

CARLISLE DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE LIMITED

Minutes of a meeting of the Carlisle Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd held at Newton Rigg on Saturday, 17th March 2018.

B 18/01 ATTENDANCE

68 members were present and 30 apologies for absence were received.

B 18/02 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Canon Jayne said that it had been an interesting time since the Board last met, with a number of developments to report to members. Mr Michael Bonner who had been a long term member of the Synod and Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and a member of the Finance Committee had retired at the end of 2017. This had created a casual vacancy, which had been advertised, but for which no nominations had been received. He paid tribute to Mr Bonner's work over the years.

Looking back over last twelve months, one of the biggest debates had been about the sale of Church House in Carlisle and the move of the Diocesan Office to Penrith. He was pleased to report that the office had settled very well in Penrith. Regarding the old Church House building, a sale was being pursued to the Cathedral as part of their plans for mission. The former St Cuthbert's Vicarage, which adjoined Church House, was in the process of being sold to Carlisle Key, a charity which worked with young people who were homeless. Although Carlisle Key were not a church organisation, their charitable activities would provide a wonderful use for the old Vicarage, ensuring that our historic assets continued to be used for the good of society.

Another one of our historic assets was Rydal Hall. There had been changes at Rydal in recent months, with the new Chairman of the Rydal Hall Board resigning just before Christmas and the General Manager leaving his post at the end of January. These changes presented serious challenges but the DBF and the Rydal Board were determined to overcome them and to ensure that Rydal made a significant contribution to the mission of the Diocese in the future.

Canon Jayne also wanted to draw the DBF's attention to progress with reviewing the OpShops in Carlisle and Penrith. He invited the Archdeacon of Carlisle to update the meeting.

The Archdeacon reported that Mrs Carolyn Barton, the new half-time Project Manager for OpShops, had been appointed on an eighteen month fixed term contract and had started work in the middle of January. She was working with stakeholders to provide a clear direction of travel for the shops so that they would in time be financially independent, support the local communities in which they were based and have an evangelistic mission.

Canon Jayne thanked the Archdeacon and the Revd Andrew Towner for the work they had done during the review of the OpShops.

B 18/03 MINUTES – DBF 17/07

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday, 14th October 2017 were approved and signed.

B 18/04 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE & QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

i. Wednesday, 20th September 2017 – FC 17/114. The minutes were received. There was a query about minute FC 17/104 Parish Offers received to 31st August. The minutes said that seven parishes had yet to make a payment and the member asking the question wanted to know what the Finance Committee did to respond to parishes in this situation. The Chair reported that in some cases the causes were reported to Church House and that often the impact was temporary, with payments catching up in the course of the year. In other situations the Finance Committee relied on the Archdeacons to work with parishes to understand their issues and find solutions, calling on input from Rural Deans, Lay Chairs and others as necessary.

ii. Wednesday, 15th November 2017 – FC 17/145. The minutes were received.

B 18/05 EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD

Archdeacon Pratt explained that the extra-ordinary meeting of the Board had been called to vote on proposed amendments to the Articles of Association. In order to make the amendments agreement was required from 75% of the members. As 75% of the members were not present, voting would instead be conducted by post. He stressed that in order to pass the amendments in a postal vote members needed to return their voting papers.

Mr Hurton explained that although the Board meeting itself was quorate any special resolution required the agreement of 75% of those eligible to vote and in this case the number eligible to vote represented the entire membership of the Board. The proposals had been agreed by the DBF Finance Committee and the changes had been previewed at the last meeting of the Board in October 2017.

The Archdeacon reminded members of the detail of the proposed changes. First, they would increase the number of possible co-opted Directors from two to four in order to ensure that the requisite expertise was available. There were currently four executive directors, namely the Diocesan Bishop and the three Archdeacons, five non-executive Directors elected by the DBF, and up to two co-opted Directors. Under the proposals a majority of non-executive Directors would continue to be elected by the members.

The Archdeacon told members that the second change was to impose a time limit to the length of service on the Finance Committee. The proposal was to limit the length of service to two three years terms and would also apply to co-opted members as well. This would not affect the Bishop and the Archdeacons who were Directors by virtue of their Office. The third change was to enable members on an exceptional basis to participate in meetings using technology.

Mr Hurton emphasised that there was no plan to make all four co-options. Instead the ability to co-opt up to four Directors would provide enough flexibility to ensure that particular skills were available on the Finance Committee if required.

A voting paper would be posted out with a self-addressed envelope and covering letter to members explained that this had been discussed last October with a further discussion at this meeting.

A straw poll of those present was then taken. One member abstained while all others voted in favour of the proposals set out in the special resolution. Mr Hurton would include information about the result of the straw poll in the covering letter that would go to members along with the voting paper.