

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY FINANCE AND PROPERTY WORKGROUP

This document outlines the various tasks related to finance and property that the Southern Presbytery Finance and Property Group (F&P) is expected to manage.

The F&P should operate to ensure that the Southern Presbytery parishes are operating financially in a manner which is in accord with the Book of Order (BOO) and which best serves the stated aims of the parish mission goals.

The F&P is to undertake tasks delegated by the Presbytery Council.

The tasks may include:

1. Preparation of an annual budget for the Southern Presbytery and the management of a process of approval for this and for the annual levy.
2. Preparation of monthly reports of expenditure as compared to budget and of any unusual financial movements past or predicted.
3. Preparing annual audited accounts for presentation to the Southern Presbytery Annual Meeting
4. Requesting Southern Presbytery Resource Groups to submit budgets for events or activities that require funding from outside agencies, e.g. PSDS or Synod.
5. Approval of payment of accounts as presented by the Southern Presbytery Treasurer.
6. Provide simple guidelines for a minimum standard of accounts for parishes in the Presbytery and assistance to get church accounts into this form.
7. Advocating re national levies.
8. Requesting audited accounts from Southern Presbytery parishes.
9. Reviewing and, if approved, forwarding applications for funding from the Synod of Otago and Southland's Ecclesiastical Fund.
10. Managing investment funds including those specific to existing Presbyteries.
11. Managing Southern Presbytery assets.
12. Annual performance appraisal of the Southern Presbytery Treasurer.
13. Any other financial tasks requested by the Presbytery Council or initiated by the F&P itself and approved by the Presbytery Council.
14. Administration of all property matters under the jurisdiction of the Southern Presbytery.
15. Be aware of the regulations of Synod of Otago and Southland to ensure all paper work is completed before it goes to Synod.

Payment of accounts

All payment of accounts presented to Southern Presbytery will require approval by the F&P. The Treasurer may be delegated authority to pay accounts. Such payments would require ratification at the next meeting of the F&P. When required the Treasurer should seek the guidance of the Convenor of the F&P for advice and/or approval for payment. Payments by cheque should require the signature of the two out of three approved signatories.

Annual Budget

The Southern Presbytery Annual Budget for funding the Southern Presbytery operations will be prepared by the Treasurer with input and/or advice from the F&P and the Southern Presbytery Clerk where necessary. The budget should be such as to ensure a small surplus of less than 5% of the total budget.

Annual Accounts

The F&P will ensure that the annual accounts are prepared by the Southern Presbytery Treasurer. The F&P will ensure that the accounts are audited by a suitably qualified individual or organisation.

Funding Southern Presbytery Resource Groups

The expectation is that each Resource Group will be self funding by the participants of the Resource Group events. However, where Resource Groups organise an event which might benefit the whole Southern Presbytery some, if not all the costs, might be best met by Southern Presbytery or some other agency, e.g. PSDS or Synod. The costs could include travel for keynote speakers, materials and hire of equipment and venues. For such events a budget should be submitted by the Resource Group for the F&P to review.

The approval for Southern Presbytery to fund or partially fund such events will lie with the Presbytery Council on the recommendation of the F&P.

Levy on Parishes

The F&P will levy each parish to ensure that the funding requirements of the Southern Presbytery budget are met. Any surplus from the previous year's activities should be used to offset the levy on the congregations. The funding formula, i.e., % of Parish income, unit cost per communicant member, etc. will be determined by the Southern Presbytery Council on the recommendation of the F&P.

The Treasurer will forward invoices for the levy to each parish. Any parish failing to pay the levy by the due date should be advised of their delay and requested to fulfil their obligation by the Treasurer. Any parish requesting a review of their obligations should be granted a hearing by the F&P. The F&P should strive to ensure that fairness and justice prevail.

Advocate re national levies

The F&P may assist parishes to understand and clarify their financial commitments to the national church, PCANZ. Such assistance may include liaising with PCANZ to mitigate the impact of such levies on parishes.

Audited accounts from parishes

The F&P will assist all parishes to have their annual accounts appropriately audited and presented to a standard acceptable to the Charities Commission. Similarly, the F&P will assist all parishes to submit their financial statistics which are to be passed on to the PCANZ.

[Reviewing Applications to the Synod Ecclesiastical Fund](#)

All applications for funding from the Synod of Otago and Southland Ecclesiastical Fund should be reviewed by the F&P. If the application meets the requirements of such applications for Synod funds the F&P will recommend that the Southern Presbytery Council approves the application. Those applications which fail to meet the requirements of Synod funding applications should be returned to the applicant with:

- recommendations to assist the applicant to meet the appropriate requirements,
- or reasons that the application was not recommended

Managing Investment Funds

The Southern Presbytery will most likely have funds to be invested. Such funds might result from:

- existing investments held by the former Presbyteries which make up the Southern Presbytery, e.g. A W Hamilton Bequest Fund (Southland)
- funds levied from Parishes for the operation of the Southern Presbytery, and
- other funds which may need to be “protected” for specific purposes, e.g. Asset Replacement.

The F&P must ensure that such funds are invested with low risk agencies. The F&P must also ensure that, where necessary, records of the individual funds must be maintained to ensure that:

- interest is accredited to the individual funds, and
- the funds are used in accordance with the instructions of those who authorised the fund

Such funds need to be invested to ensure an adequate return for Southern Presbytery, or the beneficiaries, and/or provide support for other purposes outlined by the agency where the funds are invested. PSDS, for example, provides funds for various PCANZ initiatives and interest can be “donated” to assist such initiatives.

Managing Southern Presbytery Assets

The F&P must ensure that a register of Presbytery assets is maintained and that there is adequate insurance cover of these assets.

Annual Performance Appraisal of the Southern Presbytery Treasurer

The F&P will ensure that a performance appraisal of the Southern Presbytery Treasurer is held annually. The appraisal should focus on the duties stated in the Treasurer’s “Schedule of Duties” included in the Southern Presbytery Treasurer’s Position Description. Also included in the appraisal should be a review of the working relationship between the Treasurer, the F&P Convenor, the Southern Presbytery Clerk, and other members of the F&P.

Any Other Tasks

The F&P shall undertake any other financial related tasks required by the Southern Presbytery Council. The F&P shall initiate other tasks, as it sees fit, which will improve the financial performance of the Southern Presbytery, and which will reduce the financial burden on the Parishes, however the F&P must seek approval from the Council before it undertakes any additional tasks.