

# St Edmundsbury Cathedral



## CHAPTER MINUTES

Minutes of the 200<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting  
Chapter Room  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 10:30 am

**Present:** The Very Rev'd Joe Hawes (Chair)  
Canon Tim Allen (TA)  
Sarah-Jane Allison (SJA)  
The Rev'd Canon Philip Banks (PB)  
Dominic Holmes (DH)  
Mrs Barbara Pycraft (BP)  
The Rev'd Canon Michael Robinson (MR)  
Elizabeth Steele (ES)  
The Rev'd Canon Matthew Vernon (MV)  
The Venerable Sally Gaze (SG)

**In Attendance:** Michael Shallow (MS)  
Mark Proctor, Lovewell Blake (MP)  
Michael Batty, Greene & Greene (MB)  
Erin Seligman (Minute Taker)

### 1. Prayers and Welcome

The Dean opened the meeting with a prayer.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Stewart Alderman  
The Rev'd Sarah Geileskey (Cathedral Curate)

### 3. Conflicts of Interest

- MR confirmed he has signed a Conflict of Interest Form.
- Chapter discussed if a potential conflict of interest exists between the Dean, SG and MR and discussions of the potential sale of the St. James School site. **Action:** MR will research if a potential conflict of interest exists and report back to Chapter.

### 4. Notification of AOB

- Coronavirus
- Historic Photographs (BP)

### 5. Correspondence

- Chapter received a thank you card from Simon Puttock.

## 6. Minutes and Reports

### a) Review the Action Points from Chapter 12/02/2020

- The Actions log was reviewed and updated.

### b) Approve the Chapter minutes and Confidential Chapter minutes from 12/02/2020

- Amendments were made and the minutes were approved.

### c) Matters arising from the Chapter minutes and Action Points 12/02/2020

- The Dean noted an update on Children and Young Families is not included on this agenda given the Rev'd Sarah Geileskey's absence. This now a regular agenda item and will return in April.
- PB has drafted a report on the impact of September 2019 changes to Morning Prayer and Eucharist timings, but additional consultation is required with the clergy and congregations. **Action:** PB will provide an update and/or present a finalised report for Chapter consideration in April.
- SJA and ES said many outdated legacy leaflets have now been removed from the offices of local solicitors. The Dean said he will send a Legacy letter to Chapter members and patrons. Chapter discussed if the Legacy leaflet should direct donors to leave money to the "Cathedral" or the "Foundation." Chapter considered scheduling a service and promoting Legacy planning during November, the Month of the Dead. Chapter also discussed the benefits of partnering with local solicitors – particularly Greene & Greene - to offer advice to members of the congregation and assist in the preparation of wills. **Action:** The Dean and SJA will invite solicitors to participate in such a partnership.

### d) Review minutes of Information Protection Group meeting on 10/02/2020

- TA noted the minutes did not list the attendees.

### e) Review minutes of Guild of St Edmund Committee meeting on 30/01/2020

- TA noted discussions that took place about the Intranet and questioned the delay in acquiring an interactive system. While it was agreed the system would be beneficial, SJA said it was deemed too costly in the past. **Action:** SJA will have Sarah Friswell research costs of an interactive system.

### f) Review minutes of Vestey Memorial Trust meeting on 12/02/2020

- The Dean thanked the Vestey Trust for purchasing a new piano for the Music Department.

### g) Review minutes of Harvest Planning Committee meeting on 21/01/2020

### h) Review minutes of Friends Council of St Edmundsbury meeting on 02/10/2019

## 7. Audited Accounts

- Mark Proctor (MP) of Lovewell Blake reported the Cathedral's annual audit of accounts has resulted in a clean bill of health. He commended Andy Thompson (AT) for providing a report that required no changes from auditors, which is quite an achievement. Chapter applauded AT, Jane O'Connell and SJA for their efforts and the Dean noted what joy it was to have a Finance Department that regularly produces up-to-date, timely and efficient reports.
- MP said the report matches expectations and briefly discussed the Cathedral's net gains, investment portfolio, reserves and balance sheet which he reported as "healthy."
- MP noted the Cathedral's monetary value of fixed assets has not been altered for many years and remains low. **Chapter agreed** to raise the limit from £500 to £1,000, which is a standard limit for most businesses and will make AT's job easier.
- SJA said the Vestey Trust is now included within the Cathedral's accounts.
- Although the Cathedral is starting the year on a strong financial base, the Dean said the coronavirus may bring challenging times ahead. Chapter extended their thanks to all the auditors who helped put this report together.

## 8. The Dean

### a) Dean's Report

- The Dean recently attended a joint meeting between Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership and representatives from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, English Heritage and Historic England, chaired by the Sub Dean
- The Dean and MV noted the importance of presenting a united front and coherent vision for developing the entire site, particularly when applying for monies from the National Lottery Fund. The Heritage Partnership will take this forward with a meeting in two weeks time which includes the Rev'd Simon Harvey, Vicar of St Mary's Church, who is a member of the Partnership. BP applauded St Mary's involvement.

### b) Finance

- Chapter reviewed the Period to 29 February 2020 accounting results as well as a Coronavirus Risk Assessment.
- The Dean reported that while the Cathedral's finances are okay at the moment, AT is projecting major losses due to the pandemic. Visitors to the Cathedral are already down, as are sales at Pilgrim's Kitchen and the Shop. PB reported that some income-generating events have already been cancelled as well. TA said the pandemic may also impact the financial wellbeing of potential donors and charitable trusts, which could add to even bigger losses for the Cathedral. The pandemic's impact on the Cathedral's investments was also discussed.
- SJA said she has spoken with the Cathedral's insurers regarding our financial losses due to the cancellation of events, which are not covered by our policy. The policy is scheduled to be renewed on 30<sup>th</sup> March and SJA will seek more information and whether the policy could be expanded to cover such losses.

### c) Cathedral Archaeologist

- Chapter was informed of the Fabric Advisory Committee's recommendation to appoint Alison Dickens as the Cathedral Archaeologist. **Chapter unanimously approved** this appointment and SJA will ensure the necessary notification is forwarded to the Cathedral's Fabric Commission.

## 9. The Administrator

### a) Annual Report

- SJA said the Annual Report is still very much a draft that will need editing. TA proposed that an additional section should be added on the Cathedral's role as an Inclusive Church and **this was agreed.**
- TA proposed that a short additional paragraph should be added to the section of the Annual Report on Principal Risks and Uncertainties to reflect the extraordinary risks to the Cathedral's activities and finances which seemed likely to arise from the coronavirus pandemic, but MV noted it would seem odd to name a specific threat in a report that does not detail all other potential risks.
- Chapter congratulated Kate Hibbert for pulling the Annual Report together. SJA asked Chapter to submit any amendments.
- A shorter and glossier format of the Annual Report will also be designed and published for use as a marketing and fundraising tool.

### b) Safeguarding

- **There was nothing to report**

**c) Policies**

- **Chapter approved** the Mobile Device Policy.

**d) Peer Review**

- **Chapter approved** the Peer Review Action Plan.

**e) Terms of Reference**

- SJA presented Chapter with the Terms of Reference for the Cathedral's Management Team.
- Chapter discussed what defines an executive and non-executive member, if others should be invited to attend Management meetings, and if minutes should be made available to Chapter.
- Specifically Chapter did not accept the proposal that the Canon Theologian and the Archdeacon for Rural Mission should be added to the existing membership of the Management Team, since it would be unreasonable and unrealistic to expect them to attend the weekly meetings of this group given their full time jobs in the Diocese.

**10. Canon Precentor**

**a) Liturgy Update**

- Chapter discussed the directives that may be put in place within places of worship to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.
- PB reported the current plans for Holy Week and Easter, which may need to be adjusted as the Cathedral follows national guidance regarding coronavirus transmission prevention.

**b) Events – Closures**

- PB reported that an international musical ensemble has approached us for permission to film a promotional music video within the Cathedral, which would require the Cathedral to be closed for an entire day. Chapter discussed the pros and cons of closing the Cathedral or altering day-to-day services and operations, such as guided tours and school visits, to accommodate special events such as this. It was agreed that, for exceptional cases and provided there was a suitable return for such disruption, the Cathedral could be flexible, and that a Policy for similar requests should be developed. PB agreed to draft such a Policy within the Arts and Events policy also being drafted.

**c) Fabric Update**

- Renovations to the former library are now complete and the space is ready for tenants. An IT survey discovered one of the Cathedral IT contact points is in the library and Chapter agreed that this will need rewiring.
- PB is working with RC regarding which projects will be temporarily placed on hold until the impact of the coronavirus is clear. These include the installation of a kitchenette in the Edmund Room, non-essential tree work and construction of a fence around the Anselm Building bins.

**d) Music Review Group**

- It is hoped that the Girls Front Row will be launched on 24<sup>th</sup> May as part of the Abbey 1000 weekend.
- Following recruitment to Cathedral Choir, the Colts Choir now has only two members. For the time being they will join with the Junior Girls' Choir (St Cecilia Juniors) whilst wider recruitment plans unfold.

**11. Canon Pastor**

**a) 2020 Update**

- MV said plans continue to move forward but are now dependent on the pandemic.

#### **b) Dementia Friendly Church**

- MV presented an update on how the Cathedral might support those affected by dementia. Citing a number of churches that have established Dementia Cafes, SG said a yearning for such accommodations is there. **Chapter agreed** exploration on how to become a dementia-friendly Cathedral should continue.

#### **12. Confidential Items**

- Chapter adjourned to confidential chambers at 2:30 pm.

#### **13. Any other business**

- **Chapter approved** the Chapter meeting dates for 2021.
- BP said a photograph hanging within the Ancient Library is heavily damaged. Quotes to repair and preserve the photograph exceed £2,500 and BP asked if another committee could cover this cost as the photograph is not technically part of the Ancient Library's collection. It was agreed that this is money that cannot be spent right now given the pandemic, and that the photograph be shielded from sunlight for the time being. Help to preserve the photo will also be sought from the Fabric Advisory Committee and perhaps the Friends of St Edmundsbury.
- Diocesan Secretary Anna Hughes will attend next month's Chapter meeting. The Dean and MR will decide what topics will be placed on the agenda for discussion.

#### **14. Future Meeting Dates**

- 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020
- 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (Tuesday, 11:00 am start)
- 10<sup>th</sup> June – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (Chapter Day / Night)
- 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020
- 12<sup>th</sup> November (Thursday)
- 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

**Meeting closed at 2:50.**