

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

1st June 2020

It should be noted that due to the lockdown situation this meeting was a 'virtual' meeting via Zoom. The attendees were in agreement that it was acceptable to regard it as a vestry meeting and minute it as such.

1. On the Zoom Meeting:

Rev. Christine Downey

Gavin Craig

Ella Henderson

Denis King

Jonathan Gibbs

Carole MacBride

Rona Finlayson

Margaret King

2. Apologies for Absence:

Douglas Walker

Lord Morton

Margaret Chill

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine said a prayer and welcomed people to the meeting.

4. Minutes of May 4th Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on May 4th were approved with no amendments. These will be displayed in the hall and on the website.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

The response to St Mary's application for a Grant of £26,364 for the repairs to the rectory stonework, roof/gutters, and insulation had been received. The Building Grants Group has offered a grant of £15,000. This is just under 50% of the proposed cost, £30,364, of the work and is in line with the normal policy for this type of grant request. St Mary's had already offered to pay £4,000 towards the cost of the work.

There was also an offer of a loan up to £11,364 at 3% interest over 5 years to ensure that there were adequate funds to complete the project.

The meeting decided to accept the £15,000 offer but to decline the offer of the loan. This will be communicated to the Grants Committee and plans will be made to get the work underway when this is possible.

6. Other Matters from Christine

Christine's reported that :

She is investigating how her YouTube communications can be improved. She is looking at investing in an editor which will improve the videos she posts. The live streams are attracting 50 to 60 views. It is recognised that these will not all be St Mary's congregation members.

Ella raised the point that some congregation members who are hard of hearing could not hear Christine's videos and that there should be some sort of signage. Christine agreed that this was very important and that she would ensure that subtitles were available and information communicated on how these could be accessed.

There was also the suggestion that the videos could be published on the Ratho and Kirknewton Community sites. She will look into whether this is acceptable to the administrators of these sites.

In Touch was sent out to the congregational list via email the previous Wednesday. Paper copies are available and will be delivered by hand to congregation members who it is known do not have access to email. At the same time some other information will be distributed along with the In Touch magazines. These are :

- Information received from the Diocese on the Scottish Episcopal Church guidelines and rules for churches during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A note just received from the Diocese which would give people who are unable to use online technology the opportunity to listen to Services via the telephone.

If anyone is aware of a congregation member who requires to receive In Touch in paper format and is not doing so please let Christine or any vestry member know.

7. Treasurer's Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the 29th of May balance in the General Account was £34,878.

There was £2,123 held in restricted funds, leaving £32,755 in unrestricted funds.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £5,023.

The Value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on April 30th was £41,148. The May end figure was unavailable at this date.

- The quarterly £1,500 grant from the Douglas Trust has been received.
- As the church buildings are closed energy costs are significantly down.
- £100 paid to St Salvador's Food Bank as agreed at the previous vestry meeting.
- Easyfundraising quarterly payment of £80.47 received. Also £5 from Amazon Smile.
- Payment for the gutter clearance and fabric health checks on the church and rectory made from St Mary's Trust account.

8. Fabric Report

Carole reported that :

- There is a water leak in the disabled toilet in the Douglas Hall. She has carried out a temporary fix to stop the leak but this will need to be addressed professionally before the hall is opened up again.
- There are some willow trees in the rectory garden causing problems with the drainage. Ben will attempt to remove the smaller ones. There is a larger one which Ben will not be able to deal with and therefore it will require a professional to carry out the work. As a start Ben has been speaking with the estate regarding this.
- Although the grass and plants in the church grounds have been looked after, thanks to Graeme and Carole, the pathways need weeding. Carole encouraged anyone who could find time to help address this to do so.

9. Hall Committee Report:

Nothing to report.

10. Lay Rep Report:

A questionnaire had been sent out by the Diocesan Treasurer. The purpose of the questionnaire was to get an early response on what the views of the charges in the Diocese on the paper which had been presented to the March Synod regarding Diocesan finances were. The paper had been written in response to the fact that the balance of the money in the Diocesan General Fund had been gradually reducing and gave a number of possibilities on how the fund could be brought back to its target levels. This could have an effect on the level of Quota percentage increase for 2021.

A supplementary vestry meeting was held on May 31st to consider St Mary's response to the questionnaire. The general feeling was that more detail on the actual finances of the Diocese and how they are accounted for was needed to make an informed response. The questionnaire was completed with that point emphasised.

This paper and its recommendations will be debated at the next Synod in October.

11.PVG Report

All rules and guidelines from the Governments, Province, and Diocese regarding the Covid-19 crisis are being followed.

As lockdown is eased it will be the vestry's responsibility to ensure that the necessary hygiene and distancing measures are put in place and to ensure that they are being adhered to.

12. AOB

- Rona said that there had been cases of magazines having been delivered to addresses where the addressee has moved. The magazine mailing list needs to be reviewed and brought up to date.
- Vestry Away Day notes are to be circulated to the congregation.

13. Date of Next Meeting: The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on July 6th**. At present this will be, again, a 'virtual' meeting.