# UNITARIANS IN EDINBURGH

# Church Council

*Minutes from Meeting held on Tuesday 8th August 2023 at 7pm by Zoom.*

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present; Julie Finneran (Chair), Ann Sinclair (Acting Treasurer), Mandy Orr, Joan Cook (minute taker)

Apologies; received from Brian Robertson and Elyse Jack Opening Words; Joan read ‘This Is My Church’ from Songs for Living

2. Minutes of Council meeting 3rd July 2023

Ann informed us OSCR have acknowledged receipt of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022, as well as the change to the constitution.

The minutes of the meeting on were accepted as correct, with some minor adjustments, [Joan to do and re-send] proposed by Ann Sinclair and seconded by Julie Finneran.

1. Update from Ann on roof repairs

A report was received from Ann giving an update on the progress of the work on the roof of the upper hall. Tenders were received from 3 firms, with considerable variations in costings on some items. Contingency funds were included in each of the tenders. Our agents, Hardies, were satisfied with all three tenders and recommended we accept the lowest tender, priced at £103,509 [£124,210 including VAT]. Hardies are familiar with the work of this company, having worked with them previously on similar projects.

Council agreed that Ann Sinclair should be authorised to sign the acceptance of the tender from The Roof Company on behalf of St Mark’s Unitarian Church.

It is expected the total cost of the work will be in the region of £130,000 [including Hardies' fees]. As the bank balance stood at £173,000 at the end of July [which includes £46,000 from the encashed Capital Reserve Fund and £3000 from the Benefact Trust] it is anticipated we will manage to pay for the work without using monies from Speed or Geddie funds.

Ann will facilitate introduction of Hardies to our neighbours on the south side re- the work and scaffolding.

It is expected that work will commence mid-September and last for some 12 to 14 weeks. The hall and emergency exits will be accessible at week-ends and evenings, but there may be periods when the accessible WC will not be available while work is done on its roof.

4. Discussion on safeguarding issues

The proposal for Self-declarations from PCT members, and probably Celebrant was discussed by Council, and it was decided that perhaps we should be carrying out PVG checks on all those involved in providing care or support to the children and the more vulnerable members of our community.

Joan to liaise with Barbara Clifford, SUA Safeguarding link.

There were no ongoing safeguarding issues to report.

5. Discussion about hosting LGBTI+ exhibition

There was a suggestion that St Mark’s might host the GA travelling LGBTI+ exhibition during the Fringe , it was decided that we did not have sufficient room in the vestibule when Fringe events were taking place to accommodate even a couple of banners, and they would cause people to linger, causing difficulties with access and egress.

There were also concerns that we did not have sufficient information re: content.

6. Team Updates:

Management team

See notes item 3 above.

Ann reported that there have been more changes to the programme than usual this year, and for the first time there are now sufficient volunteers to cover all Fringe events at St Mark’s. Ann was thanked for all her hard work in organising and supervising the use of the church as a fringe venue, as well as the work of her team.

Financial team

We are awaiting confirmation of the amount due to St Mark’s from a legacy

Ministry team

A possible discussion group has been discussed, but due to the lack of anyone willing to organise it, it was suggested that we approach Glasgow, who have such a group, and suggest a combined group.

Pastoral team

The Primary Care team have asked that members of Council pass on the names of those who may benefit from help offered by the team, it was decided that this would require the consent of those individuals before any referral was made.

The possibility of Mental Health First Aid training was raised. Mandy offered to inquire as to who provided training for hospice volunteers.

Communications team

The proposal for a consultation exercise with a view to gaining information re: peoples’ needs and the direction in which St. Mark’s should be going in the form of a time limited consultation was discussed, and felt to be an excellent idea. Monika Strell and the communication team were to be approached.

7. Set new Smart goals

It was felt an in-person session with all members of Council present would be advantageous in setting SMART goals for ’23-’24.

8. Upcoming social events

The following events are planned;

17th September Visit to Exhibition at the City Art Gallery Julie to organise

November ‘My Music’ an evening looking at musical favourites Joan to organise

17th December Christmas Celebration Joan to organise

17th December Post-Christmas Celebration Lunch ? Ministry to organise

24th December Post-Christmas Eve Service Mince Pies Joan to organise

9. Any Other Competent business

The need for a Church Secretary, is becoming more pressing, and Joan indicated she would like to stand down as Membership Secretary, so a replacement needs to be found for that role.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday 25th September at 7pm by zoom [Not 18th as previously arranged- school holiday]

Opening & Closing words will be from Ann Sinclair.

Closing Words

Joan read ‘Go in Peace’ by Rev Celia Cartwright.

*JMMC*

*20//8/23*