

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

COUNCIL OF ASSEMBLY

18 June 2018

MINUTES

The Council of Assembly met within the Church Offices, Edinburgh, on Monday 18 June 2018, and was constituted with prayer. A list of those attending is attached to this Minute as Appendix I.

1. TRUSTEES' MEETING

The discussion which took place under this item is contained in a Record Apart. Laura Dunlop QC was in attendance to moderate the discussion.

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Convener welcomed Alison Fenton and John Chalmers as new members. Jennifer Adams had left the meeting by this point and was also welcomed. Derek Browning was welcomed as the immediate past Moderator and apologies were noted. A formal record of declarations of interest was kept separately.

3. AGREE AGENDA

The Agenda for the meeting was agreed.

4. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Items listed in the deliverance for the Council of Assembly were circulated in the papers for the meeting and included an item in relation to the Joint Report of the Council of Assembly, Ministries Council, Mission and Discipleship Council, Panel of review and Reform and Legal Questions Committee. A summary paper was also provided for information which outlined the four occasions on which the Council reported.

5. ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Council's Annual Operational Plan for 2018-2019 offered a summary of the key priorities along with detailed breakdown of responsibilities, milestones and outcomes for the tasks to be undertaken. A cover note accompanied the Plan with suggestions for discussion and planning in relation to the Radical Action Plan. In addition the Convener thanked the Senior Management Team for a paper offering some reflections on the counter motion in respect of the Strategic Plan which was produced out of their meeting on 29 May.

Following full and detailed discussions the Secretary agreed to make the necessary amendments to the Annual Operational Plan. Noting the range of ongoing commitments it was agreed that the agenda for Council meetings over the coming year would be reviewed and revised to address issues of capacity and to allow for focus on the key priorities laid out in the Plan. Members were asked to respond to papers as these were made available via the portal with questions to be submitted as far as possible in advance of the meeting.

Members agreed that 20 August, marked in diaries as a potential additional meeting date for the Council, would become a day conference dedicated solely to discussion on the Radical Action Plan. Details of this Extraordinary Meeting were to be confirmed including any preparatory requirements of members. Arrangements would be made for external facilitation of conversations.

6. BUILDINGS

Details of the National Office Buildings Project were provided in the Annual Operational Plan and a separate paper contained a reminder of the criteria by which the 3 options would be assessed. Raymond Young sought assurance of ongoing input from and joint working with the General Trustees and such assurance was given. It was confirmed that this piece of work would relate to the conversations around strategy. Council noted that there would be significant cost implications. Staff interests would be part of considerations including retention and recruitment. The Head of HR reported that information was being gathered on how staff travel to work.

The key criterion which impacted on the locations to be analysed was based around the agendas for sustainability and climate change. Council was invited to reaffirm the criteria which had resulted in the following potential locations: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth city centres.

7. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS

For future meetings it was proposed that written reports would be taken as read unless it was otherwise specified within the report that discussion and decision was required. Councils were invited to submit written reports timeously ahead of the meeting and suitable time would be permitted on the agenda. The reporting form template would be redrafted to include financial reporting and details of any challenges or issues. There would no longer be a requirement for presentations. To allow for best use of time, further consideration would be given regarding who would be invited to attend meetings in order to report to Council.

7.1 Church and Society Council

Members noted the written update from the Church and Society Council and welcomed the work of a Gender Justice Officer, located within the Church and Society Council, engaging with Councils and Departments to support their gender-based work.

7.2 World Mission Council

Members noted the written update from the World Mission Council. There would be a focus over the coming year on highlighting how partners around the world were engaged in interfaith relationship building and working with congregations and Presbyteries to inform the Church more widely. Neil Glover offered to review a decision made that the World Mission Council would no longer have input in the *Vocations Information Day* events which were organised and delivered by the Ministries Council.

Following the departure of a staff member the team had reduced by one post. The decision was taken by the Central Services Committee Executive (Staffing) to suspend an appointment and this would be reviewed at the end of the year. A workforce plan was yet to be put in place and the difficulty of dealing with individual cases in the meantime was noted.

7.3 Mission and Discipleship Council

With new pieces of work in addition to ongoing tasks, allied to a reduction in budget and staffing numbers, the Council would explore co-option to support the work.

7.4 Ecumenical Relations

Members noted with regret the decision by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to no longer accept invitations to their Moderator of the General Assembly, or any other formal delegation, to attend the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church and to no longer issue invitations to those two denominations to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Councils were encouraged to make efforts to affirm continuing relationships. The Moderator and the Principal Clerk were of the view that it would be an important piece of

symbolism for the Church of Scotland to continue to issue an invitation to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to attend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland despite acknowledging that this invitation would be declined.

8. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meetings held on 9 April (COA7) and 8 May 2018 (COAExtra2) were approved.

9. MATTERS ARISING

9.1 World Mission Council (Min 116.1)

With regard to the *Let Us Build a House* project it was explained that the money was being reused to support work in rebuilding community infrastructure and communities. Those who donated were aware of the funds being used for this purpose, which was similar to the original intention.

10. FINANCE

10.1 Minutes of Finance Group

The Council received the draft Minutes of the Finance Group meeting of 4 June (FG1 (2018-2019)).

10.2 Finance Group Report

Mr Watt highlighted the following matters:

- a) Management Accounts to 30 April 2018: The Council noted the Management Accounts to 30 April 2018. A correction to the overview of the Management Accounts was noted as follows: on page 2 under the heading World Mission Council and Christian Aid, amend the word 'surplus' in the first line to read 'deficit'.
- b) List of Grants: A list of grants paid in 2017 was received and it was noted that further work would be carried out to confirm which of these grants were restricted, unrestricted, discretionary and mandatory payments. The Finance Department would also follow up on some anomalies which had been identified.
- c) Contribution to Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS): Further to receiving details out of an ongoing review of ACTS the Finance Group concurred with the recommendation of the Ecumenical Relations Committee that the Church should withhold the final two instalments of the quarterly payments for the remainder of 2018. This was based on the strength of the financial position of ACTS and, following the outcome of actions recommended by the review, a decision would be made on the appropriate level of future funding.

11. PROPERTY SALES AND PURCHASES

The Solicitor agreed to prepare a written report of property sales and purchases for future meetings.

After receiving a verbal report and discussion on the relevant details Council approved the following:

- a) The new leases of Unit 3 at Templeton Business Park, Glasgow and extension of existing lease of Unit 5 there; and new lease of 20 Westfield Avenue, Edinburgh to replace existing lease of Unit 3 at Canal Court, Edinburgh.
- b) Council approved, in principle, the new leases of The Old Lodge, Boquhan Estate, Stirling and Dunmore, Helenslee Road, Dumbarton, subject to Viv Dickenson and the Solicitor being satisfied with the final terms. Both were proposed ten year leases with the option to buy after three years and break-off options would be built in.

- c) The sale of West Lodge, Inglewood, Alloa and The Old Schoolhouse, Midmar.

12. GOVERNANCE

12.1 Report of Governance Group

Comments on the draft Data Protection Policy were being received and this would be reviewed by the Group at its next meeting and brought to Council thereafter.

12.2 Deputising Arrangements for Council of Assembly

On occasions when a Convener and/or Secretary of a Council could not be present at a Council of Assembly meeting, it was encouraged that a deputy, either a council member, or a senior member of staff, or both, attend. The deputy in attendance shall have access to the appropriate Council papers and have the right to participate fully in discussions. They would not have the right to vote or otherwise participate in decisions taken.

13. CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

- 13.1** The Central Services Committee met on 14 June 2018 and discussed, amongst other things, the strategy for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) investments. A report on this would be brought to Council in November.

Issues relating to a recent email outage were discussed and recommendations for improvements were made. It was noted that a written report would be produced for future meetings.

- 13.2** The Council received the Minutes of the CSC Executive (Staffing) meeting of 14 May (CSC Exec7 (2017-2018)) and the Draft Minutes of 11 June (CSC Exec1 (2018-2019)).

14. SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

There was nothing further to report in addition to earlier discussions.

15. COMMUNICATION

There was nothing to report at this time.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no formal correspondence received and it was agreed, however, that it would be helpful to report on any relevant electronic communications. It was noted that there were comments made on Facebook to suggest that some of the people who attended the roadshows felt that their views were not reflected in the outcome of the debate on the Strategic Plan at the General Assembly.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A schedule of meeting dates for 2018-2019 was provided. A day conference would take place on Monday 20 August 2018 as an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to consider the Radical Action Plan. The next Ordinary Meeting would be the overnight meeting on Sunday 16 and Monday 17 September 2018.

Notwithstanding the challenges of the use of video conferencing with a large group of people it was felt that this may prove a practical solution in some cases and this would be explored further. The request was also made to have the hearing loop system available at Council meetings.

The Meeting was closed with Prayer.

APPENDIX I

COUNCIL OF ASSEMBLY

18 June 2018

Sederunt:

Jennifer Adams
Ian Alexander
Sally Bonnar
David Brackenridge
Derek Browning
John Chalmers
Viv Dickenson
Alison Fenton
Richard Frazer
Neil Glover
Martin Johnstone
Anne Lamont
Elaine McCloghry
Andrew McGowan
John McPake
Anne Macintosh
Mary Macleod
Ruth MacLeod
Angus Mathieson
Norma Rolls
Jayne Scott
Martin Scott
Norman Smith
Bill Steele
David Watt
George Whyte
Ronald Wright
Raymond Young

Apologies:

John Corrigan
Alistair Gibb
Isobel Hunter
Alan Sorensen

In Attendance:

Laura Dunlop QC (*item 1*)
Carron Lunt
Pauline Wilson