

Perth North Church Kirk Session

Approved Minute of the Meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2025

At 1900 hrs in the Tryst

At the start of the meeting [REDACTED] Joint Session Clerk, offered a welcome not only to elders and visitors but to our Interim Moderator, [REDACTED], who had kindly agreed to moderate our meeting in the continued absence of [REDACTED]

1. Opening Worship and Constitution

From The Message, [REDACTED] read a couple of short passages from 1 Corinthians, Chapter 4 which reminded us that we are all both leaders and servants in Christ's church – and here in Perth North. Every church suffers internal issues from time to time, but what matters is our ability to recognise these issues when they arise and take steps to deal with them. This is a challenging time for the church of today particularly in the light of attitudes towards Christians. But what we should always try and keep in focus is what the Gospel is all about – to serve Christ and his people.

After constituting the meeting in prayer, he handed over to [REDACTED] and invited him to take a lead on the business of the meeting.

2. Attendance and Apologies (as per Attendance Register)

Elders	24
Apologies	07
Visitors	03
Total Attendance	27

3. The late [REDACTED]

As this was the first Kirk Session meeting since we learned of [REDACTED] passing on Monday 3 February 2025, [REDACTED] lead a tribute. We wanted to remember and give thanks for [REDACTED] who was ordained as an elder in 1978 and served with great distinction, as both Assistant Session Clerk and as Principal Session Clerk, for a total of 12 years. He was a man of great faith who devoted his life to serving the Lord he loved. We will miss him dearly. As a mark of respect, all those present were invited to stand, in silence, for a minute, so that we could each remember and give thanks for [REDACTED]

At the end of the short period of silence [REDACTED] proceeded to thank everyone for their observance and confirmed that he would be contacting [REDACTED] to let her know of this fitting acknowledgement.

Before turning to the Agenda for the business of the meeting [REDACTED] took the opportunity to apologise for the ever-increasing volume of papers which we are having to issue ahead of Kirk Session meetings. We acknowledged that this month had been particularly bad – for reasons which he would come to.

4. Agree Agenda, and Declarations of Interest

It was noted that both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had each requested to bring an Item up under AOCB.

There being no objections, or other requests, it was agreed to follow the Agenda as presented. [REDACTED] emphasised the intention to go into a short Private Session, immediately at the end of our Main Meeting, to deal with the two Items as listed under Agenda Item 4.1.

There were no Declarations of Interest expressed.

5. Minute of previous meeting – 21 January 2025 – Main Meeting – P01

5.1 Accuracy

In the absence of any comments, or suggested changes, the draft Minute was duly approved as it stood.

5.2 Matters Arising, not covered by Agenda Items:

5.2.1 Network

5.2.1.1 City Centre Mission – draft Minute of meeting on 22 January 2025 – P02

By way of update, [REDACTED] confirmed that the Funding Bid to Presbytery had been submitted last week and that she had since spoken to the Presbytery Clerk, [REDACTED], who was generally supportive. The next meeting of the City Centre Mission grouping is to take place at 10am on 19 March 2025 at St. Matthew's Church.

5.2.2 Pastoral Care – feedback on Pastoral Care & Bereavement Conference

██████████ confirmed that she and ██████████ had both attended this training course, run by Perth Presbytery, at St. Matthew's Church on Saturday, 22 February 2025. There had been approx. 30 attendees - mostly from rural churches outwith Perth – from across the Presbytery. The day consisted of mainly discussion and sharing of feedback. Whilst it was good to meet up with members from other congregations, it was reassuring to note that many of them are struggling with similar pastoral issues encountered at Perth North.

6. InTogether -P03

██████████ spoke glowingly of the Film Premiere held on Friday, 21 February 2025 at Riverside Church where invited guests and visitors joined members of the FunTogether Playgroup to watch a Promotional video created to advertise the work of the group. This event was made even more enjoyable by copious amounts of popcorn being on offer along with refreshments etc. ██████████ reported that other groups have visited “InTogether” and “FunTogether” and have been excited about what is happening – seeds are being sown and much positive feedback is being received. Two videos have been produced, one for churches and the other secular.

Whilst elders may be interested to view the church video at a future Kirk Session meeting, it was agreed, following an excellent suggestion from ██████████, to show the church video at our Annual Stated Meeting in April this year.

7. Presbytery

7.1 Summary of meeting on 1 February 2025 – P04

██████████, our Presbytery Representative, had nothing to add.

██████████ suggested that the Item on Page 4, under “Bertha Park” merited further discussion particularly in the light of a circular follow-up e-mail he had received last Thursday from the Presbytery Clerk. This emphasised that Presbytery has had no success in securing another “Supervising Congregation” to take over from Riverside when they relinquish this role at Easter. As an interim measure, Presbytery are seeking to explore the prospects for a few “Sponsoring Congregations” – not fully defined – to come on board in the hope that this may encourage another “Supervising Congregation” to come forward. It is suggested that the role of a “Sponsoring Congregation” would be more limited than that of a “Supervising Congregation” and may only involve the ability to offer general support and encouragement to Bertha Park as well as the possibility of putting someone forward to stand on the Core Leadership Team.

There was a hint, in the e-mail that, at the end of the day, if no “Supervising Congregation” can be found, this could put the Bertha Park Initiative in jeopardy.

Much discussion followed. First and foremost, there was considerable sadness expressed at the prospect that Bertha Park may be forced to fold. None of us wanted to see that happening. However, there was a recognition from Session that Perth North is already pretty stretched in terms of mission and outreach, not least in our capacity as the “Supervising Congregation” for InTogether. We also had to be mindful of what may be asked of us, down the line, in terms of supporting other churches in the North Network as per the Presbytery Mission Plan. Thus, taking on another “supervising” role with Bertha Park is probably beyond us. However, Perth North already has a dedicated team of volunteers who regularly support Bertha Park. We may, therefore, be in a position to consider taking on a “sponsoring” role if we can be satisfied that our obligations would not extend beyond the support and encouragement presently offered. [REDACTED] is, meantime, to revert to Presbytery to seek a clearer idea of what may be expected of us. Beyond that, the name of [REDACTED] was mentioned as someone who has taken a great interest in Bertha Park, and supported events there, and who might have been willing to join the Core Leadership Team (we didn’t know, however, if this role had to be carried out by a serving elder - so this may require to be investigated).

7.2 Appointment of PNC Presbytery Representative for 2025/26

[REDACTED] was delighted to confirm that [REDACTED] had, once again, agreed to continue in this role for another year. In the absence of any other candidates, his appointment was unanimous, and he was warmly thanked.

8. Roll Keeper and Data Protection

8.1 Temporary Roll Keeper’s Report – P05

This was noted, and accepted, with thanks.

8.2 Data Protection

No report

9. 2024 Trustees Annual Report + Accounts (unexamined version) – P06

First of all, [REDACTED] proceeded to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the text for this document. It gives the reader a very full, detailed and encouraging story of our church’s work in 2024. He stressed that the version being presented tonight was an unexamined version (ie not as yet audited) so there was scope to alter and/or amend as appropriate.

[REDACTED] thought it would be prudent to include, at the end of the Parish Report, the names of those bodies who had provided funds for our Parish Work, (believed to be Gannochy Trust, Souter Trust and P and K Council). [REDACTED] offered to confirm these details for [REDACTED]

Before speaking to the Accounts, [REDACTED], Church Treasurer, thanked our secretary, [REDACTED] for her invaluable help in compiling, and presenting, the financial

information. He then proceeded to give a comprehensive summary of various elements within the Accounts and recorded appreciation for all attempts to reduce our overheads, particularly the salary of our Church Officer (by dint of a reduction in his working hours) and energy costs etc. Going forward, the Finance Group would be looking carefully at utilising the “Legacy” monies which are currently held on account. Whilst he concluded his remarks by offering his personal thanks to the other members of the Finance Group [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]), [REDACTED] echoed the sentiments of the Session when she thanked [REDACTED] most warmly for all his hard work over the year.

10. Reports from Session Groups:

10.1 Discipleship – no report

10.2 Fellowship

[REDACTED] reported that the kitchen off the Main Hall is being kitted out and is beginning to come into operation.

10.2.1 Guild – [REDACTED] had no report.

10.3 City Centre – P07

In updating her Report, [REDACTED] informed Session of the intention to run two Lent soup lunches (to consist of soup/bread/tray bake/coffee) between 11am and 2pm on both 12 and 19 April. Session was fully supportive. She is looking for volunteers and will want to intimate in church. Noting that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are both going to undertake an on-line food hygiene course.

10.4 Parish

In [REDACTED] absence, [REDACTED] noted his e-mail to her of 24 February which she read out as follows:

“Over the last five days (so after the deadline for my Parish Report), we have meaningfully engaged with over 50 members of the Tulloch community. Our Wednesday lunch-time group with the P7’s is proving incredibly successful, with over 15 attending regularly. Also on Wednesday, we ran a P1 family community event at the Tulloch Community Centre where we had over 25 people in attendance. We played dodgeball and ate dinner together. Finally, this evening was our first P7 drop-in at the Hub. We had 12 P7s come. We played games, had dinner and a good discussion.”

10.5 Facilities

10.5.1 Draft policies (based on CoS Templates) for review and subsequent adoption- P08-12

[REDACTED] explained the context which relates to the Presbytery’s upcoming Annual Inspection of Congregational and Safeguarding Records (which in the case of Perth North is to take place on 31 March). Tonight is the start of a process to put in place various CoS Policies which Perth North does not currently have and which, we have been told, are mandatory. The process will be along the same

lines as that adopted a couple of years ago when we introduced a Whistleblowing Policy to Perth North. At the Inspection, [REDACTED] will be able to confirm that we are addressing these omissions and have things in hand. The process will also, in any event, demonstrate good governance not only on the part of Session but on us as individual Trustees.

What has been presented are draft policies based on templates of the CoS. It is considered impracticable to start going through each of these policies tonight. Instead, Session agreed to allow [REDACTED] to form a small team (still to be selected) to undertake a detailed review before coming back to Session at a later date with “final” drafts for approval.

10.5.2 New opening hours of Church office

[REDACTED] advised that, due to the previously agreed change in the Church Officer’s hours of work, the opening hours of the church office will, as from Monday, 3 March 2025, be as follows:

Monday – 10am to 12 noon (Volunteer)

Tuesday – 10am to 12 noon (Volunteer)

Wednesday – 10am to 12 noon (Church Secretary + Volunteer)

Thursday – 10am to 12 noon (Church Secretary + Volunteer).

(Office closed on a Friday).

She confirmed that the external signage and the message on the office answering machine will be changed.

There is to be a reception held for the office volunteers, by way of a “Thank you”, on Wednesday, 5 March from 11.30-12.30pm in the Tryst.

10.5.3 Office Volunteers and Church Officer Volunteers

[REDACTED] went on to offer thanks not only to all key holders (locking up gates on a Sunday for [REDACTED]), but also to all those who have agreed to take on relief Church Officer duties on a Sunday. Rotas and Duty Sheets have been issued to all concerned. [REDACTED] is to continue as Part-time Church Officer 2 consecutive Sundays per month and the other relief Volunteers will cover the remaining 2 Sundays on a rotational basis.

[REDACTED] was personally thanked for all she has been doing in seeking volunteers, creating and establishing Rotas and Duty Sheets, and liaising with all parties to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

10.6 Fabric P13

In [REDACTED] absence, [REDACTED] had nothing to add to the Fabric Report which was received, and noted, with thanks.

11. Spiritual Matters

11.1 Specific to Perth North

11.1.1 Plans for Easter Services

It was accepted that PNC did not have the capacity, this year, to hold daily services during Holy Week. Session did, however, welcome the offer from [REDACTED] to lead our lunch-time service on Maundy Thursday (17 April) at which she would Celebrate Communion. Members will have the opportunity, and will be encouraged, to attend services being held during Holy Week by the other City Centre Churches, details of which will be published in the Easter Edition of *North News*. Noting that the Church Office will be closed on Easter Monday.

11.1.2 “Easter Story”

Noting that, unfortunately, this event, which [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had planned to hold in Perth North on the evening of Palm Sunday, 13 April 2025, has had to be cancelled owing to the unavailability of two principal performers. Perth North is to be kept in mind, as a venue, should it be decided to hold this event at another time.

11.1.3 2025 Annual Stated Meeting

Session agreed to our Annual Stated Meeting being held on Sunday, 27 April 2025. [REDACTED] had kindly agreed to moderate and to preach at our service that Sunday.

11.2 General

Nothing to record

12. Staff Panel

12. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reported that, on 4 February 2025, [REDACTED] had successfully completed her three month Probationary period in her role as Project Lead for InTogether. [REDACTED], her Line-manager, has been delighted with her work and has found her a real asset. [REDACTED] is equally happy to remain in post. At our Kirk Session meeting in March, [REDACTED] has agreed to give us an “in person” update on her work with InTogether.

13. Health and Safety Panel

No report

14. Safeguarding Panel

██████████, our Safeguarding Convenor, advised of two Safeguarding training courses on Friday 14 March (2 - 4pm) and Saturday 15 March (9.45 -11.45am) which were open to Trustees and Volunteers. Presbytery was grateful to Perth North for hosting these ██████████ has a particular eye on future such courses specifically so as to align with the three yearly training cycle required for Perth North Kirk Session Trustees. She confirmed that the requisite Safeguarding Forms will be brought to our March meeting for attestation ahead of Presbytery's Inspection.

15. Hire of Church Premises

██████████ drew Session's attention to the following upcoming bookings:

- (a) Various Brass Bands – Tryst on Saturday, 8 March 12.30 – 1.30pm
Main Hall, the same day, 2 – 4pm
Main Hall on Sunday, 9 March 1 – 3pm

The premises will be used for practice sessions ahead of a competition in Perth Concert Hall.

- (b) Ukraine Coffee Morning in the Church Halls on Saturday, 22 March. ██████████ is the contact. Session endorsed the decision to donate our halls free of charge for this event.

16. Correspondence

██████████ reported on the following two selected items:

- (a) Neighbour Notification from Perth and Kinross Planning Dept regarding a Change of Use of a residential flat at 8D Kinnoull Street, Perth to a short-term let accommodation unit (no effect on/implications for Perth North) and
- (b) An e-mail from ██████████ on the work of CAP (Christians Against Poverty) along with a Strategy Update.

17. Insurance

No report

18. AOCB

18.1 ██████████ was granted permission to distribute Christian Aid envelopes throughout the sanctuary in May to coincide with Christian Aid Week.

18.2 ██████████ spoke to a Petition he had drawn up which railed against the misinformation and lies being spread about Ukraine and President Zelensky. He had put Session's name to this and was seeking their support. His intention is to use Perth Presbytery as a conduit to petition the General Assembly so that the Church of Scotland can be seen to be upholding what we regard as the Truth. No objections were raised, and the Moderator offered his general support. He thought it would probably have more impact if the Petition focussed solely on Ukraine rather than adding in other conflicts. It was thought that elders should have the opportunity to see and review the wording in

██████████ Petition so it was agreed that early arrangements would be made for the Petition to be circulated to the elders.

18.3 As Editor, ██████████ advised that the last date for submitting articles for the Easter Edition of *North News* was 23 March. Printing was planned for 1 April with distribution thereafter in time for Easter.

19. Date of next Kirk Session meeting

Confirmed as Tuesday, 25 March 2025 at 1900 hrs in the Tryst.

Before we went into Private Session, the Moderator closed the Main Meeting with the Benediction.

Papers Apart:

P01 – Draft Minute of Main Kirk Session Meeting on 21 January 2025

P02 – Draft Minute of City Centre Mission meeting on 22 January 2025

P03 – InTogether Report

P04 – Summary of Presbytery Meeting on 1 February 2025

P05 – Temporary Roll Keeper's Report

P06 – 2024 Trustees Annual Report + Accounts (unexamined version)

P07 – City Centre Report

P08 – P12 - Various draft Policies

P13 – Fabric Report