

Dundee Friends' Property Trust
Meeting of the Trustees via Video Conference, 1.30pm on Wednesday 24th November 2021

Present:

Martin Pippard (Clerk)
Sue Mansfield (Minute Clerk)
Pamela Brunt (Treasurer)
Peter Cheer (ESAM Representative)
Bill Edgar
Marion Sharkey (Administrator)

Prevented:

George Berwick

Minute 34/2021

The Meeting started with a short period of Worship.

Minute 35/2021

The Minutes of the Meeting of DFPT held via video conference on Wednesday 25 August 2021 were signed by the Clerk.

Minute 36/2021 Matters Arising

Minute 36a/2021 Meeting House Manual (Minute 26d/2021)

We thank Marion Sharkey (DFPT Administrator) all her hard work in preparing the draft Meeting House manual. We note that it is still a work in progress and that preparing it has been useful in highlighting how procedures can be simplified, e.g. the housekeeping supplies and fire safety checks. We agree to ask Bryan Murray to take over doing the latter as part of the Factor's role.

Minute 36b/2021 Inspection of Sewage System (Minute 30d/2021)

We note from the Clerk's Report that Drain Blitz were consulted re carrying out an inspection of the sewage system but that they were sceptical about the value of doing so because they believed that the recent flooding problems were due to the inability of the main sewers to cope due to the exceptional circumstances (failure of the pump station on the first occasion and extremely heavy rain on the second). Likewise they were of the view that the problems with the one way valve were due to increased pressure in the main sewer rather than the valve itself being blocked. We, therefore, agree not to proceed with further investigations for the present but the Building and Fabric Maintenance group will keep a watching eye on the situation.

Minute 36c/2021 Lift Problems (Minute 30f/2021)

We note from the Clerk's Report that the lift has continued to prove problematic and both Caltech and Oastlers have been informed about our continuing concern that it might not be fit for purpose though for the present it appears to be working satisfactorily.

Minute 37/2021 Trust Finances

Minute 37a/2021

We thank Pamela Brunt for her report for the period 01/01/2021 to 15/11/2021 (Paper 6 previously circulated and attached) updating us on the Trust's finances and we note that the invoice for the repairs to the rear flat roof has been submitted to the Historic Buildings and Listed Places of Worship Fund and we anticipate that this will result in a refund of the VAT element of this. We currently have a surplus of income over expenditure and, therefore, we are building reserves that we hope would enable us to finance future potentially bigger repairs if needed.

Minute 37b/2021

We thank Pam Brunt (Treasurer) and Martin Pippard for their work in preparing the draft Annual Report (Paper 7 previously circulated) and note that it is planned that it will be ready for submission early in 2022 once the financial data is added and the auditing process has been undertaken by Patterson Boyd. A final draft will be circulated to all Trustees prior to it being submitted to OSCR.

Minute 38/2021 Reports from the Working Groups

Minute 38a/2021

a) Housekeeping

We thank Martin Pippard for his verbal report in the absence of George Berwick after speaking to him. We note that the cleaning rota is working well and that housekeeping matters are in general proceeding smoothly. The relevant section of the Meeting House manual has been circulated to the Housekeeping group and Marion has received feedback that they are content with it.

Minute 38b//2021

b) Lettings

We thank Sue Mansfield for her report on behalf of the Lettings Group (Paper 8 previously circulated and attached) summarising current usage, recent inquiries and their proposed 4 tier structure for charging. We accept their recommendation that the charging structure be simplified so that the discounts for long term regular bookings are incorporated into the scale of charges for such bookings compared to one-off bookings. We also agree that in future the hourly rate be discontinued and charges be based on either whole day or sessional (i.e. morning, afternoon or evening) rates. We ask them to prepare a new information sheet for inquirers looking to rent space incorporating these changes including the revised scale of charges and to examine the reference to charities which is a diverse sector.

Minute 38c/2021

c) Building Fabric and Maintenance

We thank Bill Edgar for his report on behalf of the group and note that he whilst he has been liaising with Marion, the group has not formally met since our August meeting. He is proposing that the group will meet in the near future to confirm arrangements re the need to further investigate the ventilation and heating issues and the repainting of the pillars. He also proposed a list of standing items for the agenda for 4 quarterly meetings of the group. This will lay down a good foundation for the future re ESAM taking over when DFPT is stood down. Whilst we note that Marion, in her capacity as Administrator, will continue to liaise with and will provide support to the group, she will no longer be a member of it after May 2022 and we ask LM to bring forward the names of 2 people to join it so that there can be a transition period.

Minute 38d/2021)

d) Fundraising Group

We thank Martin Pippard for updating us on the activities of the group based on the report to LM and note the pop-up shop at the Meeting House will now take place in May 2022. We thank the group for their continuing fundraising activity which has raised in the region of £1,800 to date for this year.

Minute 39/2021 Factor's Reports on the condition of the 3rd and 4th Floor Flats

We note the content of the Clerk's Report (Paper 5 previously circulated and attached) and both reports from Brian Murray (Papers 5a & 5b) and note that the recommended maintenance work in both flats is being undertaken by the Factor. With regard to the requests from the tenants in the 4th floor flat for e.g. the kitchen floor covering to be replaced we need to alert Brian Murray to the fact that according to the terms of the original tenancy agreement, the floor coverings and kitchen equipment such as the washing machine belong to the tenants and hence are not the DFPT's responsibility to replace them. We ask Claire Broadhurst to help liaise with the tenants over this along with their support worker from Dundee City Council about these issues.

Minute 40/2021 Future Plans for the building**Minute 40a/2021 Conversion of floors 1 and 2 into flats**

We note from the Clerk's Report (Paper 5 previously circulated and attached) that the planning permission for this expires in March 2022. Given that the estimated cost of doing this work was in excess of £200,000 it is unlikely that we will be able to proceed with this in the foreseeable future. We, therefore, resolve to explore applying for the planning permission to be renewed on the basis that it will not be necessary to provide additional documentation in the way of plans beyond what was previously submitted.

Minute 40b/2021 Heating Needs in the Meeting House

We note from the Clerk's Report (Paper 5 previously circulated and attached) that with the onset of colder weather, problems have emerged with ensuring that the Ground Floor Meeting Room is heated to a comfortable temperature. For the present this is being addressed by setting the central heating so that it comes in earlier in the day when it is in use. Since our initial discussions about this during the refurbishment works when we obtained a report from a manufacturer's of electric radiant heaters (Herschel) and decided to wait to assess the requirements once the room was back in use, we subsequently obtained a report from Resource Efficient Scotland (Paper 5c previously circulated and attached). This suggests that in addition to improving the heating within the room installing electric radiant heaters could also substantially reduce our carbon footprint. We, therefore, ask the Clerk to liaise with the Building Fabric and Maintenance group to explore in more detail the installation of radiant heaters and how this would fit in with the longer term need to replace the gas boiler by 2025.

Minute 40c/2021 Ventilation Needs in the Meeting House

We note that ventilation to the basement and ground floor of the Meeting House may continue to restrict numbers when these are in use. There are continuing issue with the ventilation shafts to the basement as a result of debris falling into them from the work being demolition work being conducted by Roan's next door and which despite repeated requests they have not removed. Oastlers have been asked whether they can advise on the layout of the ventilation shafts and the Clerk will continue to negotiate with Roan to resolve this issue.

Minute 41/2021 Future Relationships with Local Meeting and ESAM

We need to consider the next steps towards laying down DFPT and as a result we thank Martin Pippard (Clerk) for his discussion paper (previously circulated and attached). For the present we think that the work groups have to be given more time to bed down into their roles and to liaise with each other to reduce the workload of the DFPT. We, therefore, agree to look at this more detail towards the middle of 2022.

Minute 42/2021 Health and Safety Matters

We thank Martin Pippard for update on the Coronavirus Risk Assessment included in the Clerk's Report (Paper 5 previously circulated and attached) and note that:

- a) The lift and basement remain out of use in order to limit close contacts.
- b) The Kadampa Meditation Centre can increase the maximum number for their Wednesday evening meetings to 20 on the basis of their own risk assessment. This still allows for a 1.5m separation between chairs.
- c) The 1st floor Meeting Room has a capacity of 19 with chairs at 1.5m distance and further benefits from a window that can be opened to increase ventilation.
- d) A new hand sanitiser has been installed in the 1st floor hallway now that it being used on a weekly basis by 2 separate support groups.

Minute 43/2021 Administrator's Report

We thank Marion Sharkey for her Report (Paper 2 previously circulated and attached) and note that in the event of the Humanitarian Project not being able to match us with a family needing to be housed in the 3rd floor flat that we should ask Brian Murray to find new tenants for us in the usual way.

Minute 44/2021 Any Other Business

There were no other business matters.

Minute 45/2021 Dates of next Meetings

These are still to be agreed in conjunction with Dundee Local Meeting but we agree to hold our next meeting on 23rd February 2022.

Minute 46/2021 Closing Worship

The Meeting concluded with a period of silent worship.

Martin Pippard (Clerk)

Sue Mansfield (Minute Clerk)