

Minutes of St Brides Church Open Meeting 25th September 2016

Panel – Father Rafal Sobieszuk (Parish Administrator – Chair), John Hastings (Parish Project Manager), Mr Guy Logan (Diocesan Estates Manager), Father Jim Thompson (Diocesan Treasurer), Deacon John McGarry (Minutes),

Fr Rafal opened the meeting with a prayer and thanked those present for attending.

John Hastings began meeting by giving an overview of the works undertaken in both the Church and the Parish Centre. All works were undertaken as a consequence of 3 grants secured by previous Parish priest Fr Ness.

- I. Extension to bar and kitchen in Parish Centre. Took time to get project going. Everything in Parish Centre is now complete. There is a new cooker and all appliances now in working order.
- II. Minor Works grant secured in early 2015 related to building a disabled ramp in Church, new doors, new pews installed to match existing ones, brickwork repairs and emergency exit. The brickwork repair had to await Historic Scotland's approval of the brick needed to match the existing bricks satisfactorily.
- III. Major Works on the Church building estimated to cost around £2million, Viridor Credits gave a grant of £900k and match funding from Parish of £100k through fundraising between March and June 2105 secured this grant. Over the last year we have secured the following grants :
 - Historic Environment Scotland - £250K
 - National Churches Trust - £40k
 - All Churches Trust - £15k
 - Scottish Churches Trust - £5k

This comes to a total of £1.31 million received.

With VAT offset scheme we expect the net result of costs to be around **£1.7 million**. We have secured a loan from the Diocese to pay the balance of the costs.

What was involved?

The Church was closed for 7 months. The roof was replaced in stages with existing fabric taken off and new fabric laid on top which is guaranteed to last for around 30 years. The existing fabric was already 28 years old. There are now very secure walkways across the roof and if further work is needed in future it can be done hopefully without the expense of scaffolding.

- Structure of Roof explored and all supports investigated and treated
- Light Canons were opened from outside and new copper applied
- New glass put in on roof (very thin) bringing in more natural light.
- Very extensive repairs to roof
- Brick replacement –a lot of damage to brickwork – Contractors took very detailed photographs. Mortar at present looks lighter but should darken down.

John Hastings spoke of the inevitability of not everything working 100% at the start. There are still some leaks which have been traced back to window frames on ‘light canons’. We will only know if all repaired when we experience seriously adverse weather. Repairs are still under contract.

There is an area of concern re hydraulic water pressure coming up under the floor on the sanctuary which is not part of the contracted works. The carpet previously covered this issue but this is now open to ventilation.

- Maintenance on Gas heaters needs to be undertaken.
- PA system is still a problem with one of the microphones being away for repair.
- Organ will be brought back from St Columba’s in Viewpark.
- Some snagging still to be done with re drain pipes at back, lights on disabled ramp and pigeons roosting outside Piazza door.
- Other issues of concern include a new boiler needed for Church house, the present one being 30 years old and also brickwork on house, some of which is crumbling and also paintwork on window frames in the house needs attention.

Costs

Guy Logan spoke about costs and added to John Hastings report re additional ‘wall ties’ needed (70,000 new ties were installed) as well as new lighting which has been installed. Guy also pointed out the fluctuation in price re the contract for new bricks which came in at almost 3 times the estimated cost. The final account has still to be settled with the main contractor which Guy reiterated as above as **£1.7 million**.

There will be a shortfall of **£450k** approx. Guy gave an explanation re other costs included in overall account covering survey work , professional fees, start- up fees, school lets. Some monies were transferred from minor works to the major works.

How will it be paid for? There has been an agreement between the Parish and the Diocese that that the shortfall will be paid back at **£1,000 per week over the next 10-12 years.**

Fr Thompson the Diocesan Treasurer gave an explanation of the PIF fund which was set up by Diocese a number of years ago and operates a bit like a credit union with parishes depositing surplus funds in this, allowing other parishes to borrow from the funds at a low rate of interest. It is from this fund that St Brides has borrowed the shortfall.

Questions / Ideas concerning all works done in Church

- 1. It was thought that work would take up to 18 months. The building was not totally re-roofed and slats not taken down on Church ceiling. The programme only took 7 months. Were savings not made on account of this? (JG)**

Answer – Guy Logan gave explanation of costs emphasising that the whole roof was stripped back. The brick contract was £600k and some elements of contract were triple in cost. The whole roof was over clad with virtually a new roof with a new built up system on top. There was a series of correspondence re the loading on the roof which included an asbestos survey. We actually now have a better roof which is going to last a long time. The SARNA (covering for roof) package came to £100k. The polycarbonate was taken off and new glass put in. The prelims (scaffolding etc.) for CCG came to almost £390k. Any repairs needed to ceiling slats were done in situ rather than taking down which would have been a whole other logistical problem. There was a huge amount of work to make it come in on budget. The Contractors were off site as quickly as possible.

With regards to the timetable there was an overestimate at beginning to cover for any contingencies and not to disappoint parishioners if the project over-ran. As things progressed it was remarkable that the contractors were off site in 7 months given that there was a delay of 4 weeks at the beginning. We were also paying £400 per week for use of school which we had originally booked for 12 months but could cancel at 2 weeks' notice.

II. **Why were just some of the bricks taken out? And could others need repaired? (EMcE)**

Answer – There was a survey done on each section and marked out brick by brick as to what needed repaired or replaced. There was frost damage to a number of bricks and the most vulnerable were replaced or repaired. This was a thorough job but not to say that others will not need repaired in the future.

III. **Question of area outside Fire door needing repairs? (JG)**

Answer – This was not part of the Contractor's job and it would not be a cheap job. There are two areas outside the Fire Door - the evacuation area and an area beyond which does not belong to the building. The estimates cost to repair the bricks in evacuation area is around £17k and potentially up to £30k as part of listed building. This would need to be part of the ongoing responsibility of the Fabric Committee including a Fire Management Plan.

IV. **Question of Lighting - Why is lighting not as good on Sanctuary?**

Answer – It seems that light is being blocked out by Baldachino. One light on pillar is not working and needs repair. It was pointed out in discussion that there was a myriad of old wiring that needs sorted out. Light for the altar area will be looked at.

Completion of Parish Centre

Explanation given as to renovations completed including:

- Extension to the bar area – taking the bar into the cellar and moving the cellar to the side
- Extending the kitchen giving more storage.

The reasons the work took so long to complete included a delay at beginning due to a problem with drain at back of building. There were also delays in procuring new stainless steel units including new cooker and fridge. A new bottle washer was also purchased for bar area. The cost of the stainless steel units came to £7,100 with cooker and fridge costing another £2,800. The total cost of renovation came to £94,900 with vat bringing this to £102,000. We were given a grant of £71,636 which means we had a shortfall of around £30k. There is no loan or debt for Parish Centre as the final account has been paid out of parish funds. There is however currently negotiations re professional fees.

Questions re Parish Centre

1. **Why did works take so long?**

Answer – There were two issues: The chamber below manhole cover had not been inspected which caused quite an initial delay in the project starting. The other issue was with the

contractors whose response in relation to completion of project seemed to drag towards the end.

Wish List

- **Cross For Church**

There had been a survey earlier in the year which was in favour of a Cross for the building. JH gave a report on the design and materials being considered. Corton Steel appears to be the best. Historic Scotland is happy with this to go ahead. The cost would be around £13.000 including cost of Crane to put it in place. There may be a grant for this. This will be presented to the Fabric Committee for consideration.

- **Underfloor Heating for Church**

The estimate for this is around £90k. There is a question as to the affordability of this. We are still on the lookout for grant awarding bodies who may look at heating in listed buildings for this work.

- **Re-wiring**

There is wiring in the church and chapel house which is obsolete and will eventually need to be investigated and replaced.

- **Repairs to Chapel House**

CCG have carried out main repairs but there needs to be an ongoing programme of maintenance including a Plan for the Church and Chapel house.

Parish Finances

Most of this has been covered. It was noted that the Fabric Committee has been involved in all finance matters re the works being carried out. The question remains as to how we pay back the loan from the Diocese? Several options have already been put in place including:

- Club 200
- Parish Fund Raising Nights
- Ideas re- fund raising from Parish – open to suggestions
- Consideration to be given to 2nd Collection once per month going to pay debt – may encourage larger contributions.
- Donations and Legacies will be encouraged
- Gift Aid on 2nd Collection – Is this possible? Envelopes?

Questions and Answers

1. **Wood or steel for Cross?**

JH gave answer to this looking at question of Corton Steel or Teak. Aluminium considered but this would not be robust enough. Corton Steel seems to be favoured by Architects. There is no formal decision as to height or final design. Parishioners would be consulted about this.

2. Money well spent?

Viridor came and visited Parish Centre and were happy with what had been done. They also came to look at roof on Church and were equally happy with this work.

At the celebratory Mass there will be photos of before and after and we are hopeful of a good representation from Viridor and other Grant funding bodies.

3. Scrap Copper from roof?

Guy Logan gave a breakdown of costs of copper including scrappage making savings of around £2,200.

It was pointed out some people could not come to this meeting and may have something to add to wish list and other people may want to be more involved and offer help. Fr Rafal reminded meeting that there will be updates published regularly.

The meeting closed with thanks given to those who attended and the interest shown. Particular thanks were offered to John Hastings for the responsibility he has taken over the last year or so in managing the overall project on behalf of the parish. Thanks were also given to Guy Logan and Fr Jim Thomson for their input to the meeting and the project.