

PARISH OF ST LAWRENCE



**An Assembly of the Principal and Electors
of St. Lawrence**

Monday 26th February 2018

[19:31]

Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence:

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to welcome you this evening to St. Lawrence Parish Hall and also to welcome those of you who are in the primary school; I know that you can hear me. I am Deidre Mezbourian. I am the Constable and with me on the stage to my left are the Procureurs of the Parish, Mr. Bruce Harrison and Mr. Martin Sabey. Sitting to my right is the Parish Secretary, Mrs. Anita Barker, and to her right we have the Reverend Phil Warren, the Rector. I need to ask you to note that this Assembly is being recorded for minute-ing purposes. We are following the usual process of a Parish Assembly this evening and I therefore now invite the Rector to lead the Assembly in prayer.

Reverend Phil Warren:

Maybe for those seated, if you stand with me and thank you to those already standing. Let us pray. [**Prayers**].

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Phil. Some housekeeping: [**Fire instructions and directions to toilets**].

I know that some of you here this evening have not been to a Parish Assembly before, so I am going to explain the procedure to you – so that you know and understand – before we progress to the business set out on the published agenda. When we reach the stage of progressing with the business, the Parish Secretary will read the Convening Notice. As you will probably have seen there are 2 items of business on the order paper, those being to approve the minutes of the Assembly held on the 13th of December last year and then Item 2 is what you are all here for this evening. Copies of the minutes have been on display in the Parish Hall and on the website and you do have them with you. When we come to the minutes I will ask for a proposer and a seconder and I will ask for a show of hands for those in favour of the minutes and any against. If they are adopted I will then sign the minutes. We will then move to the second item of business, for which there are 3 invited speakers. They have been given a maximum of 15 minutes to speak. However, they are doing their utmost to keep their speech down to maybe just about 10 minutes but you do need to hear the voice of those who are supporting this and those who are opposing it. The Architect, Mr. Justin Gallaher, will speak to the approved plans. The Rector will speak in support of the plans and I have invited Mr. Marcus Binney to voice his opposition to those plans. I will then invite questions from the floor. Clearly, because we have so many people here, I will ask you to restrict your questions to about 2 minutes. However, everyone is entitled to speak and to ask a question, and the only thing I would say about that is that you need to restrict your questions, broadly, to the item on the Convening Notice. I will also ask you not to repeat what has been said or gone beforehand. We are going to pass microphones around for when you wish to speak. I would ask you to please state your name before you give your question or comment. You know that we are using the school. The proceedings here can be heard by those at the school and they are also able to participate in the Assembly by asking questions. The events at the school are being overseen by

Constable John Refault of St. Peter. I thank him for his assistance. I must also thank Mr. Charlesworth, the head teacher, for the use of the school. The Parish Secretary is going to do some timekeeping this evening, a little bit like a hustings meeting. So, when you have used your 2 minutes of questions you will hear a bell but I am sure, out of consideration for everyone here, that questions will be kept as brief as possible. However, you do have 2 minutes. Please do not interrupt anyone who is speaking and I will allow questions from everybody. When I am satisfied that there are no more people who want to ask another question, we will move on to the vote. We know that there are some strongly held views on this matter. The Members of this Assembly expect and, of course, are entitled to an orderly process that is respectful in word and manner and I will not make any more comment about that. I do not expect to need to remind anyone of that. For the avoidance of doubt, I will not be casting my vote this evening. You have each been given a ballot paper that has 2 words on it, yes and no. If you vote yes, you agree to Item 2 on the Convening Notice. If you vote no, you do not agree to Item 2 on the Convening Notice. The Convening Notice will be read shortly. When everybody has had the chance to ask their questions we will move to the ballot. When the Connétable of St. Peter, who, as I have said, is overseeing the Assembly being held in the school hall, is satisfied that all the ballots there have been cast, he will escort the ballot box to the Parish Hall with our Chef de Police, Centenier Mike Haden. The Connétable will also invite 2 people to accompany him and the Chef to ensure that the ballot box is not tampered with and he will invite one person who supports this and one person who opposes it. Both ballot boxes will be opened behind me on stage here and the count will be observed by the Procureurs of the Parish and I have also invited Mr. Marcus Binney and Mrs. Cynthia Rumboll to observe the count. The Connétable of St. Peter will oversee the count. He will make any decision that may be necessary such as what constitutes a spoiled paper. When you come to vote, it is acceptable to put a

cross, a tick or a dot against the word yes or no as you choose. However, I must emphasise that the decision on a spoiled paper rests finally with the Connétable of St. Peter. When he is satisfied that every vote has been counted and he has an outcome, he will pass the details to me and I will announce the result. Should the result be tied it will be taken that this Assembly has rejected Item 2 on the Convening Notice and the work will not continue. When I have announced the result of the ballot, there being no further business on the Convening Notice, I will declare the meeting closed. We will now seal the ballot boxes. The Connétable of St. Peter will seal the ballot box in the school and our Chef de Police, Centenier Mike Haden, will seal the ballot box here. He will show you that the ballot box is empty if he is able to lift it. Are you all satisfied that the ballot box is empty? **[Signified]** In which case, I will invite him to seal it, please. Thank you, Mike.

The Assembly will now begin formally and I am going to ask the press to stop filming. Thank you very much for your patience, it is not usual to film an Assembly. I am aware that some people here this evening may wish to film the proceedings of the Assembly, so I am going to ask those present whether they would be satisfied for that to happen, by a show of hands. Are you willing for this Assembly to be filmed and potentially put on to social media. Can I have a show of hands, please, if you are in favour of that happening? Okay, can I have a show of hands as to whether anyone is against that, please? That looks quite close. We are doing the same thing at the school so I am going to ask the Constable to indicate whether the people at the school have decided whether the proceedings can be filmed.

The Connétable of St. Peter :

Deidre, I can confirm at the school it is very close as well. They are about equal for and against.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

I think that is fair. In that case, we are going to proceed to a count. [Moans]

[19:45]

No, we need to be fair. It is not usual to film. You may change your mind, now. You may vote one way; we may have more one way than the other. I am going to ask the Procureurs to count. Can we have a ball park figure? Those in favour this evening of having the Assembly filmed -

The Connétable of St. Peter :

We have a total of 67 for in the school hall.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, and 54 here. And a show of hands if you do not wish the Assembly to be filmed –

The Connétable of St. Peter :

We have a clear majority in the school hall of people not wishing it to be filmed.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Okay. We will have a count here, please, Procureurs. The Procureurs have just said that we have 68 people voting against this Assembly being filmed and potentially put on to social media and we have heard from the Connétable of St. Peter that it is an overwhelming majority in the school against filming so, therefore, at the request of this Assembly, I ask people, please, to respect that decision and not film for social media. Thank you. I will now ask the Parish Secretary to read the convening notice.

Parish Secretary, Mrs. Anita Barker:

Parish Notice, Paroisse de St. Lawrence, Parish Assembly. An Assembly of the

Principals and Electors of the Parish will be held at the Parish Hall on Monday 26th February at 7.00 p.m. for the following business:

Number 1: To receive and, if agreed, approve the Act of the Parish Assembly held on the 13th of December 2017, copies of which are on display at the Parish Hall and on the Parish website. Number 2: To consider and, if agreed, to authorise the Connétable and the Procureurs du Bien Publique to take such action as may be necessary to ensure the completion of the currently suspended building work on the Parish Church, previously approved by the Ecclesiastical Assembly of the Parish on the 16th of July 2015, namely the construction of an extension to the west elevation of the Parish Church to provide, inter alia, disabled access, W.C. and lobby, together with associated works, including the creation of a door opening in the west elevation of the Church, and to utilise, for these purposes, the funds approved by the Parish Assembly on the 8th of July 2015. The proposed works to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans, copies of which are on display in the Parish Hall. Please note that photographic ID will be required for those attending the Assembly. Entry from 6.00 p.m., Deidre Mezbourian, Connétable, 14th of February 2018.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Anita, and I can confirm that that notice was duly posted in the Boite Grillé at the Church, as is required under the Parish Assembly Law. So, Item 1 on the Convening Notice this evening, as we have heard, is to approve the Act of the Assembly held on the 13th of December 2017. Do I have a proposer for that, please? Sorry, I see Mike Ethelston for that. **[Proposed]** Is that seconded, please? And I see Deputy John le Fondré **[Seconded]**. As is customary when we approve minutes of the previous meeting I will ask for a show of hands in favour of the minutes. And any against? Thank you. The minutes have been approved and I will now sign them.

I should also ask the Connétable of St. Peter whether the minutes were approved or not at the school. Connétable, can you hear me?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Yes, but we did not take a vote on the minutes over on this side. If you would like me to do it I will do.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Please do.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

If you can all show if you approve the minutes, please? I do not think we need a count. I think it is fairly unanimous over here that the minutes are approved.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

I am glad about that. Thank you. This is a little bit like Eurovision, is it not? Those of you who attend regularly will know that what I tend to do at these Parish Assemblies is to forget to ask for apologies. So I am now going to ask whether there are any apologies this evening for noting. I see one hand at the back. Mr. Sean Morvan. Thank you. Are there any further apologies? No? Okay, thank you. Oh, sorry, I keep forgetting about the school hall. Connétable, are there any apologies in the school hall?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

None from the school hall, thank you.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you very much. We are now going to move to Item 2 on the Convening Notice. I invite Mr. Justin Gallaher, the Architect of the approved plans, to address

the Assembly. As I said, he has a maximum of 15 minutes but I do not think that he is going to take that amount of time.

Mr. Justin Gallaher:

Connétable, Procureurs, Rector, ladies and gentlemen, good evening. I have been asked on behalf of the design team to explain the architectural view of the scheme, with the hope of allaying some of the fears that have been brought up in recent correspondence and rumours. This is certainly an important Island-wide building, serving its community. Our approach from inception has always been one with sensitivity and respect for the building and who it serves. From early on in the process we brought in Tracey Ingle, Principal of the Historic Environment team, ensuring her involvement as an intrinsic part of the design and planning process. Alternative ideas were discussed at early stages, where it was concluded that the Historic Environment team identified 1. that the most appropriate position to locate any fabric adjustment for a disabled entrance would be in the youngest section of the Church fabric and 2. that part of an old, existing doorway, the cannon door, should be utilised. The disruption of the existing historical fabric would therefore be minimal. The scheme has been subject to a lengthy, detailed and carefully considered process over 5 years, involving numerous bodies. This process has been open and transparent, involving the Historic Environment team, the Minister for Planning, an independent inspector, the Rector of the Parish, Ecclesiastical Assembly, Ecclesiastical Court, the Dean of Jersey, Parish representatives, the Connétable, Deputies, Procureurs, structural engineer, Granite Le Pelley, local experts in granite, and archaeologists from the Société Jersiaise. The scheme is being fully supported by all the bodies, having weighed up the needs of the Church and impact to the fabric. There is little more an applicant could have done to ensure a full and proper process has been followed to reach the point of commencing work

on site last month. The proposal has been designed to avoid altering the cannon doorway feature. The position and design of the proposal has been primarily dictated by the doorway in order to preserve this feature. The point of breakthrough is therefore contained within a part of the original doorway itself. The buttress mouldings to the main building structure and the lancet window above have also been important features to preserve. In order to achieve a fully inclusive disabled access the external levels will be sloped down to the internal floor level. Granite paving will be continued around the western end and linked up with the north door. Introducing a steel portal frame means that the structure will remain independent from the existing fabric. This means that the extent of physical connections to the existing wall will be limited to only a recessed flashing at roof level, following the line of the mortar joints between the granite. Down each side will be waterproofing seals. The extent of excavation has strip footings running away from the existing gable, maintaining an independent structure. At an early stage, the trial hole dug down 850 millimetres identified the existing granite wall continuing below that level. The structural engineer is confident that the existing granite wall structure will not be undermined. From what I have heard, some people appear to be surprised that bones will be discovered during the excavations. This has come as no surprise to the design team. We fully expect to discover bone fragments and perhaps other items, given that the north aisle was originally built over part of the old cemetery. Part of the grass verge will be cut back square where it tapers in. There are no known marked graves but, again, bone fragments are likely to be discovered. These are the reasons why we have had an archaeologist on board to record any findings and there to advise in conjunction with the Historic Environment team. We have mitigated the level of excavation for drainage by providing a small bore pump main linked through to the connection at the north-east gate. This avoids the deeper excavation needed for standard gravity drains. The details honour and reflect the historic

context. It has always been at the forefront of this proposal to maintain and preserve important historical features to the fabric of this building. The reveals will remain exposed internally. While the proposal will screen the external view of the cannon door moulding, the arch and facing granite will continue to be visible from inside. It is acknowledged that a partition will visually divide the archway from full view but the arch will remain visible from both sides and that no cutting of the profile granite work is required. The joint will simply be sealed up with no physical fixings. This approach means the work is entirely reversible as agreed with the Historic Environment team. Externally, details from the west portal of the chamfered granite coping stones have been replicated by Granite Le Pelley, sourced locally.

[20:00]

The infill granite face will replicate the random course lines of the adjacent buttress to continue the existing proportions. It has been suggested that the recent commencement of works has already caused irreversible damage and desecrated the fabric. May I, therefore, take this opportunity to allay any fears. No damage has been made to the fabric. The contractor, under the agreement of the archaeologist, had fixed 11 2-inch screw plugs into the mortar joints to provide lateral restraint to the protective overhead cover to allow excavations to take place in the dry. No damage was done to the granite fabric, as confirmed by the archaeologist and Historic Environment team. After further consultation with Tracey Ingle it was thought best to remove these screws where an alternative method has been utilised. The 3D model image on the sheet provided helps to illustrate that the external appearance and size of the extension maintains the hierarchy of the west portal. In the recent letter it has been suggested that this image is inaccurate and a cartoon. The purpose of the model was to demonstrate the scale and position of the scheme,

not to be a photo-realistic image. The material is a representation only. The model, however, was drawn from CAD drawings, so the design is an accurate representation of the scheme. The comment about the path being too narrow and graves in the wrong position is unfounded. All I can say is that this is a simple misunderstanding of the rules of perspective. It is worth noting that the new Discrimination and Disability Law is coming into effect this year. I am aware that a senior adviser for this law has reviewed the scheme and alternative options, concluding that other entry points would not fully comply with the new law, but the proposal before you tonight does comply with the regulations. This would not be the first Parish Church to have an extension in recent years. Also, other than, perhaps, the Town Church, this Church has had the greatest amount of work done to it, changing the original character, most notably in the 1890s when a major facelift was undertaken. A 1920 publication by the Societé Jersiaise noted that: "No Church has had more criticism for its architectural form and changes through its history." In another publication, Jersey Parish Churches by Paul Harrison: "... that the alterations to St. Lawrence were so complete that no part of the original structure remains." In conclusion, I hope that I have helped to explain that our detailed approach has been both sensitive and respectful to the existing fabric. We have at every step tried to mitigate any disruption to the existing fabric, while ensuring the design will sit comfortably in symmetry and, mirroring elements, continue the architectural language. The Planning Department's view stated: "Having regard to the very real need for a disabled access and for a discreetly located toilet facility, and being satisfied that the location and design of the proposal is sensitive to the special nature of this building, the Department is in support." This new proposed chapter has been very carefully considered with sensitivity and respect, and responds to the growing needs of the Church in its service and mission to its community. This proposal will greatly assist in providing more flexibility to take the active life of the Church forward and

continue the relevance of this Island-wide heritage asset. Thank you for listening.

[Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr. Gallaher. I now call upon Reverend Phil Warren, the Rector, to speak to the plans.

Reverend Phil Warren:

Connétable, Procureurs, ladies and gentlemen here and in the school, can I, first, add my thanks to each one of you and say how grateful I am to you for coming along to this Parish Assembly tonight, and thank you to those who are standing and those who are in the school. This meeting has drawn a lot of attention but it is worth noting the reason why it has been called. This meeting has not been called because a democratic process has not been followed. It has. We, the church, the Rectorat, the Ecclesiastical Assembly, the Ecclesiastical Court, have done everything knowingly to follow the correct procedure as laid down by our custom and law and in this process have all the approvals in place to build the extension to our Church. However, the depth of feeling that has been apparent, the unpleasantness that has been drawn to me and others to do with the project that should be celebrated and should be embraced by our whole Parish, has intensified to such a degree that last month the decision was made to hold the work and to hold an Assembly where every parishioner can come and vote on whether this work continues or stops. I believe this is the right thing to do and so here we are; we meet tonight. Of course it is hard to know the depth and the extent of this feeling but this is the Parish Church. As Rector, I serve the whole Parish and I have done so to the best of my ability these 14 years. One of my charges is to minister peace and reconciliation and I have been saddened by what I have seen, heard and experienced. So, in choosing to hold this meeting, my hope is that peace will be restored to our Parish, relationships will be

mended. In view of that, I ask each one of us to do 2 things: first, to have an open mind as we listen to one another, to ask questions if you wish later, and then, when you vote, to make your own decision as if your vote is the only vote that counts. Secondly, whatever the outcome tonight, we honour one another, we respect the decision so that we can move forward together as a Parish. My intention in this talk is not to convince or to persuade. It is to tell the story as it has happened so far; to explain the why and the how. We should remember, churches exist in the first place for the glory of God. They were never meant to be monuments of the past but to be living and active places of Christian worship, enabling every generation to serve God, to serve one another, to serve our community, in a building that is fit for purpose and appropriate to the requirements and the needs of its day. Here in St. Lawrence we have a beautiful building, a building that has changed and been added to many times over the centuries. In fact, as Justin has said, more than most other churches in the Island, with the exception of the Town Church. It started life as a small chantry, chapel, and then, when it was opened to its neighbours a short nave was built. As the population increased the nave was lengthened, the tower and the transept was added. In the sixteenth century the Hamptonne Chapel was built. In 1524 and then, 22 years later, the north aisle was built over a mediaeval cemetery and into the west wall a broad door constructed to admit the Parish cannon. In the great restoration, the end of the nineteenth century, other changes and amendments took place, including heightening the tower. These changes were made in response to the needs of the people, to provide a building that is fit for purpose. It is surely reasonable to propose that if, over the centuries, each generation has played its part in meeting the needs of its community, we, in the twenty-first century, should be ready and prepared to do the same. As the present incumbent and as stewards of this special building, the church congregation celebrates its history. We value its integrity and week by week we care for the upkeep to the glory of God, so that not

only our generation, our children, our school and our community can enjoy the benefits but also generations to come. The problem we have faced for a number of years now, heightened by the social and legal requirements on public buildings, including, for example, the Disability Discrimination Law, which is coming into effect later this year, is that we do not have a building that is fit for purpose, and it is not fit for purpose in 2 key areas. The facility of a toilet on site, with baby changing, and a proper disabled access, that, and I quote Edward Trevor, MBE: "... makes provision for people with a disability so that they can be treated in a manner which does not differentiate them from non-disabled people." Mr. Trevor is chairman of Shopmobility, he is vice-chairman of Jersey Physical Disability Partnership. He visited the Church recently and looked at the plans. He looked at all the different entrances, the alternatives, and he has given us his full support for this extension. With increasing demands from funeral directors, wedding parties and other community events for such facilities, along with a rising number of unfortunate accidents and our own congregational needs, we formally began the process back in 2014. That year I also wrote an article in the JEP entitled "Changes at St. Lawrence." The brief was clear: to have a toilet facility on site, to have proper wheelchair access into Church, to have a kitchenette servery to offer refreshments and to have flexible space in the north aisle for Church and community events. And our criteria? Whatever we did had to be not only in keeping with the integrity of the Church building but also to the highest standard we could provide to meet the needs of a thriving Church and community. This Parish deserves the best. So, armed with the archaeological and historical survey that I have here, made by Warwick Rodwell in 1997, the local historical guide by our local historian, Alfie Pison, we began the process with a completely open mind. Initially we explored the location of an extension outside the north door. We considered carefully the sketch drawings of the Architect Michael Drury from Salisbury. Having a toilet inside the north aisle

against the west wall, together with a suggestion of changing the main west door, the twelfth century Norman door – this has been suggested in what have been known as the alternative plans – the south transept was also considered, as were possible locations for a toilet in the cemetery. There were, and there are, good reasons why all of these suggestions were not taken forward. The north door was too small and the Historic Planning Officer, Tracey Ingle, advised us that it could not be changed. The south transept would be totally unsuitable as a proper entrance for both able-bodied and disabled, as anyone entering the Church this way would find themselves in the centre of the church, in full view of the congregation and, for example, in the case of a funeral service, they would have to negotiate themselves around a coffin. That would not honour dignity and that does not equate to making proper provision. Not only that, but the south transept's location as a toilet would be inappropriate for the same reasons given above. However, we would also need to have external ramping.

[20:15]

It is also worth noting that this was a vestry before I arrived and in 2007 Mr. Norman Le Riche gifted to the church the beautiful interior doors and cupboards in memory of his wife, Ivy Le Riche, who served the Parish for many years. And then there was the suggestion of having a toilet inside the west wall in the north aisle. But not only would that damage the integrity of the interior of the building, it would also reduce the space inside the north aisle to about a third. It would prevent flexibility, it would affect the acoustics, and, whatever the design of such a toilet, it would bring the unsuitable and unwelcome noise and disturbance during a service within feet of where worshippers are seated. And that is not even taking into consideration the fact that we would also need a lobby. It is one thing to offer these suggestions. However,

when you are responsible for a public building and you know fully its use and its needs, every detail and concern is significant. Through all the deliberations and discussions over the years there was and there is only one access point that meets the brief, covers the criteria and it meets all the requirements, and that is the proposed extension. In fact, working closely with the then Dean, the very Reverend Bob Key, the Ecclesiastical Court, as well as the Planning Department, in particular Elizabeth Stables and Tracey Ingle, it was the latter who suggested first opening up the cannon door and having a small extension on the west wall of Church. The main reason for her suggestion was that it was the youngest part of the Church external fabric and therefore the least intrusive position to the historic building, the notion being that re-opening part of an old doorway was and is the most logical approach. It also provided proper disabled access and toilet facilities in one location, leaving the rest of the Church untouched. We worked hard on the design. We sought expert advice from every quarter. And when presenting the final proposals to the Church congregation, the Parish Assembly, the Ecclesiastical Court, speaking openly about the other options we had considered along the way, the overwhelming support was for these plans, signed off by the Minister for Planning on the 11th of July 2016, their having been endorsed by the independent inspector, Philip Staddon. All this, of course, is well documented, along with the articles I have written in the Parish magazine in Summer 2015 and, more recently, Autumn 2017. A democratic process has been carefully and diligently followed, permissions have been granted, all the money is in place, the additional £120,000 having been raised by the Church, and the work started in October 2017. And yet we find ourselves in this position, a vote later whether this work should continue or not. With all that has been written in the JEP and on social media, I can understand some of the concerns that have been voiced. For example, we are desecrating the Church, we are causing irreversible harm and damage. We are digging up graves. I can understand parishioners

concerned that £80,000 has already been granted and it looks like another £120,000 is expected of the Parish. If that were true, I could understand the reaction. However, that is not true; that is not the case. And that is why our Church members, over this last week, have held 3 open days and thank you to those who have come along. They wanted people to listen and to be explained to as to what we were doing and why. And that is why, too, I have encouraged people to have an open mind, to come and to see for themselves exactly what these plans are all about and what the nature of this work is. We are opening a historic doorway that is designed to be a doorway. I believe we are bringing history alive. We are having a freestanding extension. That will not cause irreversible harm or damage to the outside fabric of the Church. Our Architect has explained that already. The extension will hide from the outside the cannon doorway but it will be seen on the inside and we will do everything to promote its history, just like we do with the mediaeval painting that I hope you have seen by the pulpit. We are not digging up existing marked graves. We have known from the outset that the north aisle was built on a mediaeval cemetery and that there would be bone remains and cist graves, which will be treated properly, which will be given a proper burial. And that is why we have employed Robert Waterhouse of the Société Jersiaise to oversee the excavation work. And we will not be asking our Parish for any more money. Our Church members have raised the remaining funds and they have done so over the last 15 months. And this is on top of the £40,000 they give each year to the ongoing upkeep of this beautiful church building.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Rector, can I ask you to begin your -

Reverend Phil Warren:

I am just rounding off. We believe that this is the only and best provision to ensure

our Parish Church is fit for purpose. So, as I close, can I make one final point? I am pleased that we have all come together like this, and whatever decision is made tonight we will honour it. If it is no, any work already carried out will be reversed and the building will return to how it was before the work started. That means we will not have a building fit for purpose. It has taken us 4 years to get this far so we need to know that any solution in the future will take many years to come. If it is yes, we will continue to build and in 6 months' time we will have a fabulous facility for the whole community, 24/7. But the choice now is in the hands of parishioners. My hope and my prayer is that, as we consider this, we will think not only of ourselves but of the generations to come. Thank you so much for listening.

[Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Rector. I would just like to say that our Rector did go somewhat over the time that had been allocated to him. When Mr. Binney speaks, Mr. Binney, you will have the same amount of time to speak as the Rector took and that is in the capable hands of our Parish Secretary. So, before I ask you to take the stand, please can I check with Connétable Refault that you are able to hear everything that is being said in the Parish Hall?

The Connétable of St. Peter :

Yes, we are monitoring very well here at the Parish Hall and heard all the argument and look forward to Mr. Binney's offering.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Connétable. I now invite Mr. Marcus Binney to address the Assembly.

Mr. Marcus Binney:

Madam Connétable, thank you for allowing me to represent concerned parishioners

who feel that the addition of a toilet to the exterior of our Parish Church will damage its appearance, and who offer an alternative solution. It has been suggested that our group came late to this but a plan for an indoor toilet was prepared in 2005 and is illustrated on the boards outside. I raised the matter with the Rector and congregation in 2014. There followed a series of polite exchanges in which the Parish authorities appeared open to the idea of an alternative. A number of us raised funds to have detailed plans drawn up for an alternative scheme, which would provide all the facilities required inside the Church and at less cost. But when it came to testing those plans through the planning process, the Connétable and Rector declined to sign the application form. We are repeatedly told that the toilet extension was approved after due process. We dispute this. A fundamental mistake was made at the very beginning. This was the failure to consult or involve the 2 people who know the building best, the Archaeologist, Professor Warwick Rodwell and the Architect, Michael Drury. They worked on the restoration of St. Lawrence completed in 2005, which gave us the beautiful Church we worship in, use and admire today. Both have an unrivalled knowledge of mediaeval parish churches and a lifetime's experience in working on them. Professor Rodwell has worked extensively in the Channel Islands. He is one of the leading church archaeologists in the world and is consultant archaeologist to Westminster Abbey. Michael Drury has worked on dozens of mediaeval churches, both repairing and restoring them, and introducing new facilities. He also oversaw the recent very successful restoration and re-ordering of the Town Church in St. Helier. The work they both did on St. Lawrence was acclaimed a triumph and if they had been involved in this process we would not be where we are today. What of the rest of the process? The application submitted by the Rector and Connétable was rejected by the Planning Applications Committee. The congregation appealed that decision and another fundamental failure of process followed. By any standards, this was a contentious issue with

strongly held views on both sides. The Planning Inspector from the UK should have held a public hearing where the arguments on both sides could have been presented and debated. Instead, he chose to decide the matter on written representations alone. If an open hearing had taken place this matter would have been resolved 2 years ago. When I asked permission to address the A.G.M. in April 2016 the Rector replied: "I am writing to inform you that it will not be possible for you to raise this matter at the A.G.M. We are in the midst of an appeal, which has received the full backing of the Dean and Constable, and we need to await the outcome of that so the timing would not be right." Even the Connétable had doubts. At the Ecclesiastical Assembly in July 2015, the minutes record that she said she was concerned that parishioners: "who did not attend church knew very little or nothing about the plans being proposed." We shared her view. It is clear that the whole process has suffered from a lack of transparency and openness that has been unfair to parishioners, some of whom will be hearing these details for the first time tonight. **[Applause]** Thank you. So, where are we today? The civil parish of St. Lawrence has prime responsibility for the fabric of St. Lawrence Church. It is also the owner of the Church, a point the Rector made. But, remarkably, at no time have parishioners, in a Parish Assembly, had the opportunity to consider the plans for the toilet extension in terms of the impact on the fabric of their Church. It has not been for want of trying. Our group served 4 requetes under the 1804 Parish Assembly Law. The first was withdrawn at the request of the Rector, the second and third rejected by the Connétable as outside her competence and the fourth resisted by the Rector on the basis that it could have no purposeful outcome. The exterior toilet extension was first estimated to cost £140,000. It has now risen to nearly £200,000. The cost could raise again because the cist tombs that appear to lie immediately below the extension will require a very careful archaeological dig. All in all this is a very expensive way of providing a single toilet and wheelchair access. Two thirds of the substantial new

granite-clad extension will be nothing more than a void, a lobby serving the toilet and providing wheelchair access, which can be provided more cheaply and, we say, equally satisfactorily elsewhere. We are told the cannon archway will be on view but one third of it will be in the toilet. We are told that placing the toilet outside the building: “will enable users with restricted mobility to enter the toilet with a degree of dignity without drawing unwarranted attention to themselves or disturbing those in Church,” but the reality is that a wheelchair user in the Church will not enter the toilet from outside. They will use the re-opened cannon archway at the back of the Church. They will access the new toilet from inside the Church, not from the outside.

[20:30]

In our alternative a wheelchair user will also enter a toilet at the back of the Church through a doorway into a lobby. In that sense, our alternative scheme is little different from the approved plan. The question is simple: do we build the toilet just inside the west wall or just outside? Many mediaeval parish churches, including some in Jersey, have a hidden side, a part of the Church that few see or visit. In such cases it may be possible to hide a discreet addition in a way that does not impinge on the main views of the Church. St. Lawrence does not. Byron Le Cornu, the St. Lawrence builder, who laid the handsome granite path north of the Church, offered to build a mock-up to the correct measurements so parishioners could see for themselves how the extension would stand against the Church. His offer was rejected but the green hoarding erected to shield the initial excavation gives us an indication of how uncomfortably it will sit against the west wall and how it will impede access from the north. It projects 2.5 metres into the gravel area in front of the main west entrance. This is already quite constricted but it is an important

gathering point for weddings and funerals. The extension will reduce this by almost half. In fact, it projects so far that the path beside it, the approach from the Parish Hall, will have to be widened, not only requiring the grass to be cut back but also disturbing graves. But the disturbance will be even greater because the new path will have to be sunk by 18 inches to provide level access into the north aisle through the cannon arch. Secondly, the stonework of the cannon archway will be irreversibly changed. The large threshold stone will be removed as well as the stonework beneath it. Professor Rodwell has said that when the archway is lengthened the lower side stones, the jambs, are likely to fall out and disintegrate. In other words, if the toilet extension is later removed, the cannon arch revealed would be substantially altered and no longer original. My parents settled in Jersey in 1969. I have lived in the Parish for 30 years. In Jersey terms, I know, these few years are but grains of sand in the long and proud history of this Island. This Church is more than a fine example of mediaeval architecture. Jersey has been in the front line of history, not just since the Norman conquest of England but another thousand years and more back to the time when the Romans, led by Julius Caesar, were driving the Gauls back to the coast and their chieftains hid their gold here. This is a story we are only beginning to learn. The cist graves found by the north aisle were partly under the mediaeval church wall, so they pre-date it. The Church of St. Lawrence was built in the same century as Gorey Castle, our proudest mediaeval monument. The cannon archway is not just a blocked-up old doorway. It is witness to the repeated threat of French invasion over hundreds of years and, more than that, of Jersey's loyalty to the English crown. It has been repeatedly said that our Church has been altered and adapted in the past and that the toilet addition is no different. This is misleading. The handsome granite walls of our Church, the Church we see today, have stood substantially unaltered for over 400 years. True, the windows have been changed, the tower heightened, but there has been no significant addition since the glorious

Hamptonne Chapel was completed in 1522 and the north aisle added in 1547. St. Lawrence Church has been called 'The Cathedral of Jersey'. No-one would think of building a toilet block on the west front of any cathedral in Britain or France. Our Parish Church is a glorious piece of architecture. We are its custodians. Madame Connétable, ladies and gentlemen, we should not allow it to be disfigured in this way. Thank you. [Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence: Mr Binney, thank you. I am now going to invite questions from the floor. I will call you in the order that I see you. If you wish to speak please raise your hand. We are going to take 2 questions from the Parish Hall and then we will take 2 from the school. I call Mr. Turner, after which I call Mrs. Jackie Le Brun. If you can just bear in mind that you have 2 minutes, please? I know people are getting restless. You may already feel that you know how you want to vote this evening and we will get to cast the vote as soon as we can. So, Mr. Michael Turner, please.

Mr. Michael Turner:

Thank you, Constable. Good evening to you, good evening Rector and good evening ladies and gentlemen. I have one thing to say. A flier was shoved through my letter box last week and it states: "No to the toilet." It also says that at an Ecclesiastical Assembly, only 40 votes were taken and that is to approve the extension. Later on it says that a vote was passed at a Parish Assembly, where there were only 34 voters for and 8 against. So, my friends, where the hell were you? [Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Mr. Turner, do you have a question? [Laughter] You are as entitled to make a comment only as you are to ask a question. I just want to be sure that you do not have a question to put.

Mr. Michael Turner:

Yes, Constable. My question was where the hell were all these people?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Okay. I beg your pardon. I had not taken that as a question. We will go to Mrs. Jackie Le Brun, whom I saw after Mr. Turner.

Mrs. Jackie Le Brun.

Hello. I have a question for Mr. Binney. If we go ahead with one of the heritage plans for the so-called disabled access what sort of system will there be for the person on the other side of the oak doors to communicate with someone inside the Church to open the doors and let them in?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. Before you start, can I check that you were able to hear and understand the question?

Mr. Marcus Binney:

I think so. Disabled access has been provided in many mediaeval churches in England and is beginning to be in Jersey. Doorways can be adapted to be automatic, to work in the way in which your own doorway in your own plans can be done. This is not rocket science. We have proposed, in that option, a ramp on both sides of the Church. It can be operated in the same way as your doors in your proposed addition will be operated. This can be done equally in our alternative.

Mrs. Jackie Le Brun:

It is –

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Sorry. If you do not mind, please, I think we have had the answer. We are going to go to the school now. Connétable, do you have any questions from the floor at the school?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I have one here.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Can you please state your name?

Mr. Michael Cox:

My name is Michael Cox.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr. Cox. Please go ahead.

Mr. Michael Cox:

Good evening. It is a question for Marcus Binney. I have heard the arguments for both sides with the structure of the building and the engineering and the archaeological side and it seems to me that this has become something far more than an argument about the integrity and the structure of the building. Having witnessed the way in which a local shopkeeper was abused, threatened in her business, because she did not want to take a petition, and the way in which other people in that shop were told to get on the next boat home if they did not like what was happening in Jersey, one, is Mr. Binney aware of some of the issues with the campaign that he has run; the effect on people, including the Reverend? Secondly, is this not just really about power?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr. Cox. I will invite Mr. Binney, if he understood the question, to attempt to answer, please.

Mr. Marcus Binney:

I did not really understand it but it appeared to be relating to abusive comments. I would certainly say, as I have said before, that nobody who signed the requete has been involved in abusive comments. We deplore them. [Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. And the second question was about power.

Mr. Marcus Binney:

Power?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Power. Mr. Cox, would you like to repeat your question, please?

Mr. Michael Cox:

Yes. The second part of the question is, having witnessed that sort of behaviour and the way it has continued against various people, is this not really just about power and the inability of somebody to accept “no”?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. I think that question is clear.

Mr. Marcus Binney:

It is about power in the sense of power to the people. We have been trying for a long time to get a discussion about this. As you have heard, we signed and delivered 4 requetes. They were turned down. Now, finally, thanks to the Constable, we have

this Assembly. So we are here and we can all vote. And I am glad of that and I hope you are. [Applause]

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. Connétable, do you have any further questions at the school?

Mr. Robert Kelly :

Madame Connétable, good evening. It is Robert Kelly here.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Good evening, Mr. Kelly. Would you like to put your question, please, or your comment?

Mr. Robert Kelly:

Yes. My question is to the Architect. As a person with experience of caring for a disabled adult, does this proposed facility have a hoist and also a table or changing facility for an adult, not a baby, and also room for a carer to attend within the toilet for that individual? We have had experience in many places where we have had to change our daughter on the floor of a toilet and I think, in this day and age, that is unacceptable.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr. Kelly. Can I check, Mr Gallaher, that you understood the question?

Thank you.

Mr. Justin Gallaher:

I am sorry. I have forgotten your name, the asker of the question.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Mr. Kelly.

Mr. Justin Gallaher:

Mr. Kelly, thank you for your question. Certainly, the design of the disabled area fits the requirements for disabled toilets and facilities. A changing station is there. We can look further into whether they are suitable for an adult or a teenager, such as you refer to, but we have provided only for a baby changing station at present. Maybe we can have a discussion with the design team on that. Was there any other aspect of the question?

Mr. Robert Kelly:

Is there room for a carer?

Mr. Justin Gallaher:

Room for a carer? Yes, certainly. It is a large facility, which allows for a wheelchair to adequately move, plus a carer, so there is certainly room for 2 people to be in there to facilitate any requirements.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr Gallaher.

Mr. Robert Kelly:

Thank you. Can you just confirm that a hoist is also provided?

Mr. Justin Gallaher:

A hoist? Again, we had not planned for a hoist. Again, if that is a requirement we would investigate that with the design team.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. Mr. Kelly, did you get that answer? My understanding is that if this goes ahead it could be investigated with the design team. Okay, thank you. Are there any further questions in the hall? I saw Mr. Gill.

[20:45]

Mr. Hugh Gill:

Good evening, Constable, Rector, Procureurs and everybody. My name is Hugh Gill. I was concerned to hear from a member of the Church that the new facility will be made available to anybody to use, including pétanque players, for instance. That is one point that is of some concern. On the other, a review of the Churches in the Island and the facilities they have shows that there are only 2 Churches that have an addition attached to the Church itself. That is Grouville and St. John. At both of those, it is on the north side, which does not affect the outer aspect of the Church. Given the difficulties with the proposed design, which has, clearly, caused this meeting to happen in the way it has, and from what has been said by the speakers – and I thank all of them for excellent speeches – has consideration really been given to providing a facility in the cemetery? Aside from those 2 Churches that I have mentioned, the majority of Parish Churches in the Island have a facility – some of them not in very good condition, I have to say – that provides for anybody and everybody to use that too within the confines of the Church grounds but not attached to the Church itself. I would ask that that be addressed. Second, can I have just one quick question: what truth is there in the possibility that the toilet provision has to do with a cooking facility in the proposed kitchen?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Mr. Gill. You just got your questions in in time. I am going to ask that the Rector answer your questions.

Reverend Phil Warren:

Thank you, Hugh. Can I go backwards as I think of your questions? First, having a

toilet facility in relation to a kitchenette: there is no relationship with that. Fundamentally, we need a toilet facility, full stop. So, whether we were going for a kitchenette or not, we need a toilet facility. The other thing is expressing your concern about the use for a community. I think it is a really good thing that we have a facility that is opened out to the community. As to the other question about whether we have considered somewhere in the cemetery, yes, absolutely. I have an email here from Ann and Marcus Binney that was sent back on the 29th of July 2015. They were in Suffolk and they sent a picture of a Church example, and they were suggesting that we could have a facility – they wrote: “A toilet by the west gate in place of one of the trees there and by moving a few graves on the north side of the gate.” So, yes, we did consider this very carefully and, for the reasons I gave in my talk, and along with the regulations that we knew were up and coming, we need to have a facility on site where people can access it without having to travel a distance to go there. So, all of those things – yes for community, yes we considered it and yes to a toilet, and that is regardless of a kitchenette. I hope that answers it.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Rector. I saw Mrs. Judy Pallot.

Judith Pallot:

My name is Judith Pallot. Can I just ask having had experience nursing disabled people of varying degrees, was anybody from the disabled society invited to give their comments at all into the needs that might be for people who are disabled to use this toilet?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

I am going to invite Mr. Peter Noble, who is a Church Warden, to answer that.

Peter Noble:

Sorry, good evening. We did in fact (Overspeaking 10 35 39) -

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Sorry, can I just check that everybody can hear? Because -

Peter Noble:

Can you hear? Is that all right?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

No, as long as there is no light on the microphones are working.

Peter Noble:

The red light on the microphone? Hello?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

That is it.

Peter Noble:

Is that better? Good. Right. Originally we wrote to Anthony Lewis who I have known in the past to ask if he would come and have a look at what we were proposing. He has got problems with regard to communication as those that know him would know. He put us on to Edward Trevor who is the Chairman of Shopmobility and Vice-Chairman of the Jersey Disabled Discrimination Group. He is also one of the people who have put together the Jersey Disabled Discrimination Law. He has come up and had a look at what we are proposing. We have not discussed with him the actual content of the toilet but we have discussed with him the disabled access, the alternatives on the table with regard to using the existing doors. He is fully supportive of what we are proposing.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. I am going to now move to the school again to ask if there are any further questions there.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

We have 2 more questions over here.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

The first one is from Mr. James Le Feuvre.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you.

James Le Feuvre:

Thank you. My understanding is the Parish Church has enjoyed an exceptional and preferential relationship with the Parish and indeed rate payers, not least in comparison with the Roman Catholic, Methodist and other religious denominations. If this is the case, do the panel believe that poses an exceptional responsibility on the Church authorities in terms of open and meaningful consultation to engage with parishioners and rate payers before any construction commences? I have a supplementary within my 2 minutes. There is an inference that there will be a toilet facility open 24/7 so that others elsewhere can enjoy. I would very much like to know who will be responsible for security and cleaning that facility. I suspect that T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) or now the Department of Infrastructure struggles as it is to keep other toilets clean, safe and secure. I would hope the rate

payers are not going to be expected to maintain, clean and look after a toilet if everybody can come whenever they choose, whenever they are passing to use that facility. I had not understood that, can we please have clarity about that point?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you James. I am going to ask the Rector to respond to you.

Reverend Phil Warren:

Firstly, in terms of the cleaning question, the cleaning responsibility of the Church lies with the Church. We have a very good cleaner and team and they would oversee the cleaning of that. We hope it is open 24/7, I am not anticipating that it is used 24/7. However, for those who are walking to the car parks whether from a meeting like this from the Church, to have a facility is important. That is our hope. In terms of the special relationship between Parish and Church, absolutely. The difficulty is in hindsight, one can look back. In hindsight one can say you should have done this and that. We have a process that we have followed very carefully and the process when it involves parish or parish buildings is to hold Parish Assembly meetings which we have done. Each one of those was advertised according to the law and custom. As well as informing as many people to work in a relationship with the parish so as many people knew as possible. As someone has already said, I would have loved for many more people to come to the various Parish Assemblies. Especially in 2015 as we were making this decision. We could only do what we had and the numbers that we had were the numbers that we had. A democratic process was followed and the relationship between Parish and Church is really important.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you Rector. Connétable you had another question I believe?

Matthew Harrison:

Constable good evening, my name is Matthew Harrison. My question is for the Rector, it concerns symbols. To me, a Church is a symbol, it is the house of God and the whole idea of it is to contain all sorts of other symbols. The Church itself is, as I say, the house of God. It contains the cross and the altar which are probably the most important. There is a movement through the Church from the front that is the front of the west-faced, through the Church towards the rising sun in the east and the key symbols of the altar and the cross at the back of the Church. To me, the most important face of the Church is the front and the most important part of that front is the entrance which invites us into the kingdom of God, the house of God. Therefore, it seems strange and forgive me for saying something that sounds like sacrilege but clearly Christ himself needed to use the toilet. However, we do not hear about it in the Bible. Why is that? Because it is not important symbolically, it is not important religiously. Therefore, I ask the Rector on what basis is it appropriate to make a toilet the most prominent feature - and I would note that this projects further than the main entrance and is wider than the main entrance. What makes it right that a key symbol on the front of the Church relates to our bodily functions?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you Mr. Harrison and I will invite the Rector to respond.

Reverend Phil Warren:

I do not think I have ever been asked that question so thank you for the question. What you have raised are a number of theological views. I would love at some point to have a theological discussion with you, there is not the time to do that here. As I said in my opening talk, the Church as a building is meant to be a living and acting place that gives glory to God, that serves God, its people, its community and is fit

for purpose. Therefore, the theological justification for what we are doing is that it is a place of mission and ministry. We believe that this is what we have proposed and this is what the extension would offer. I would love to have a conversation with you about this.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, Rector. I call Mr. Hamish Ramsay.

Hamish Ramsay:

Thank you. A question for you Phil, Rector. That is, the cost of anything additional that needs to be done, we heard about the hoist, we heard about changing facilities, will not fall on the Parish is that right? It will fall on the congregation, on anybody else who wishes to make donations to this?

Reverend Phil Warren:

That is correct.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. I saw Mrs. Victoria Wilderspin.

Victoria Wilderspin:

Victoria Wilderspin and I have a question for Mr. Binney. Mr. Binney, I heard from someone this evening that the 'No' campaign have announced on the radio today that they will continue their campaign against the building work if they lose the vote. Is this correct?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Sorry, can Mr. Binney please have a microphone so that everyone can hear him?

Marcus Binney:

I certainly had not heard that, I did not say it. This is a democratic vote, we will certainly accept it. Equally, I would be interested to know about it and perhaps the Rector has said what happens if it is a 'No' vote today, will we be allowed to bring forward our alternative proposals?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Sorry, if I may just say I am taking 2 questions at a time. We can come back to you Mr. Binney in a moment. We have had 2 questions from the Parish Hall, we are going over now to the school. Connétable?

Peter Kinley:

Hi, Peter Kinley speaking, I would just like to ask, if there is a 'No' vote tonight, will the Parish give the opportunity, rather than just walking away and sulking, to think about the alternative solution and possibly build a toilet inside the Church?

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, I am sorry sir, I did not catch your name.

Peter Kinley:

Peter Kinley.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Peter?

Peter Kinley:

Kinley.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Kinley. Thank you, I am going to direct your question to the Rector.

[21:00]

Reverend Phil Warren:

Peter? Yes, Peter thank you for your question. As you can appreciate, it has taken us 4 years to get to this point. Throughout the process, we have looked at the alternatives including the alternative of having the toilet inside Church. As well at different parts of that, including - even with the Ecclesiastical Court in December 2016. Those plans were turned down in favour of what has been proposed. For us to have a 'no' vote, as you can imagine, it will be a difficult decision but one we would honour. We would have to start the process again. There are many difficulties with the alternative plans. As I said in my talk, I do not know what the answer is. I really do not know what the answer is. As church members, the congregation do not wish to have that. That has been made clear and I cannot see the way forward very easily. I would like to give you a straightforward answer, I do not think I can. There would need to be some time of reflection before anything is decided.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you, another question please from the school?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Just checking over this side Connétable, is there anyone left in the school hall that wishes to raise a question? Any supplementary questions at all in the school hall? Yes, madam, could you give your name please?

Christiane McCarthy:

Christiane McCarthy. I would like to know why the money would not be better

spent in the developing countries where they very well need toilets and drainage facilities. I understand that the disabled people and able bodied people that will be in the congregation need to use the toilet facilities but we have at the Parish Hall already toilet facilities, perhaps a change of door could be used there. Also, if they have made their way by travel or transport to our Parish Church which is a mediaeval church which is a very old and significant - ancient monument throughout the British Isles, of its strategic importance why the money cannot be saved and spent elsewhere as well on overseas developments.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you Mrs. McCarthy, I am afraid I missed your first name, could you repeat it please?

Christiane McCarthy:

It is Christiane.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Christiane, thank you very much.

Christiane McCarthy:

Thank you.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

I am going to direct your question to the Rector.

Reverend Phil Warren:

Thank you Christiane for your question. The first thing to say, certainly speaking for ourselves as a church and ministry, we value very much overseas mission. We do a lot to support missions overseas and financially we give a tenth of our income

to support missionary work. I do that personally. The other thing to say is that when you have requirements by law and also social pressures to act, you have to look at this responsibly and you have to do the best. Therefore, that does involve raising money, it does involve expenditure. Whatever the options or alternative plans, money has to be spent. As I said in my opening talk, not only was it to keep in terms of the integrity of the building but to find the very best for our Church building now and for generations to come.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Thank you. Back to the Parish Hall, I call Steven Cohu.

Steven Cohu:

The Rector mentioned with the benefit of hindsight, I presume with the benefit of hindsight, he means that we would have been at this stage where we would have had a Parish Assembly a year ago, possibly 2 years ago. There has been plenty of opportunity to prevent the requirement for hindsight and the claim that due process has been followed, which was flawed. When we were looking into this, after the refusal by Deidre Mezbourian to call a meeting, the Attorney General advised that a requete should be directed to the Rector. On receiving the requete, he then refused to call a meeting on the grounds of res judicata which is a legal principle on which he could not rely. Why was the Rector and the Connétable over the last 2 years been so resistant to calling a meeting?

Reverend Phil Warren:

I have not been resistant to calling a meeting but I do believe a meeting should be called under the right context and situation. The reason the requete was turned down was based on the legal advice that I had been given. I do not believe in a democracy - and we are still in a democracy, I believe, where process follows, where we value

our law and custom, that you should be forced to do something when correct procedure has been followed. What I am encouraged about tonight is this has been a choice that we have made and I believe it is right and it is timely. It gives the opportunity for parishioners to make their vote. That opportunity was available back in 2015 when through the course of process Parish meetings were advertised.

Steven Cohu:

I have noticed that you say that due process has been followed and you should not be forced. I am just going to follow this up. You say that due process has been followed and that you should not be forced to call a meeting that you do not want to force, you should not be forced. However, under the 1804 Law an Ecclesiastical or a Parish Assembly can be called by the presentation of a requete signed by 10 or more parishioners. That is the law that is the rules. It has nothing to do with whether you want to accept a requete, whether you decide that this particular law does not apply in this case. Perhaps you would like to comment on that?

Reverend Phil Warren:

Yes, I would love to comment on that. I received legal advice and the decision was based on the advice that we received. Mr. Binney presented his arguments, his request to the Ecclesiastical Court in December of 2016. We were informed, the Court was informed that letters had been written to the assessors, the Rectors, trying to persuade them not to go with the proposal. As the Rector then of St. Peter announced to the Court, that was effectively contempt of Court. Nonetheless, Mr. Binney stood up, he gave his request, it was heard. The decision was turned down and the approvals were given for the plans that we have. The reason, based on the legal advice that I have been given is that a higher Court has heard the request. Based on that res judicata, a thing that has already been judged, I was advised not to hold the meeting and I took the advice that I was given.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

In response to Mr. Cohu's question to his suggestion that I was resisting calling a Parish Assembly, I disagree with that. In fact, I had a number of meetings with Mr. Binney in order to come up with the wording of the requete that he could present to me. However, when the requete was presented to me, I did explain to him that it looked to me as if potentially I was not the right President of the Assembly to receive the requete as worded. Again, legal advice was sought by me and the legal advice was clear to me that the wording of the requete did not permit me to call a Parish Assembly on the wording in that requete. That is the response that I gave to Mr. Binney, et al. the other people that had signed the requetet. However, this evening we are here and we are able to ask questions, I am going to call Mr. Binney because he had a question earlier that I overruled because we had already had 2 from here. Can we have the microphone to Mr. Binney?

Marcus Binney:

My question was answered by the next speaker.

The Connétable of St. Lawrence:

Okay, that is fine. In that case I am going to call somebody else, I see Mr. John Pallot.

John Pallot:

Yes, my name is John Pallot. A question for Reverend Warren. Can you explain why the other access points into the Church will not meet requirements, especially with the Disability Discrimination Law which has come into force?

Reverend Phil Warren:

Yes. When we think about the Church building, can I just check that those in the