

Shaping parish decisions – the new Parish Council

Over recent years the role and membership of the group advising the Priests has varied considerably. Amongst other things it has been known as a “steering group.” Now, as one parish, it seems fitting and proper that it is named as the Parish Council. On the next page you will find the aims, membership and procedures for the Parish Council, and below are the names of those who serve on the Parish Council.

The Parish Council exists to help the parish to be run for the good of all. The Parish council will discuss the matters that you raise, and feed the results of those discussions back to you. As the aims state, “the best decisions are collegiate” – that means, decisions taken with the involvement and consensus of as wide a group as possible.

From Spring 2012 there will be an open meeting for all parishioners. For now, there are great pressures from being so immersed in building works throughout 2011. There are also significant opportunities for comment – currently with those from St Basil’s on the building group, and shortly for a similar group at Holy Trinity (hoping planning permission is granted).

For now, **please offer feedback and comment about every area of parish life** to any of the Parish Council members, who will be eager to hear it. Hopefully there is more than one name that you recognise on the list! Our next meeting is 23rd March.

Parish Council Chair	Mary-Catherine Bottjer
Vice-Chair	Deidre South
Secretary	John Bourke (also a Pastoral Assistant)
Finance Committee rep	Patrick Gomes (also a Pastoral Assistant)
Pastoral Assistant	Sandra Bourke
Pastoral Assistant	Eileen Prizeman
Pastoral Assistant	Mari Heywood
Pastoral Assistant	Teresa Walker
Pastoral Assistant	Isobel Parks
Pastoral Assistant	Teresa Reed
Pastoral Assistant	Phyl McLaren
Nominated from Indian Community	Joseph Varkey
Nominated from Filipino Community	Helen Jasmin
Nominated parishioner	Carmel Lo (also parish rep on Diocesan Pastoral Council)
Nominated parishioner	Josie Cambell (also parish rep on Basildon Faiths’ Forum)
Nominated parishioner	David Jenkins
Nominated parishioner	<i>Vacancy</i>
Priest of the Parish	Fr Brett Adams
Parish Sister	Sr Clare Kane
Parish Priest	Fr Dominic Howarth

Please do get in touch with ideas / comments / suggestions ... and the odd word of affirmation for things that you are happy about!

Yours with prayers
Mary-Catherine & Fr Dominic

The Parish Council of Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Parish, Basildon

Aims, Membership and Procedure

Aims *It is a recommendation within the Diocese that all parishes have a Parish Council or equivalent. In Canon Law, ultimate responsibility for decision taking in the parish rests with the Parish Priest, subject to the norms of the Catholic Church. However it is clearly the case – and clearly the spirit of the Second Vatican Council – that the best decisions are collegiate. For this reason the Parish Council has a central role in the Catholic Parish of Our Lady and All Saints, Basildon, with two clear aims:*

To support the running of the Parish for the good of all by giving advice on matters brought to the Parish Council's attention and offering feedback / comment based on their observations of Parish life.

To take decisions which address matters where improvements and changes are needed. Where appropriate – and in conjunction with the Parish Finance Committee – to identify and allocate the resources necessary to implement improvements.

Membership

- The Priests and Parish Sister
- 1 member representing the Parish Finance committee (*this will usually be the Chair of the Finance Committee*)
- Six active parishioners nominated by the Priests and Parish Sister
- The Parish Pastoral Assistants
- 1 person representing members of the Filipino Community living in Basildon
- 1 person representing the members of the Indian community living in Basildon.

Procedure

All of the above named are voting members. Decisions will ideally be by consensus, but in the event of a tied vote the Parish Priest will have the casting vote.

A Quorum shall be 6 or more members, which must include at least two of the following: Parish Council Chair, a Priest of the Parish, Parish Sister.

The Parish Council may invite an individual parishioner or expert in a particular field to any specific meeting for any ad-hoc purpose as required. This person would not have voting rights, nor be part of the quorum for the meeting.

Officers

A chairperson nominated by the Parish Priest

A vice-chairperson elected by the Parish Council

A minutes secretary elected by the Parish Council

Duration of office

Tenure of office shall be for three years or less if an officer resigns from a position.

Any member who, without reasonable cause, fails to attend three consecutive meetings will be deemed to have resigned and any such vacancy arising will be filled as soon as possible.

Frequency of meetings

The Parish Council will meet a minimum of four times per year, and additionally as regularly as the membership deems necessary.

This document was ratified unanimously at the Parish Council meeting of Tuesday 1st February 2011. The members are deemed to have begun their tenure of office on this date.