**Parish Council Meeting, via Zoom.** **Monday 20th July 2020**

**Present:**

Fr. Peter Mansfield, Gerry O’Donnell, Sue Carr, Roque Fernandes, Penne Hutton, Brenda Eydman,

Pauline D’Mello-Maplesden, Bernadette Hallett, Bridget Hanlon, Peter McFall, Elsie Ofili,

Colin Wilding,

**Minutes:**

Bernadette Hallett

**Agenda:**

1. **Welcome** from Gerry to our 4th Zoom PPC meeting. **Opening Prayer** prepared by Roque.

2. **Apologies for Absence** - Erica Thurbon

3. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

Financial update, 9.2.3, stated we are currently down by £18,000 on predicted spending; this should read: on predicted balance by end of the year.

4. **Review of the reopening of the church for mass**

Fr. Peter reported that he has been very pleased with the way things have worked over the first two weekends. The stewards and cleaners have done an excellent job and people have been welcomed into the church with kindness and consideration. Email updates to volunteers have dealt with minor points that needed reviewing.

A request was made that it needs to be emphasised to parishioners that they need to register or provide Track and Trace details every time they attend mass, not just once, as some people have not understood this and think they only need to do this once. One person was having trouble with pre-registering their details for mass. Gerry will follow this up with them separately in case it is a problem within the system.

Mass registration; there are three ways of doing this,

1) Fill in details at home and bring them with you to hand in,

2) Cards are available in the porch for people on arrival who have been unable to bring details with them or 3) Pre-registration on line. Pre registration is for Track and Trace purposes and is not a seat reservation.

Stewards rota; would be preferable to have both male and female stewards on duty if possible but would be lucky to get enough volunteers. Peter has already prepared the rota for the coming weekend and reduced the number of stewards to 3 for mass. Some volunteers are on a number of different rotas.

Communion distribution; a concern was raised about the distribution of Communion and the possibility the hand of the priest or special minister could touch the hand of the receiver. Fr. Peter is happy to speak individually to anyone who has a concern, but he does not touch anyone’s hands when he places, or drops, the Host in their hand. The Special Ministers have clear guidance as to how to give Communion. This guidance is available for anyone to read if they request it. The Special Minister receives Communion on the Sanctuary as usual and then sanitises their own hands before distributing Communion.

5. **Review of keeping the parish connected**

Numbers at masses have not yet reached full capacity. At the moment the first people to arrive will be admitted until the capacity is full. People will only know the church is full if they turn up but get turned away. This could also mean they don’t bother to try the following week.

This potential problem leads to a new proposal, ie. An online booking system with a backup phone booking..

Therefore: 1) book on line, or 2) phone line for those unable to book on line.

A booking would have to identify whether they are requesting 1/2/3 seats to be booked. A problem could arise if someone books seating but then fails to attend, therefore preventing someone else from taking advantage of a seat. A note could be made of “No Shows”.

Gerry asked Brenda how she thought this might affect some of the older parishioners. So much is now being dealt with on line which is difficult for those who are not on the internet or have the skills to deal with this. Lots of the elderly are in friendship groups so one person could possibly book themselves and a friend together. How far in advance would a booking need to be made? – the suggestion is one week.

Bernadette has spoken to someone whose parish uses this practice and they said it works well and has not produced any problems yet.

People who are currently contacting the elderly or vulnerable by phone could also check with them about mass registration when they speak to them.

Need to discuss who is going to deal with the bookings and the dedicated phone line. Need to plan for when this could be implemented. Someone who attends a weekday could possibly ask a steward to book them in for the following weekend mass. Fr. Peter said that some Diocese are developing an app which could cover bookings, so this proposal is unique to our own parish.

John the Baptist parish, Purley, just use an email system. This could be investigated. It all needs an administrator. It does not allow for an automatic ‘places filled’ situation.

Fr. Peter asked if we could not use the word ‘ticket’, but maybe call the places seating units, or places, or a cluster of seats as it sounds better.

All the PPC members are in agreement that the proposal is followed up and that the fine detail and complexities should be investigated.

\* Gerry will ask the web team to start looking at this method and bring their findings back to the PPC.

Brenda reported that there have been some minor issues with regard to contacting the elderly and vulnerable. If they have been unable to make contact with someone then a visit has been made to check that they are alright. There have not been a lot of requests for help as that tends to go through Fr. Peter. Many people are still reluctant to attend mass. Some will go to a weekday mass which is quieter. She could ask the people who make the phone contacts to sound out people to see how they feel about mass attendance and a booking system. The streamed masses are still invaluable to the housebound and those in isolation.

Digital platforms;

YouTube: before masses restarted in church, the numbers of streamed mass viewings was very high.

Mailing List: There are 119 subscribers..

The new camera has been a great success and is much appreciated. There has been a very good response to the request for donations, and also some very kind emails where people have acknowledged the importance of the streamed masses for so many people. We have been able to purchase a refurbished laptop to work with the new camera.

JustGiving: working well.

Isolated and Housebound; some people might appreciate a phone call from the Parish Priest if possible. Fr. Peter has already made a number of phone calls to make direct contact with people.

6. **Other considerations as lockdown is eased**

More people are now able to get out but there are still those who cannot leave the house and they may feel even more isolated and cut off as other people resume their outside activities. All of our current ways of making contact with people will then take on an even higher importance once this happens.

The question was asked as to when the housebound might be able to receive Communion from a visiting Special Minister. The Diocese are awaiting the ‘next stage’ instructions from the government. At the moment the Parish Priest can only visit a person who is dying. The next stage will be complex for the priest and ministers. This will not happen before September and will only be able to take place if there are Special Ministers who are willing to make these visits. We need the government permission to proceed.

7. **Parish Priorities**

Bernadette reported that the Bereavement Support group, (Bernadette, Sue, and Bridget) had met via Zoom on the previous Monday. They reviewed their plans from the meeting with Fr. Peter in March but most plans are currently on hold until lockdown and social gatherings regulations are eased. They are looking at developing their ideas for a parish sympathy card, and prayer card/bookmark. They are also going to draw up their own checklist of contacts for people in preparation for a funeral for their own reference.

They are hoping that they will still be able to plan for a dedicated Memorial Mass for parishioners in the Autumn to tie in with Remembrance Day and the Feast of All saints and All Souls.

The minutes of their meeting have been sent to Gerry and Fr. Peter.

No reports from other groups. Gerry reminded people that the time will come when we are able to resurrect plans already made and it is good to know that things are still going on in the background and have not been forgotten.

8. **Financial update**

Peter McFall gave an update on parish finances. The suggested projection of £18,000 on predicted spending is now down slightly to £17,500.

Just Giving had produced a sum of £390 at the last meeting but the Diocese has since refunded a further £629.

Gift Aid envelopes; very few were collected pre lockdown so these have now been posted out to the people concerned.

Collections; there have been collection baskets available at the first two masses. There must be a 72 hour delay before money is handled and counted, and counting will now take place fortnightly. The collection from the previous Sunday will not be included until the following count.

We need to raise the profile of JustGiving with regular reminders.

9. **Communication to the Parish**

\* Gerry will include a reminder that people need to register their contact details each time they attend mass.

10. **Priest’s notices**

Funerals, baptisms, etc are now allowed with restrictions on numbers of attendees. First funeral is this Wednesday 22nd July. Regulations are changing for events but we will still need stewards and cleaners. Baptisms are now building up and will need volunteers. Fr. Peter will contact stewards and cleaners to check availability for extra duties. He would like to recruit some more volunteers if possible. Responsibilities will increase.

There is no help in the office at the moment so Fr. Peter is responsible for all administration as well as Sacristy duties. He will look to see whether it might be possible to get some help with some of the admin.

Events would benefit from having flower displays in the church. Brenda will see what she can do.

Gerry made the point that the members of the PPC are willing to offer help where possible to support Fr. Peter.

Colin queried the fact that there is only one parish email address to cover everything and suggested that maybe it would help to ease things if there could be a separate email system to deal with separate issues.

11. **Live parish 200 club draw**

We went live yet again to Peter McFall’s living room for the monthly 200 club draw…….

Congratulations to the holder of number 45, Maxine Rogers, who is this month’s lucky winner.

12. **AOB**

No further items

**Volunteer to prepare Opening Prayer - Penne**

**Closing Prayer** by Fr. Peter, who also gave his thanks to us all for our continued support which is enabling us to take things forward so well.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

Date: Monday 24th August

Time: 7.30 pm

Place: Zoom