



Diocese of Nottingham: The St John Paul II Nottingham Parish Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 10th March 2025

In attendance: Martin Foulds, Philip Martin and Canon Philipp Ziomek (Chairperson).

1. Opening Prayer/Remarks

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Philip.

It was noted that this was the first meeting of the finance committee for the newly established parish of St John Paul II, Nottingham, embracing the Good Shepherd and St Anthony's Churches.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from John Doherty, Francesca Lynch and David Staiano.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 11th December 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting, held under the auspices of the former Good Shepherd parish, were approved and will now be posted on the parish notice board and website. **ACTION 1/25: Philip** to action accordingly.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

- a) *Apologies for absence-*** It was noted that Oliver Kuras had not responded to emails regarding his continued membership of the Committee. It was agreed therefore that Oliver would not, until further notice, be regarded as a member of the Committee.
- b) *New parish website-*** It was agreed that the timeline for developing the parish's new website should be clarified, given it has been under development for a considerable time now. **ACTION 2/25: Philip** to seek an update from Sarah Williamson.
- c) *Deanery youth worker post-*** Canon Philipp explained that the proposed arrangements continue to be on hold whilst the diocese develops its financial options. Meanwhile, the parish has now established its own youth group, which meets each Friday evening in the parish centre.
- d) *Parish finance update-*** It was again reported that there had not been any recent contact from Kelly Hart, the consultant engaged by the parish to investigate sources of grant aid towards the cost of repairing the defective concrete affecting the mullions and

other parts of the church building. It was noted that the diocese now employs a diocesan fundraising manager to assist parishes with securing external grants and ensuring compliance with funding conditions and it was suggested that the parish might in these circumstances instead wish to seek advice from that postholder (Kristen Dougherty).

Canon Philipp advised that initial investigatory work on the repair of the mullions and other parts of the external church building is in progress. As previously reported, Gary Dickman (from Capitol Stone) recommended another company be engaged to undertake the specialist concrete work, in liaison with James Phillips, the architect overseeing the work, and the diocese's property department. The company concerned are currently carrying out some initial analysis work before proceeding to the next stage.

- e) **Parish uniformed groups' use of the parish centre facilities-** It was explained that Canon Philipp, together with Philip and Francesca Lynch, had met on 5th February 2025 with a representative of the girlguiding units about the proposed charging arrangements for their use of the parish centre facilities. It had been reiterated that as the units are no longer affiliated to the parish they are to be treated as an external body under the centre charging policy established by the Committee for their use of the centre. It was however agreed, exceptionally, to remit the implementation of these charges by 50% for the first year, after which the units will be eligible to pay the full charge less the 20% discount to which they are eligible as a charity. **ACTION 3/25: Philip** to remind Francesca to invoice the girlguiding units accordingly with immediate effect.
- f) **Parish reorganisation-** Canon Philipp advised that the parish of Our Lady of Victories and St Anthony was now extinct and had been replaced by two new parishes: the parish of St John Paul II, Nottingham (embracing the Good Shepherd and St Anthony's Churches) and St Francis of Assisi, Sherwood ((embracing the churches of Our Lady of Victories, Southwell, Holy Trinity at Newark and St Joseph's at New Ollerton). The cut-off date for the financial arrangements for the former parishes was 31st January 2025. The division of financial resources between the two new parishes is still under consideration.
- g) **Membership of the Committee-** Canon Philipp explained that he was still trying to recruit new members, including at least one other female member, to join the Committee. When available, details of any interested people will be passed to Philip to follow up in terms of providing an induction session/briefing. **ACTION 4/25: Canon Philipp/Philip.**

5. Parish finances-update

In Francesca's absence, Philip provided an update on the parish's current finances:

- There was a credit balance of £40,858.72 in the parish's current bank account as at 7th March 2025.
- The parish's separate set-off account (held with the diocese) is currently in credit to the sum of £322,994.83. This account is being built up by regular transfers from the parish's current account to help with the future cost of repairing the defective concrete affecting the mullions and other parts of the church building and to limit the amount of money the parish has to borrow.
- The parish is currently querying the background to an electricity bill of approximately £9,500 for the parish centre which has recently been received from

Inter Diocesan Fuel Management Ltd (a “not for profit” company that acts as a, fuel/energy procurement agency on behalf of Nottingham and a number of other Catholic dioceses and schools). If agreed, this bill will have to be met from the parish’s current account.

6. Analysis of income 2024/25

Consideration was given to the report relating to the parish’s “measurable” income sources (weekly offertory donations, bank standing orders, parish debt collections, Gift Aid, the Dona contactless donations and donations made through the on-line “Donate” facility). Key points discussed were:

- At present the report excludes St Anthony’s as the new parish’s financial arrangements have only been put in place from the beginning of February 2025 and meaningful comparisons with previous years is not possible.
- The Good Shepherd Church’s total income from the measurable sources in 2024/25 is currently projected to be £162,541 which, if correct, represents a decrease of 1.6% on 2023/24 income levels.
- When year on year inflation is factored in there is a real terms reduction of 4.6%.
- Mass attendance is still increasing, with total attendance over the four Masses held at Good Shepherd each weekend now averaging 709 attendees- an increase of 2% since 1st April 2024. If attendance at Mass on Christmas Eve/Day and Easter Sundays in 2023/24 is excluded, the average increase is 35 attendees per week- a 5.2% increase.

ACTION 5/25: Philip to continue to bring quarterly income reports to the Committee. Reports relating to the 2025/26 financial year onwards will include St Anthony’s.

7. Review of parish finances

It was reported that Philip and David Staiano had spoken to Good Shepherd parishioners from the pulpit on the parish’s finances at all Saturday/Sunday Masses on 1st/2nd March 2025. Philip and David had subsequently been available, with support from members of the parish administrative and stewardship teams, at the back of church for discussion with individual parishioners. The review had been well received and, to date, has generated five new standing orders, nine new Gift Aid declarations and five new requests for offertory envelopes. The standing orders alone will generate approximately £3,000 per annum additional income for the parish in terms of regular donations and Gift Aid.

Philip also gave a presentation to St Anthony’s parishioners on 2nd February 2025 about the financial procedures for the new parish. To date, five parishioners from St Anthony’s have subsequently transferred their standing orders to the new parish, as well as four Gift Aid declarations. Further information has been requested and is awaited from Fr Michael O’Donoghue at St Francis of Assisi Parish to ensure no-one has been missed. **ACTION 6/25: Philip** to follow up at the appropriate time with Fr Michael.

8. Deanery Roadshow- 17th February 2025

Canon Philipp and Philip provided brief feedback in relation to the Deanery Roadshow they had attended on 17th February 2025 and which had involved presentations by Bishop Patrick on the diocese's emerging pastoral plan and from David Lawes, the diocese chief operating officer, on the future funding of the diocese's central teams. The funding proposals include widening the scope of the "assessable income" used to determine parish quotas and to potentially enable the diocese to take a defined percentage of the reserves held by parishes. Concerns were expressed at the meeting that such an approach could very well alienate Good Shepherd parishioners given the parish's reserves had been built up over time by focussed donations from parishioners towards the cost of the essential, expensive work needed to address the defective concrete issue affecting the church building.

9. Any Other Business

Nothing was identified for discussion.

10. Dates of the next meeting

It was confirmed that the Committee's next meeting would be from 6.30-8.00pm on Thursday 12th June 2025, with the substantive item for the agenda being the Parish Annual Return 2024/25.

Philip advised that we would need to ensure that the Annual Return includes details of the small donations Gift Aid claim which we are able to make via the Return for St Anthony's as a separate building where Mass is offered. **ACTION 7/25: Philip** to brief Francesca accordingly.

11. Closing Prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer led by Canon Philipp.