



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11 November 2009

The Meeting started with a prayer.

Present: Canon Michael, Tony Sheill, Liz Carey-Sheill, Arthur and Clare Neville, Peter Arrowsmith, Chris Barker, Liz Clarke, Neil Spencer, Jenny Frodsham, Babs Gurney.

1 **Apologies:** none were received

2 **Minutes of the last meeting:** Were distributed and agreed.

3 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

a **Pastoral Care**

Stream 3 – Liz Carey-Sheill is our Parish representative and has been to a couple of meetings, the next one being in Shefford next week. She has completed a questionnaire on our behalf and will arrange a display to be put up in the entrance to show the new Pastoral areas. The group is a very good and committed group, lead by Canon Benny Noonan as Pastoral Dean.

Parish members – Attendance at Mass - There are 125 more Parishioners than last year with an average of 333 attending over a 4 week period

b **Churches Together** – Neil Spencer, Parish Representative told us there is a meeting next Monday. There will be a flier produced listing all Church services, which could be distributed at the switching on of the lights on 04.12.09 or via the various Churches. There will be a **Nativity Tableau** on the market square on Saturday 19 December 2009 for which Arthur and Clare volunteered to read.

Fairtrade - There is a Christmas Tree festival at St Andrew's Church on 5 December 2009 and the FAB will have a tree in it. The Fairtrade group are trying to get a slot on Biggleswade FM to highlight Fairtrade goods. Fairtrade fortnight will see a 'Think as you shop' event on Saturday 6 March 2010, with local producers and guest speakers, and will be held in the Baptist Church hall in London Road.

d **Parish Youth**

Confirmations 2010 – The date needs to be agreed when the Bishop's can attend, then lessons can start.

First Communions – We are pleased to hear that this is the largest group we have had for a long time.

Parish Youth Co-ordinator - A Parish Youth Co-ordinator has not yet been appointed

4 **Treasurer's Report**

There was no report available; however Alban has said the collection is averaging £540 per week, and £200 in standing orders. We have approximately £40,000 in the deposit account and the same in stocks and shares. The Standing orders go directly into the deposit account. The current account had £5000, but is now down to £3000. This is slightly better than last year, although we have some large expenses coming up. An outside speaker will be asked to encourage planned giving and gift aid etc

5 **Building Maintenance**

a **Disabled Toilet/Club room extension** – The plans have been sent to the diocese, but nothing has been heard yet. Liz Carey-Sheill will write and ask what progress is being made. Liz will also ask if any decision has been made about the East Beds Community bus parking in the car park.

b **Minor Basilica** – The Fire door has now been fitted so the First Communion class can now use the hall. It took 2 cars and a large van to take the rubbish to the tip. A grill will be fitted over the radiator, which will have a timer. All those who helped to tidy up the basilica were thanked.

c **Church Roof** – The roof is coming to the end of its life. We have had one quote for £10,000 to re-felt it and the do regular maintenance, re-sealing etc. Liz will check how often the re-sealing will need to be done and how long the guarantee will be. The Diocesan treasurer will have to be contacted for permission before any works are started. It should, however, ensure that the fabric of the Church is Ok for the next 20-30 years. Chris Barker will ask a roofer he knows for a quote.

6 **Church Music** – The choir is meeting regularly preparing some new music for Christmas. The small electric keyboard is coming to the end of its life. The pipe organ is only used by Nick Whitehead. It has been suggested that the pipe organ could be sold and an electronic keyboard purchased, that could be used by all organists. It was decided to leave it up to the organists as experts.

7 **Health and Safety** – We need a Parish Health and Safety representative; Chris Barker is interested and would like further information about training and the role etc.

8 **Car Parking** – The Community bus cannot park without permission from the Diocese. The Diocese would like us to grant permits to all who use the car park. Magnolia charity for disabled have 2 places in the car park and the police 4, but Canon Michael will keep an eye on the parking, as some days the car park is full. It was suggested that we should have a form placed on the cars asking them for their details for insurance and security reasons. Liz Carey-Sheill to do the form.

9 **AOB: Club Room Electrics** – Canon Michael said that the AA who meet on Tuesdays had blown the fuses when using 3 heaters and a kettle. Canon Michael will look into a couple of halogen heaters as the radiator can only be put on if all the heating is on. A wall heater was suggested as safer for the Mums and toddlers. An Electrician will be asked for a quote.

10 **Date and time of next meeting - Wednesday 27 January 2010 at 8.00pm, following 7.30pm Mass.**

The meeting ended with a prayer.