

Allan Park South Church of Scotland, Stirling
Registered Charity No. SC001414
Minute of a meeting of Allan Park South Church Session
Held on Wednesday 13th March 2019 at 7pm

Constitute

The meeting was constituted by readings from Luke 9: 1-6, followed by a prayer by the Rev. Lynne Mack.

Sederunt

The Rev. Lynne Mack and a number of Trustees as recorded in attendance book. Apologies for absence were received from Lorna Shaw and Anne McDonald

Rev Alan Miller and Rev Alison Brightfield also joined the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Kirk Session held on Wednesday 13th February 2019 were approved by Arthur McDonald and seconded by John Shaw

Matters Arising

Rev Lynne Mack advised that she had spoken with the Very Rev Albert Bogle and agreed that Allan Park South Church can be used as a 'hot desk' by Sanctuary First. Albert is getting a probationer minister and although based at Falkirk Presbytery, will want a desk in the sanctuary at APS

Notification of AOB

Nomination of office bearers

Review of electoral roll

Discussion with Presbytery Clerk re Ad Hoc Committee decision process

Finance Report

Ed Morton reported :-

Bank balance as at 11th February 2019 was **£45,400**

/£45,400

Of which:

Unrestricted funds £ 25,282 and Restricted funds £ 19,524

Ed thanked Sally for her very valuable contribution in applying so tenaciously for external funding, and the success of this.

Ed presented a summary of the **Trustees Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st December 2018**. A copy of the annual Trustees & statements of account report was made available to all attendees.

The Charity recorded a deficit over the year of £4,258. This comprised a restricted fund surplus of £6,127 and an unrestricted fund deficit of £10,385. In the case of the unrestricted fund, these losses were attributable to the first half of the year, from which point, the funds remained broadly in balance. You will recall that the Charity undertook a financial review of their activities which resulted in active cost-cutting measures, including redundancies. In 2017, the Charity reported a deficit of £27529 so the results of 2018 show a significant turnaround.

INCOME COMPARISON

	2017	2018	Change	% Change
Unrestricted	73481	57223	-16258	-22%
Restricted	27459	43873	+16414	+60%
Total	100940	101096	+156	+0%

EXPENDITURE COMPARISON

	2017	2018	Change	% Change
Unrestricted	108601	67608	-40933	-38%
Restricted	19868	37746	+17878	+90%
Total	128469	105354	-23115	-18%

COMBINED

	2017	2018	Change	% Change
Income	100940	101096	+156	+1%
Expenditure	128469	105354	-23115	-18%
Total	-27529	-4258	+23271	+85%

/+85%

CASH AT BANK

	2017	2018	Change	% Change
Unrestricted	33121	21213	-11908	-36%
Restricted	16642	25664	+9002	+54%
Total	49763	46877	-2796	-6%

DONATIONS & LEGACIES

	2017	2018	Change	% Change
Open Plate	4143	4069	-74	-2%
FWO	2086	1930	-156	-1%
Gift Aid	29770	26630	-3140	-10%
Tax on GA	9044	8874	-593	-6%
Donations	8253	5278	-2800	-34%
Bequests	4738	0	-4738	-100%
Use of Premises	11325	12154	+829	+7%
Sundry income	1303	1288	-15	-1%
Total	70662	60223	-10439	-15%

Notes on Expenditure – principal changes

Because Alistair Cowper left the Charge in April 2018, The Charity benefitted from a reduction in Ministries & Mission costs of £933 per month. Ministers receive a travel allowance of £240 per quarter (as set by 121) so the travel costs were also reduced. The Manse became vacant at the 19th April 2018 so the Council tax stopped.

Pulpit supply fees were increased but this was offset by the reduction in M & M.

Wages and salaries reduced by £10,000

Repairs and maintenance for the Church building were sharply down at £2261 (£13094 in 2017) but the cost of Manse repairs increased £6000.

The nett effect was that total costs reduced from £128,469 to £105,354

Cost of running the Church – unrestricted funds

It cost £67,608 of unrestricted funds to run the Church in 2018 equivalent to £1300 per week.

Receipts totalled £57,223 or £1100 per week.

/week.

Summary

The Charity has had remarkable success in turning around a significant loss incurred in 2017 and almost broke even in 2018 when restricted and unrestricted funds are amalgamated. The rental of the Manse should realise £18,000 in a full year and this will significantly benefit the Charity. Unit Fuel costs are likely to increase significantly, and much will depend on the weather. There is no doubt that the 'Beast from the East in 2018 had a significant impact on costs, thankfully and to date, not repeated in 2019!

The accounts were formally agreed and approved by the Trustees.

Emerging Church Project Manager Report

Sally Forshaw reported :-

Bairns Rock

Bairns Rock continues to be well attended and we are still looking for another 2 volunteers. Laura has been attending a basic course to teach Makaton to children at the song time.

Our inter-generational project has had a slow start with 2 ladies from Westerlands nursing home attending and 3 mums with 4 children. I continue to promote to the right people. Laura is organising an Easter craft and fun day on Saturday 20th April 12-2.

Lunch Club

Our anonymous donor has paid for a further 4 weeks soup and the Agape Church came along and made 2 soups and provided the home baking that day. They also sang 3 songs and the ladies and gents were thrilled with the home made food and great atmosphere. The Agape Church also thoroughly enjoyed coming along and have offered to come again so they are booked in for the 4th April. I have submitted a small funding bid to Greggs to run a summer outing and to fund some activities for the lunch club.

Choir

Choir is amazing and continues to attract new members with 24-30 attending each week. We have ongoing problems with the piano so we are proposing to run a fundraiser to fund half of the piano and I have submitted a small funding bid to the Cairn Community Fund. Amanda who attends the choir has sponsored this application.

Tea Dance

Our February tea dance was well attended and growing. We had 33 in attendance and 5 tables full. We need more tables.

/tables.

Knitting and Sewing Group

Paula Freck has been appointed to run a weekly knitting/sewing group funded by the Corra foundation and started Monday 28th February.

Art Group

Our Friday art group run by Jane Steel is working on colouring in sheets looking at the Stations of the Cross. Seven people attended last week.

Funding

As agreed at the last meeting I have submitted an initial outline proposal to the postcode lottery to continue our tea dances.

Tesco bags of help have contacted us and would welcome an application. Our BB award is now closed which makes us eligible.

Working with our Communities

I was contacted by Karen Bellingham-Baird from the Mercatcross & City Centre Community Council to partner with them to submit a joint bid to provide a light breakfast and lunch to children who suffer from holiday hunger three mornings a week for the two weeks Easter holidays. Our bid has been successful in that we have been given funding to provide this both weeks on the Thurs and Friday's only. This is a great opportunity to engage with the wider community and reach out to our more needy families within our community.

Jane, Paula and I attended the Big Lunch at Portobello which took us through how to run a community lunch. It can be a small lunch or a larger event. Karen is keen to partner with us to do something in the summer.

Meetings and Partners

I met with Elaine from Forth Valley College who seemed interested in all the volunteer opportunities available but we have had no referrals as yet.

Volunteers

Our new Admin volunteer Jenny met with Jane S and Jane H this week to discuss power point etc.

Training

Paula and I attended Fit for Funding training and Social Media training which were both run by Go for It and RHIS training eating well for older people which also opens up funding opportunities to access funding for helping older people to eat well by providing food in some way.

Jane S and I attended a funding breakfast with the Postcode Lottery to find out the criteria required for an application. Our tea dance funding comes to an end at the end of May so I propose we put in an application to continue these as we fit into the criteria.

/criteria.

Working with our Communities

Jim and I attended a Go for It workshop to look at how we engage effectively with our communities. Jane and I attended a Forth Valley conference Growing your Communities today with a variety of workshops and networking available.

Meetings and Partners

I met with Joanne from SVE in January and this has resulted in two new volunteer requests this month and another enquiry today.

I have finally secured a meeting with Elaine from Forth Valley College next week.

Volunteers

2 new volunteers signed up with 2 more enquiries this week. Fifteen volunteers attended the Church of Scotland safeguarding training which took place in APS in January.

Administration Report

Jane Harris reported:

- External volunteer starting this week.
- Newsletter – aiming for next week. Please let us know anything to include asap.
- Kitchen deep clean – can we fix a date?
- Some help may be needed with PowerPoint preparation first half of April. Really need one other person from congregation who can do this.

Fabric / Property Report

David Boyd reported:

The annual Church inspection was undertaken last week. Report and Presbytery returns are in preparation. Conditions are much as last year but with some further dilapidations as will be noted in the report.

Main areas for action are:

Church

External. Cracks to west elevation and window mullion on east side worse since last year. I have requested a quotation for repair from Alex Milne (mason).

/(mason).

Internal. Retiring room now seriously dilapidated and requiring damp treatment and redecoration. (Work party?)

General cleanliness is poor in some areas including large hall floor and hall carpets. (Work party?)

Boiler room cleared out by Men's Shed and now tidy

David is getting a quote for some external stonework needed near the boiler house. Consider seeking external funding for external work needed or wait until bigger development plan is clear ?

Manse.

The manse is looking great and now ready for letting with blinds having been re-fitted and some new curtains provided. (Ask if anybody has any more at home – drop 54"). Electrical repair to outside lights and PAT testing is scheduled.

We are registered as landlord with Council, and Property Bureau have energy certificate and Legionnaires testing in hand. They already have a potential client wanting to view.

Paper globe lamp shades (inexpensive) have been procured but not yet fitted.

Other.

Procurement of door-bell for rear door is in hand. (About £35 from Screwfix).

Safeguarding Report

John Shaw reported on behalf of Lorna Shaw :-

Still trying to resolve the issue of PVG for one of our staff, an Irish national. It has been passed back to 121 Safeguarding team to provide precise correct information about what forms to submit for checks.

Presbytery Report

Arthur MacDonald reported :-

**MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY MEETING ON THURSDAY 10TH MARCH 2019
AT BRIDGE OF ALLAN PARISH CHURCH**

Minutes of the Ad Hoc committee to revise the Presbytery Plan

Stirling City Centre:- The second sentence reads “A working group is being set up to Lease with all relevant parties, Allan Park South and St Columba’s to explore future uses for Allan Park South building as a resource for Mission”

This is now an instruction to proceed.

Trustees Annual Report etc

The Trustees of the Presbytery of Stirling approved the Trustees’ Annual Report and accounts for the year ending 31st December 2018.

Business Committee

Stirling and Falkirk Presbyteries met on 15th February 2019 to try and decide how to amalgamate the current structures being used by both Presbyteries into one co-ordinated operation.

Presbyteries in other groupings are currently looking at amalgations.

Future Presbytery Meetings

The April meeting of Presbytery will be held in the Church of the Holy Rude [10th April] will be addressed by the Very Rev Albert Bogle on the subject of “re-imaging Church”

Union between Stirling :Allan Park South and Stirling :St Columba’s

Following approval from of the Presbytery Plan from the Ad Hoc committee to revise the Presbytery plan, it is proposed that a working group be established with the power to appoint co-opt an Architectural Adviser , to progress a feasibility into the future uses of Allan Park South Church and halls. This group will consist of one representative from each of the two church’s ,one member of the Presbytery’s Stewardship committee and one member of the Finance Committee , one member of the Strategy Committee and authorise the working group to appoint or co-opt an Architectural adviser.

Church in Community [CIC] Committee.

Dementia Support Development Co-ordinator is promoting a National Learning event, in collaboration with the Church and Society Council and Presbytery of Stirling

This event is on 22nd March 2019 from 10.00 to 4.00pm in Allan Park Church.

Stewardship Report

The meeting was informed that the date for return of their Signed Annual Congregation Accounts, so you have been warned.

/warned.

Try Praying

There was a presentation from Emma Weaver from “ Try Praying” who gave an interesting talk on what “Try Praying” means to her and distributed a hand out outlining how the power of prayer, even for those who are not religious and who do not go to church.

Roll Keeper Report

Hugh Buchanan reported :-

There have been the following changes to the Roll since the report of 13 February 2019.

Additions

By certificate of transferrance

Ms Colleen Sharp, Stirling

Removals

By death

Ms Catherine Morton, Bannockburn

By resignation

Claire Bordeau, Stirling

After these changes, there are 159 names on the roll, including 8 adherents.

Roll revision

Neil Malcolm has indicated that he wishes to no longer be a Trustee, and has therefore now on the roll as an inactive Elder.

I have reviewed the roll and would welcome views from the Session as to whether any of the following has an active connection with the congregation:

- Dr Susie Fokken, 40 Chyvelah Ope, Gloweth, Truro, TR1 3YA
- Mr James and Mrs Ann Gardner, address unknown, Fife.
- Mr William Hamilton, formerly of 2 Morgan Court, Stirling, FK7 0QX
- Mr Douglas McGowan, address unknown, formerly of Glenlyon, Torbrex Village
- Mrs Linda M Melville, address unknown, formerly 32 Park Terrace, Stirling.
- Mrs May Robertson, address unknown,

/unknown,

Worship and Music Report

Jim Steel reported :-

UCB met with Jim recently and confirmed they will be setting up an office here in Stirling. They are keen to work with all churches in Stirling.

Ministers are in place for much of April to June with a few spaces still remaining to be filled.

Streaming is coming along, and getting closer to being able to be used regularly.

A team from St Johns Lutheran Church (SJLC) will again visit us this year in June, dates to be confirmed. Jim and Jane are visiting St Johns Lutheran Church from 5th to 14th April to work alongside the Perry family in raising support for their missional activities here in Stirling and in building further relationships with SJLC

Lynne noted that there will be a service held at APS on Wednesday 17th April during Holy Week, and Ross McGowan, organist from St Columbas, will play the organ for this service.

Holy Week Services

Mon 15 th April	Rev Scott McInnes @ Viewfield
Tue 16 th April	Rev Alan Miller @ North Parish
Wed 17 th April	Rev Lynne Mack @ APS
Thur 18 th April	Rev Barry Hughes @ St Columbas
Friday 19 th April	Rev Gary McIntyre @ St Marks

Union Update

There will be a meeting of the selected 5 from APS and 5 from St Columbas on Thursday 28th March to begin the joint discussions of union.

Correspondence

The Dementia Friendly conference will now be held on Friday 22nd March at APS rather than St Columbas as originally planned, due to a double booking at St Columbas. 130 people from across Scotland are expected to attend.

Some new learning resources have been purchased from Illustrated Childrens Ministry which are available to anyone who may wish to use them as an art based learning group. They are PDF colouring sheets, with the 'Stations of The Cross' theme for Lent particularly and once completed by our Friday art group, will be framed & displayed in church.

/church.

We are aiming to hold a BIG LUNCH on 1st/2nd June 2019, along with other towns throughout the UK. This BIG LUNCH project is run by the Eden Project.

Allans Primary are holding their end of term service at APS on Thursday 28th April – Jim will assist them with sound setup at this and also at their rehearsal on Wednesday 27th April.

Jane Harris and Jane Steel are assisting St Columbas to run the Stirling Kirks Together 'Easter Code' event for Primary 6's from Allan Primary, St Ninians Primary and Borestone Primary, on Friday 22nd March, Monday 25th March and Tuesday 26th March. Jane & Jane will run the slides and film clips throughout the sessions.

A Stewardship Roadshow will take place at APS on Wednesday 12th June, organised by David Lynch.

AOB

Nomination of office bearers

Jane Steel was re-nominated as Session Clerk and agreed to remain in post until the Union matters have been concluded, should this continue to be agreeable to the Kirk Session.

It had been proposed as an agenda item that we discuss and re-nominate all office bearers including the Treasurer post (recent documents produced from Church of Scotland on unitary constitutions note that a 3 year renewable term is considered good practice) however Rev Lynne Mack advised that this was not necessary since our current treasurer, Ed Morton, has not stood down from his post and wishes to remain as Treasurer.

Review of Electoral Roll

See Rollkeepers report as above

Discussion with Presbytery Clerk re Ad Hoc Committee decision process

Following a letter of concern having been sent on behalf of Allan Park South congregation to the Presbytery Clerk, about the inclusion of two key trustees from St Columbas (Peter Murdoch, Session Clerk and Rev Alex Millar, Minister and also Moderator of Stirling Presbytery) on the Ad Hoc Committee which decided whether APS should union with St Columbas or not), Rev Alan Miller addressed the Kirk Session.

The concerns raised were that St Columbas had undue influence on the thoughts and decisions of the Ad Hoc committee by having two key members on the committee.

/committee.

Rev Miller advised that the Presbytery plan had begun in 2011, and was approved in November 2011. In Feb 2012, APS had 21 days to appeal to the plan which stated that APS and St Columbas would union together. APS did not appeal at that time.

1.5 years ago, in 2017, the Presbytery Plan was reviewed again in the light of reducing number of ministers, and reducing congregations. The Ad Hoc committee was formed including the St Columbas trustees as noted above. Nobody from APS was invited onto the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Principal Clerk at 121 confirmed to our Session Clerk by telephone, that it is the normal recommendation from 121 that anyone with a conflict of interest should be removed from the room when discussions take place on a matter involving them, and additionally are not given any notes from the discussions relating to the said matter.

When questioned, Rev Miller advised that the two St Columbas members were not removed from the room when discussions were taking place in regard to the union of St Columbas and APS. Rev Miller also confirmed that the two members were provided with copies of the minutes showing the thoughts and decisions made, of the Ad Hoc Committee , although Rev Miller confirmed that they took no part in voting on decisions.

Rev Miller gave his personal assurance that no undue influence was exerted by St Columbas's two members on any decisions made in regard to the union.

Rev Miller stated that a mistake had however been made by Presbytery, in that APS had, prior to the Dec Presbytery meeting, still been classed as a category D building.

Category A = Central to the Presbytery plan & for long term use

Category B = In the Presbytery plan with a review period of e.g. 7 years

Category C = Not in Presbytery plan going forward & not fit for purpose

Category D = Cannot be determined at this stage

When a decision is made on the selected place of worship in a union situation, both of the churches in question must be either category A, B or C.

The decision of Presbytery, and the Ad Hoc Committee, at the December Presbytery meeting, that St Columbas be the main place of Sunday worship, is therefore not permitted, and has been revoked.

At the April Presbytery meeting, Presbytery will advise their new category for APS building, and APS will have the opportunity to speak at the Presbytery meeting and also to appeal in writing any decision made.

Rev Miller therefore confirmed that the decision on where the main place of Sunday worship must be discussed by the basis of union teams, and an agreement reached between them. It is the decision of this joint team to make.

/make.

Rev Miller advised that Presbytery wished the APS building to remain open and is setting up a 'Working Party', where APS will have 1 member on it, and St Columbas will have 1 member on it, to consider the use of the APS building for missional and community outreach use.

The Kirk Session voted and nominated by majority, David Boyd to represent APS on the working party.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 8th May 2019 at 7pm

Please note there will be no meeting in April.

MODERATOR

CLERK