

Finance & Support Services Committee Meeting – 1st October 2022

Held wholly on Zoom

Present

Susan Austin
Gerry Simonis
Marion Kerr
Margaret Morris
Michael Hockaday
Tim Bateman
Jennie Blake
Nicola White

Representing

Chair of Meeting
CF in Scotland
CF in Scotland
Eastern
East Midlands
North West Midlands
South East
South West

Participant Observers

Gary Baker
Philip Stainer
Yvonne Campbell

Financial Controller
Property Manager/Finance Officer
General Secretary

Apologies

Mark Tucker
Jim Lyon
Mark Taylor
Sue McFarlane
Sonia James

Operations Manager
Chair of Council
President
CF in Wales
CF in Wales

1. Welcome

(Paper A)

The welcome was given by the Chair of Committee, Susan Austin.

2. Opening Devotion

Devotions were led by the Chair, including a reading from Proverbs 16:1 – 9.

3. Apologies

Apologies were noted and are recorded above.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the meeting

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 21st April 2022

(Paper B)

The minutes were agreed and accepted by the Committee and will be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

6. Matters Arising not elsewhere on the agenda

Expenses Policy – this is to be reviewed at the April 2023 meeting.

Terms of Reference – these are at item 11.

7. Investment Trust & Trading Board

Minutes of meeting – July 2022

(Paper C)

There were no questions or matters arising from the minutes.

The Committee accepted the minutes.

Chair Approved

The Chair asked the committee if anyone was interested in attending the Churches Investors Group Meeting & AGM on 23rd November to please let her know.

8. CF Accounts Jan – June 2022, Forecasts 2022/Forecasts 2023 (Papers D, D1, D2)

(a, b, c & d)

2022 Actuals

The Financial Controller submitted the finance report and highlighted the following points.

The 2019 accounts have been included with the information for comparison as this was the last normal year (pre Covid).

The KPI's for 2022 are looking promising; however, this report was compiled prior to the recent mini budget.

Expenditure remains higher than income and must be kept under control.

Interest rates are currently increasing, the COIF deposits interest will increase.

Recommendation to Council

That the remaining Gift of Grace balance is awarded to CF Trading to help somewhat in offsetting its loss of income and significant trading losses caused by COVID during 2020 and 2021.

Decision: Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation to go forward to Council.

Timescale: for Council meeting 18 November 2022

Papers D, D1, D2, were accepted by the committee.

e) Unpaid Affiliation Fees

(Paper D3)

CF in Scotland representative commented that there are several churches in Scotland who have not paid their fees. He asked if they could claim from the Gift of Grace fund and if they had been actively invited to claim from the fund. The Financial Controller responded that all churches were actively invited to claim from the fund; however, several of the churches in Scotland do not have a current safeguarding policy/certificate. The General Secretary added that there had been a closing date for applications from the fund, but this has been ignored.

It was noted that some churches have paid most but not all for their fees and that this is usually due to discrepancies in membership numbers.

The Financial Controller observed that there are several churches who appear to be longstanding non-payers and that the current policy on non-payment seems to not be enforced; that there are quite a few churches without Safeguarding Policy, he asked will these churches be leaving CF in 2023; that there is at least one church with only 1 member and for a charity to exist there need to be at least 2 members so by default CFL will be managing trustees of the church.

There are quite a few churches from whom there have been no response or updates. Of the non-paying churches there is one whose Minister is a member of CF Staff, three with Ministers who are included in the CF Pension Scheme and one church whose Minister is a CF Trustee; these are all benefitting from CF.

The Finance Officer responded that Ministers are contacted directly as part of the process, still often without response, often churches do not have a Minister or there are restrictions on contacting officers due to GDPR. He stated that this year has been the worst in his memory for non – payment of fees; however, some payments have been received since the documents were compiled. Any safeguarding hold ups need to be reported to CSC. Finance Officer and General Secretary will continue to work with churches to encourage payment of fees.

Paper D3 was accepted.

Recommendation

Write-off unpaid 2022 Affiliation Fees from Carlisle City Church (£262) and Glasgow Cathcart Church (£280.50) both churches having closed.

Decision: Committee agreed unanimously to the write-offs, as above, to go forward to Council for agreement.

Action: Decision to Council.

Timescale: 18 November 2022

Recommendation

The GDPR policy be revisited so that there is at least one method of contact for each Officer of every Church.

Agreed: Unanimously.

Action: General Secretary to inform Safeguarding Officer.

Timescale: As soon as possible.

Recommendation

Finance Team to follow up on the policy for non-payers of Affiliation Fees.

Timescale: ongoing; report back to next meeting, April 2023.

Recommendation

Committee recommended a list be produced for Council of the churches where it is known that fees will not be paid, to enable the fees to be written off.

Action: Finance Officer, and General Secretary to compile list for Council as above.

Timescale: 18 November 2022

f) Schedule of Charges - 2024

(Paper D4)

Paper D4 was for information and accepted by the Committee.

g) Capital Expenditure

(Paper D5)

Paper D5 was for information and accepted by the Committee.

9. CF/CFL Loan

(Paper E)

The Financial Controller provided a brief background on the loan.

Recommendation to CFL Directors

That CFL turn the long-term loan of £1,255,342 into a grant to CF thus fully paying off the loan.

Agreed: Unanimously.

Action: to be discussed at the next Directors meeting.

Timescale: For meeting in November 2022

10. Finance Strategy and Operating Deficits

(Paper F)

The Financial Controller reported on Paper F and gave a summary of the Paper and the graphs.

He highlighted the following:

CF finances are finely balanced, income in a typical year does not cover expenditure, the shortfall being covered by capital receipts from closed churches, long-term money market gains or any short fall will be covered from the Protected Program Fund capital. CF have a very good mechanism for KPI's, reporting and funding of programs.

Note: the KPI's were produced before the mini budget.

Recommendation

That the three-year rolling strategy be extended into the 2024-2026 level of operations.

Agreed: Unanimously.

Action: to Council for agreement.

Timescale: 18 November 2022.

11. Terms of Reference Review

The current Terms of Reference are dated October 2015 and should be reviewed as part of the wider review that Council intends to carry out of all Terms of Reference and role descriptions. The Financial Controller is to meet with the Operations Manager, General Secretary and Chair of Council regarding this.

Decision:

General Secretary to arrange a meeting of Chair of Council, Operations Manager, Financial Controller, and herself to review the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

Action: to report back to the next committee meeting.

Timescale: April 2023.

12. CFL - Accounts Jan – June 2022

(Papers G, G1, G2)

Papers G, G1 and G2 were received and noted for information.

The New College Accounts etc will go the CFL meeting for approval.

13. CF Area Grants (England & Wales)

(Paper H)

Paper H was for information and accepted by the Committee.

An extensive discussion took place considering whether the process for applications could and should be simplified in any way. It was agreed that there is no need to make any changes to the process.

Two representatives left the meeting, this rendered the meeting inquorate. Any future recommendations of the meeting to be discussed and forwarded to Council for confirmation and agreement.

14. Minister's Recommended Stipend

(Paper I)

Following request from a church the method of working out the minimum recommended stipend for Ministers was discussed.

The feeling of the meeting was that Ministers need to be valued and resourced, and that the minimum recommended stipend should continue to rise in line with inflation (RPI).

Action: FSSC request that Council confirm and agree that the minimum recommended stipend for Ministers continue to increase in line with the RPI in September in keeping with the current policy.

Timescale: 18 November 2022

15. Yearbook 2023

(Paper J)

As agreed above the recommended minimum stipend for Ministers will be increased by the September RPI percentage.

The Finance Officer suggested that the table of church fees be removed as there are many variances in what is charged between country, area, locality. General Secretary said there is a need for a link where churches can get guidance on what to charge.

Action: General Secretary to liaise with a few Ministers requesting what level of fees are charged by their churches and compare them. Table to remain in Yearbook with a note that variation may be found in countries & areas. Bring to council if amendments to fees is needed.

Timescale: for Council 18 November 2022.

The Property Manager/Finance Officer reported that Paper J was for information, highlighting the caveat for the stipend.

16. Travel Grants

(Paper K)

This payment is a grant therefore this will be a contribution towards the costs incurred, not full payment of the expense.

Suggested changes/additions to the claim form.

It needs to be included on the claim form that there will only be one grant per car.

That the first band starts at 20 miles and wordings to be clarified.

To include car sharing information.

Action: Financial Controller, General Secretary, Operations Manager, and Chair of FSSC meet to amend the claim form. Forward to Council for acceptance/agreement.

Timescale: for Council 18 November 2022.

17. CMD Grants

(Paper L)

This grant will be to invest in those accredited by CF who continue to develop their ministry.

They must have completed the CF mandatory bespoke safeguarding training. It will be paid every other year. It is unlikely that everyone who can claim will claim.

The feeling of the committee was to trial this for 2 years and review in 24 months' time.

Proposal to Council for agreement

To provide CMD grants of £300 for those on the accredited lists who have completed the safeguarding training every two years.

Timescale: for Council 18 November 2022.

18. Hope Community Church

(Paper M)

ITTB requested a detailed report **(Paper M)** be produced to provide the committee with the best information available to enable consideration of this request.

After discussion the feeling of the meeting was that CF does not have the resources to fund the project.

Papers to be condensed before being presented to Council for consideration.

Recommendation to Council:

That CF do not gift nor purchase the property at 264 Hotwells Road.

That when Council writes to the church, they encourage them in their response.

Timescale: For Council 18 November 2022

19. Portrait – Rev William Jay

(Paper N)

The feeling of the meeting was that this portrait should sit with all other portraits,

Recommendation:

As there is no practical space to safely store the portrait in Nottingham, the Property Manager suggests that he arrange with the Revd. Chris J. Bamforth Damp (Bunyan Meeting) to arrange for the portrait to be added to the Memorial Hall Portraits.

Action: Property Manager to arrange storage for the portrait as above.

Timescale: as soon as possible.

20. A.O.B.

General Secretary informed the meeting that she had circulated to all committee members (CSC & FSSC) the details of the current vacant voluntary positions for representing CF, requesting that these be shared with Areas and Churches.

21. Date of Next Meetings:

2023 13 April (Thursday), 7 October

2024 6 April, 5 October

22. Closing Prayer

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and for their participation.

The meeting closed with the sharing of the Grace.

Signed:

Dated: