

CLYDE PRESBYTERY

Saturday 4th November 2023 at 10.00am

On the 4th day of November 2023, Clyde Presbytery met in person in Dumbarton Riverside Church, with some members joining via zoom, and was constituted with prayer.

WELCOME

The Moderator welcomed and formally admitted Rev Robbie Hamilton to Clyde Presbytery, having recently been appointed as Presbytery Clerk. Robbie took the *oath de fidei* and said he looked forward to getting to know everyone and working with them going forward.

SEDERUNT

Rev David Burt, Moderator, with 27 ministers in person and 6 on zoom; 34 elders in person with 12 joining on zoom and 5 corresponding members in person with 1 on zoom, as recorded separately.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from 12 ministers, 16 elders and 5 corresponding member, as recorded separately.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the ordinary meeting on 12th September and the ordination on 26th September 2023, having previously been circulated, were approved.

APPOINTMENT OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

The next ordinary meeting was approved as 13th February 2024

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business was approved as printed.

OVERTURE

The Confessions of Faith Overture had been circulated ahead of time and comments sought. It was noted there were no comments on record so far. The Moderator then called for a vote:

Votes in favour 76

Votes against 2

Comments to be submitted with response - none

PRESENTATION

A presentation of £500 was made to each of our Ministry Students, Chris Barlas, William McCulloch, Charlene Mitchell, Robert Thomson and Stuart Wilson. The Moderator wished them well with their continued studies.

DECISIONS MADE UNDER POWERS (S/O 61) for noting

Granted permission for the congregation of Dumbarton: St Andrew's to join with Dumbarton: Riverside at Riverside Parish Church on Sunday 24th September at 11.00 a.m.

Granted permission for Dumbarton St Andrew's to worship in the Riverside building on Sunday 12th November for Armistice

Granted permission for the congregation of Greenock St Margaret's to join with Lyle Kirk for a joint communion service on Sunday 1st October 2023

Appointed Rev Jonathan Fleming as Interim Moderator at Greenock Wellpark Mid Kirk from 23rd October 2023 following the resignation of Rev Ian Bell

Noted that Cardross congregation are worshipping in their halls until further notice due to problems with their heating system.

Determined that, according to the office rota, the following ministers/congregations are due to attend GA2024:

Dougie Adam, Gordon Armstrong, Mark Boshoff, William Boyle, David Burt, Gray Fletcher, Christine Goldie, Pamela Gordon, Ken Gray, Alan Hamilton, Robbie Hamilton, Karen Harbison, Maggie McArthur and Christine Murdoch (ministers 14)

Bearsden Killermont, Bearsden Westerton Fairlie Memorial, Bridge of Weir St Machar's Ranfurly, Cardross, Greenock St Ninian's, Greenock Mount Kirk, Rhu & Shandon, Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay, Kilmacolm St Columba, Lomond, Paisley St Mark's Oldhall, Paisley West, Paisley North and Port Glasgow Hamilton Bardrainey (elders 14)

COMMITTEE DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER POWERS (S/O 60) for noting

Business

Noted the resignation of Jamie McNamara as Presbytery Building Officer and wish him well as he takes up a post within Perth Presbytery.

Agreed that Robbie Hamilton and Douglas Vallance be appointed to the interview panel, along with representatives from the General Trustees and HR, to find a suitable replacement for the Building Officer

Noted that Rev John Murning has intimated his intention to retire from Paisley Sherwood Greenlaw on 14th February 2024

Reports that the matter referred back from the previous Presbytery meeting, regarding the merging of the Local Church Review and Superintendence Committees, was discussed in detail and the decision to merge the committees stands meantime. This may be reviewed at a later date should it prove to be problematic

Vacancy Procedure

Sisted the previously approved vacancy at Baldernock linked with Milngavie St Paul's on the advice of the Principal Clerk, pending the outcome of the request for a Mission Plan Review from Milngavie St Luke's

Appointed an Advisory Committee comprising the Rev Christine Murdoch, John Armit and William John Sim to deal with the vacancy at Helensburgh Parish Church.

Granted permission for Helensburgh Parish Church to call a minister on unrestricted tenure all in terms of the provisions of Act VII 2003 and the Presbytery Mission Plan;

Ministry

Supported the taking of two weeks study leave by Rev Hanneke Marshall from 30th September - 14th October 2023 to study being an "Intergenerational Church".

Supported the application of Tim Mineard and David Nicholson to train to become Placement Supervisors.

Supported the application of Francis Murphy to become a Probationer Supervisor and notes he will undergo the necessary training to allow him to do so

Notes that the Worship Leader Training is going well and is encouraged by the support. It is hoped a further course will be arranged for early in 2024. If anyone is interested in attending please contact YSmith@churchofscotland.org.uk

Presbytery Implementation/Planning

Approved the basis of severance for Helensburgh linked with Rhu & Shandon and noted the congregations voted as follows:

Helensburgh:	For 102	against 1
Rhu & Shandon	For 34	against 0

Approved the basis of Union for Inverkip, Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay and noted the congregations voted as follows:

Inverkip.	For 67	against 2
Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay	For 50	against 0

Strongly encourages Kirk Sessions and office bearers to approach their cluster facilitators to discuss local progress towards implementation of the PMP.

Withdraws Ian Millar as OLM from the Lochside Linkage from the end of 2023, and allocates him as per the approved plan to the forming linkage of Arrochar, Luss and Rhu & Shandon.

Granted permission to the Kirk Session of Barrhead St Andrew's to move ahead with the local appointment of a full-time Youth & Community Worker, recognising that funds are available.

Encourages attendance at the monthly online prayer meeting via Zoom (no longer Microsoft Teams): <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89334699398>. This takes place on the last Friday of every month at 7am. Meeting ID: 893 3469 9398 (no passcode required).

Property

Approved an application from Renfrew North for a grant of £5,000 from the Cargill Bequest Fund to assist with the cost of repairing their stained glass window.

Granted permission to Port Glasgow New Parish to move their old organ to a more appropriate place in the sanctuary, subject to the approval of the General Trustees.

Notes that the application above has been declined for the time being by the General Trustees and representatives will arrange a visit before a final decision is reached.

Granted permission to Port Glasgow New Parish to repair the louvres in their Bell Tower at a cost of £6,836 and approved their application to release funds held in their central fabric fund to cover these costs.

Approved the application from Luss Parish Church to carry out essential repairs to stonework on the church roof and approved their application for a grant to assist with this project.

Approved the application from Rhu & Shandon Church to carry out essential repairs to the church tower, at a cost of £ 188,760 inc VAT, subject to approval by the General Trustees and approves their application to release funds held in their central fabric fund to fund the project.

Approved the request from Bearsden Killermont Church to replace and upgrade their existing AV system plus installation of cameras in the sanctuary; replacement of one screen with a larger screen with better connectivity and moving of that screen to replace their existing second screen in the Welcome & Café areas and to upgrade internet provision throughout

Notes that the Kirk Session of Lomond Parish Church, in seeking to purchase a new manse for the proposed union between Lomond and Kilmarnock Gartocharn, have viewed a suitable property within the parish and have paid due diligence to the 'Guidelines for Manses' as published by the General Trustees. It should be further noted that their offer was successful.

Approved the application from Cardross Parish Church to carry out essential repairs to the Church Tower at an estimated cost of £23,300 or thereby.

Approved an application from Bearsden New Kilpatrick Church to install emergency lighting in the sanctuary at a cost of £9,000 or thereabouts.

Notes that the Kirk Session of Helensburgh Parish Church has withdrawn its offer to purchase a property at Rhu Road Higher, Helensburgh due to subsequent unfavourable survey reports and will continue its search to provide a suitable manse for the charge.

Notes that the officers at Helensburgh Parish Church are endeavouring to resolve a major issue of a sewage discharge failure between the church and a neighbouring domestic property which they own. Permission has been granted to investigate the cause and undertake necessary repairs. The nature of the failure made it extremely difficult to estimate the costs involved and a formal application for Approval of Works will follow in due course for retrospective approval. Funds are available locally.

Notes that all vacant charges are required to provide a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for their manses. If not already recorded at level 'C' or better, improvements to the manse will require to be undertaken to reach this level before being

granted leave to call and if not achievable with the existing property then a suitable property which meets this standard will require to be purchased as a replacement.

Approves the application from Johnstone: St Andrew's Trinity to sell its manse at 45 Woodlands Crescent, Johnstone PA5 0AZ as the property is no longer required. The free proceeds of the sale to be credited to the Consolidated Fabric Fund . The financial board to engage with the Church of Scotland Solicitors to facilitate the process. Extract minutes from the Kirk Session and Financial Board approving the sale have been received.

Approves the application from Port Glasgow: New parish church Kirk Session to sell its existing manse at Barr's Brae, Port Glasgow and purchase a suitable replacement which meets the current requirements and notes that the Kirk session will engage with the Church of Scotland's Solicitors to facilitate the process. An extract minute from the Kirk Session approving this decision has been received. Due process in acquiring a new manse will be followed in all respects.

Approves the application from Greenock: Lyle Kirk to undertake works to clear gutters, replace lead and slates, upgrade lighting and redecorate the corridors affected by water ingress. The amount involved is in the region of £17,000 and they require to draw down funds from the Consolidated Fabric Fund.

Property Report

Most of the Committee's activity has been spent considering routine applications for approval of works.

Manses

Session Clerks were requested to provide current EPC certificates for their manses and there has been a reasonable response to that invitation. In that connection I would draw attention to the note above. Energy Improvements to manses, or any property for that matter, can cause significant disruption to achieve their goal and the ideal opportunity to undertake such tasks is when the property is empty. In exceptional cases the improvements may not be financially viable and the option to seek a replacement manse which meets the efficiency criterion may be the easier solution.

RAAC

There has been a great deal of publicity in the news recently about RAAC (Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) initially raised in schools, then cascaded into hospitals etc. I don't know what the implications are for our property portfolio but with the help of the committee, we will endeavour to determine what the evidence is, if any, within our Presbytery.

Stewardship & Finance

Granted reductions in M&M contributions to the following congregations against their 2023 allocation:

Craigrownie (on behalf of Lochside linkage) £7500 for continuing employment of their Family worker and Barrhead St Andrew's £7500 towards their Youth & Community worker

Recruitment has begun to seek a suitable replacement for the Building Officer and further details will be circulated should a successful appointment be made.

Treasurer's Notes on Forecast General Fund Income & Expenditure for 2023, Draft Budget for 2024 and Draft Proposed Presbytery Dues for 2024

At this time of the year I normally produce a draft budget for next year and provide an indication of Presbytery Dues for next year as an aid to Congregation Treasurers who are putting together their own draft budget for next year for discussion with their church's trustees. The final budget and Proposed Presbytery Dues for 2024 will be tabled for discussion and approval at the February 2024 Meeting of Presbyters

Attached to this note you will find:

Appendix 1; A forecast of the General Fund Income & Expenditure Account for 2023 and a draft budget for 2024 and

Appendix 2; A draft proposal on Presbytery Dues for 2024

Over the next few weeks I will have discussions on the draft budget for 2024 and the Proposed Presbytery Dues with the Presbytery Clerk and the Stewardship & Finance Committee and I am happy to receive input from Presbyters

Forecast General Income & Expenditure for 2023

I have produced a forecast of Income & Expenditure for 2023 by tabling actuals for each of the first 3 quarters of the year and forecasting what will happen in the last quarter. I have compared the forecast for the year with the budget approved by Presbyters in February 2023.

The following points are worthy of note:

Revenue

Forecast revenue at £182,772 is £53,359 higher than budget mainly due to having received £50,000 from the Ministry & Mission Discretionary Fund (which we have used to augment our newly created Presbytery Mission Fund), an increase of £2,322 in interest received and the unexpected receipt of £750 from the Peter Brough Trust.

Salaries

I am forecasting that the salary costs of our Clerk, Mission Officer and Secretary will be fully covered by the £120,000 support provided by the General Trustees. The saving of £10,000 against budget is mainly due to the savings made in the 2 months when we were not paying for a Presbytery Clerk.

We will probably make a saving in Building Officer costs if there is void between the date when our present Building Officer leaves and the date of appointment of his replacement

Staff Travel Costs

I am forecasting savings of £3,000 in travel costs partly due to staff voids.

Presbytery Mission Projects

Giving to Grow Assessments do not include a Discretionary Fund element and we agreed to raise £60,000 through Presbytery Dues to set up a Presbytery Mission Fund. In addition, as noted above, we have received £50,000 from unused Discretionary Funds. The full £110,000 received during the year has been used to set up the new Mission Fund

Office costs

I am forecasting savings of £8,000 in office costs mainly due to less use of the Presbytery Office than I budgeted.

Committee Expenses and Events

Against a budget of £8,400 I am forecasting a spend of only £1,601, a saving of £6,799

Grants to Ministry Candidates

Provision was made in the budget to allow a grant of £500 to 7 candidates but we only have 5 candidates at present so we have made a saving of £1,000.

Moderator Visit Expenses

We spent £2,000 less on the Moderator's visit than we had budgeted.

Total Forecast Costs for 2023 compared with Budget

Forecast total costs at £159,672 are £18,677 less than budget for the reasons provided above.

Budget Surplus/(Deficit)

I budgeted for a deficit of £11,587 for the year but I am now forecasting a surplus of £23,095, which we can carry forward to be used in future years to reduce Presbytery Dues.

Draft Budget for 2024

I have drawn up a draft budget based on the information I have available at this time and on the basis of a number of assumptions which I will detail below:

1. Salaries

I am budgeting for a gross salary cost of £170,000 less a contribution of £120,000 from the General Trustees, a net cost of £50,000. We believe that the General Trustees will continue to provide support of £120,000 for at least the next 2 years

The salaries budget is £20,000 greater than the forecast cost for 2023 and provides for the cost for a full year for our Presbytery Clerk and for increases relating to salary bandings and cost of living increases. We await input from 121 on this

2. Staff travelling costs

I have provided £6,000 for staff travelling costs compared with forecast cost for 2023 of around £4,000. I await input from the Clerk on this

3. Presbytery Mission Fund

I have made provision to raise £25,000 to fund mission projects the Mission Committee and Stewardship & Finance Committee believe should be supported by Presbytery

You will see that this is £35,000 less than I raised last year. The reason for reducing how much is raised is the limited number of applications received this year. The reason for raising £25,000 is that £25,000 is the support received from the Discretionary Fund to offset Building Officer costs in 2024 and this support will not be available in future years.

4. Office costs

I have provided £16,000 for office costs compared with a forecast of £8,000 for 2023.

I will take input from the Clerk on this

5. Grants to Ministry Candidates

I have provided for £500 grants for 7 candidates and I will seek input on this level of support from the Convener.

6. Other Costs

I have provided £4,900 for various other costs and will take further input from Committee Conveners and the Clerk. The forecast cost for these other costs for 2023 is just over £2,000

7. Total Presbytery Costs

The draft budget provides for costs of £106,000 including £25,000 for the Presbytery Mission Fund - £81,000 excluding the Mission Fund

This compares with our forecast of costs for 2023 of £160,000 including £110,000 for the Presbytery Mission Fund - £50,000 excluding the Mission Fund

The main areas accounting for the net increase of £31,000 in costs excluding the Mission Fund are detailed above but can be summarised as follows;

- Provision for increase in salary costs - £20,000
- Provision for increased traveling costs - £2,000
- Provision for increased office costs - £8,000
- Provision for increased other costs - £4,000
- Reduction in cost of Moderator's visit - £3,000

As noted above I will be seeking to review the budget with input from the Clerk, Committee Conveners and the Stewardship & Finance Committee over the next few weeks to allow me to table a final budget for approval at the February Presbytery Meeting

8. Presbytery Dues for 2024

Assuming the budget for Presbytery costs for 2023 are set at £106,000 and taking into account support of £25,000 provided out of the Ministry & Mission Discretionary Fund and interest received of £4,000 the Presbytery Dues required to be raised to produce a balanced budget for the year would be £77,000 compared with £104,000 in 2023.

It should be noted that without the £120,000 support from the General Trustees and the £25,000 from the Ministry & Mission Discretionary Fund the amount to be raised through Presbytery Dues would be £222,000. As I said at this time last year this should be viewed in the knowledge that Giving to Grow assessments for 2024 are substantially less than 2022 Ministry and Ministry assessments (especially for our larger income congregations) and should be further reduced when church unions are implemented.

9. Proposed Method of Collecting Presbytery Dues

Last year we changed the way in which collected Presbytery Dues from one where Presbytery Dues were assessed on Congregations on a pro rata basis to Ministry & Mission Assessments to one where Congregations were asked to contribute towards Presbytery according to their incomes with the larger income churches contributing a higher percentage of their Income

Given that under Giving to Grow larger income congregations benefitted more this is seen as a fairer way of determining how much is paid by each

congregation and I propose we continue with this new method in determining what each congregations should contribute towards Presbytery Dues in 2024

I have sorted congregations by income and have applied an escalating scale of charge to congregations based on where their assessable income lies as follows:

2022 Assessable Congregational Income	Number	% of Income	Presbytery Dues Allocation
Less than £25,000	3	0%	0
£25,001 to £50,000	23	0%	0
£50,001 to £75,000	7	.5%	2,202
£75,001 to £100,000	15	1.0%	12,892
£100,001 to £125,000	12	1.5%	19,798
£125,001 to £150,000	5	2.0%	13,516
Over £150,000	7	2.5%	34,757
Total	72		83,165

I have compared the calculated Presbytery Dues allocation with what congregations paid last year and applied transitional relief so that no congregation will pay more in Presbytery Dues in 2024 than it did in 2023.

You will see from the schedule of Proposed Presbytery Dues that transitional relief amounts to £4,313 and the revised Presbytery Dues figure comes out at £78,852, which is slightly more than the £77,000 I have proposed to raise in my draft budget. I will deal with that variance in tabling my final proposals

CONFERENCE SESSION

Presbytery then moved into conference session when an opportunity to meet the new Clerk was afforded. There followed a presentation on the various forms of Pastoral Support which were available.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment to meet on **Tuesday 13th February 2024** in Dumbarton Riverside for ordinary business

Moderator

Clerk