

Record of the Lismore Church Working Party
Church House, 5 October 2022
Draft

Present

Core Members: Andy Hough (Community Trust), Dugald Cameron, Mary MacDougall (Session), Jennifer Baker (Historical Society), Laura Savill (Public Hall),
Associates: Stephen Green, Bob Hay (Secretary).
Observer: Arthur Cross

There were no apologies.

1. Minutes of 6 September.

Accepted as a record of the meeting.

2. Matters arising and Actions from the Minutes of 6 September.

List of Contacts SG was compiling a list of landowners to contact.

Visitor Numbers: MM to report on ferries to the next meeting.

Graveyard: MC to report on contact with Argyll & Bute Council

All carried forward

How other Churches have approached things. In progress (BH)

Historic Environment Scotland

AH would circulate copies of the correspondence with HES, including the possibility of joining the Heritage Trust Network

3. Feedback from Groups (including time line of CofS decisions)

Session

DC reported that the Lismore Kirk Session and the Congregation had agreed unanimously to recommend transfer of the church building, the church house and the glebe lands to community ownership. This had now been endorsed by the Presbytery Property Committee. The matter would now come before a full meeting of the Argyll & Bute Presbytery before being sent on to the General Commissioners of the Church of Scotland. No time line was available for this process

DC would provide AH with names of Commissioners to contact.

Development Trust

Trust members were cautious about taking on overall responsibility for a community acquisition of the church assets, because of capacity concerns. The first priority of the Trust was the affordable housing project. It was considered that there needed to be a clear statement of the reasons why the Trust, rather than a new body, should undertake this work.

Historical Society

BH would circulate a Vision document, once it had been scrutinised by the directors.

Public Hall

LS reported that the Hall directors remained uncertain about the capacity of the island to undertake the project.

4. Finance

Requirements

AH reviewed the finance that would be required to start the project, concentrating on the resources needed to upgrade the church house to meet the standards and regulations for letting the property (water quality, insulation etc). It would be important to draw on the expertise of session members who were already dealing with these issues. It was noted that, if acquired, the church house, as an asset, could be used as collateral in raising finance.

Existing Funding

AH reviewed his findings from the most recent Lismore Kirk accounts (2018). It was noted that the congregational givings were for the support of its spiritual life, and would not be available for the maintenance of the property.

In recognition of this, it was proposed that a start should be made on setting up an island fund (sub-fund of the Trust) to accumulate donations for “The Support of the Cathedral Church of St Moluag”, with a promotional page on the island website.

Potential Future Funding

In view of the substantial finance that would be required for the upgrading of the church building, it was proposed to draw up a list of potential Benefactors.

BH would continue to accumulate information about sources of grant funding. No applications could be made until the acquisition of the property.

5. Feedback to the Community by AH

The proposed Agenda for the meeting was approved by the meeting:

1. Remit/purpose and brief from the Community Council meeting on 23 June
2. What the working group has achieved: a. Principles. b. Kirk Session and Presbytery decisions
3. What the working group has not been able to achieve, and why. Including what is known about initiatives elsewhere.
4. AH view of Risks, and Next Steps
5. Questions and Discussion
6. Next Steps

6. AOCB

It was agreed that the working party should continue, and be called as necessary, to consider new information.