**2018 St Anne’s Pastoral Parish Council - Chairperson Report**

In preparation to writing my report I re-read what I had written for the 2017 AGM.

Some I recognised as being worked through, with some still to start.

A year on and all remain applicable, thus the reason I have included the 2017 report here

Here are a couple of outtakes of 2018 I wish to highlight

* We have come a long way with the finance and maintenance area. Yes, there is still much to do and you will see this at the finance committee stand. So I encourage you to check it out, ask questions and be informed as they are **committed to providing on-going leadership and guidance.**
* The 2nd thing I ask you to do is, dream.

**Dream** of a parish life for you and your family. A parish where we collectively, serve and live the mission. It matters not if your dreams are big or small, it only **matters that we dream.**

* And lastly. **Make your dreams known and get involved to make them real.** There is so much god given talent and skills in this parish. Use them to make dreams happen.

I have one more year left as chairperson. Today I re-commit to you all to serve on the pastoral council and look forward where I can proudly say…**‘we dreamt and together we made our dreams come true’**

**2017 St Anne’s AGM Chairperson Report**

My report as chairperson will focus on highlighting key areas and undertakings from the parish council, what are the different engagement and relationships that we are out there building with the various parish groups to ensure a healthy and vibrant pastoral future.

As a newly formed parish council, having been together for less than a year, the first order of business is the collective creation of a vision, a mission.

A vision that sets the foundation that is clear and straightforward and the basis with which we look to make decisions and to ensure that as a council we are going in the right direction.

Vision & mission is one thing but what is needed are fundamental principles which the pastoral parish council will look to work within, operate and behave.

**Working Principles**

• **Check-in with the mission, goals, values, and the voice of the people.**

This is to make sure we stay on task and do things for the right reasons.

**• Be transparent in what we say and do.**

Transparency is an essential and fundamental theme that I saw at last year’s AGM and its theme that came through the 2016 St Anne’s survey results.

When you provide transparency, you build trust.

You, of course, open yourself for criticism but that’s the nature of transparency. You can’t have one without the other

Our path to transparency is on-going. Information from the council, regarding meeting minutes, AGM meetings, and the fundamental principle documents will be published and visible to all.

The St Anne’s website has been re-positioned, and we are just working the process of getting the council information back up. For example, the survey results were available on the site, but the link now seems to be broken.

**• Be clear on the decision making process.**

Not all decisions are going to be popular. But as the chairperson, my role is to ensure that we go through an explicit decision-making process taking into account inputs such as example, cost, time, benefits and always playing this back against the voice of the people and the vision & mission.

**• Bring about sustainable change.**

If I reflect on the position of the council alone, people will come and go; the leadership of the council will change so ensuring that there is a level of consistency and the base level of how things that need to get done are well understood during handover

So with this in mind I have a clear goal as the chairperson is to introduce succession management and a one stop information place (i.e., technology) with regards to the operational working end for the council.

**• Communicate, communicate, and communicate.**

It’s considered to be the overarching of all the principles and one of the reasons it is also part of the strategic areas of focus for 2017 as it covers so much. Importantly is how we tell the story of change so our parish members can be engaged.

So as the chairperson it’s my responsibility to ensure that we work within the principles, alongside the vision and the mission.

I hope that the people of the parish see that we in fact do behave and act and engage as per the principles and if not then the council encourage you to speak up.

**What to focus on first?**

There’s a lot of work to do in the parish and knowing where to start is one of the biggest challenges. So with the vision and mission, the fundamental principles which I have just talked about, council meetings which included feedback from past & present council members, parish life experiences conversations/feedback and the church survey, the council ratified the five area of focus with council members being assigned accordingly.

* **Maintenance**
* **Financial**
* **Caring & Service Hospitality**
* **Pastoral Care**
* **Communication**

These five areas have a day to day element to it which is critical to the parish life. It also has a future aspect that is equally essential to the future success and longevity of St Anne’s parish life.

A day to day example is the great work that the Caring & Service Hospitality committee are doing and you will see some of this in Father Mike report, such as St Anne’s feast day.

They continue to look at different areas such as providing service hospitality when there is a funeral, which has been identified as an area that is not only a need, but a simple service that our parish should offer, especially when that funeral is for one of our own. A parish community member.

I am going to finish off the report in the context of the ‘Five areas of Focus’ but with a future view on it.

**What is it that we must do to ensure the success and longevity of St Anne’s parish life and execute on the vision, the mission?**

There needs to be more **visibility** and **understanding** between the standing committee, the parish pastoral council, and the finance committee.

**All of these groups are explicitly linked.** I have heard examples of people and standing committee leaders dipping into their own pockets to pay for goods and services which should be paid by the parish.

To get to a level of visibility and understanding, there are some **disciplines** needed on all sides. Planning of events and forecasting financials from the standing committee’s is a must.

Continuing engagement from the council and then on to the finance committee to set or re-set budgets so that these standing committees can continue to do the great works that they do today and into the future.

I would hate to think that money became the primary roadblock, when it fits within the construct of parish community life and service, if it delivers on the vision and mission, then it should be fundable.

I look to the Youth group as an obvious example of great work that lifts the energy of the parish.

**Reflecting on the area of maintenance.**

Our church needs something. We are a growing parish community and a growing community in general.

It’s clear that at certain masses and celebrations that our church and hall overflow and although we can continue to maintain, there must be a point when the cost of maintenance vs. our ability to celebrate mass and celebrate, in general, becomes untenable.

To this end, along with the finance & maintenance committee and the Diocesan Property Group, we look to undertake a review of the property, the site and all of its building and seek guidance and direction.

The important part here is, ask the question, seek guidance and then consult with the parish. We need to ask the question first.

**Pastoral Care.**   
Our priests aren’t getting any younger, and I am in no doubt that the demands for their time are no less than it was 20-30 years ago and of course there are less and less of them each year. Although we have been blessed for many years with the number of priests stationed here, that won’t be stainable.

So we need to plan, we need to design, and we need to lead the Diocesan with the future we want for our priests. So they can provide the spiritual guidance that is needed without the burden of running a parish.

**The last area with a future lens is communication.**

* Which covers a complete array of different elements.
* What’s the future for our newsletter?
* How do we get information out to different people?
* Who’s who in our parish?
* What’s our online presence to the world look like?
* How are people viewing, consuming and communicating more through technology and do we cater for this?

Communication covers all of this and more.

It’s also about our ability to tell a story. A St Anne’s parish story. A story about our people and our love for Christ.

In closing, I looked today to paint a picture, a picture of good works.

I hope though to paint a picture of interconnectedness; a state which we must look to strengthen if as a parish we want to continue and be sustainable.

**I have a straightforward view.**

And though I’ll use the word **attractive**, I don’t use it in the context of it just being on the surface. It covers things like **energy, spirit, life, vibrancy, caring, unity and love.**

That’s the state which our parish needs to get to, to be **attractive**.

When we have fully funded programs, then people are **attracted** to be part of that program.

When we communicate out to the community and are transparent about financials (i.e., where your planned giving is going), then people feel informed and are **attracted** to continue giving or give more.

When we use technology to communicate all the good things that are happening in our parish, then people are **attracted** and want to be part of the parish life.

When we communicate and consult with our parish about the things that impact and affect our parish life, they are **attracted** to get involved and to make a difference and have a say.

If you take one thing out of the report today, good things are being done; good things will continue to be done. Times are changing and **the call today is to get involved.**

Heta Dawson

PPC Chairperson