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The Kirk Session and Elders met at 19.30 hours on 27 March 2024 in the Killellan Halls. The meeting was constituted in worship and prayer by the Moderator.

2. Sederunt and Apologies: the names of those attending were noted, with apologies also noted. In total 26 elders attended .

3. Minutes of the Kirk Session meetings of 29 November 2023, 29 January and 14 February and Elders meeting on 25February and 3 March 2024 had been circulated and pages 743 to 760 were duly approved

4. Matters arising from the Minutes would be covered in the agenda

5. Correspondence/reports - Session Clerk

Helen gave the following update:

The annual attestation of records had taken place on 7 February and now had been approved by Presbytery.

Helen read out a letter of thanks from Ruth Noonan for the support given by the congregation to her and the boys during their weeks here after Gary left .

A request for dog handling training classes in the West Hall was refused on the grounds that we had to ensure cleanliness for all users of the halls particularly the very young and old and their offer to sweep up dog hairs afterwards was not sufficient .

A request from Johnstone Historical Society who were seeking Grant funding to be taken under the church’s umbrella to use our charity number . Helen drew the elders’ attention that to agree to this would be a breach of our Charity/Trustee obligations . Also, their request to utilise Annabelle’s time and services would not work when she is paid by the church and fully occupied in that time. Their offer to help at Doors Open day had been most appreciated last year, nevertheless that alone could not justify using our charity number.

Ian Jackson confirmed they had other source for grant support now.

Thanks to all Elders who had contributed to the Carnival Hamper by paying their £2 and to Ina who had collected the money.

6. UPDATES

a) Presbytery Planning /Langbank update

The Moderator reported after the agreement reached with Langbank Kirk Session a joint document had been submitted to Presbytery . It had been approved by them under their Powers and had now been submitted to the Church of Scotland

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(hereafter 121) Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group (PMPIG) for their approval .

If approved the next steps would be for elders to approve the linkage, and then a congregational vote would be held in both churches on the same day, two Sundays notice would be given for this.

If 121 do not approve the linkage, then Clyde Presbytery could force a Union through, however it was noted that Clyde Presbytery supports our proposal highlighting the short notice given of the changed plans to HKK and Langbank and that Langbank has its own buildings so no change to total church property in the area.

b) Carnival update

Matthew as joint coordinator reported that everything was progressing well and made special mention of all the work done by Mike Farley with the programme preparation, noting he had secured more adverts than last year.

More programme sellers were needed and a number of other items which would be highlighted in future services.

c) Organist

Helen reported that Peter McKerrell had intimated his intention to retire from post as he approached his 80th Birthday . His immense contribution to the music at our church will be acknowledged and it was agreed Members should be given the opportunity to contribute to a gift for him . His last service would be on Sunday 31 May .

A Team would be formed to seek a new organist led by Matthew . Bill Haddow confirmed he would be the choir representative.

Further volunteers to serve on the team were asked for at the meeting but no one was forthcoming .

Matthew to approach supply organists and draw up a rota.

d) Frankie Greenwood

Frankie had requested reducing her hours from 20 to 15 now she had a new job with NHS Scotland as a Senior Educator . Matthew and Helen would meet with her to arrange how all the initiatives she has introduced can still be supported. Volunteers would be needed to support her projects . Anyone with any ideas to speak to either Barbara Ann, Helen or Matthew.

e) Register of People holding a Controlled interest in land

Helen reported that this legislation came into force in April 2022 however until the intimation in March from the Law Department of our obligations 121 had given the impression that they hoped that religious properties would be exempt from the

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requirements of the regulations. This was not the case and we had until 1 April 2024 to comply.

The Law Department suggested 3 options :

1. Employ a local solicitor to register the land.
2. Do it ourselves
3. 121 Law Department would carry out the work for a fee of £200.

We had 3 properties, namely the Manse, the West Halls and the Garden ground to register and the title to each was in the name of different previous office bearers.

Since the penalty for non-compliance or incorrect compliance was £5000, Helen sought approval to instruct the C of S Law Department to carry out the registration for us. She did not wish to take on this responsibility with the possible financial penalties

In response to a question, it was explained that we assumed the late notification from 121 on 15 March was due to them hoping we were exempt.

It was agreed that the Law Department could be instructed, and they had advised that due to volume of work they might be delayed in submitting the registration however we had in writing that this would meet our obligations.

7. Items for discussion:

1. Finance - Approval of the accounts for 2023

The draft accounts had been circulated and were still with the Auditor .Since neither Jack nor Eric were able to attend tonight , elders had been asked to direct any questions to Jack in advance of the meeting.

In response to one question, it was agreed to check with Jack on the manner of dealing with the utilities .

Subject to speaking to Jack about this point the accounts were duly approved.

1. Kirk Session Structure

A Letter of concern had been received by the Session Clerk .

In this it was set out that the signatories therein called for reinstatement of the session format whereby all elders are deemed to be members of the session have right to attend sessions meeting be heard and to vote on issues coming before it .

The letter also set out that if after consultation with all Elders it is agreed that the session is too large and unwieldy then a system of rotation on an annual basis or other agreed system should be adopted .

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The Moderator pointed out that this letter had been signed by 29 elders and it was not known if all 65 elders had been consulted although it was not believed they had been, so we did not know everyone’s view.

Ian Jackson confirmed he had not sought all elders views but just a group to show it was not just his opinion.

Considerable discussion took place allowing everyone who wished to express a view or make comment to be heard. It was pointed out that all elders have the right to attend session meeting and express their opinions and be heard. On average only about 30 attended in the past .

Views were stated that several elders felt they did not have the chance now to fulfil the obligation they took on as elders and did not feel included .

Lack of knowledge was alleged about what was happening in the Church, although it was pointed out that all Teams’ reports are circulated pre-KS meetings and more detailed minutes as quickly as possible afterwards.

Views were stated that some elders still felt they did not know what was happening on the Teams even although the reports were given. It was explained that in fact the decision making was done through these Teams with deliverances at the KS meetings.

Whilst some elders expressed the view that the signatories of the letter wanted back to old system, it was acknowledged that in a big group only some people speak and that it only takes a small number of people if need to make urgent decisions. It was also suggested that perhaps being openly invited, or expected, to attend KS meeting and being able to have views heard would be enough.

There was criticism of too much reliance on computer communication and that meant the church lost its personality.

It was accepted that although initially the communication between the KS and wider eldership was not ideal, things had improved there.

Views were also expressed that many elders felt they had given their time to their church and its time for the younger people to step up and take on the roles.

The Moderator pointed out that it was important for everyone to agree what was wanted and it was clear that although many had felt excluded, in her time here that had changed and it was clear that KS meetings were open to all, even if many elders did not choose to attend, and that all elders could express their views whilst accepting that certain matters may need to be taken in private if commercially or pastorally sensitive.

The current KS members also gave their view that many of the comments made tonight and at the earlier meeting appeared to be openly criticising KS members who had volunteered to serve and had tried to do so diligently and faithfully and appeared now to be blamed for everything they had done.

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One former KS member explained that due to hurtful comments made to him when he was on the KS he nearly left the Church.

However, an assurance was given by some of the Elders attending that this was not a criticism of the current session despite how it was delivered but was against the system which had been voted in.

Elders were reminded that the current session changed on a revolving basis yet last year no new nominations had come forward.

The Moderator pointed out that everyone needs to be aware that we need to resolve this somehow as it is not a good atmosphere to try and attract a new minster. This divergence of opinion was now known in the community and did not paint the church in a welcoming or good light.

The Moderator also pointed out that in her last charge all elders served on one of the Teams and this should be expected too in HKK.

The discussion concluded with the moderator thanking all elders for expressing their views which would be duly considered again by the KS. It was clear that elders wanted to feel included, notified of meetings and welcomed at all meetings not just the elders conferences. However, there must be a quid pro quo that they then agree to take part in Teams and be fully engaged in the life of the church.

1. Property Manse, Church and West Hall

Jim Mclaughlin spoke to his detailed report explaining about the work needed in the Manse with underfloor insulation, redecoration of all rooms and new carpeting. Window replacement was desirable and a new ensuite.

In relation to the church there was a serious issue with the heating and new carpeting needed . Also, the entrance porch needed improving.

The moderator stressed that starting the 150th celebrations should commence with a deep clean of the church.

In the West Halls a grand plan to refurbish all the halls might need be to be delayed but the toilets and kitchen and entrance needed upgraded and costs were awaited .

The team would also look to see if the disabled access could be improved but the steps and height of the entrance from the car park made this problematic.

*Deliverances* to:

1. Approve a replacement carpet and the redecoration of the entrance vestibule
2. Consider replacing the heating system in the church

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3.Consider the proposals and subject to costs approve the refurbishment of the above areas in the west halls

All duly approved

Significant fundraising would be needed and furthermore the Moderator in response to an enquiry to Finance had been horrified how low some people’s contributions to the church were.

This would be highlighted in future Records and need to be addressed.

D. BB

The Moderator explained that the current captain Stuart Willibond had intimated his intention to resign at the end of the current session after Parents night . The only other warranted officer in the company section George King was also stepping down.

At the meeting of all the leaders the Moderator has ascertained the following information about the BB

Anchor Boys - led by Gillian and John McFarlane – 24 boys.

Junior Section – led by John and Gillian McFarlane and Sheila McHarg – 21 boys.

Company section – led by Stuart Willibond and George King, two officers (not warranted ? ) with 1 helper - 28 boys.

Unless these officers/ helpers were willing and able to be trained or other warranted officers were found then the company section would need to close.

There were also implications of this for on the HKK BB Pipe Band.

The Moderator had asked for confirmation on their insurance position, especially now that HKK girls were not a GB organisation and other band members had not paid their fees to the BB.

A volunteer to deal with the admin would assist any incoming captain or officers.

No one at the meeting volunteered and a request would go out on Facebook .

The Moderator also pointed out that the whole company only paid £450 for all their usages of the halls which was a very small sum for the use of the halls and to date the church had also met the Capitation fees of the officers at £350 so in fact the church only received £100.

The Finance Team asked the Moderator to point out to the BB that they would be expecting an increase in the BB contributions for their lets, for them to pay the capitation fees out of their funds and the Finance team would contact them about this.

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Also, too much reliance was being placed on one couple for the other sections, which the elders were now aware.

**SUBMITED REPORTS**

Reports from the Teams had been circulated and the deliverances from Property had been approved.

Mission Team leader highlighted that assistance for Christian Aid would be needed.

The Moderator asked the Team to consider the retiral offering charities going forward as perhaps HKK needed the money.

Safeguarding: Sandra asked the session to ratify the appointment of Daniel Evans, Ben McHarg and Jack Stewart to work with the Pipe Band which was approved

Pastoral team stressed to let them know if anyone needed visited.

**AOB**

Presbytery Elder – after many years’ service Roy Anderson was stepping down and a volunteer needed for that role who would attend about 4 meeting a year and report to session of what was happening at Presbytery.

This needed to be approved by May

Annabelle was pursing new signs for the Church and obtaining quotes.

The Mother and Toddlers group possibly might have to close when the person currently running it steps down although it now looked as though someone had been found. Views were expressed that this should be a church organisation as we advertise it .

A Summer ball is being planned for the 150th celebrations and a list of the other suggested events was on the notice board

Also agreed that in the halls the church buys all the tea coffee etc rather than each organisation storing food all over the kitchen. Some one to over see this needed .

We were aiming to be an eco-congregation and needed volunteers to take this forward .

Kay as Treasurer asked if she could be copied into all the reports pre meeting to enable her to be better informed at the meeting.

Helen reminded the Elders about the conference on the 28th which will take place on Sunday 28th April after morning worship. It is hoped there will be a good attendance of all elders.

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Date of next Session meeting to be intimated.

The meeting finished by saying the Grace together.

Signed

Moderator Session clerk

Date: