is required. It was agreed that this agenda item does not need to be brought forward in future, unless a monetary ask comes forward for future consideration.</p>	
9.	<p><b><u>Update on gift aid –</u></b> The deadline for last year was missed however the sum of money will be around £9k. We can claim up to 10k as eligible gift aid for both Wymondham and Attleborough separately.</p> <p>Nick reported that at the end of this financial year. £9k will come back into reserves</p>	Nick
10.	<p><b><u>Digital giving</u></b> We have a number of parishioners who are not contributing income due to the impact of Covid, either because they are not using cash or because they are not attending masses whilst we are in the pandemic. The committee considered the use of PayPal or swipe card giving at church.</p> <p>We are getting 65 logins per mass, these will be our parishioners, who may wish to support the parish but currently do not know how they can.</p> <p>It was agreed that a reminder in the newsletter about how to contribute to the parish would be a good idea.</p> <p>It was also agreed that we write a letter to the parish to include a financial report and an invitation to make giving on a regular basis. – Arnie to produce financial report – Nick to draft letter for Fr Pat and publish as gift aiders.</p> <p>Agreed to look at BACs with a coding reference which can be attributed to an appropriate fund. Look at getting in touch with other parishes who may find some good tips of how they have gone about this to avoid confusion for our parishioners and making it easier to administer.</p>	<p>Nick</p> <p>Nick, Fr Pat, Arnie</p> <p>Arnie, Martin</p>

	<p>A company has a deal with the diocese, for swipe giving for which the cost for administration is too high currently. The committee felt that this was not the right time to look at this but Nick and Martin to bring up at a future committee meeting for discussion when appropriate.</p>	<p>Nick, Martin</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>It was agreed to establish a pattern of regular meetings. With agreement for the First Wed in the month as the best date for all, Quarterly dates circulated as;</p> <p>7<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (Zoom meeting)  7<sup>th</sup> July 2021  6<sup>th</sup> October 2021  5<sup>th</sup> January 2022</p> <p>The committee gave thanks that during lockdown, we were still able to feed the hungry. Our thanks to Arnie, which was a great credit to his perseverance during this difficult time. Our thanks went to Arnie at the beginning of the meeting, however, the meeting closed with the committee's thanks for all he has done. He of course said that he had been humbled especially by those who have been crying out for support in Wymondam and our surrounding areas and was pleased to be a small part of what has been achieved.</p> <p>Nick closed the meeting at 9:50pm with a closing prayer from Father Pat.</p>	