

St. Mary's Church, Dalmahoy

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

4th November 2019

1. Present:

Rev. Christine Downey
Lord Morton
Gavin Craig
Rosie Mann
Ted Tracey-Bower
Douglas Walker
Rona Finlayson
Margaret Chill
Denis King
Ella Henderson

2. Apologies for Absence:

Jane Russell
Carole MacBride

3. Opening Prayer and Welcome

Christine said a responsorial prayer, asked the meeting to pray for all congregation members who were unwell, and welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

4. Minutes of October 7th Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on October 7th were approved with no amendments. These will now be displayed in the hall and on the website.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- Mr Payne has not been able to make time as yet to mend the heating. Carole has made initial enquiries with companies which specialise in the heating of churches with a view to rewiring and replacement heaters and hopes to have more to report on that in due course.
- Due to constraints on her available time Carole has not as yet arranged for Killian to look at the sound system. It will happen, ideally before the festive season.
- Carole, in her absence, had proposed an increase in the total fees charged to £770, a £370 non- refundable booking fee and a £400 wedding fee to become effective on December 1st. Christine and Carole would still have the discretion to alter the wedding fee if considered to be appropriate. The net effect is a £100 increase in what the church receives and an increase for Alan whose recommended professional rates have also increased. This was unanimously approved by the meeting.

- It was agreed by the meeting that we would not proceed in asking the Bishop and Dean for a meeting to discuss our disappointment over the rejection of the Grant request towards Rectory repairs. This will be addressed both by Christine at Clergy Conference and at the St Marys Trust meeting on November 26th.
- The Diocese had sent a representative to inspect the Rectory in relation to what work is required. Their view differed from the one that we have. Carole is in touch with two parties, one of which will be requested to submit an independent review.

6. Other Matters from Christine

- As a result of the issues at the Rectory with rats there had been an infestation of flies in the bathroom where there is a gap in the floorboards around the bath. The meeting agreed that it has now become essential that this is fixed immediately and that the bathroom and small toilet are fully insulated. Contractors have been arranged and work should begin very soon.
- On the rat issue itself. While it persists it is felt that progress is being made. Meetings have been held between the Ratho Park representatives, Lord Morton and his agent, and Ben. SEPA and Health and Safety agencies are also fully aware and working with Ratho Park to eliminate the sewage problem. Ratho Park has committed to refunding St Mary's for the extra cost that we have incurred by hiring contractors to help deal with the issue.
- There will be a Hanging of the Greens service on December 15th at 10.30. This will be followed by lunch for those who wish to stay and then the Carol Service at 14.00.
- There had been a number of complaints regarding the number of unfamiliar hymns being sung at the Sunday Services. This will be addressed. There is also a plan to have a favourite hymns service once a month.
- The communion hymn will revert to being sung after the congregation have taken communion. Alan will play a voluntary while communion is being taken.
- While it is not the current policy for St Mary's to acknowledge birthdays by sending a card it has been decided that once a month all birthdays for that month will be recognised at the Sunday Service by being named and a singing of Happy Birthday.
- In order that congregation members who are unwell get the correct level support and good wishes from St Mary's it is asked that one of Christine, Rona or Carole are made aware of the situation

7. Treasurer's Report

Gavin distributed his report which showed that the end of October balance in the General Account was £20,296.87. This was £3,740 up on the previous month. However it should be noted that the half yearly Gift Aid return from HMRC of £4,136 had been received within the month.

The St Mary's Trust Account stood at £7,778. During the month £2,450 for new radiators in the rectory and £96 to the chimney sweep had been paid out of this account.

The Value of the SEC Unit Trust Pool on September 30th was £58,458.35 (October figure not available at the time of the meeting)

£2178 had been received to date as donations to the Building Fund Appeal.

8. Fabric Report

In addition to the other Fabric related issues already mentioned Carole had also reported :

- The light bulbs in the church have been replaced, comments so far have been mixed. There is definitely an improvement in the brightness but also some of the atmosphere that the yellower light gave has been lost.
- It had become apparent that two outside lights are either not working properly or at all, these will be attended to in due course.
- Accessibility, with particular reference to the pathway between the car park and the church north door. Carole is intending to contact the head green keeper at the hotel to ask whether he has any suggestions as to how the surface of the pathway could be altered to make it more user friendly for wheelchair users in particular but those with limited mobility in general. Lighting is another factor which should probably be addressed, with solar powered lighting now being readily available at affordable costs, this is probably much more achievable than it was in the past.

Christine told the meeting that when the chimney sweep was on-site he had informed her that there had been a fire in the chimney which could have had serious consequences. He had suggested that the chimney be swept twice a year. He will come back in January.

9. Hall Committee Report:

The plans for the Christmas Fair on November 16th, which Ella and Rona are coordinating, continue to progress. Any offers of help will be gratefully received.

Ella told the meeting that there were currently four schools who will attend the the Choir Festival on November 29th. She was hopeful that another two schools may attend.

10. Lay Rep Report:

Ted had attended the Synod on October 24th. He reported that a motion to increase Quota in 2020 by 3% and in 2021 by 10% had been approved. This was to ensure that the SEC Reserves were protected. Ted had abstained in the vote as he felt that St Mary's currently has its own financial challenges to address.

11. PVG Report

There is one current incident which is being dealt with in line with the PVG processes.

12. AGM Preparation

The AGM papers were distributed electronically in the week beginning October 28th. Denis is to request that Pippa print off a number of paper copies for those who do not use email.

Candidates for election to the positions of Lay Representative, Alternate Lay Representative and 2 Ordinary Vestry members are invited.

13. AOB

- The roles of In Touch Editor and Website Administrator require to be filled. There have been no volunteers at this time.

- Carole had made a suggestion that the printing of Order of Service sheets could be included in the Wedding Package that St Mary's offers. Christine felt that this would not be something we should progress. The reasoning being that couples would be looking for different formats and designs on the sheets. The result would be that the overhead on effort in providing the service would outweigh the financial benefit.

14. Date of Next Meeting: The next vestry meeting will be held at **7.00pm on Monday December 2nd** in the Douglas Hall.