



St Alfege
The Parish Church of Greenwich

Parochial Church Council (PCC)
7.00 p.m. in the Church

Minutes of the PCC meeting
17th June 2009

Present: Rev'd Chris Moody, Andrew Blundy, Richard Bancroft, Andrew Lewis, Nigel Perks, Alan Bradley, Freda Cannon, Tim Delap, Sarah Lavery, Peter Rumsey, Chris Todhunter, Sally Hughes, Tom McDonald and John Stanley.

In attendance (by invitation): Brian Vale (Chair of the Development Committee)

Before the meeting commenced, David Manktelow of Stonewest Limited gave a short presentation to the PCC on the refurbishment of St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, and restoration work that his company undertook on St Paul's Cathedral. Andrew Blundy thanked DM on behalf of the committee for his informative and interesting presentation. DM left the meeting and the PCC then convened.

Chair: Andrew Blundy (Church Warden)

1. **Opening prayer**
2. **Apologies for Absence.**

Kate Steer, Chris Le Breton, Mark Harris, Peter Kinnison, Joanne Newton

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting.**

The minutes of the previous meeting of 20th May 2009 were approved **nem con.**

St Alfège
The Parish Church of Greenwich
Continuation

4. Matters Arising.

The last meeting contemplated all PCC members being CRB checked. It was decided, however, that this was not necessary and that only those members who had other voluntary work that would bring them into contact with children or vulnerable adults should submit themselves for a CRB check. It was agreed that SH would liaise with JE regarding training for the safeguarding of children.

5. Roan Street report from the Development Committee.

Brian Vale presented the Report of the Development Committee to the PCC, which had been distributed prior to his presentation.

In introducing the report BV explained that his committee had been set up in 2003 as a result of the continuing deficit in the church's budget. Its terms of reference are

- To develop the land interests of the church (which are available for development without compromising the work of the church) to enhance the environment around the church
- To maximise the income from the land assets
- To enhance the facilities adjacent to the church, in particular the Hall

Revenue earning was important but there were other heritage, community and social objectives as well. BV explained that the DevComm had taken great care over the project and had used the best and most appropriate architects and consultants, and had maintained continuous contact with outside bodies such as the Diocese and Greenwich Council. Consultation with the community had been a priority and the plans had been continually adjusted and re-thought as a result. Likewise every stage of the project had been agreed by the PCC and the dates of six meetings since 2004 were given together with the nature of the decisions taken at each. Thus the PCC had already agreed to the major principles underlying the project and with 90 per cent of the details.

BV then outlined the major features of the revised plan as given in his paper. Roan Street was straightforward. DevComm were worried, however, that the income to be received from the flats was now too small as a result of the budget earmarked for the church hall. He invited the PCC to consider this issue.

BV emphasised that he was only asking the PCC at this stage to agree the revised plans and the specifications – which the figures showed would achieve the project's objectives. It was however neither necessary nor possible to speculate on the project's overall economic viability. The economic and housing market four years ahead was uncertain, and figures

St Alfege
The Parish Church of Greenwich
Continuation

currently available were not reliable enough. More detailed calculations would need to be done in due course.

BV recommended the report to the committee seeking the following approvals: **a)** final agreement to the proposal and **b)** agreement that DevComm can now obtain whatever approvals are needed from the Diocese and **c)** that his committee can take the next step to submit an application to the London Borough of Greenwich for Planning Permission. There followed a robust discussion by the committee and the following comments were made:

- Nigel Perks objected to the density of the scheme and the poor design and was concerned about the financial viability of the project.
- Chris Todhunter expressed his thanks to the DevComm for the successful sale of the wood yard. He felt that the report was flawed in some of the assumptions that had been made, in particular that it assumed the normalisation of the property market. The scheme was not financially viable. He was concerned that there appeared to be a disregard for the integration of the church hall. He felt that there was a consensus from members of the church that we should retain ownership of the land and was concerned that we should investigate some of the shared ownership schemes. The proposal would involve the risk of large project and a commitment to returning 59 per cent to the commercial developer. He wanted to see a scheme that brought about a community that was integrated with the church. He said that providing social benefit was not just about cheap flats. He also felt that a better approach would be to look at an incremental scheme rather than one big build.
- Richard Bancroft (who had previously written to BV expressing his concerns) was of the view that the scheme was not financially viable and requested a detailed breakdown of costs for the scheme. He queried whether a developer could be found who would take on the risk of such a scheme given that the proposal required them to invest £5.075m to flats that might be worth £5.3m.
- Alan Bradley thought that we would be mad to adopt such a scheme and wanted to look at other development ideas such as a visitor/heritage centre.
- Sally Hughes felt that the church hall could achieve up to £30k in additional revenue if properly managed and thought that the hall had been left out of the scheme. She felt that the scheme had imposed a planning blight on the hall development. She also felt that the capital gearing was much too high in relation to the achievable income, and that the income that the church sought could be gained by a much smaller and more gradualist level of investment, such as what is achievable with the Hall.

St Alfège
The Parish Church of Greenwich
Continuation

- Andrew Lewis felt that the scheme was not financially viable and that no developer would be found under the current plans. He also queried some of the financial assumptions made in the report and felt that they did not add up. He said that he was in favour of developing the site but objected to the design and density of the current plans. He further said that the PCC had already decided to put any scheme on hold for 5 years so that we could develop the church hall in the interim.
- Tim Delap felt that the costing exercise had been extremely complex and had overegged it. He felt it was a reasonable compromise between a wish to have both affordable housing and an income stream.
- Chris Moody said that he felt the basic outline was right, but that the Hall should be integral to the development. He said that the scheme needed to generate 30 years' income for the church and that it also needed to generate an income for the diocese. He said that the development partner did not have to be a commercial partner and that a lot had changed over time. He thanked Brian Vale for the work of the DevComm and said that we should not vote on the report but receive it. **Agreed nem con.**
- BV advised the committee that he had been contacted that morning by the Archdeacon who had offered Diocesan expert analysis of the viability of the scheme. The Diocesan surveyor would go through the DevComm Report in detail and report back to the PCC.

It was agreed to receive the report and send it to the diocese with a copy of the minutes of this meeting after which the diocese would have a further discussion with the vicar and church wardens who would then report back to the committee.

Andrew Blundy thanked Brian Vale for all his hard work and that of his committee.

6. Standing Committee Report.

The report was received and duly noted.

7. Church Administrators Report.

The report was received and duly noted.

8. Hall Report.

The vicar felt that the interim report should not have been circulated and it was withdrawn from the meeting pending further work.

St Alfege
The Parish Church of Greenwich
Continuation

9. Sunday School Report.

The report was received and duly noted.

10. Fabric Committee Report.

The report was received and duly noted.

11. Treasurers Report

The report was moved to the next PCC meeting.

12. Church Business Plan.

It was agreed that Andrew Lewis, Simon Foreman, Chris Moody and Gill moody would start to work on the draft of a business plan for the church. Chris Todhunter said that he would like the business plan to include specific fund raising for the church hall redevelopment.

13. Any other business.

CM circulated an e mail of thanks from Julian Watson of the Heritage Centre who had recently been allowed to look at our historical archives and advised that further work would be required before any decision was taken on releasing records to the centre.

Dates for the next PCC meetings are set as follows:

Wednesday 15th July 7.00pm at Church
Wednesday 16th Sept 7.00pm at Church
Wednesday 14th Oct 7.00pm at Church

There being no other business the meeting ended.

The Grace