

## Minutes of Finance & Property Meeting at Willaston 8.15pm Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

1. Minutes from meeting 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015

*Approved*

2. Matters arising

*None beyond a discussion and reiteration of item 6 concerning quinquennial inspections.*

3. Manses:

Onchan

*Work has commenced with a completion date of 3 June.*

*The architects, Partington Nixon and Kinrade sought five tenders for the work although only three contractors responded. Of these Organic Construction Solutions offered the lowest quotation and on the architects' recommendation the circuit stewards have accepted Organic's quote. Regrettably the range of quotes was much higher than anticipated and it has been necessary to curtail the scope of the project in order to contain costs within the previously approved expenditure of £90,000 of which the Kelly Trust have generously agreed to meet 50%.*

*Some desirable but non-essential items have been removed from the project for example conversion of the central heating to oil, replacement of internal doors, an increased parking area, patio and walled garden. However on commencement of the work it became evident that some essential work is needed to the garage roof and replacement rather than reuse of kitchen units is desirable although not necessarily essential.*

*The finance and property committee considered whether or not it was appropriate to recommend a further £10,000 of expenditure and after careful discussion the meeting agreed to support this recommendation of the circuit stewards.*

Devonshire Road

*At the previous meeting, finance and property recommended expenditure of £50,000 at Devonshire Road and this proposal was put to the circuit meeting on 9 December 2015. However an amendment to this proposal was made increasing the maximum expenditure to £65,000 and this was the figure approved by the circuit meeting subject to the circuit making an application to the Kelly Trustees. The work is due to take place during the month of August.*

4. Sale of Circuit Property

- a. Pine Hill

*An offer of £240,000 has been accepted; exchange of contracts and completion is anticipated on 11 February 2016.*

*It is anticipated that the sale proceeds will be subject to a Connexional levy although at the previous finance and property meeting the treasurer agreed to approach property division to ascertain if expenditure on the Onchan and Devonshire Road manses can be offset against the Connexional levy.*

b. Kirk Michael manse

*Cowley Groves have been replaced as agents by Manx Move who confidently anticipate achieving a sale close to £245,000. Cowley Groves' asking price of £274,950 did not attract any viewings never mind offers.*

c. Croit-e-Caley

*No progress to report.*

5. Property schemes to go forward to Circuit

Willaston

*Richard Hall reported an approach he had received from the Douglas Borough Council after the last finance and property meeting but before the circuit meeting. The Borough are interested in acquiring the building at Willaston as the site is preventing the creation of an access road the Borough are hoping to provide as part of an extensive redevelopment of the area. Although the Borough have offered to provide an alternative building, Richard suggested that we may need to think more widely about the options available which may include accepting a cash offer should we feel that to be appropriate.*

*After discussion, and noting both the valuable work of the Live at Home scheme operating from the existing building and the need to provide for the future work of Live at Home, regardless of any conclusion on the future of our existing building, it was agreed that a working party would be formed to review the future of our work in Willaston and the existing building. Circuit meeting permission will be sought to continue the discussions with the Borough and to form the working party comprising Richard Hall, a circuit steward and a member from each of the Trinity and Promenade churches. It is envisaged that this group will report quarterly to both finance and property and circuit.*

6. Budgets 2016/17

**a. Praying the Keils.** *Frank Cowin reported that more cash would be needed next year as printing may no longer be available on a pro bono basis. The meeting agreed to*

*an increase from £300 to £400 in next year's proposed budget. **After the meeting it was noted that the cost of this could reasonably be taken from the district advance account which is intended to be used for mission***

- b. **Ministers Relocation Expenses.** *At the end of this Connexional year we could have as many as five ministers to relocate. [RH/DS/ING X 2/North Section] While some of the costs are met by the Connexion the circuit stewards consider it prudent to provide a budget of £10,000. The meeting noted that DPC had recommended an approach for Connexional assistance but this cannot be relied on. The treasurer will consider whether or not this expenditure arises in the current year or the next and he expressed the view that this was an item of the circuit expense account in the year it arises.*
- c. **Art Collection.** *Although a firm budget is not yet available the group working on the proposal to bring the Methodist Church art collection to the island in 2018 need some indication of the funding that may be available from the circuit. The commitment needs to be given to the trustees of the art collection immediately after the circuit meeting on 9 March. While a booking fee of £1,500 will cover insurance while the collection is on the island, other costs and particularly transport raise the likely total cost to something between £12,000 and £15,000.*

*The working group believe that funding will be available from the Arts Council and from our ecumenical partners. Richard Hall has had an exploratory conversation with the Bishop who offered some encouragement.*

*After a careful discussion the circuit stewards proposal that the circuit offer to meet 25% of the total costs subject to a maximum of £3,000*

**After the meeting it was noted that the cost of this could reasonably be taken from the district advance account which is intended to be used for mission.**

- d. **Sierra Leone.** *At synod in September 2015 Paul Craine presented a project for consideration and indicated a total cost of £42,000. The proposal and the suggestion that we could accelerate the implementation by providing a degree of temporary support from circuit funds is fully documented in the minutes of that meeting.*

*Overseas Aid have confirmed their willingness to fund 50% of the project provided the remainder is in place first. So far the Sierra Leone committee have raised £8,000.*

*This leaves the following conundrum: wait for the Sierra Leone committee to raise the balance of £13,000 and by so doing risk losing the support of Overseas Aid as well as delaying the completion of the project. Or permit the circuit to advance £13,000 to the Sierra Leone committee strictly on the basis that overseas aid will contribute the pledged £21,000 and that the committee will undertake fundraising activities until they have repaid the advance from circuit funds.*

*After discussion it was agreed to recommend to circuit that an advance of £13,000 be made to the serial Sierra Leone committee to enable this work to proceed as a matter of urgency*

7. Any other business

*None*

8. Date and time of next meetings

*Willaston 8:15 pm 11 May 2016*

*Willaston 8:15 pm 20 July 2016*