

**THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND - MINISTRIES COUNCIL
COUNCIL**

St Andrew's and St George's West Church, 13-17 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Wednesday 6 December 2017

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Convener: Neil Glover

Vice-Conveners: John Dent
Eleanor McMahon
Sarah Ross

Members & Observers: 31 others recorded in the Register of Attendance

Staff in Attendance: Jayne Scott plus 8 staff as recorded in the Register of Attendance

Also in Attendance: Catherine Wallace, Secretary to the Diaconate Council along with Pamela Scott also from Diaconate Council

Apologies: Apologies were noted in the sederunt

ACTION

42 Opening Worship

The meeting was opened with prayers from several Council Members around the various items for discussion. The Convener welcomed the Craig Renton, who recently started as Depute Council Secretary. Apologies were noted including from Barbara Finlayson who has joined as a member to fill a vacancy.

43 Minutes

The Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 25 October 2017 was approved with minor amendment.

44 Matters Arising

44.1 Housing & Loan Fund - Survey on Ministerial Retirement (33.1): The Council Secretary will work with Lin Macmillan, Secretary of the Housing & Loan Fund, on a survey.

JS

45 Convener's Report

Council received a written report *MC4-01*.

45.1 Development Programme Update: The Convener thanked Council Members and Staff, in particular the Council Secretary and the Finance Manager, for the work done on the Development Programme which had been approved by Council of Assembly. Recruitment processes will take place over the coming months.

45.2 Presbytery Conference: Focus on the first day was around a strategy for the Church from the Council of Assembly. Following a series of roadshows Council Members who were able to attend were encouraged to give feedback to the Council of Assembly on the vision for the Church and to seek clarification of proposed implementation.

The Ministries Council offered presentations on the second day of the conference on a number of ongoing pieces of work including Presbytery Planning, Hub-style Ministries, Ascend, Priority Areas and Registration of Ministries.

45.3 Membership: The Convener was pleased to report that the Council of Assembly had agreed to remove mention of a person's title in Church records including minutes of meetings. With Barbara Finlayson joining the Council one vacancy in Council Membership remained.

The Council of Assembly agreed to seek the General Assembly's approval for an additional 4 members to serve on Ministries Council. This would be a temporary uplift for a period of 2 years from May 2018 in light of the anticipated workload over that period.

Furthermore, the Council of Assembly agreed to an increase in the number of Ministries Council co-optees, particularly on the Interim Ministries Task Group and the Go For It Fund Committee. Again this was with the condition that this be for a period of 2 years from May 2018.

The request to have the Ministries Finance Committee Convener recognised as a fifth Vice-Convener was not accepted. The Council was of the view that members of the Ministries Council were permitted to serve as sub-committee Conveners without having to be appointed as Vice-Conveners, in line with the practice within the Council of Assembly.

45.4 Appointment/Reappointment of Co-opted Members: Council agreed to the appointments and Reappointment set out in paper MC4-02 with some amendments.

45.5 Legal Questions Committee: A number of discussions with the Legal Questions Committee (LQC) have taken place relating to various sections of Deliverance from the General Assembly. Two areas were brought for discussion by Council:

Revised Discipline Act - Discussions with the Convener of LQC have led to an agreement to share drafts with the Ministries Council Convener, the Vice-Convener for Education & Support and certain Senior Staff Members of the Ministries Council. There were a number of areas highlighted for further discussion:

- a. Guidelines relating to pastoral support provision
- b. Sharing of information with Ministries Council
- c. Involvement of Ministries Council in case review
- d. Possibility of Ministries Council triggering a discipline case
- e. Proposed timings

Act 1 2015 – The 2017 General Assembly Deliverance to Ministries Council was:

Instruct the Council jointly with the Legal Questions Committee to consider issues that have arisen when implementing the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriages Act, (Act 1 2015) and report to the General Assembly of 2018 as to whether amending legislation is required.

The Act gives vacancy as the point of departure and does not specify a point of departure for Presbytery-wide posts or Pioneer Ministry appointments. The Council would also be concerned with the appointment of Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers and Ministries Development Staff. The General Assembly should therefore have the opportunity to take a view on whether there should be analogous processes of departure in other forms of appointment, or that Parish Ministry and Diaconal appointments should be the only place where a departure should occur.

Following discussion the Council took a vote in favour of the view that all other posts become open with no discrimination in recruitment but with discernment in appointment and deployment. 26 for, 4 against and the dissent of Mike Goss and Alistair Cook was recorded.

45.6 Proposed Payment of Ordained Local Ministers (OLM): Council received details in paper MC4-09 along with a presentation from the Convener. Brian Porteous declared an interest as an OLM candidate. Concerns were expressed for those with a sense of call to OLM who feel unable to transfer or to answer that call because they may not be in

a financial position to not look for payment. It was noted the details of remuneration were provided in *Ordained Local Ministry (Act IX 2011)* under section 24.

Following a full discussion it was agreed that wider work was needed around the recruitment strategy, training needs, remuneration and deployment of OLM as part of a Church strategy.

45.7 Pensions: Further to recent discussions a report was being prepared and an update would be offered at a future Council meeting.

45.8 Interim Ministries Team in Shetland: A report will be brought to a future Council meeting.

45.9 Death In Service Trustees: The Trustees of our Death In Service scheme (currently the Convener, Finance Committee Convener, Council Secretary and the Head of Organisational Programmes for the Council of Assembly, Catherine Skinner, need to carry out further checks before taking a decision on the recipients of Death In Service payments. It is not sufficient only to consider the scheme member's expression of wishes. This is an issue common to all the Church's Death In Service schemes, and there are ongoing discussions with the solicitor of the Church to identify the best response. Council agreed in principle to the Depute Council Secretary becoming a Death In Service Trustee in the future with a view to Catherine Skinner stepping down from this role.

46 Partnership Development

A written report *MC4-03* providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from Sarah Ross, Partnership Development Vice-Convener.

46.1 Presbytery Planning: A paper on Ministerial Numbers *MC4-04* was presented and it was noted that more information was available on request. Thanks were expressed for the work done by David Stewart as a co-opted member of the Presbytery Planning Task Group.

Council agreed the following points:

1. Ministries Council to supply advisory figures to Presbyteries to help develop realistic and creative forward planning for the Church of Scotland, and report accordingly to the General Assembly of 2018.
2. The presbytery planning figures of 2011 to remain mandatory, so that Presbyteries do not exceed previously agreed ministries numbers.
3. Ministries Council to consider bi-vocational posts within ministries.

46.2 Go For It Fund: Under the Regulations there was a commitment for the Ministries Council to provide core funding for the Go For It Fund for the years 2012-2017. Funding in 2018 has been agreed. Following discussions with the Council of Assembly Governance Group it was agreed that grants would be honoured. This was on the provision that there was a major review of longer-term funding arrangements. The Regulations for Go For It would also require to be reviewed. There will be a small working party set up to look at funding for Go For It and recommendations brought to the Council.

There had been a drop in applications and £108k returned from projects which had not gone ahead but now seeing increase in applications again. The Fund is looking at possibilities for online application processes.

47 Priority Areas

A written report *MC4-05* providing an overview of the work of the section was received. Shirley Grieve, Priority Areas Secretary, was pleased that Richard Williams, the PCUSA Young Adult Volunteer Programme Coordinator, was able to say a few words at the recent Committee meeting during his visit to Scotland. The Committee is looking to discuss having a vice-convener who would be able to cover for the Committee Convener.

47.1 New Models of Resourcing Priority Areas: A working Group has been looking at resourcing of Priority Areas and widening the approach for poverty in other areas. Council received paper *MC4-06* with background information. Conversations will continue with the Presbytery Planning Task Group to take this forward.

48 Education and Support

Written report *MC4-07* providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from the Eleanor McMahon, Education and Support Vice-Convener.

48.1 Period of Discernment: The General Assembly 2017 report recognised the need to reinstate dates that would allow a clearer indication of the timescale through assessment into training for applicants. The proposal would be a 6 month period of discernment, rather than the present 3-9 months. Legislation will be prepared to enable either a Presbytery or Ministries Council to initiate a Local Review at any point during the period of discernment, should there be circumstances to merit it.

48.2 Trinity College: Council noted ongoing discussion around a pre-existing funding arrangement. Further details will be brought to a future Council meeting.

48.3 Registration of Ministries – Training implications: The Committee will seek to have discussions with the Registration of Ministries Committee regarding the required competency framework that they will be used to identify learning requirements for those making application for Category O and the provision of budget for such training deployment.

49 Registration of Ministries

The Register of Ministry will take effect from 1 January 2018. The Registration of Ministries Committee will meet to consider the initial applications to transfer to Category O registration on 13 December. The Committee has been exploring areas of training for those making application for Category O including safeguarding, data protection and church law.

A communication will go to all Presbyteries prior Christmas to set out the processes for making application for Category O registration.

50 Finance

50.1 General Assembly Deliverance - Payment of Visa Costs for Admissions: At the 2017 General Assembly the Ministries Council was asked to consider the possibility of paying visa fees and all other fees associated with applying for long term right to settle and all UK nationality fees of those who are becoming ministers of the Church of Scotland and who are coming to the UK from outside the EU and the European Economic Area. The Ministries Finance Committee considered the benefits and risks analysis outlined in paper *MC4-08* and from the proposals offered in the paper agreed that the suitable option would be to fully Fund Minister plus a £10k tax free loan to be repaid over 6 years. The Recruitment Task Group also considered this at their meeting on 5 December and supported the same proposal. In addition the Group will look at the number of ministers coming through under this proposal and consider setting a ratio. Council was mindful of the uncertainty around future Brexit decisions.

51 Diaconate Council

Catherine Wallace, Secretary to the Diaconate Council along with Pamela Scott, also from Diaconate Council, were welcomed to the meeting.

The Deacons of Word and Service document came out of discussions around giving a sense of identity to the Diaconate. The distinctiveness of the Diaconate has always been there and other forms of ministry have mirrored some of this description. Pop up banners have been created and resources will be updated. The vision document was well received at the world Diaconate conference in Chicago.

The Council Convener will attend the Diaconate Council meeting on 20 January and looks

forward to being part of discussions on the future. Council warmly welcomed the report and appreciated the opportunity to hear from representatives of the Diaconate Council. Details will be incorporated in the Ministries Council report to the General Assembly.

52 Finance Continued

52.3 Management Accounts to August 2017: The accounts (*MC4-11a&b*) show a positive variance for the year and forecasts are favourable. The actual full time equivalent number of parish ministers as at 31 October was 38 fewer ministers than originally budgeted.

The Convener will request a report on the work of the Refugee Project, which is partly funded by Ministries Council, at a future meeting.

NG

52.2 Draft Budget 2018: The draft 2018 Budget which was brought to the August Ministries Council Conference has now been provisionally approved by the Council of Assembly Finance Group to include spending on the Development Programme. The proposed 1.5% increase to Minister's stipends and Ministries Development Staff salaries has also been approved by the Council of Assembly and the costs of this increase have been built into the budget *MC4-10a&b*.

52.4 Partnership Funding: Paper *MC4-12* with an outline of a proposal for the process of considering applications for funding from existing external partners was presented with the following points for agreement:

- a) Existing partnership agreements to continue at existing level of funding for 2018 and 2019.
- b) Process for annual funding awards to be introduced in 2018 with full implementation from 2019. A proposed annual timetabling of process was included in the paper which compliments the budgetary processes already set out for Ministries Council.
- c) No new partnership funding agreements to be established for three years with a review to coincide with the review of the three-year Development Programme.
- d) Partnership organisations as named above to be informed of the introduction of the process no later than March 2018.

The Finance Committee has produced a template for business cases that sets out that things are sustainable, affordable and evaluated. The Partnership Development Committee and Priority Areas Committee should be part of the process going forward.

53 Staffing

The Staffing Structure document has been revised to include names against the posts and to show the teams within the Council. The revised structure *MC4-13* was circulated to Council and will be available on the Church website. This includes the posts being created as result of Development Programme. The new posts will be advertised in the coming weeks. Clare Milrine has been a temporary appointment as Project Officer and is now a permanent staff member.

Both Clare Milrine and Katie Bradley, Training Officer, due to go on maternity leave and the requests for covering these posts will go to the next Staffing Executive.

Part-time Administrator post within the Secretariat team was in final stages and it was hoped that the person will start in post in January.

54 General Assembly Report 2017 - Outline for Report

The Convener sought comments on the outline for the report *MC4-14*. It was noted that the Joint Emerging Church Group report would be part of the Mission & Discipleship Council Report this year. The reporting alternates each year between Ministries Council and Mission & Discipleship Council. Council will have the opportunity to further comment on a completed Draft of the report at its February meeting.

ACTION

53 Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 14 February 2018 at St Andrew’s and St George’s West Church, 13-17 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

The Convener thanked those present for their contributions and the meeting closed with the Grace.

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Convener Date

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Secretary Date