

ABBOTSHALL PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, KIRKCALDY
CONGREGATIONAL BOARD

Kennedy Hall

Thursday 26th October 2017

The Trustees and Congregational Board meeting was constituted with a reading & prayer.

Sederunt:

Present were the Interim Moderator, Ena Hudson, in the chair and 12 Board Members. Apologies received from 8 Board Members.

Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd June 2017 were approved without change.

Matters arising from last meeting:

Audio Induction Hearing Loop System: At the meeting on 30th June 2016 Bruce Farrell advised that he has priced a system for the Kennedy Hall. It could be purchased for circa £100 plus £650 to install amplifiers and speakers. The Board agreed to go ahead with the purchase as it can be to advantage for disabled groups using the Halls.

At the meeting on 22nd June it was agreed that the hearing loop system in the Main Hall would be moved into the Kennedy Hall.

Action: Communications Convenor

Safety Handrail: At the meeting on 3rd November 2016 a request was made to cost the installation of a handrail on the hill from west gate to Church. The Property Convenor advised that a handrail would cost approximately £40/meter circa £3800 to install on the north side of the pathway. The ground does not belong to the Church so Council would have to be approached before this work could be carried out.

The Council have pursued about keeping the footpath in better condition by removing grass cutting etc. The exiting handrail will be rebuilt week commencing 30th October

Action: Closed

Church Boiler Room: At the meeting on 26th January the Property convenor advised that:

- The Boiler room door lintel is showing signs of deterioration. Steel beam lintel and support stonework has cracked and is liable to collapse. The lintle has now been replaced
- Asbestos sheets inside boiler room will require to be partially or totally removed to allow safe work site for lintel repairs. No one in Fife wishes to undertake asbestos removal work. Removal can be considered at a later date. Decision taken to leave asbestos as is not a hazard as long as not disturbed.

Actions: Closed

Jenny Featherstone's work: At the meeting on 26th January it was confirmed that Abbotshall wish to continue being involved.

£300 was raised by the October Coffee Morning and donated towards Jenny's work.

The Session Clerk gave an update on the support being provided and action to be taken to ask Jenny what support she requires. Abbotshall will re consider this matter when a new minister is appointed.

Action: Closed

Halls Rental Costs:

At the Board meeting on 29th March it was agreed that due to increases in heating and lighting costs that costs for use of church properties by the Council should be increased to £60 per hour.

The Property Convenor advised that this new rate will be applied when the Council make future bookings.

Action: Closed

Messy Church:

Providing financial support for Messy Church was raised at the Kirk Session and referred to the Board for a decision. Due to the significant and high level of expenditure on the Manse and the resulting low level of funds (See Property and Treasurers reports) the decision was taken to make a small one of contribution of £60 at this time.

Action: Treasurer

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Health & Safety:

The Property Convenor advised that he was in receipt of the C of S Tool Kit for Health and Safety and that we must comply with the requirements. He advised that we already follow the requirements.

Property Report:

The Interim Moderator advised the Board that Presbytery had received the Abbotshall Property and Finance Reports and had commented favourably stating that both reports were well presented.

The Property Convenor provided a presentation of and displayed a spread sheet of the Abbotshall Properties rolling maintenance program and provided a detailed status of work completed and outstanding on all the Abbotshall properties, year to date.

The report included a detailed report on the work being undertaken, in accordance with the Vacancy Guidelines, on the Manse in preparation for a new minister and Manse family. It was highlighted that some of the work on the Manse would not be completed until a minister is appointed as the detail would be left to the Manse family to decide on their preferences.

A copy of the Maintenance Plan will be placed on the Abbotshall Web Site

Action: Property Convenor

Manse Refurbishment work:

Majority of planned work has now been completed. Decoration and curtains work will be held until the new Manse family has been identified to allow them to make choices.

A detailed costing for the Manse refurbishment was presented to the Board at the meeting on 22nd June 2017. The refurbishment cost estimate was £30,670 + 10% escalation = £33,740. This has now increased due to additional work identified as follows:

Additional work has been identified adding additional costs to the original estimate:

- Dormer Window found to be leaking which required flashing to be replaced;
- Drain down pipe found to be cracked and drain blocked. Down pipe replaces and drain blockage cleared;
- Skew found to be damaged and leaking which required to be re pointed;

The above work has added a further £2780 in cost of refurbishing the Manse;

Windows:

An over spend of £9k has been incurred on the original budget figure for Manse window refurbishment. The Property Convenor apologised for this stating that the original estimate had been misinterpreted. However, a decision had been taken to continue the refurbishment as the windows had to be put into a state of good repair.

East Gable Wall:

On closer inspection it has been found that the crack identified in the east Gable Wall is considerably worse than initially identified. A full repair will require dismantling and rebuilding of the Chimney Stone Work and replacing the Chimney Capping Stone as well as pointing the stone work of the Gable Wall.

- Cost of a temporary repair to last circa 5 years would be £3200;
- Cost of a permanent repair is currently unknown but could be in the region of £10k;

Q: Could the Chimney Stack be removed?

A: No, as the Manse is a listed building and would have to be reinstated to original installation.

Q: Could the Manse be occupied without a repair to the Chimney?

A: No, as the seriousness of the damage is such that the chimney is now considered unsafe and in danger of falling either onto the Manse roof or onto the neighbouring property;

The Board require to make a decision whether or not to go for a temporary or full repair. Cost of a full repair at a later date would be in addition to the cost of the temporary repair. Full repair now would include the cost of the temporary repair and scaffolding costs.

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The Board requested the Management Committee to:

- Obtain a cost estimate for the full repair;
- To make a cost comparison between the full repair and a temporary repair;
- Board's preference is to go for a full repair at this time if we can afford it without going overdrawn;
- Management Committee to bring a recommendation to the Board;
- To ask the General Trustees if money for the full repair could be forthcoming from the Consolidated Fabric fund;

Action: Management Committee

In light of the projected overspend on the Manse refurbishment and the potential cost of repairs to Chimney the Board agreed that the planned work on the Manse Garage should not be carried out.

Action: Property Convenor

Halls Report:

The Property Convenor advised that Halls lets are busy until year end. Some bookings have been received for 2018.

Finance Report:

The Treasurer distributed the financial report for the year to 22/10/17.

The Treasurer gave a detailed explanation of the current the projected budget to year end:

Budget at 22/10/17

- Income to 22/10/17 is £75,052 (Including the legacies of £12,000)
- Expenditure to 22/10/17 is £90,685
- Resulting in a deficit of £15,633.

Projected budget to 31/12/17:

- Projected Income to year end £85,517
- Estimated expenditure £146,405 (excluding Manse Chimney repairs)
- Resulting in a deficit of £56,888 (Excluding Manse Chimney repairs)

The deficit will have to be financed from the reserves resulting in reducing the funds held by the Church to circa £46,000 at year end.

At the start of 2017 Abbotshall funds stood at £102,804 plus the Consolidated Fabric Fund of £19,000 from the sale of the Raith Church properties which is held by the General Trustees.

General observations:

- Income from Free will offerings is reducing year on year
- Circa 48 households attending Church services;
- In 2017 there are 142 active households supporting the Church;

Member's Commitment to Giving:

A decision is now required from the Trustees as to what actions can be taken increase in "Giving" to the Church in order to make up the considerable shortfall between income and expenditure. This decision should also include actions to encourage the large number of absent Members to contribute towards the Church commitments.

Action: Trustees

Kirk Session requires to make a decision about the Roll with regard to the Members who do not support the Church in any way.

Action: Session

Agreement was made that an article should be written addressing the need to increase giving, particularly reaching out to the households that contribute nothing.

Church Sound System:

At the meeting on 22nd June 2017 a report was made by the Communications Convenor advising that an investigation into and tests carried out on the Church sound system. He had advise that the sound system is working as best as possible within the design of the current system. Some adjustments had been made

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to the system to try and overcome external interference and loss of sound output. A professional sound engineer has been contacted to investigate and advise on needs of a sound system, to take place week commencing 26th June.

The Communications Convenor advised that two Sound Engineering companies had carried out tests and had provided two quotations for upgrading the Church sound system;

- 1st quote of £12,000 total upgrade;
- 2nd quote of £8,500 total upgrade but can be split into three distinct parts with an evaluation of effect after each phase;

Discussion took place regarding options for improving clarity of sound system in the Church:

- Raising money via special fund raising events;
- Consider everyone moving to the centre of the Church;

The Board agreed to postpone any expenditure on upgrading the Church Sound System at this time due to the current financial situation.

Organisations Reports:

No reports available. Visitations to the Choir and Craft Group are still awaited.

Correspondence:

None.

AOCB:

Church Organisations were reminded that their accounts should be submitted to the Treasurer by the year end.

Xmas Envelopes: It was agreed that the envelopes should be sent out with the November News Letter. It was agreed that the wording on the envelopes should be changed to reflect the need for money to support the Manse refurbishment.

The Vacancy:

There is no new news on the Vacancy as we continue our search for a new Minister

Next Meeting:

Next Board meeting will be Wednesday 17th January 2018 at 19:30 hrs in Kennedy Hall;

There being no further business the meeting was closed with the Grace.

Chair
(Interim Moderator)

Clerk