

Glasgow Presbytery Conference on Recharging the Eldership

5 March 2022

Kirk Session Commitment

Elders as Team Members

A Team is defined as a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose. Performance, goals and an approach for which they hold themselves accountable.¹

Working as a Team offers the opportunity for Kirk Sessions to engage in the task of achieving its vision in relation to Mission and Ministry.

An effective Team requires the following:

- Good communication
- An open atmosphere where each member's views and insights are valued
- Relationships within the Team are based on trust and mutual respect
- Disagreement about issues is seen to be natural and constructive in the decision-making process
- Decisions should be reached by consensus
- Each person's contribution should be affirmed
- Power is shared
- Motivation is encouraged by a sense of belonging

The benefits of Team working are:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Resources
- Decisions and Solutions
- Commitment

The Team Commitment:

This is a useful statement when establishing a new Team, in the current context, a Kirk Session. Elders are invited to define the parameters under which the Kirk Session will operate: for example confidentiality, honesty, listening, non-confrontation, humour, keeping to the point, not being personal.²

Example of a Kirk Session Commitment/...

¹ The Wisdom of Teams ; J Katzenbach and D K Smith

² This section is drawn from a Team Building Course presented by Susan Reid, of Susan Reid Associates. permission to use the material is acknowledged with gratitude and thanks

Example of a Kirk Session Commitment

As members of the Church, it is central to our discipleship that we try faithfully to follow Jesus Christ and love one another.

This is our promise to each other:

We will respect each other, be flexible, open minded, patient and understanding.

We will encourage and support each other in a caring way.

We will continue to create an environment of trust.

Where everyone is listened to, heard and valued.

With God's grace we will be a church filled with love, joy, fellowship and thanksgiving.

To achieve this we will:

- Listen to each other and try to understand each other's point of view.
- Speak clearly without fear or intimidation.
- Address all remarks through the Moderator at Kirk Session meetings.
- Participate fully and give of our best in the work of our Kirk Session.
- Respect each other in what we say and the way we say it both verbally and in written form.
- Abide by decisions made, even when we differed or disagreed during the discussion.
- Help and care for each other in all things and at all time.