

## Notes of the Meeting held at 7:30pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Present** – Fr Nicholas (Fr N), Sr Dympna (Sr D), Liz Duggan (LD), Barbara Kay (BK), Justin Bozzino (JB), Jenny Becker (JB), Chris Norfolk (CN), Jon Foster (JF), Marguerita Carroll (MC), Celia Robb (CR), Marion Mangan (MM1) and Michael Mangan (MM2) and Nigel Anstead (NA), Christine Allen (CA)

**Apologies** Teresa Williams (TW) & Chris Brookes (CB)

The meeting was given a copy of the agenda and the latest COVID statistics from the Bedford Area, also part of an email received that day from the Public Health Officer in Bedford.

1. Fr Nicholas started the meeting with an opening prayer. He then asked (JF) to Chair the meeting.

### **2. COVID situation in Bedford.**

(JF) read the latest COVID statistics

#### **Figures as of Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August**

*National vaccination level. Double Dose – 77.5% Single Dose – 89.6%*

*Bedford vaccination level. Double Dose – 69.1% Single Dose – 78.4%*

*People tested positive in Bedford daily 92*

*Bedford hospital admission last 7 days = 53*

*Bedford active cases 1827*

All of these had increased since the last meeting.

### **3. Review of current arrangements for Masses**

(JF) read part of an email sent by the Public Health Officer Bedford to all places of worship today 19<sup>th</sup> August

“The overall infection rate in Bedford Borough remains high”

“The number of inpatients at Bedford Hospital with COVID-19 remains at the highest level since March”

“As fully vaccinated people are still at risk of being infected, people are advised to take other precautions such as wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, and limit contact with other people, especially with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable.”

“Please consider the following key points

- Capacity – ensure that there is space for people to social distance from those outside their household, and encourage them to do so
- Ventilation – please ensure spaces remain well ventilated by letting fresh air where possible, and consider how the space can be well ventilated before, during and after services/prayers
- Encourage those who can to wear face coverings indoors
- Testing – encourage people to test regularly with lateral flow tests, and isolate and book a test if they have COVID-19 symptoms
- Consider limiting communal singing and the sharing of communal objects whilst rates of infection remain very high, and provide cleaning facilities/hand sanitiser
- Support and encourage your faith communities to get fully vaccinated”

It was agreed that the current social distancing measures in the church remain until further notice and be reviewed on a four weekly basis.

Proposed extra Sunday evening Mass. Fr Nicholas stated that he had only received feedback from 6 people so far. It was agreed that it be emphasised in the weekly newsletter and church notices to see if there was any more interest. Fr Nicholas said he would need at least 25 people to attend to make it viable.

4. **Coffee after Sunday Masses**

(NA) said he would like to start the teas and coffees after 10:30am Sunday Mass for those who want it from the 5<sup>th</sup> September, using plastic cups and would sanitise afterwards.

(BK and MC) said the Latin Mass would also like to resume teas and coffees after their Masses from 29<sup>th</sup> August.

This was agreed by the meeting.

5. **Hall Diocese Risk Assessment update**

(MC) said as she had stated at the last meeting that she had done risk assessments but not on the diocese format, she said she had explained this at the finance meeting this week and she had spoken to Tony McNiff at the diocese and he was happy with the risk assessments she had done for the hall.

6. **AOB**

(Sr D) asked about singing hymns at Mass, (JF) said that the diocese guidelines were being followed, " Congregational Singing - face coverings should be used where there is any congregational singing & phase singing in gently with shorter pieces [Alleluia, Sanctus. Memorial Acclamation, Amen, Agnus Dei] rather than longer pieces [Gloria, Creed, hymns/songs]."

There had been no change to this.

Fr Nicholas asked about confirmation uptake. (LD) said there had been very little interest shown to date.

(CN) said he would produce something to go on the parish website and newsletter and sent to (JF).

(Sr D) asked if people were aware about that our Pastoral Area has been enlarged and now includes the Catholic churches in Biggleswade, Shefford, Flitwick and Leighton Buzzard. Fr Nicholas said he was not aware so (Sr D) said she would forward the email to him.

(MM2) asked about the McMillan Coffee morning, the usual Saturday date the hall was already booked by an outside party. Some different dates and times were discussed and it was agreed to have it after the 10:30am Sunday Mass as teas and coffees would already be taking place.

(Sr D) asked about the Parish gathering, this used to be held once a month so the Parish Priest and the parishioners could discuss parish matters. After a discussion it was agreed to start this again as from 5<sup>th</sup> September after the 10:30am Mass during teas and coffees.

7. Father Nicholas ended the meeting with a prayer.

Review to take place on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Whether a meeting is required to be decided nearer the time.

Notes written up by JF

Checked by BK