

Minutes of the Christ Church Council Meeting 7 January 2014

Present: Judith Bishop, Margaret Burrows, Morny Davison, Mark Elliott, Rebecca Nicholson, Martin Palmer, Bob Siderfin, Alex Soboslay, Angela Soboslay, Brenda Wall (Secretary), Malcolm Wall.

David Bishop (Treasurer) and George Chedburn (architect) were present for discussion of building plans.

In the chair: Canon Angela Townshend.

1. The meeting opened with prayer.

2. Apologies were received from Andrew Sillett, David Rawlings, Sarah Kerr.

3. Minutes

Change to the minutes of the last meeting (12 November 2013): we should add that the bell ringers are led by a member of the congregation, not as implied a group of outsiders. With this amendment, the minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Buildings

Bob Siderfin introduced a paper from the Buildings Working Group outlining the group's recommended programme of works. Tranche 1 includes works to be done in the near future. The document includes estimated costs, though these are from a year ago and subject to tender. We should be able to reclaim VAT on materials and fees, and there is no fee for applying for a faculty.

Other works needed include safe access to the church roof. (The roof itself is in good condition.) The Buildings Group are also discussing what use might be made of the former Sacristy space at the south-east corner of the building. Discussion of this was deferred to the next Council meeting.

George Chedburn explained that what was being presented was at sketch stage, and we would not be committing to the details. The next step was to put something in outline to the DAC for a delegation visit and to get informal advice. February or March suggested. Other bodies such as English Heritage and the Georgian Society may have to be involved.

(1) Toilet facilities. Widespread agreement this is a priority (including refurbishing the choir toilet). Alex asked whether it would be feasible to add a third toilet along with an enlarged disabled facility. Architect to consider this.

(2) Wheelchair access to building. There may be grants available towards this, but there were still some concerns expressed about the cost. Alex asked whether we shouldn't be realistic and cut our coat according to our cloth? Mark said that at this stage we ought to look at what we really want to do, and afterwards look at costs, fund-raising, etc. The new disabled entrance proposed would however involve rebuilding the staircase, and still not be the same entrance for everyone. Architect to look at feasibility of disabled access to main door.

(3) The Porch. The doors will open in as at present, and then there will be an internal glass porch. It will be lighter, warmer and more beautiful. The damp needs to be sorted, and redecoration and panelling need to be agreed. Damp may require ongoing attention.

(4) Organ blower to be changed so it isn't drawing in cold air from outside?

(5) Parking at the rear. We need to make a better case for a turning place.

(6) Heating system. Preferred solution at the moment is two separate boilers, so that different areas can be heated separately, which might save energy and cost (possibly

using domestic rather than industrial scale boilers). Malcolm asked if the heating can be done at once. We have received two quotes for the heating system, but still require a faculty. If the heating system fails completely, then it will be done as an emergency, otherwise it will be done in the summer. Martin mentioned that he has closed the roof shutters, so the church should be warmer as a result.

(7) Next steps. At the AGM the whole congregation will be given the opportunity to comment on the building plans. Alex will also put plans on the notice board. The Buildings Group proposes concluding the process and applying for a faculty after Easter. Alex questioned whether this is rushing things; the only fixed timeline is for the east end reordering - the Archdeacon's Licence cannot be extended - and we shouldn't be distracted from thinking that through properly. He also asked whether we shouldn't be looking at raising money first, following the process outlined by Church Care. George Chedburn, who has experience of the faculty procedure, said that discussion, refinement of plans and consultation with the DAC usually all proceeded in parallel. Mark said that we don't have to rush, but we do need deadlines for momentum to be maintained. Once we have the faculty it can easily be renewed or revised. There was agreement that we wish to move forward and progress the proposals. Alex moved, and Mark seconded, the following motion: That Council direct the architect to approach the DAC for an Advisory Visit regarding the outline proposal which was presented this evening. Passed nem con.

(8) Other building work:

- a. Bells: see attached report.
- b. Lanterns. Martin has ordered larger and clearer bulbs.

George Chedburn and David Bishop were thanked for attending and left the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the previous meeting.

(1) A list of sidesperson's duties will be put at the back of the church.

6. Charities.

The list of charities was discussed and approved.

7. Trustees Report.

Trustees met on 26 November to discuss mainly the bells restoration. The trustee representing the Rector of Walcot has resigned, and we are waiting to hear of his replacement. Our finances are solid, and the donation to the Diocese was discussed. The Diocese asked for £17,000 and the Trustees have agreed on £15,000. This year Council will decide the amount to be donated by Christ Church.

8. Churches Together in Bath Central Area will apparently be disbanded. It was agreed that Christ Church should join the Northern Group.

9. Inclusive Church. Deferred to the next meeting.

10. Safeguarding. Deferred to the next meeting.

11. AOB.

Outside Events. Judith reported that £1,700 has been raised from outside events. On 12 April there will be a concert from Greycoats School for Girls. A dance company are interested in five performances at Christ Church at the end of March. Judith will get more information. Brenda proposed, and Mark seconded, a vote of thanks to Judith and David for organising the Toppings events. Passed by acclamation.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 25 February.

The meeting closed with prayer at 21.45.

Appendix: Bells Restoration Project
Progress Report for Council

7th January 2014

- Faculty petition has been sent off via architects and has got there in time for next week's meeting of the DAC.
- Tenders still awaited for tower works. Only two received so far. Two of the five bell hangers have been stood down; we must write soon to discard the other two as the word of our intentions will get around.
- Funding applications sent off to the DACR (Diocesan Association of Change Ringers) and Foyle Foundation; application to Allchurches Trust has been posted.
- Reasonably firm indications of support of £35,000 against the £115,000 we need.
- Appeal leaflet being drafted.

Ian Hay Davison