

Presbytery Meeting Tuesday 6th March 2018 Summary

Presbytery met at Queen's Cross Parish Church for the last time in the current session, the next meeting being at Holburn West in May. The business included the following:

CrossReach

Viv Dickenson, Chief Executive of CrossReach since June 2017, was the guest speaker. CrossReach was previously known as the Church of Scotland Board of Social Responsibility and took the new name in 2005. It continues the long tradition of the Church of Scotland providing care and support for some of the most vulnerable people in Scotland having started in 1869 with the 150 year anniversary celebrations due in 2019.

CrossReach employs 2,000 staff and has 500 volunteers. With an annual expenditure of £51 million most of the funding comes from local authorities and it is the fourth largest provider in Scotland of residential care.

As the social care arm of the Church of Scotland CrossReach aims to work more closely with Presbyteries and local congregations. For more information Presbyters were directed to the following web pages;

<http://www.crossreach.org.uk> and www.socialcareforum.scot/

Ministry Changes

St George's Tillydrone

Presbytery thanked the Rev James Weir for his 15 years of Ministry at St George's Tillydrone and wished him well for his retirement from April 30th 2018.

Kingswells

Presbytery thanked the Rev Alisa McDonald for her Ministry at Kingswells for the past 6 years and wished her well on her move to the charge of Barnhill St Margaret's, Broughty Ferry, where she will be inducted on the 12th of April 2018.

Newhills

Presbytery granted permission for the Rev Hugh Wallace to demit his charge at Newhills on September 30th 2018 and noted that an opportunity to thank Mr Wallace will be given at the September meeting of Presbytery.

Safeguarding

Presbytery received the annual safeguarding report from the joint Presbytery Safeguarding Contacts. During 2017, 4 training sessions were held between January and May. Two of these included Coordinator training sessions. 92 Volunteers and 14 Coordinators and Panel Members attended.

The only trainer was not available for training sessions in the second half of 2017. Since the beginning of 2018 two trainers from Gordon Presbytery have assisted and sessions were being arranged for March and April, with the possibility of at least one further session before the summer break.

Two Coordinators have expressed an interest in becoming trainers.

Presbytery Business Review Group

Presbytery agreed at the February meeting with a proposal from the Business and Finance Committee to appoint an ad hoc group to reflect on the results of a questionnaire on how Presbytery currently undertakes its business and how this might be improved, also to reflect on the

feedback from a Presbytery conference in January and to report back with recommendations.

Presbytery noted the membership of the Business Review Group and noted its following remit:

1. To reflect on the outcomes of the Survey and Conference about how to improve the way that Presbytery goes about its business.
2. To give initial consideration to the changes to the way Presbytery operates that would be required were Aberdeen to be enlarged by the incorporation of Shetland as a single parish.
3. To consider, in particular, the frequency, content, format, conduct and location of Presbytery meetings.
4. To consider the format and content of Presbytery minutes.
5. To consider what business functions and decisions might appropriately be devolved to its Standing Committees and then reported to Presbytery.
6. To consider what other changes to the way that Standing Committees operate would make them a more effective use of Presbyters' time.
7. To submit a preliminary report with recommendations to Presbytery in May 2018, thereby enabling the Group to take account of Presbyters' questions and comments.
8. To submit a final report with recommendations to Presbytery, if possible, in June 2018.

Presbytery of Shetland

Presbytery noted that the Convener of the Business and Finance Committee, the Presbytery Clerk and the Deputy Clerk met with three representatives of the Presbytery of Shetland on 21 February 2018 to discuss the proposal that the latter be incorporated into the Presbytery of Aberdeen as a single parish. The topics discussed included the need to reduce the number of church buildings in use (currently 33), the financial implications of the proposal and the likely timescale for bringing an Act to the General Assembly (probably 2020). It was noted that the post of Transition Minister to assist with the project had already been advertised. It was agreed that the Presbytery Clerk would seek clarification about funding from the Principal Clerk, and it was suggested that the next representatives' meeting take place on Shetland in June 2018.

Presbytery Facebook

The Business and Finance Committee considered what guidance should be provided concerning requests to post information on the Presbytery Facebook page. Presbytery agreed that the Presbytery Facebook page should not publicise congregational events, but only publicise events organised by Presbytery and Church of Scotland related organisations being held locally by bodies such as CrossReach, Christian Aid and the Centre for Ministries Studies at Aberdeen University.

Meet the MPs and MSPs Event

Presbytery noted and welcomed the opportunity to display the corporate witness of the Church in Aberdeen at the forthcoming "Meet the MPs" event in the morning of Saturday 28th April, and commended it to the prayers and the support of all congregations within the Presbytery.

The event is to be held at the Boys' Brigade Headquarters in Crimon Place, Aberdeen and at the time of the Presbytery meeting 35 different congregations and Christian Agencies had signed up to exhibit. 15 are from the Church of Scotland with others from different denominations. A number of Holyrood and Westminster politicians had agreed to attend and invitations are to be sent out to

local councillors.

Use of 2018 Discretionary Allowance

Presbytery is allowed to retain as a Discretionary Allowance 5% of the Ministries and Mission Allocation paid by each church to Church of Scotland central funds. Presbytery noted that the framework for the distribution of funds from the Allowance will be maintained i.e.

- Mission projects
- Unexpected repairs
- Forecast shortfalls in M&M payments
- Unexpected change in circumstances

The balance of the Discretionary Allowance at 1st January 2018 was £97,404. Presbytery agreed several payments from the fund leaving a balance of £82,994 in March.

In order to assist the process of application for financial support from the fund a new form had been produced to be issued to Treasurers to help the Congregational Stewardship Committee in its decision making.

2018 Year of Young People

The Congregational Support Committee Report included:

Photo competition

Organised by the Church of Scotland Church and Society Council's Climate Change Project, the competition covers 10 categories from climate change to wildlife and a £50 gift voucher will be awarded to the winner of each category. Details can be found at:
<http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/get-involved/competition/> or <https://tinyurl.com/y6vtjt9s>

Year of Young People Song

Commissioned by the Church of Scotland specifically for Year of Young People and written and produced by Fischy Music, the song "Every Single Little Thing" celebrates all that children and young people bring to church life. It can be downloaded for free from:
[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/year_of_young_people/yoyp_re](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/year_of_young_people/yoyp_resources)
[sources or https://tinyurl.com/ydygo5cg](https://tinyurl.com/ydygo5cg)

Presbytery commended the Year of Young People Photo Competition and Song to Kirk Sessions and encouraged them to make the information available to young people's groups in their congregation.

LEARN publication "Children and Young People"

Presbytery commended this publication to congregations.

Covering a broad range of topics, this new collection of articles takes readers through three key components of ministry with children and young people; being church together; working together; and forming together. The resource is full of new ideas and understanding of ministry with children and young people. Copies are available from St Andrew Press (Discounts for bulk purchases):
<https://standrewpress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9780715209851/children-and-young-people> or
<https://tinyurl.com/y9b4lep3>

Vocations Information Day

The present system of recruitment of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and other ministries means attending a national vocations' day; embarking on a period of discernment; if agreed, the applicant proceeds to a national assessment conference. If accepted at that point, the enquirer becomes a candidate in training in ministry and formal training can begin at the next appropriate opportunity.

The Presbytery Ministries Committee saw a need for a local Vocations Information Day.

Presbytery agreed in principle to the Committee organising a local Vocations Information Day in early 2019 and requested:

- a. such an information day should be organised with national input;
- b. other nearby Presbyteries be invited to make an input to the organisation and programme of the day.

Property Matters

Woodside

Presbytery approved the application from Woodside Parish Church to seek authorisation to proceed with the planned improvements to the link building between the church and hall at a cost of £320,000, excluding VAT.

It was also agreed that Woodside should apply for funds from various grant awarding bodies and further supported its application for grant funding from the General Trustees.

Torry St Fittick's

Presbytery approved the urgent works to repair the roofing of the hall, and the adjacent church and stonework of Torry St. Fittick's church buildings, following an intermediate quinquennial survey, at a cost of £50,000 excluding VAT and supported the grant application to the General Trustees towards the costs.

St Machar's Cathedral

Presbytery approved the Application to seek approval for the replacement of the pews and installation of a new sound system at St Machar's Cathedral at a cost of £184,109 including VAT and noted that funds were available.

Presbytery instructed the Clerk to complete the relevant parts of the Application Forms for Woodside, Torry St Fittick's and St Machar's Cathedral and to forward them to the General Trustees for their approval.

Presbytery also:

- Nominated Mrs Lorna Glen, Session Clerk at Ferryhill Parish Church and currently Convener of the Planning and Deployment Committee, as the Moderator of Aberdeen Presbytery for 2018/2019.
- Welcomed and thanked the Readers Mr Gordon Cooper and Prof Peter MD Gray and also thanked, in his absence Mr Martin Greig.
- Noted that the Very Rev Professor Iain Torrance had transferred his membership to the Presbytery of Edinburgh and thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Presbytery of Aberdeen.
- Agreed to appoint Mr Ronald Johnstone (South Holburn) as Convener of the Property Committee.

- Noted that the majority of congregational records were inspected on February 28th 2018 and were found to be satisfactory and further noted that the remaining congregational records were to be inspected on March 9th 2018.
- Recognised the opportunities through the Living Well Cafes to provide a safe, welcoming and stimulating setting for those suffering with memory loss and dementia, and for their carers; and encouraged all Presbyters to commend its services to those they know who would benefit from attending.
- Noted that there is no Aberdeen Presbytery Youth Representative to the 2018 General Assembly.
- Noted that talks are taking place to consider a possible union between Garthdee Parish Church and Mannofield Parish Church.
- Noted the changes in the scope, and application regulations for Historic Lottery Funding grants.

Intimations included:

- Presbyters are asked to remain vigilant following recent reports to the Church of Scotland Law Department with regards to the “spoofing” of Church of Scotland email addresses, following instances of an email purporting to be from a Church of Scotland Minister being sent to a Congregational Treasurer. Please ensure that any requests for payment are from a genuine source and if in doubt, please do not respond by email.
- A reminder is offered that any emails received containing an "invoice" from a company and noting reference to the Presbytery of Aberdeen should be viewed as Spam, please delete from your in box and please do not add the company email address to your address book. Furthermore, please ensure that you do not download any attachments nor "click on" any links within these emails. As always, if ever in doubt with regards to the authenticity of an email, please do not access any links, please do not respond to the "sender" and please do not download any documents attached.
- The Jump Children's Ministry Conference will be held at Sheddocksley Baptist Church on Saturday 28th April. The theme of the event is 'God's Story. Our Story. My Story', and guest speaker will be children's author and storyteller Bob Hartman. There will also be workshops on offer. The day will run from 9:30am until 4pm and includes lunch and refreshments. Early-bird tickets are available for £15 up until Easter, after which time tickets will cost £20. For further information please access the website via <https://jumpaberdeen.org/>. To register please access:- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/jump-conference-2018-tickets-42277110977>
- All are invited to a World Partnership Day at Rubislaw Church Centre on Saturday 14th April from 9:30-2pm. Come and hear more about the work of the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland and how your congregation can be involved in a World Partnership. For those with a link, you are invited to prepare a table display showcasing your partnership. A light lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Alisa.McDonald@churchofscotland.org.uk by 1 April to register interest.
- The Centre for Ministry Studies is to host a conference titled 'Calvin for Pastors' which will be held on Saturday 12th May in the Linklater Rooms at King's College of the University of Aberdeen. To book a place, please access <https://www.store.abdn.ac.uk/product-catalogue/events/college-of-arts-and-social-sciences/school-of-divinity-history-and-philosophy/calvin-for-pastors> alternatively, please telephone Mrs Clare Davidson at the

Centre for Ministry Studies on 01224 272138. The cost of the event is £45 (unwaged £25).