

Portsmouth Parish Centre
PLT Meeting 21st Dec 06 at 19.30 – upper room

Action Minutes

Attendance: Andy Minchin, Jim Molloy, David Davies, Sylvia Fisher, Brian Mansbridge, Rosemary Filtress and Sheila Gill (Chairman).

1. Matters arising

1.1 CRB checks for Trustees - with advice from Gill Cross it appears that this should not be necessary.

1.2 CCC/DAC visit – letters would indicate that there are now no outstanding issues that will hinder progress with the approved plans – there are however a number of items that will require more detailed attention i.e. the use of the chancel and the structure of the kitchen area. (copy of DAC minute attached)

1.3 Letter from Daniel Foreshaw reference fees - for future consideration.

2. Feasibility Study for Capital Appeal

2.1 It was agreed that an addendum approved by Action Planning (these items already agreed verbally with Sandie Foster) be attached to the report to clarify a number of items of content as follows:

- Page 7, 2nd paragraph, line 2 - to read 'questions put together by members of the PLT based on a community survey carried out in a neighbouring area.'
- Page 9, penultimate paragraph, line 3 – sentence beginning 'At a business group meeting...' is both misrepresentative and very misleading and should be deleted.
- Page 10, last paragraph, line 3 – to read 'and approved by the PLT as an initial draft', ...'

2.2 It was suggested that the PCC should make a very measured response to the report bearing in mind that the interview research in particular was very limited.

2.3 The PLT accept the findings of the report and in particular concur with Item 1: the Executive Summary and Item 16: Issues which need to be addressed. It is recommended that the PCC initially pay particular attention to these Items.

Item 17 of the report has already been overtaken by subsequent discussion. The Paragraph on top of page 24 however, is still relevant and needs attention. Other content in Item 17 may be useful to inform any further action plans.

2.4 Andy tabled a detailed document identifying key points from the report such that an action plan may be constructed to deal with issues arising. Brian had already made some response to this. It was felt however that it was for the PCC to respond to the Capital Appeal Feasibility Study report initially before any further progress could be made. (Andy and Brian may choose to work on this document in the meantime).

2.5 It was suggested that there is much to be encouraged by in the report in terms of the potential sums to be raised especially since Sandie stated her figures are conservative. On the face of it the position may not seem good but the report clearly identifies issues that need to be addressed which, when achieved, would significantly improve the prospects for fundraising.

2.6 It is the conclusion of the PLT that the Portsmouth Parish Centre development project is (just about) ready for a Capital Appeal but that the people of Christ Church are not.

2.7 The way ahead is for the PCC to decide at the meeting in January. The PLT do not wish to make any recommendations at this time (see separate PLT Position Statement to be read as part of these minutes).

3. Contract with Action Planning

In the light of outcomes of the Capital Appeal Feasibility Study and the fact that Sandie Foster is leaving her position at Action Planning on 31st December 06 it was recommended that the contract be suspended.

An amended action plan from David Saint, as suggested at the 18th Dec meeting, was considered (see attached). Whilst his conclusions were unanimously accepted it was suggested this would not be money well spent at this time since the church would not gain any long term benefit from his recommended actions whilst a number of issues identified remain unresolved.

With the authority of the members of the PCC Standing Committee present it was agreed that Sheila Gill should write accordingly to David Saint. (Action complete).

The Portsdown Parish Centre Project

Project Leadership Team Meeting 21st Dec

Position Statement post Capital Appeal Feasibility Study.

1. It was unanimously agreed that after the PCC meeting on 9th Jan 07 all the members of the PLT will stand down and it is proposed that the PCC stand down the entire project organisation (as it is currently) to enable a pause to refocus on the priorities.
2. Jim Molloy announced that he is standing down from his position as Chairman of the Design and Build Group. His work over 7 years is applauded; he has been instrumental in bringing the building improvements required to meet the aim of the project to a widely supported 'can do' position.
3. The PLT has since Jan 2005 worked to the requirements of the PCC on a project that was redefined in Nov 2005 in terms of its' scope and budget. The approved aim remained unchanged. The PLT has made a number of important and well considered recommendations to the PCC over that period which have generally been unanimously approved. A number of communication and consultation exercises have been conducted, facilitated by the PLT and PCC which have been generally well received by the wider church and which have been encouraging in relation to the understanding of and support for the project. The PLT has, in good faith, after a period of about 14 months brought this project to a position where it is almost ready for a Capital Fundraising Appeal.
4. The Capital Appeal Feasibility report suggests that the people of the church are not ready for a Capital Appeal at this time. With concern for the future management of project finances it is proposed that a stop be placed on any further expenditure, for the time being (other than to clear existing commitments). This project, as it stands, incorporates some long term planning for the financial sustainability of the building; the impact of any change to the scope of the project or phasing may not only impact on that sustainability but be very financially challenging in the short term.
5. The PCC has for some time and is still facing a very difficult situation in the absence of any Priestly authority in the church and the PLT wish to express their understanding of this position. We also appreciate the enormous contribution that the PCC's Standing Committee have made and do make to keep things going; but we must be honest about the way things are.
6. It has become increasingly evident that some members of the PCC are not in accord with the vision for the church nor fully support the aim of the project; in which case the PLT has been allowed to work without a fully supported mandate. The Capital Appeal Feasibility study suggests that neither does the PCC have the support for the project of

the wider church. It is impossible for any sub-committee of the PCC to progress the project in this situation.

7. It is worth pointing out that 4 of the 7 members of the PLT are PCC members and that 3 of them are officers of the PCC Standing Committee.
8. It is very hard to see how the PCC is to be united without the Priestly leadership authority. Without such leadership and the supporting communication skills, the necessary compromises within committee work sow the seeds of uncertainty within the church and appear as confusion to the wider public.
9. The PLT has for over a year now flagged up the potential problem to the project of the lack of proactive support from an incumbent led Ministry team. This was addressed formally by the PLT in July and reported to the PCC through a risk assessment exercise. This became a painful process but retrospectively, it identified the true risks of proceeding with a shortfall in leadership and communication skills. We were encouraged by the efforts of the Churchwardens to secure additional support for the church from Jan 07 but dismayed to learn that this has been unsuccessful in the short term. This also proves how vulnerable any committee driven project can be to disruptive outside influence.
10. Most members of the group express a continuing individual commitment to support the Portsdown Parish Centre Project with a willingness to consider any role the PCC might ask them to play assuming their full support.