

THE REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF THE CHURCH IN WALES

A meeting of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales was held via video conference on 15 June 2020.

Present: Ex officio members
The Archbishop of Wales
The Most Reverend J D E Davies

Chair of the Standing Committee
Mrs E M Perkins

Chairs of the Diocesan Boards of Finance
St. Asaph: Mrs H R Jones
Bangor: The Venerable M K R Stallard
St. Davids: Mr N C P Griffin
Llandaff: Mr M A Lawley
Monmouth: Mr P E Lea
Swansea & Brecon: Sir E P Silk

Elected members
St. Asaph: The Very Reverend N H Williams, Mrs H Wiseman
Bangor: The Very Reverend K L Jones, Dr H Parry-Smith
St. Davids: Mrs J A P Hayward, the Venerable P R Mackness
Llandaff: Mr G I Moses, the Venerable C B W Smith
Monmouth: Miss P R Brown, the Venerable J S Williams
Swansea & Brecon: The Venerable A N Jevons

Nominated members
Mr J J Turner (Chair)
Mr R Davies

Apologies: Apologies were received from Mr Peter Kennedy, Mr T O S Lloyd and Mr T J P Davenport.

In attendance: The following members of staff were present:
The Provincial Secretary, the Head of Finance, the Deputy Head of Finance, the Head of Legal Services, the Head of Property Services, the Governance Officer and the Finance and Governance Officer.
The Safeguarding Manager was present for item 20/53.

Prayers: Opening prayers were led by the Venerable Jonathan Williams, Archdeacon of Newport.

Conflicts of interest: All clergy present declared that they had an interest in Clergy Remuneration Review (item 20/49), the setting of stipends and salaries for 2021 (item 20/50) and the setting of parochial fee levels for 2021 (item 20/52). The cathedral deans and archdeacons present declared an interest in the discussion on the funding of cathedrals (item 20/47): it was noted that they would not personally benefit financially from any decisions arising.

Representative Body membership

20/38

The Governance Officer advised the Representative Body that an additional vacancy had arisen within the Representative Body's co-opted membership following the recent sad death of Mr Lyn James. Both positions within the co-opted membership were now vacant.

The Representative Body agreed that as the end of the current triennial period of membership was approaching (on 31 December 2020) it would delay making decisions about co-opting additional members until the beginning of the new triennium.

The Chair advised the Representative Body that following Lyn James's death, he was now the only Representative Body member on the Investment Committee. The membership criteria of the Investment Committee required two of its members to also be members of the Representative Body and, until an additional trustee member was appointed to the Investment Committee, the Chair explained he had invited the Deputy-chair of the Representative Body, Sir Paul Silk and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr Geoff Moses, to be in attendance at the Investment Committee's meetings to ensure the Committee's business was conducted in the presence of additional trustees.

Minutes of the meetings of 5 March 2020 and 27 April 2020

20/39

The minutes of the previous meetings were agreed as a true record. The minutes would be signed by the Chair as soon as possible after COVID-19 movement restrictions were eased. Various matters arising from the minutes were noted.

Summary of committee activities

20/40

The Governance Officer reminded the Representative Body that a revised system for reporting the activities of the Representative Body's committees had recently been introduced.

The Representative Body noted the updates provided by each of its committees.

Risk register update

20/41

The Provincial Secretary informed the Representative Body that at its meeting on 1 June the Audit and Risk Committee had undertaken its usual interim review of the risk register.

COVID-19 pandemic

In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic the Committee had considered particularly four risks:

- Risk 1 – falling congregation numbers;
- Risk 4 – the Church in Wales's organisational structure;
- Risk 15 – poor total returns on the Representative Body's investments as a result of economic events; and
- Risk 17 – insolvency of a diocese.

The Provincial Secretary noted that as a result of the Committee's discussions, the inherent and residual assessments for these risks were now deemed to be 'high'. No risk relating specifically to a pandemic was currently included within the risk register. This is to be reviewed.

During discussion, it was noted that a risk specifically concerning clergy well-being would be an appropriate addition to the risk register.

The Audit and Risk Committee would undertake its detailed annual review of the risk register at its meeting in October 2020 with the most significant risks being discussed by the Representative Body at its meeting in November 2020. The Provincial Secretary reminded members that the risk register was a live document with which senior provincial staff were regularly engaged.

New risks

The Provincial Secretary explained that the Audit and Risk Committee had also approved the insertion of two new risks into the risk register, risk which related to St. Padarn's Institute. The new risks related to:

- Academic complaints – where academic standards and quality assurance concerns may lead to loss of accreditation and funding; and
- Course closure – where the discontinuation of a course could have financial or reputational implications.

The inherent and residual assessments of both risks had been identified as 'low'.

Future developments

The Provincial Secretary informed the Representative Body that the risk register had been discussed with the external auditor, Haysmacintyre, with two enhancements to current practice recommended.

Firstly, an analysis of the Representative Body's appetite for risk should be included within the register. It was noted that many organisations found it difficult to assess and then clearly articulate appetite for risk but the Audit and Risk Committee would discuss this, together with the methodology for assessing risk appetite, at its meeting in October 2020.

The production of a risk heat map would also be considered and discussed with the Audit and Risk Committee.

Summary

Following detailed discussion, the Representative Body noted the amendments to the risk register.

Financial position of the Representative Body and dioceses

20/42

The Provincial Secretary introduced a comprehensive paper setting out the current financial position of the Representative Body and, following consultation with the diocesan secretaries, the dioceses. It was noted that the diocesan secretaries and Chairs of the diocesan boards of

finance had met on 3 June 2020 to keep abreast of the developing financial situation, and the effect on provincial and diocesan finances.

General financial situation

Provincial staff remained in close contact with the investment managers and revised income forecasts had been prepared. It was noted that the value of the Representative Body's stock exchange holdings had seen some recovery since the start of the pandemic, but continuing volatility in the stock market made the situation far from stable and divergence between market values and the real economy was currently a real possibility: further turbulence, and probable losses of value, was expected.

Diocesan situations

All dioceses had acknowledged the significant importance of the financial assistance provided to them by the Representative Body for Quarter 2 and the dioceses had set out how they were making use of the assistance, within the principles the Representative Body had stipulated at its meeting in April 2020 (minute 20/32). At the meeting of the diocesan secretaries and DBF Chairs on 3 June the importance of continued financial support was stressed.

Increases in parish giving via the Church in Wales's Gift Direct system were noted and dioceses would press for further development of this form of giving.

Further financial assistance

Based on discussions with dioceses, the continuing closure of church buildings and suspension of public worship as well as the precarious economic situation for dioceses, the Representative Body discussed a proposal to replicate the financial support it had provided for dioceses for Quarter 2 in Quarter 3.

The Provincial Secretary noted that such provision would mean that, with the forecast reduction in income, this further increase in expenditure would mean annual deficits for the Representative Body of circa £11 million for 2020 and circa £8million for 2021 were probable. Additionally, if stock exchange holdings had to be liquidated in order to provide additional cash, this would have a cumulative effect on the Representative Body's investment assets' potential to generate investment income and capital growth in the future.

Discussion

Detailed discussion of this proposal followed during which members acknowledged the significance of the support provided for Quarter 2 and the positive effect this had had on diocesan activities and the interaction between dioceses and parishes: the commitment demonstrated by the province had helped the spirit of conversations with parishes, particularly those who were finding it difficult to meet parish share commitments. The vital part the Representative Body's assets had to play in aiding the Church in Wales's recovery from the effects of the pandemic was acknowledged.

It was felt that, at this point, concentrating on the provision of assistance for Quarter 3 was preferable. Consideration of any further assistance for Quarter 4, and beyond, needed to be informed by a clearer view of the economic situation in the autumn by which time, it was hoped, church buildings would be able to re-open to some degree.

Some members noted that if additional support were to be provided in Quarter 4 and onwards it should be considered on a slightly different basis, with possibilities including it being targeted to particular, impoverished areas; or on different principles and with different expectations.

Conclusion

Following discussion, the Representative Body agreed to:

- i. Provide dioceses with the same level of financial support in Quarter 3 that was provided in Quarter 2. Specifically, to absorb rather than recharge all stipend costs due in Q3. (Stipend costs consist of stipends, pension contributions, employer's national insurance contributions and council tax. This absorption was conditional upon:
 - a. DBFs agreeing to forego payment of the Q3 Block Grant with the exception of Parsonage Board Scheme contributions which will be paid to DBFs on 30 September 2020.
 - b. DBFs continuing to take active steps to encourage online giving and to close the gap between income and expenditure.
 - c. DBFs agreeing to take active steps to collect parish share during Q3.
- ii. Meet again during the autumn of 2020 to discuss and make further decisions about the provision of any further financial assistance for Quarter 4.

Finance Strategy Forum

The Provincial Secretary noted that the Representative Body's meeting in June each year was usually preceded by the annual Joint Finance meeting with the bishops and diocesan secretaries. That meeting had been postponed in order to give more time for the economic situation to become clearer in order to guide the Representative Body's consideration of its future financial commitments.

This meeting was being planned to take place in early September and would be re-named the Finance Strategy Forum. At that meeting a number of significant financial matters affected the Church in Wales would have to be discussed, including the Block Grant levels beyond 2021; the funding arrangements for cathedrals; the Clergy Remuneration Review; and future funding of the Evangelism Fund. These discussions would need to take place within the context of the economic impact of COVID-19 and the resulting reduced levels of income in the medium term.

In recognition of the changed financial conditions, the budget for 2021 would be a zero-based budget. Forming that budget would need to take place in the context of the financial priorities of the Church in Wales: the Finance Strategy Forum meeting would be key to discussing and articulating what the financial priorities should be.

Audit Findings report

20/43

The Chair welcomed Mr Adam Halsey, Partner at Haysmacintyre, and Vikram Sandhu, Audit Manager at Haysmacintyre, to the meeting. Mr Halsey delivered the Audit Findings report, explaining that while the audit been carried out remotely due to the COVID-19-related movement restrictions, it had been a seamless undertaking due to the Xledger electronic accounts management system.

Mr Halsey drew members' attention also to the fact that any matters raised in the report were either of limited concern or advisory and that the audit was an unqualified audit. The COVID-19 mitigations that were in place were satisfactory and properly expressed within the accounts.

Mr Halsey explained that it was important to ensure that the composition and allocation of the Representative Body's assets was clearly communicated, including an explanation of its reserves policy. This would ensure that the Representative Body's financial position was articulated in a meaningful way and allow the status of its assets to be understood by the wider Church in Wales. It was noted that the Audit and Risk Committee was undertaking work on the development of a reserves policy that expressed the importance of balancing the needs of the present while not unduly damaging future income generation as well as the primacy of the Clergy Pension Scheme within the overall investment fund.

Following the auditor's presentation, all provincial staff in attendance left the meeting to allow the auditors to meet with the trustees alone.

Mr Geoff Moses, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, noted the Committee had reviewed the auditor's report and he had nothing to add.

The following resolution was proposed and passed unanimously:

That the Audit Findings Report be received.

The work of and support from the provincial finance department during the audit and the preparation of the annual report was acknowledged. Mr Halsey and Mr Sandhu left the meeting.

Annual report and accounts 2019

20/44

The draft annual report and accounts for 2019 were introduced by the Head of Finance. She noted that the net movement in funds for the year was £74million, due principally to investment gains of £87million. At 31 December 2019 the Representative Body's total funds increased to £784million (from £710million).

The Head of Finance noted that 2019 had seen income of £21.1million against expenditure of £22.8million, resulting in a deficit (before investment gains and transfers) of £1.7million. Unrealised investment gains resulted in an overall General Fund increase of £52million.

The following resolutions were proposed and passed unanimously:

That the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Representative Body for the year ended 31 December 2019 be approved and adopted.

That the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Representative Body be authorised to sign the letter of representation on behalf of the Representative Body.

Common Investment Fund

20/45

The Head of Finance presented the draft accounts for the Common Investment Fund for 2019, confirming the Fund was separate to the main investment fund and explaining that it was a fund

in which parishes were able to invest any legacies or special trusts they held and use the income generated.

The total value of the Common Investment Fund at 31 December 2019 was £62.9million with its total return to 31 December 2019 being 17.4% (compared to the Teknometry comparator return of 16.1%).

The Head of Finance stressed that the administration of the Common Investment Fund continued and income was being paid out to parishes as usual during the lockdown period.

The following resolution was proposed and passed unanimously:

That the accounts of the Common Investment Fund for the year ended 31 December 2019 be approved and adopted.

Evangelism Fund

20/46

The Provincial Secretary confirmed that the Evangelism Fund Committee had not met since the Representative Body's meeting in March 2020: no further grants had been awarded and no further applications (at the first or second stages of the application process) considered.

Given the two-stage application process and that the Committee had just one further meeting scheduled in 2020, it was not foreseen that any further grants would be awarded during the year. Two dioceses (the dioceses of Monmouth and Swansea & Brecon) were yet to submit first-stage applications to the Fund and the Provincial Secretary confirmed he was in discussion with those dioceses.

Funding of the Evangelism Fund

Currently, £161,616 remained from the Evangelism Fund's total of £10million following grants made to the dioceses of St. Asaph, Bangor, St. Davids and Llandaff.

The Representative Body was reminded that at its meeting in November 2019 (minute 19/53) it had indicated that a further £6million could be made available if the Evangelism Fund Committee needed to access further funding in order to award first-time grants to dioceses, in line with the principles of the Fund.

Further discussion of this measure took place. The Representative Body determined that it did not wish to change this provision, feeling that it would not be fair to the dioceses of Monmouth and Swansea & Brecon to prevent them from having an opportunity to make meaningful applications to the Evangelism Fund. Second bids from dioceses would not be accepted for the time being.

It was noted that to provide this further £6million of funding, it may be necessary to liquidate investment assets.

Summary

Following detailed discussion, the Representative Body:

- i. Noted the current position; and

- ii. Endorsed its decision in November 2019 to allow the Evangelism Fund Committee to access up to £6million to award first-time grants to dioceses, in line with the principles of the Fund.

Funding of cathedrals

20/47

The Archbishop updated the Representative Body on the work being undertaken by a small group of trustees and provincial staff to assess in detail the funding arrangements for the cathedrals. The group had visited all six cathedrals earlier in the year.

While the differences between the six cathedrals were notable, common themes were emerging and a report with recommendations was being prepared for consideration by the Representative Body in due course. The group was of the view that decisions about future funding of arrangements for cathedrals should be made in the context of a wider discussion of the priorities of the Church in Wales to ensure the complexities of funding the cathedrals was understood and in line with the future strategic allocation of the Representative Body's assets.

The Representative Body noted the situation.

Sales outlets for Church in Wales Publications

20/48

Churches Together Bookshop

The Provincial Secretary reminded the Representative Body that for many years the range of resources produced by Church in Wales Publications had been stocked and sold via the Churches Together Bookshop, which was based in Cardiff. The link with the Church in Wales was strong as the Bookshop staff attended many provincial and diocesan events, including Governing Body meetings, to sell books and other resources. Also, provincial ICT staff provided extensive support to the Bookshop by building and maintaining the shop's website.

The Provincial Secretary and the Head of Finance had met with representatives of the Churches Together Bookshop and were informed that the bookshop may no longer be financially viable and the Directors were wondering if the time had come to close the shop and wind up of the company. If this option was pursued, it was possible that the business would not have sufficient funds to fully meet closure costs.

Subsequent correspondence from the Directors to the Provincial Secretary had requested a loan of £6,000 from the Representative Body in order to allow the Bookshop to close in an orderly manner.

The Provincial Secretary indicated that while the Churches Together Bookshop was not legally part of the Representative Body, the relationship between the Bookshop and the Church in Wales was a close one and it was in the interests of neither the Representative Body nor the wider Church in Wales for the Bookshop not to end its operations well.

Logistics of Church in Wales Publications

The Provincial Secretary explained that the closure of the Churches Together Bookshop created certain logistical problems in terms of the storage and distribution of the printed materials produced by Church in Wales Publications. The provincial office was not equipped

to act as a retail venue for the sale of these resources, neither did it have sufficient storage space for online sales.

Following discussion with the Worship Resources Advisory Group (WRAG), the Head of Communication and Technology had opened negotiations with a company to provide online and telephone-based sale of the lectionary, together with storage of stock and distribution. It was possible this service could be expanded to offer similar services for other Church in Wales printed materials, something that would be assessed alongside other possible options, including print on demand, digital-only publications and other storage and distribution options.

Discussion

During the following discussion the contribution made to Church in Wales life by the Churches Together Bookshop, particularly its presence at Governing Body meetings and diocesan conferences, was acknowledged with appreciation. The gap left by its absence would be significant.

It was also felt the cathedral shops could be used as local hubs for the stocking and distribution of print resources, something that could revitalise the contributions these shops made to the province as well as dioceses.

Summary

Following discussion, the Representative Body:

- i. Authorised the Head of Finance to agree financial assistance to the Churches Together Bookshop of up to £6,000; and
- ii. Noted ongoing explorations for the provision of replacement storage and distribution arrangements for Church in Wales Publications materials.

Clergy Remuneration Review

20/49

The Head of Finance provided an oral update on the work of the implementation group appointed by the Representative Body to prepare costings, financial projections and options for the implementation of the recommendations with the Clergy Remuneration Review Working Group's 2019 report *Supporting the Mission of the Church in Wales in the 21st Century*.

The work of the implementation group had been delayed by the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the group had re-considered its projected timescale for implementation. The date for implementation had been deferred by six months to 1 July 2022 and the group expected to present its report to the Representative Body at its meeting in November 2020 for consideration.

The Chair of the implementation group, Mrs Hilary Wiseman, explained that the group's timescale allowed for a consultation with the clergy.

The Representative Body noted the position.

Stipend and salary award 2021

20/50

The Head of Finance advised the Representative Body that the People Committee, at its meeting of 6 May 2020, had discussed the annual stipend and salary award. Members were reminded that in June 2015 the Representative Body had introduced a policy of basing annual increases on the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figure published for the April preceding the January in which the increase would be implemented. The policy also included an option to add a discretionary 0.5% to this figure, in consultation with dioceses, if necessitated by the prevailing financial situation of the time.

The Head of Finance confirmed the CPI for April 2020 was 0.8% and, following consultation with the dioceses, the Committee recommended that there was no increase to stipend and salary levels from 1 January 2021.

Following discussion, and in line with the recommendation of the People Committee, the Representative Body agreed that no increase to stipend and salary levels would be implemented from 1 January 2021. Three members voted against this decision and one abstained.

In response to a question from one member, clarification would be sought as to whether lay staff on incremental salary scales were entitled to move to the next spinal point of their salary grade in 2021 irrespective of the decision that salary levels would not increase. It was agreed this matter would be referred to the People Committee for clarification.

Vacancy fees 2021

20/51

The Head of Finance reported the People Committee had undertaken its annual review of vacancy fee levels. The Committee's recommendation for no increase to be made to the vacancy fees in the Church in Wales from 1 January 2021 was approved by the Representative Body.

Vacancy fees from 1 January 2021 were therefore confirmed to be:

	Fee from 1 January 2021
Cleric in receipt of a pension by virtue of service in Holy Orders	£24
Cleric in the non-stipendiary ministry over 70 years of age	£24
Licensed Reader (fee payable to the Readers' Association)	£24

Parochial Fees 2021

20/52

The Head of Finance confirmed the People Committee had undertaken its annual review of parochial fee levels, recommending that no change to parochial fee levels be implemented from 1 January 2021.

In line with the People Committee's recommendation, the Representative Body agreed that no change to parochial fee levels would be implemented from 1 January 2021, as set out in the following tables:

Marriage fees	Fee from 1 January 2021
Marriage service (including fee for publication of banns)	
- Ministry fee (payable to the officiating minister)	£195
- Church fee (payable to the PCC)	£260
- (Total fee)	£455
Copy of marriage certificate (payable to the PCC)	£10
Publication of banns (to include certificate of banns)	£40
For a marriage blessing	
- Ministry fee (payable to the officiating minister)	£195
- Church fee (payable to the PCC)	£215
- (Total fee)	£410

Funeral and burial fees	Fee from 1 January 2021
Ministry fee (payable to the officiating minister)	£86
Committal * (payable to the officiating minister)	£22
Church fee (payable to the PCC)	£108
Burial fee in Church in Wales burial ground	
- Body	£482
- Cremated remains (payable to the PCC for the Church Maintenance Fund)	£161
Memorial fee	
- Plain wooden cross	£24
- Grave headstone	£182
- Cremated remains tablet	£97
- Additional inscription	£43
(all payable to the PCC for the Churchyard Maintenance Fund)	
Search of burial registers (payable to the PCC)	£22 per hour (or part thereof)

* For a committal following a separate funeral service elsewhere, at which a different minister had officiated.

The Representative Body noted that the People Committee would undertake a comprehensive review of parochial fees.

In response to a question about the involvement of the Welsh Government in the approval of burial fees the Head of Legal Services confirmed that as no increases to the currently approved fees were proposed, no approval from Welsh Government was necessary.

Memorial fees

Following initial work undertaken by the People Committee, the Representative Body considered the fee arrangements for memorial services. Social distancing requirements had meant that the numbers of mourners allowed to attend funeral services in recent months had been restricted. It was possible therefore that when public worship was able to resume in a less restricted way memorial services may be arranged for those whose funerals had had to take place amidst such restrictions. Concern had been raised that charging additional fees for subsequent memorial services where the funeral had already attracted a fee was not in the correct spirit and may lead to relational difficulties between grieving families and local church communities if it were construed that the local church or minister were profiting from the COVID-19 pandemic by taking the opportunity to command duplicate fees.

Wide ranging discussion followed. While the Representative Body acknowledged the concern of charging duplicate fees it was also aware that the concept of memorial services taking place in addition to a smaller scale funeral service was not new. Also, memorial services often took place at a time removed from the funeral and often involved different places and different officiants: the charging of fees for their undertaking had not caused undue complications as a result neither had specific provision within the fee structure been warranted.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the fee arrangements for memorial services (both church fees and ministry fees), together with the introduction of clarificatory explanatory notes, would be given further, detailed consideration. The Representative Body authorised the Chair of the Representative Body to endorse detailed proposals in due course.

Safeguarding Policy

20/53

The Safeguarding Manager advised the Representative Body that the People Committee had, at its meeting in February 2020, approved a timetable for the development of a new provincial Safeguarding Policy which met the commitment made to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) that a revised policy would be ready for publication in June 2020.

The Safeguarding Advisory Group (SAG) had supported the People Committee in the development of the new policy.

The Safeguarding Manager explained the revised policy was conceived as a succinct policy statement which was supplemented by an extensive catalogue of standalone procedural and guidance documents.

The policy set out the Church in Wales's commitment to both ensuring all who worshipped and participated in the life of the Church in Wales could do so safely, and to providing appropriate training and support as necessary to those within church communities who were in positions of responsibility. The policy also indicated that the Church in Wales was committed to working in a manner that complied with all necessary safeguarding legislation and good practice.

The Representative Body endorsed the new Safeguarding Policy which would be presented to the Governing Body at its meeting in September 2020 for approval, at which point it would become the definitive and only Safeguarding Policy for the province.

Safeguarding Advisory Group

20/54

The Provincial Secretary reminded the Representative Body that at its meeting in March 2020 (minute 20/17) it had approved a number of updates to the powers and duties of the People Committee, which included the formation of a Safeguarding Advisory Group (SAG) which would provide the People Committee with specialist advice on all safeguarding-related matters. The SAG reports directly to the People Committee.

The SAG had met for the first time in May 2020 and had already made an impact in the guidance it had provided in the updating of the provincial Safeguarding Policy.

Discussions to identify a suitable Chair for the SAG were ongoing and the Representative Body authorised the Chair of the People Committee to approve the appointment of the Chair of the SAG. When made, the appointment of the Chair would be communicated to all members of the People Committee and members of the Representative Body and included within the Chair of the Representative Body's report to the Governing Body.

Parsonage Board contributions 2021

20/55

The Chair of the Property Committee, Mr Rod Davies, reminded the Representative Body that each year, the Property Committee reviewed and considered the appropriate minimum level of expenditure diocesan parsonage boards should make to the upkeep and repair of parsonages each year.

Mr Davies confirmed the Property Committee had discussed the Parsonage Board contributions for 2021 at its meeting on 10 June, noting that the industry predictions for cost growth during 2020 and 2021 were muted and that the 4% increase to Parsonage Board contributions implemented in January 2020 had been slightly ahead of actual cost increases.

The Property Committee had therefore agreed to recommend to the Representative Body that no increase to Parsonage Board contributions be applied in 2021 with contributions remaining at a minimum of £5,535 per parsonage house for 2021.

In line with the advice of the Property Committee the Representative Body agreed that Parsonage Board contributions for 2021 would remain at 2020 levels.

Sales of consecrated property

20/56

In accordance with Chapter III, section 23(2) of the Constitution, the Representative Body authorised the sale of the following consecrated property:

- B.227 The former St. Catherine's church, Arthog
- B.227 The former St. Paul's church, Bryncoedifor
- B.243 The former St. Michael's church, Llanfihangel Tre'r Beirdd
- B.243 The former St. Ana's church, Coedana
- B.243 The former St. Tyfrydog's church, Llandyfrydog

M.713 The former St. Paul's church, Cwm

St. Cynog's churchyard, Penderyn

20/57

The Chair of the Property Committee informed the Representative Body that the boundary wall at St. Cynog churchyard, Penderyn was currently posing a significant risk to the public and was in need of urgent repair. The cost of repair was likely to be in the region of £120,000, an amount that was beyond the resources of the local parish.

It was likely that emergency funding from the Representative Body would be needed to allow the works to be undertaken. Further professional advice would be sought.

It was agreed the Chair of the Representative Body and the Chair of the Property Committee would be consulted in order to authorise any expenditure.

Re-opening of church buildings

20/58

The Head of Property Services provided the Representative Body with a detailed update on preparations for the re-opening of church buildings. It was anticipated that the Welsh Government would soon ease current restrictions to allow a phased and regulated re-opening of church buildings.

The Head of Property Services explained he and the Head of Legal Services were closely involved in discussions with the Welsh Government via the Inter-Faith Forum and were able to make detailed preparations (in consultation with a group of archdeacons) for the re-opening of church buildings that reflected the measures and provisions Welsh Government expected to be satisfied.

A traffic light system

When church buildings were able to re-open it would be in a phased way and in adherence to a traffic light system:

- Red phase – buildings open for private prayer only. No services may take place.
- Amber phase – certain services may take place (with social distancing).
- Green phase – all services may resume (with social distancing).

It was stressed that there was no requirement for church buildings to re-open, and parishes could only do so if they were able to comply with hygiene and cleaning requirements as well as implement effective and safe social distancing procedures within the building.

Guidance and risk assessment

The Head of Property Services explained that before a church building was able to re-open a risk assessment must be completed by the parish concerned and approved by the relevant archdeacon. The risk assessment was a checklist-style proforma that complied with Welsh Government's guidance: supporting guidance to help parishes undertake the necessary work had also been prepared.

Legal situation

The Head of Legal Services reminded the Representative Body that it was the owner of the church buildings and the associated legislation placed expectations on owners of buildings to comply with the cleaning, hygiene and social distancing required. By not allowing church buildings to re-open without the archdeacons first approving the risk assessment demonstrated diligence on the part of the Representative Body as the owner of the building. It also ensured that local parish officers (the managers of the buildings and therefore also bearing legal responsibility for adherence to the legislation) gave appropriate consideration to the local arrangements that must be made and were therefore not themselves exposed to undue liability.

At present no announcement on the re-opening of church building had been made by Welsh Government and, for the time being, all were required to remain closed. When that situation changed updated pastoral guidance would be published by the Bench of Bishops together with the guidance on re-opening and information about the risk assessment requirements.

The Chair acknowledged the significant work that had been undertaken by the Head of Property Services and the Head of Legal Services, and thanked them for their work.

DEEMED BUSINESS

The following items were noted without discussion.

Investment Committee

20/59

The Representative Body noted the Investment Committee had not met since the last Representative Body meeting.

Audit and Risk Committee

20/60

The Representative Body noted the following items arising from the Audit and Risk Committee's meeting held on 1 June 2020.

Cashflow forecasts

The cashflow forecasts to 30 June 2021 highlighted the current cash held at bank and in money market deposits of £16 million would be depleted by the end of 2020. It would therefore be necessary to utilise the £10 million currently being held by the investment managers for potential investment property purchases and thereafter, any further cash requirements would be generated from the sale of stock exchange investments, this would result in the permanent depletion of the capital base and a reduction in the future income generated by those assets.

People Committee

20/61

The Representative Body noted the following items arising from the People Committee's meetings held on 6 May 2020 and 8 June 2020.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough)

Following the introduction of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, announced by the UK Government as part of a package of measures to protect jobs and businesses during the coronavirus pandemic it had been noted that:

- As at 28 April 2020, 10 employees of the Representative Body had been placed on furlough leave at 100% of their usual salary;
- Several more employees were likely to be considered for and placed on furlough leave over the coming weeks/months; and
- The Representative Body had taken the approach that furloughed workers would not accrue their contractual holiday entitlement whilst on furlough leave but continue to accrue statutory annual leave entitlement.

Property Committee

20/62

The Representative Body noted the Property Committee's meeting planned to take place on 19 March had been cancelled due to the travel restrictions imposed following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. A meeting had taken place via video conference on 10 June 2020.

Cathedrals and Churches Commission

20/63

The Representative Body noted the Commission had not met since the last Representative Body meeting.

Training Formation and Ministerial Development Committee

20/64

The Representative Body noted the first meeting of Committee in its newly constituted format had met via video conferencing on 11 May 2020.

QAA course designation

The Committee received the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) report for St. Padarn's Institute, noting that St. Padarn's had passed and that the review contained no recommendations. The Committee noted and approved the Principal's response to the report.

The Committee also approved the Course Designation Monitoring Submission for signature by the Principal and submission to Welsh Government.

Use of the Representative Body Seal

20/65

It was reported that the Representative Body Seal had been used from numbers 36593 to 36621 inclusive. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the meeting taking place by video conference, it was not possible for members to inspect the Seal Register in the usual way. Photographs of the relevant pages of the Seal Register are available on request.

Next meeting

20/66

The Chair confirmed the Representative Body would next meet on Thursday 12 November 2020. Before then, provincial staff would work to identify a date in early September for the Finance Strategy Forum meeting, when the Representative Body would meet with the bishops and diocesan secretaries.

Closing prayers

The Archbishop closed the meeting with prayer.