

6 OCTOBER 2020. On Tuesday the sixth day of October 2020, the Presbytery met by ZOOM at 7.30pm for Ordinary Business, and the Moderator constituted the meeting in prayer.

SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES: There were present 11 ministers and 24 elders whose names were recorded by the Clerk in the attendance book. The names of corresponding members in attendance were also recorded in the book, as were apologies.

MINUTES: The minute of the meeting of 1 September 2020 was submitted and approved as circulated, with the addition of a section of deliverance under the Property and Stewardship report which had been omitted.

ORDER OF BUSINESS: The order of business was approved as circulated.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: Prof Murray Campbell, Convener, presented the report of the Business Committee. Presbytery received the report.

1. Presbytery approved membership of its Committees for 2020/21 as set out in the Presbytery Year Book; if anyone else would like to join a Committee they should contact the Clerk.
2. Presbytery noted that Conveners will call a Committee meeting before the November meeting of Presbytery.
3. Presbytery noted that the Church of Scotland met in General Assembly on 2-3 October 2020. A report will be given in the November meeting of Presbytery, and in the meantime the Presbytery Planning Implementation Group will report on a temporary protocol to enable congregations to approve a basis of adjustment, while in-person meetings are not permitted.
4. Following a request received from the Kirk Sessions of Ashkirk and Selkirk, Presbytery appointed Mr Gordon Junor, elder of Selkirk Parish Church, to be an Assessor Elder to the Ashkirk Kirk Session for a period of one year.

VACANCY PROCEDURE COMMITTEE – EDDLESTON L/W PEEBLES: OLD: Rev Margaret Steele, Convener, presented the report of the Vacancy Procedure Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery noted the decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee to appoint the Rev Pamela Strachan as Interim Moderator of Eddleston l/w Peebles: Old with immediate effect. Presbytery noted the thanks given by the Committee to the Very Reverend Dr Finlay Macdonald for the work he has carried out towards adopting the Presbytery Plan within the charge of Eddleston l/w Peebles: Old.

COMMITTEE ON THE RE-OPENING OF CHURCH BUILDINGS: Mr Keith Simpson, Convener, presented the report of the Committee on the Re-opening of Church Buildings. Mr Simpson explained that a further 7 congregations have been given permission to re-open buildings for worship services. Mr Simpson also drew attention to the new insurance requirements for church buildings which remain unoccupied (see email circulated by the Clerk to Presbytery members on 23 September 2020). Presbytery received the report. There followed a discussion about the different experiences of congregations whose church buildings had re-opened.

PRESBYTERY PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION GROUP: Mr David Brackenridge, Convener, presented the report of the Presbytery Planning Implementation Group. Mr Brackenridge gave an outline of the new protocol, prepared by the Legal Questions Committee and approved by the General Assembly of 2-3 October 2020, enabling congregations to vote on a Basis of Adjustment while physical meetings are not permitted. Presbytery received the report. The Clerk agreed to circulate a copy of the protocol.

MISSION AND SERVICE: In the absence of the Convener, the Clerk presented an intimation from the Mission and Service Committee. The Committee would like to collate the experiences of the congregations within Presbytery of worship and other activities during and since lockdown, in order to encourage and inspire one another, and to consider how our mission might be shaped by what has been learned during the coronavirus pandemic. Each congregation within Presbytery is asked to submit a brief note to the Convener, Dr Fiona Burnett, summarising how the congregation has worshipped during and since lockdown, and outlining the impact of the coronavirus restrictions on the life and work of the congregation; “Good news” stories would be particularly appreciated. Please could submissions be made by the end of October in any format, whether by post, email or video.

INTIMATIONS:

1. The Presbytery Year Book 2020-21 has been circulated; a few amendments have since been submitted, so a further edition will be circulated soon.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the Presbytery adjourned to meet for Ordinary Business on Tuesday 3 November 2020 at 7.30pm by Zoom (to be confirmed), of which public intimation was made, and the *sederunt* was closed with prayer.

Moderator

Clerk