

Minutes of the Walking Together Team meeting

5th September 2024 7.30pm in Room

Present: Jonathan & Mary Holden (SP), Margaret Dimambro (SP), Anne Elson (SP), Liz Mottram (OL), Paul Hayden (OL).

Apologies: Susan Chan (SP), Fr. Stephen Day, Fr. David Hartley.

Susan Chan is no longer available to attend this Team's meetings.

Fr. Stephen circulated an email to represent his views in advance of the meeting.

Jonathan chaired the meeting, which began with the Epistle of the day (1 Corinthians 3: 18-20) and the Synod prayer.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting held on 6th June** were taken as read and agreed.

Matters arising from 6th June meeting.

1a) Item 2 – activity of Walking Together Team going forward.

JH had drafted and circulated a clarification document. In summary, the document sets out the purpose of each committee as follows.

Purpose of Combined Topic Group: to implement and monitor activities from the Stage 2 report.

Aim of Walking Together Team: to work towards a synodal Church.

Purpose of Walking Together Team:

- to plan future stages of becoming a synodal Church, including activities from Stage 2 for which there are currently no active topic groups;
- to plan how to meet new/complex needs in a synodal way;
- to note progress reported by Combined Topic Group without micromanaging them.

Advice was offered for making the document more succinct; **JH will modify and circulate to the Team for approval. It will be shared with the Combined Topics Group (who were not clear on this Team's purpose) at their October meeting.**

Q: are there models out there for the synodal approach and examples of usage?

A: we should search for such things.

Q: should another role of the Walking Together Team be to be to keep the community informed of what is going on in the wider Church? Agreed.

AE gave some insight into the current work of the prototype Parish Pastoral Council, which is considering multiple models of constitutions. A question to consider is how could this model enable a synodal approach to decision making and ensure the views and needs of the more marginalised members of the parish are included?

1b) Item 3 – minutes of Combined Topic Group meeting of 11th July

The red information folders have been received positively. MH is working to get information on more parish groups for inclusion.

The article in August's Newsletter Extra by LM (actioned by the Combined Topic Group) describing developments since the Stage 2 report was seen as extremely valuable.

2. **Enlisting volunteers to developing topic groups 4 (prioritising young people) and 5 (infrastructure)**

The following information in Fr Stephen's email was noted with appreciation.

- Volunteers are key to the development of any parish.
- Fr Stephen's complete willingness to discuss all matters openly.
- Details of the new Youth Group for ages 10-13, publicised in the parish newsletter. The Team was glad to hear of the volunteers enlisted to run this group, led by Paul Milton.

The Team also considered the meeting (Thurs 26th Sept 7pm at Our Lady's) to be led by Mary Rouse on children's liturgy for existing and new helpers, particularly the setting up of a children's liturgy group at St Peter's.

MD to contact the volunteers for children's liturgy from the green volunteer forms and alert them to the above meeting.

The Team wondered if Fr Stephen had the support that had been offered in the area of website maintenance and development.

The Team believed there were parishioners out there with useful skills (e.g. project management) who could step forward. Because there are so many layers to developing a plan, for instance in the repurposing/redevelopment of buildings (much of which is not the remit of the parish, but the Diocese) there is currently a veil over what options are available. People are needed to brainstorm the various options, develop possible scenarios, clarify external and internal dependencies and communicate the current possibilities as clearly as possible to the Parish Priest and parishioners.

AE would raise the above at the next PPC meeting.

3. Role of Walking Together Team in helping with PPC and Finance Committee and promoting synodal methods into future decision -making

This item is also covered in 1a) above.

Fr Stephen's email makes the following points.

- He describes developments within the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Council and the need to avoid duplication between these teams and the Walking Together Team.
- He asks for some thought on what makes Walking Together of continued distinctive usefulness.

The heading of this agenda item suggests a role of Walking Together in influencing the *modus operandi* of PPC and Finance Committees - specifically, using the technique of conversations in the Spirit and ensuring input from marginalised groups (eg. EAL). **AE would raise this representation at the next PPC meeting. Even if representatives of minority groups were not enlisted to the Parish Council, could we still ensure that particular members of the PPC maintained outreach to such groups?**

4. Any Other Business

- (a) Should we consider at a future meeting the prospect of not having a parish hall at St Peter's and how to accommodate active groups elsewhere? This is speculative until property plans are developed further.
- (b) It was proposed that the minutes of the W T Team meetings and the Combined Topic Groups meetings should be downloadable from the Synod page of the Catholic Leamington website. PH accepted that there were already so many links on the Synod page that it needed some redesign to help users navigate through it.

5. Next Meeting of Walking Together Team:

Thursday 16th January 2025 at 7.30pm in Our Lady's Hall. Paul Hayden to chair.

The meeting closed at 9.07pm.