

UPPER BRAES PARISH CHURCH (UBPC) MINUTES



Type of Meeting:	Kirk Session
Date and Time:	Tuesday 30 th September 2025 at 7.15pm
Location:	Brightons Ministry Centre
Sederunt:	Rev S Burton, Moderator and Ruling Elders: A Gillespie, J Falconer, J Gilmour, J Glass (Presbytery Elder), G Mann, L McGarry, F Miller, R Moore, J Norton (Session Clerk), B Rankine, J Wallace
Apologies:	H McManus, J Meek, P Paterson, M Scott
Absent:	None

Minute No.	Comment	Action
1. Constitution	1.1 The meeting was opened with readings from Isaiah 43:19, Matthew 9:17 and James 1:22 which had been given to the Moderator from someone in our community. The Moderator noted a new season requires obedience to God's Word. Potentially this is word of prophecy as it is for strengthening, encouragement and comfort. We have an invitation to hear and apply the Word of God. We choose to heed it or not. James 1:25 – "But whoever looks intently into the perfect law...will be blessed in what they do." As we take up the cross, we find life.	
2. Sederunt	2.1 The sederunt, as above, were noted. The Moderator noted 'sederunt' is Latin for 'they sat', ie they sat at the table.	
3. Notification of AOCB	3.1 None	
4. Conflict of Interest (new)	4.1 No new conflicts of interest were declared. J Norton to provide copies of form for F Miller and J Gilmour to sign.	Session Clerk
5. Minutes	5.1 The minutes from 26 th August (pp65-72) were approved. Moderator
6. Matters Arising	6.1 Strategic Finance Principles Update – carry forward to next meeting. J Glass to check with S Glass if the action in S6.2 of June KS minutes has been completed re confirming to the General Trustees the monies from the sale of Blackbraes and Shieldhill Building should be invested in the Investment Growth Fund – c/f. Feasibility Study update for Heating Improvements – G Scott noted in the Property Report presented later that he has the relevant paperwork to complete.	J Glass
	6.2 Church Administrator – J Glass noted, particularly following the work involved to complete the 2024 accounts, that this is a professional role. Jason to share the scope that S Glass previously approached the financial professional to consider taking on. He noted that we need to make our processes more efficient as it currently takes up too much time.	G Scott Moderator

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	<p>During discussion two key roles were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treasurer (CofS requires this to be an Office Bearer) who can report to Session and provide strategic direction Bookkeeper/administrator (of a more streamlined and digitised system/process) - this could be a hybrid role with external book-keeping and church volunteers doing some of the admin tasks <p>A question was asked why we have so many funds. It was noted that we inherited some; others are how the CofS is set up, eg there are restrictions placed by 121 on funds to ensure we hold enough money to look after our buildings.</p> <p>Next steps agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Moderator will source a CofS Treasurer job description to get clarity on what falls under the Treasurer role and what are the book-keeping and admin tasks. It was agreed that book-keeping does not fall under the Treasurer role we are seeking to fulfil. The Moderator will work with Jason and Sharon to break down the list of tasks involved for Treasurer and bookkeeper/admin and identify what needs to change. It is expected we will move to using an online accounting tool to make the process more efficient. Also to consider what parts of book-keeping/admin role can be done by the church family; which parts can be outsourced. Jason will phone the financial professional to progress the proposal and understand cost if book-keeping work was outsourced. Estimate could be c£4-£5k per annum. Elders to suggest names to the Moderator for the Treasurer role, noting this is separate from the book-keeping/admin role. Sharon has agreed to hold the Treasurer role until a replacement can be found. Session to consider the cost of book-keeping admin vs our funding deficit; if our givings are increasing, we might be able to hold a deficit for a year or so to allow us to find an external resource to get the management of our financial processes running more efficiently. A single-item KS meeting may be required before Nov KS meeting to agree this. Jason to ask Sharon if she is happy to be involved in 2025 accounts. <p>Aim is to start 2026 with the new system in place, especially so Team Convenors can see and manage their yearly budget.</p>	<p>Moderator</p> <p>Moderator/J & S Glass</p> <p>J Glass</p> <p>Elders</p> <p>Moderator / Session Clerk</p> <p>J Glass</p>
6.3	<p>Sale of Muiravonside Building – The Moderator noted that the sale is complete. Alan Macfarlane is in touch with utility companies to close payment.</p>	

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	<p>It is expected the balance of £55k (£64k sale price minus 15% CofS levy) will go into our Consolidated Fabric Fund (CFF) at 121, as the building was vested with the General Trustees.</p> <p>The Moderator noted the capital account of the CFF is for buildings work only. The revenue account of the CFF (currently holding c£10k) can be used for heating and lighting, insurance etc.</p> <p>The Moderator noted much work had been done for this last bit of legacy work from the Union, especially by Graham Bell, G Scott, A Gillespie under the property team, and gave thanks for this.</p>	
	<p>6.4 Rotation of Elders onto/off Kirk Session – The Moderator noted in August the process was agreed where he and the Session Clerk would categorise and approach those individuals deemed as 'definites' on Sessions' behalf.</p> <p>The Moderator also noted the principle of not having family relations serving on Session at the same time, given its smaller size and risk of conflicts of interest.</p> <p>In total six individuals/couples were approached; three said 'yes', two 'no' and a final individual is weighing up (due to respond by 12/10).</p> <p>If the last individual says no, it is the feeling of the Moderator and Session Clerk that there are currently no others to ask at present, so they would propose Session is comprised of 14 Ruling Elders.</p> <p>The Moderator noted we may need to have an electronic agreement by email to agree the appointment.</p> <p>The Moderator brought the following names to Session to approve as new Elders: Dixcee Spencer Jim Cowan Jim Hope</p> <p>No questions were raised around process or people and Session unanimously confirmed their acceptance.</p> <p>The Moderator noted he and the Session Clerk will pin down Teams once we know the final person's decision. However, he noted he is keen to keep Elders where they are, if possible. He noted some teams may have gaps, and that Dixcee has requested some time to transition elements of Triple S over to other leaders.</p>	<p>Moderator / Session Clerk</p>
	<p>6.5 OSCR Checks and Trustee Details Update – The Session Clerk confirmed Trustee details had been submitted, including J Gilmour. It turns out there is only functionality to add Trustees serving from 1 July 2025, not previous Trustees which is different to what was</p>	<p>Moderator / Session Clerk</p>

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	<p>instructed in the training given. J Norton to obtain relevant details from F Miller then upload Trustee details to OSCR portal.</p> <p>6.6 Church conference – the Moderator noted the YWAM team are now arriving around 27th October so will be part of the Conference. The Moderator reminded Elders to be encouraging 2 or 3 members around us, who are likely to be in the 'early majority', to attend. He also referred to the high-level overview circulated with the Moderator's report and asked what did Elders like, what unsure of; what questions did they have?</p> <p>Session split into small groups to discuss this then came together to share their thoughts. Points shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good timetable; provides opportunity to talk • Like different venues; make people more comfortable • We should be prepared to be surprised by what brought up in discussion; and not necessarily to be distracted by it. • How do we make sure people feel they can dip in and out, and not feel excluded because they weren't at certain parts? <p>The Moderator noted he had an idea to have an online and/or paper survey after the Conference for anyone who could not attend some/all, so that other input can be received. A small team will also draw out common threads shared during Saturday teatime to share on the Sunday morning.</p> <p>J Norton will reiterate during the welcome notices on Sunday that folks are welcome to come for as much or little as they can manage, as this has deterred some folks signing up if they can't manage the whole day or weekend.</p>	<p>Session Clerk</p>
	<p>6.7 New RCI (Register of Persons Holding a Controlled Interest in Land) – the Session Clerk noted Dixcee Spencer's (Property Lawyer) comments from a personal capacity: as 121 had confirmed the Minister, Session Clerk, Clerk to Deacons court were on the Deeds, then just the Moderator and Session Clerk need to enter their details as Recorded Persons and Associates, as the Deacons Court ceased to exist after the Union. J Norton to follow up with 121 if wish to confirm.</p> <p>J Norton noted the RCI submissions were made on 14th and 15th September to this effect by the Session Clerk and Moderator respectively.</p>	<p>Moderator</p> <p>Session Clerk</p>
	<p>6.8 Car Park Cards – J Falconer confirmed cards have been produced along with a tracker form to record cards issued. Alan MacFarlane is managing the process.</p>	<p>Session Clerk</p>

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	<p>6.9 Testimony Box/Online Form – The Moderator confirmed options are being explored; one app considered had concerns raised re GDPR.</p> <p>6.10 Update on Action Plans Timeline - The Moderator noted Presbytery have pushed this date back by a year; now required for Attestation 2027.</p>	Moderator
7. Discussion Topic	<p>7.1 Response to the Change Teaching Series – due to time constraints this was not discussed. The Moderator welcomed feedback to be shared with him directly.</p>	Elders
8. Team Reports	<p>8.1 Finance – verbal update provided by the Moderator and J Glass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S Glass to provide Income position at end August. • 2024 Report and Accounts have been signed off by Kirk Session and our Independent Assessor, Presbytery Attestation has been received and OSCR submission was completed, all on 28/09 • Standing Order set up for one of our church family studying at Bible college. • Giving to Grow (GTG) contributions made of £77k for the year so far (£72k in 2025 plus £5k overpayment from 2024). • Once we have August income position and Standing Order is set up for future GTG contributions, the Moderator will discuss our balancing GTG contributions for 2025 with 121. (It was noted GTG contributions were budgeted at £103k for 2025). • Jason to ask Sharon to provide various information so the 2026 budget can be set. <p>The Moderator noted we are incredibly thankful to Sharon and the Finance Team.</p> <p>8.2 Property – report accepted as tabled. The following wind and watertight work was approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guttering at BMC – Quote for £1120.80 • Boiler maintenance at SMC – Quotes for £399 and £624.04. <p>The Moderator asked Elders to provide G Scott and the Property team encouragement and gave thanks for their work</p> <p>8.3 Community Outreach – report accepted as tabled. The Moderator encouraged Elders to note the feedback from one of the young men released from PYO and that our outreach to the prison makes a difference. The intention is to include this in our Connect magazine.</p> <p>The Moderator asked Elders to provide J McIntosh and the Community Outreach Team encouragement and gave thanks for their work</p>	
9. Standing Updates	<p>9.1 Safeguarding – Session approved the report as tabled.</p>	

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	<p>Session approved the following to be added to the register: Anne Smith (Adults) Gordon Scott (Children and Adults) Billy Rankine (Children and Adults)</p> <p>It was also noted that Neil Matheson remains on the Register for Children.</p> <p>Session also approved Mhairi McNeil to be removed.</p> <p>B Rankine updated that Sandra Blair had confirmed the Girls Brigade Leaders with overdue training were booked on the next course on 2 December.</p> <p>He also confirmed he is providing additional admin support to Eileen.</p> <p>The Moderator updated, following agreement with the Safeguarding Manager of the CofS Safeguarding Service, that the principle has been agreed that UBPC can step in to help in our community as an extension of our youth work. Our PVGs will cover this; as it is different from a council, local authority and school.</p> <p>There will be the same need for due process, as per Safe Recruitment, which would include the usual things like job descriptions, risk assessments, applications, interviews, etc. We must also be confident that the volunteer(s) have the right skills and experience.</p> <p>The Moderator gave thanks to Eileen and the Safeguarding panel for their work.</p> <p>9.2 Presbytery – The Moderator provided the following verbal update:</p> <p>First meeting as Presbytery Moderator on 6th Sept went well.</p> <p>Instructions from General Assembly have been received with the following two actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches to comply with Church Law on Safeguarding – no additional action needed for UBPC • Kirk Sessions to review and act on the key findings of the Minister wellbeing study – this will be covered in Jan 2026 KS meeting. <p>9.3 Local Mission Church Leadership Team – no report as Team had not met.</p>	
10. Correspondence	<p>10.1 Response from Samuel Frickelton VC Memorial R.B.P. 1917 - The Moderator shared the email response received on 27th August. After advice from Brent Haywood (lawyer) the Moderator responded. No further response has been received.</p>	

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	<p>10.2 Hall let cost update – we have received guidance from the General Trustees aimed at helping congregations set appropriate rates for the use of their facilities by external groups. G Scott will review this in due course.</p> <p>10.3 Advertising of local events – Session agreed the following policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only promote mission work of the church online and via our news sheet, eg where we have an agreed partnership or the 16 charities we support • Advertise local events on our noticeboards, retaining the discretion to say no 	
11. Roll Keeping	<p>11.1 Since the last meeting Mike Kapushniak (legacy Slamannan) has written to withdraw his membership. A Certificate of Transfer has been issued along with thanks to Mike for his service and fellowship.</p> <p>The death of two members were noted: Mrs Alice Henderson (Muiravonside) – March 2025 Mrs Mary (Moir) Hamilton (BBS) – 24th August 2025</p> <p>The Moderator gave thanks for their fellowship and commended their families to our prayers.</p> <p>Session also approved the baptism of Joseph Bowen on 16th November. Joseph has requested baptism by immersion which will be carried out on the front grass of BMC grounds using a pool borrowed from another church. Session also approved this being a joint service.</p> <p>The Moderator will ask via the notices if any others may be interested in baptism or membership.</p>	Moderator
12. AOCB	12.1 None	
13. Services	<p>13.1 The following services were planned:</p> <p>28th August 2025 (11.30am) – half hour service including Communion 31st August 2025 (6.30pm) – evening service with Communion 7th September 2025 (11am) – Communion service (all age BMC) 7th September 2025 (3pm) – Muiravonside Closing Service 21st September 2025 (11am BMC) – Dedication service 25th September 2025 (11.30am) – half hour service 28th September 2025 (6.30pm) – evening service with Communion 26th October 2025 (6.30pm) – evening service with Communion 30th October 2025 (11.30am) – half hour service 2nd November 2025 (11am) – joint service at Slamannan Primary School 9th November 2025 (10.45am) – Remembrance services at both centres</p>	

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<p>14. Dates</p>	<p>16th November 2025 (11am BMC) – Baptism service and Welcome lunch 27th November 2025 (11.30am) – half hour service with Communion 30th November 2025 (6.30pm) – evening service with Communion 7th December 2025 (11am) – Communion services (not all age)</p> <p>14.1 Session approved the change in schedule proposed by the Moderator, as noted below. This change means every Team still reports twice a year but we take more reports together so as to make every other meeting a greater focus on prayer alongside a discussion topic. This means we might drop the discussion topic on the other nights, depending on issues/needs within teams.</p> <p>Dates of future meetings were noted as:</p> <p>9th October 7.00pm – Annual Business Meeting 31st October to 2nd November – Church Conference 25th November 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (Finance, Communications, Up & Coming, Pastoral Care, Discipleship) 27th January 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (discussion topic and prayer time focus) 24th February 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (Property, Finance) 24th March 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (discussion topic and prayer time focus) 28th April 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (Pastoral Care, Discipleship, Comm. Out, Up & Coming) 26th May 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (discussion topic and prayer time focus) 13th June 9.30am-3.30pm – Kirk Session Away Day 23rd June 7.15pm – Kirk Session meeting (Property, Finance, Communications, Worship)</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"> • Safeguarding • Presbytery • Local Mission Church Leadership Team <p>Also, under AOCB could come urgent requests via other teams where necessary.</p> <p>Finally, the Moderator noted this was the last KS meeting as Ruling Elders for B Rankine, A Gillespie, M Scott and P Paterson. He thanked them for their service during the first year of Union and their voices of encouragement around the table.</p> <p>In terms of commissioning new Elders, this will potentially be 23 November or during the October break, depending on availability.</p>	

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15. Close	15.1 The meeting was closed by saying the Grace together.	<div data-bbox="1321 353 1485 405"> Moderator </div> <div data-bbox="1321 450 1485 501"> Session Clerk </div>