

# UPPER BRAES PARISH CHURCH (UBPC) MINUTES



<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	Kirk Session
<b>Date and Time:</b>	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 7.15pm
<b>Location:</b>	Brightons Ministry Centre
<b>Sederunt:</b>	Rev S Burton, Moderator and Ruling Elders: I Baillie, J Falconer, A Gillespie, J Glass (Presbytery Elder), G Mann, L McGarry, H McManus, J Meek, R Moore, J Norton (Session Clerk), P Paterson, B Rankine, M Scott, J Wallace, W Tomlinson  S Glass (Treasurer) for Item 7: Finance
<b>Apologies:</b>	None
<b>Absent:</b>	None

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<b>1. Constitution</b>	<b>1.1</b> The meeting was opened with a reading from Romans 12:9-16 then constituted with prayer. The Moderator re-circulated the 'Leadership Position on Sunday Morning Worship' paper, accepted by Session on 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2021, as a reminder that we are called to make decisions as a Kirk Session mindful of our biases and not simply based on our preferences.	
<b>2. Sederunt</b>	<b>2.1</b> The sederunt, as above, were noted.	
<b>3. Conflict of Interest (new)</b>	<b>3.1</b> A conflict of interest was declared by I Baillie re Item 7.7 (Finance).	
<b>4. Minutes</b>	<b>4.1</b> The minutes from 2 <sup>nd</sup> November (pp400-406) were approved, with a point of correction that K Wansbrough should be removed from the Sederunt list. Minutes were also approved from 24 <sup>th</sup> November (p407) with point of correction that the page number should be p407 not p400 and Tom Nimmo should be removed from 'Apologies'.	..... <b>Moderator</b>
<b>5. Matters Arising</b>	<b>5.1 Sale of Shieldhill Building and Butterfly Garden Request</b> – Session discussed the proposal for UBPC to retain the Shieldhill Butterfly Garden that was issued with the Moderator's report. Pros (+) and cons (-) raised included: + Benefit of keeping church property in Shieldhill + Provides a presence in the village and opportunity to engage with the community + Ties in with the UBPC mission + Has been utilised by church groups in the past - Lack of health and hygiene facilities for anyone using the garden, particularly school groups - Reducing pool of existing volunteers / lack of new volunteers within the new united congregation to maintain the garden - Possible detrimental impact upon the sale of the wider site - Limited use of the garden in comparison to other opportunities that could be explored in the village for church missional purposes.	

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<p><b>6. Standing Updates</b></p>	<p>Following the discussion a vote was taken on accepting the proposal:  <b>For:</b> 0  <b>Against:</b> 14  <b>Abstentions:</b> 1</p> <p>Session felt though they were not supportive of the proposal as it currently stands, they felt the call and obligation for mission in community in Shieldhill.</p> <p>The Moderator and Session Clerk will write to the Shieldhill Butterfly Project Committee to outline the reasons for the decision.</p> <p><b>6.1 Presbytery</b> – Jason Glass (Presbytery Elder) had no significant points to update on from the last meeting on 3rd December.</p> <p><b>6.2 Safeguarding</b> - report accepted as tabled.</p> <p>Session approved Edna Oliver and Ian (John) Huntley to work with protected adults.</p> <p>A question was raised about the recent data cleanse exercise and the hurt it had caused two members who were being removed from the UBPC Safeguarding register.</p> <p>Clarification was given by B Rankine and J Norton that from April 2025, it is a legal requirement that we do not hold data for any individuals on our Safeguarding Register who have not worked with children or vulnerable adults within UBPC recently. This is to safeguard those individuals as any change in their disclosure status could be incorrectly disclosed to the UBPC Safeguarding Coordinator.</p> <p>The Moderator noted that to remain on the UBPC Safeguarding register intentional involvement must take place. The Moderator apologised that the decisions to remove people via the data cleanse exercise has caused hurt and stated it was not the church’s intention to do so.</p> <p>The Moderator noted the amount of work involved for Eileen Hope (Safeguarding Coordinator), therefore encouraged Session to show their appreciation and encouragement to her.</p> <p><b>6.3 Local Mission Church Leadership Team (LMCLT)</b> - report accepted as tabled.</p> <p>A question was raised what the role of the LMCLT is. The Moderator noted this hasn’t yet been communicated as the team are working through what this looks like. The aim is for the team to play more of a background enabling role. The Moderator will take this away to action with the LMCLT.</p>	<p><b>Moderator / Session Clerk</b></p>

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<p><b>7. Team Updates</b></p>	<p><b>7.1 Notes for Team Updates</b> - Session noted the request detailed in the Moderator's Report for all Team minutes to be approved by at least two who were present; and for clear language and abbreviations to be explained since the minutes are more widely shared with the congregation.</p> <p><b>7.2 Finance: Procedures around budget/spending limits</b> – Session noted the procedures for Team Convenors to work within an annual budget as outlined in the Moderator's Report, with an amend that spending above £1000 would require 3 quotes <i>where reasonable/practical</i>.</p> <p>J Falconer noted the Bribery and Procurement Policy had been updated in line with these new procedures, which will be brought to Kirk Session in January.</p> <p><b>7.3 Finance: Treasurer's Report</b> (read in conjunction with Supplementary Finance Report and Certificate of Investments Held at 06/12/24 issued with the Moderator's Report) - accepted as tabled.</p> <p>S Glass noted the need for the Gift Aid Convenor to be someone who is involved in UBPC as there is a need to understand who is donating gift aid. All to consider who could do this.</p> <p>Regarding the concern over the increased Giving to Grow (GTG) Contributions that 121 have notified us of, for Financial Year 2024 (FY24), the Moderator noted 121 want us to review the level of giving over 2025, since we expect it to be significantly less than the previous total across all four legacy congregations. We may be able to ask Presbytery to modify our GTG contributions until we know our stable level of giving.</p> <p>S Glass suggested all accounts from 2024 are merged into one. Session approved the use of an external party to do this. S and J Glass to approach a contact. All also to consider others who could do this.</p> <p><b>7.4 Finance: Team Report</b> - accepted as tabled by P Paterson. with the addition of a proposed change to the following costs accepted:</p> <p><u>Brightons Ministry Centre (BMC)</u> Funeral Services for Members – suggested donation to increase to £180</p> <p><u>Slamannan Ministry Centre (SMC)</u> Funeral Services and Weddings for Non-Members – increase to £150</p>	<p><b>Moderator</b></p> <p><b>Team Convenors</b></p> <p><b>J Falconer / Session Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Elders</b></p> <p><b>J/S Glass / Elders</b></p>

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	<p><b>7.5 Finance: Replacing the organ</b> – Session was asked to discuss and decide the way forward as outlined in the Moderator’s Report. Points were raised including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does a new organ fit into the vision and strategy of UBPC?</li> <li>• We have a responsibility to invest in the future for continuity of worship</li> <li>• Do we need a new organ? Can we do nothing and respond to repairs on an ad hoc basis?</li> <li>• It did not seem prudent to do nothing and simply respond to organ repairs on an ad hoc basis</li> <li>• Neither did it seem prudent to carry out significant remedial and conversion work on the existing organ – cost ca.£30k</li> <li>• Could alternative options, such as a digital piano (Clavinova) be explored which can produce the sound of piped organ music?</li> <li>• It was noted the Clavinova keyboard at Muiravonside is unsuitable as a replacement.</li> <li>• Some struggling to commit to the estimated cost of c£20k for a new organ when there may be reasonable alternatives and we don’t yet know what mission work we are being called to</li> </ul> <p>Following the discussion a vote was taken on accepting the proposal to replace the organ with a new digital Johannus Opus 280 Choir costing £19,295.00, via Church Organ World, Sovereign House, 30 Manchester Road, Shaw, OL2 7DE, versus a counter proposal to instruct the organists in the Worship Team to consider the option of replacing the organ with a high-quality digital keyboard that can produce pipe-organ type sounds.</p> <p><b>For original proposal: 9</b>  <b>For counter proposal: 6</b>  <b>Abstentions: 0</b></p> <p>The original proposal to source a new organ from Church Organ World was carried.</p> <p>The Moderator noted that this would be classed as property/fabric by Presbytery so could come from the Consolidated Fabric Fund.</p> <p>The Moderator will take this decision forward to G Scott (Property Team Convenor) to start proceedings to purchase the new organ.</p> <p><b>7.6 Finance: Resignation of Pastoral Assistant</b> – I Baillie noted the reasons for his resignation and the Moderator thanked Ian for his faithful service, which has gone above and beyond. So many have greatly appreciated Ian’s care and support, which is seen in the number of funeral requests Ian has received. It was noted Ian’s last working day would be 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Ian left the room briefly.</p>	<p><b>Moderator</b></p>

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	<p>Session approved a collection and a thanksgiving tea after the service on 12<sup>th</sup> January for Ian.</p> <p>The Moderator confirmed he would deal any requests that come in for Ian to carry out funerals in future, and explore with Ian who leads them.</p> <p>The Moderator then prayed for Ian and Lesley.</p> <p>Session approved Rev Monica MacDonald to take on Ian's hours on a temporary basis, giving a total working week of 29.75 hours.</p> <p>Session further approved moving to external recruitment if the individual the Moderator approached as a possible Pastoral Assistant on a temporary 6-month contract did not think this is the right timeline/fit. A short discussion took place regarding the need for confidentiality to be maintained before items are discussed at Kirk Session. All Elders were reminded to hold to this requirement.</p> <p><b>7.7 Property and Safety: Team Report</b> – report accepted as tabled. The Moderator noted G Scott and the Property Team are covering 5 properties so asked Session to give them much encouragement and to show their appreciation.</p> <p><b>7.8 Property and Safety: Information on local building work in Brightons</b> – Session noted the work being proposed for the old Brightons Manse.</p> <p><b>7.9 Communications: Team Report</b> – report accepted as tabled by J Falconer, noting the amount of work the team had put in, ahead of the seamless transition into the Union. Special thanks were given to J Meek, Neil Matheson, the Moderator and J Falconer who had gone above and beyond.</p> <p>J Falconer noted Jean Gilmour from Slamannan Ministry Centre would draw alongside the team.</p>	
<b>8. Discussion Topic</b>	<p><b>8.1 Maturity in Following Jesus</b> – carried forward to January Kirk Session.</p>	
<b>9. Correspondence</b>	<p><b>9.1 Letter from PAWS (Parents Assoc. Wallacestone Primary)</b> – the Moderator shared the letter of thanks received for the donation raised by UPBC for the Smart TVs.</p> <p><b>9.2 Request from Orange Lodge</b> – Session discussed the request to continue the let arrangement with the Orange Lodge at SMC, as outlined in the Moderator's report.</p> <p>Following the discussion a vote was taken on continuing the let agreement:  <b>For: 0</b></p>	

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<p><b>10. Roll Keeping</b></p>	<p><b>Against:</b> 14 <b>Abstentions:</b> 1</p> <p>Overall, Session felt continuing the let was not congruent with the congregation's purpose and values and how we wish to live these out within the community and parish.</p> <p>The Moderator and Session Clerk will write to the Orange Lodge to outline the reasons for the decision.</p>	<p><b>Moderator / Session Clerk</b></p>
	<p><b>9.3 Letter from member regarding Union/charity number</b> – after individual prayer and reflection, Session unanimously agreed not to take the request forward to become a new legal entity with a new charity number.</p> <p>Session feels God is building upon what has gone before, eg in terms of a charity number and bank account, Ministers (Scott and Monica), places of worship (Brightons and Slamannan), styles of worship and much more.</p> <p>The Moderator and Session Clerk will write to our member to outline the reasons for the decision.</p> <p>Session approved the proposal for the Moderator and Session Clerk to deal with future queries and, if needed bring to Session for a decision.</p>	<p><b>Moderator / Session Clerk</b></p>
	<p><b>9.4 Email from member of community</b> – the Moderator noted this proposal has been withdrawn by the community member as CoS is not supportive of it.</p>	
	<p><b>9.5 Email from Anabella Nimmo</b> – Session unanimously approved the proposal to sell a number of craft items made by a Hannah Dunnet (a Christian artist) that were donated to The Cross. These would be sold alongside the bookstall after the upcoming morning services and the proceeds returned to The Cross, who UPBC have directly benefited from as a congregation.</p>	
	<p><b>10.1</b> Since the last meeting, the deaths of our following members had been noted:</p> <p>Janet Heeps (02 November, Muiravonside)                  Agnes Anderson (04 November, Slamannan)                  Mary Balow (22 November, Brightons)                  Cameron (Skip) Sharpe (27 November, Brightons)                  Catherine Davidson (07 December, BBS)</p> <p>The Moderator gave God thanks for their years of fellowship and that we will be reunited in glory, and commended their families to our prayers.</p> <p><b>10.2</b> Session agreed Admission by Resolution of Rev. Monica MacDonald.</p>	
<p><b>11. AOCB</b></p>	<p><b>11.1</b> None</p>	

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<p><b>12. Services</b></p>	<p><b>12.1</b> The following services were planned:</p> <p>15th December (11am) – Joint Nativity service at Brightons (Jill)            15th December (6.30pm) – Christingle service at Brightons            24th December (6.30pm) – Early Watchnight Family Service at Brightons            24th December (11.30pm) – Watchnight Service at Brightons (Judith)            24th December (11.30pm) - Watchnight Service at Slamannan            25th December (10.30am) – Christmas Day service at Brightons            29th December (11am) – all age service at Brightons (Brent) and normal worship at Slamannan (Linzi)</p> <p>26th January 2025 (11am) – Braes Churches Pulpit Swap            26th January 2025 (6.30pm) – evening service            30th January 2025 (11.30am) – half hour service            16th February 2025 (11am) – Joint service at Brightons</p>	
<p><b>13. Dates</b></p>	<p><b>13.1</b> Dates of future meetings/holidays were noted as:</p> <p>28th January 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (incl. pastoral care, discipleship, worship team reports)            25th February 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (incl. community outreach, children and young people team reports)            25th March 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (incl. property, finance, communications team reports)            29th April 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (pastoral care, discipleship, worship)            27th May 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (community outreach, children and young people)            17th June 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (property, finance, communications)</p> <p>Please note: each month the following items would be standing business, with reports shared where there is business to address, and/or an update given no less than 3 months apart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding</li> <li>• Presbytery</li> <li>• Local Mission Church Leadership Team</li> </ul> <p>Also, under AOCB could come urgent requests via other teams where necessary.</p> <p>Please note the following dates as well:            Ian holiday: 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec – 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2024            Scott holiday: 26th December to 5th January</p>	

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<p><b>14. Close</b></p>	<p><b>14.1</b> The meeting was closed by saying the Grace together.</p>	<p>.....  <b>Moderator</b></p> <p>.....  <b>Session Clerk</b></p>