

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

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

Wednesday 21 March 2018

**MINUTE**

**PRESENT:**

**Convener:** Neil Glover

**Vice-Conveners:** Eleanor McMahon  
Sarah Ross

**Members & Observers:** 25 Members and 1 Observer as recorded in the Register of Attendance

**Staff in Attendance:** Jayne Scott plus 6 staff as recorded in the Register of Attendance

**Apologies:** Apologies were noted in the sederunt

**ACTION**

**65 Opening Worship**

The meeting was opened with prayers and apologies were noted.

**66 Minutes**

The Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 14 February 2018 was approved with minor amendment.

**67 Convener's Report**

**67.1 Council of Assembly Strategy Document:** A strategy document titled *Worshipping God, Inspiring Faith and Connecting People* had not yet been finalised but will be available ahead of the General Assembly. The Convener's written report *MC6-01* contained details of the key goals and supporting goals set out in the strategy document. The purpose of the Ministries Council of enabling, inspiring, equipping and encouraging ministries supports these goals.

Members shared their thoughts on the goals which the Convener agreed to feed back to the Council of Assembly.

**NG**

**67.2 Corresponding Members for General Assembly:** Noting that the Convener would attend the General Assembly as a commissioner this year Council agreed that John Dent would attend as a Corresponding Member from Ministries Council along with the Council Secretary.

**67.3 Ministries Finance Committee Convener:** As previously raised, Allan Sim was due to complete his term as a member in May. Council agreed that Alan Naylor would serve as Convener of the Ministries Finance Committee following the General Assembly for a period of two years. Council offered their thanks and best wishes to Mr Sim.

**67.4 Membership:** Vice-Convener, David McLachlan, had given notice of his intention to step down from the role as of May 2018. Council agreed to the proposal to put forward Bob Mallinson as Vice-Convener subject to approval by the Nomination Committee and the General Assembly. Council offered their thanks and best wishes to Mr McLachlan.

**67.5 Process for Nominating Next Council Convener:** The process for nominating the next Council Convener was proposed and agreed as follows:

- a. Names of nominees to be received by the Convener and Council Secretary from Council Members prior to the September overnight Council meeting.
- b. An interview panel will be set up (including in the case of one candidate being considered) consisting of the Convener, Secretary, Council of Assembly Convener and a Council Member. The panel will then bring a name to the October Council meeting for consideration.
- c. Council will be asked to agree a name to put forward to the Nomination Committee and subject to their approval the nomination will be brought to the General Assembly of 2019.

**67.6 February 2019 Council Meeting Date:** It was noted that, should the submission date for the Ministries Council report to the General Assembly be moved to a later date in 2019 then Council would be asked to consider moving the date of the February Council meeting.

**67.7 Rethinking Initial Training:** Following research and consultation with those in the Recognised Ministries, candidates, probationers and Academic Partners a report into Initial Ministerial Education was now available for Council members. To request a copy of the report please contact David Plews, Education & Training Secretary.

**67.8 Work with Presbyteries:** The Convener had recently spoken at the Presbytery of Perth as part of their work on Presbytery Planning and was due to speak at the Presbytery of Moray on 1 May along with the Council Secretary. Council would be happy to accommodate any such future requests received from Presbyteries and it was noted that Sarah Ross and Jim Teasdale have also offered to speak at Presbytery.

NG/JS

## 68 Finance

Allan Sim, Ministries Finance Committee Convener, gave a verbal report on the work of the Committee.

**68.1 Indicative 2019 Budget:** Council received the Draft Indicative 2019 Budget along with highlights paper detailing the final 2017 ring fence calculations and a forecast for 2018 as compared to the final 2018 Budget (MC6-02a&b).

The management accounts to 31 December 2017 showed the Ministries Council made a small surplus in the year, largely due to underspends on stipends and due to a large legacy of £680k which was given to the Church of Scotland for 'maintenance of ministry' and was accrued in the accounts.

The 2018 forecast shows a surplus of around £103k and this will be updated from mid-year with the monthly management accounts.

The 2019 Indicative Budget shows less in the Parish Ministries Fund than was budgeted in 2018 due to adjustment in the number of Ministers and reducing requirement for stipends. A break-even budget within the ring-fence will be achieved in 2019.

A deficit on unrestricted funds is budgeted for the non-ring fenced operational expenses of the Council i.e. Go For It, Priority Areas and Work Pace Chaplaincy Scotland.

A full review and discussion on stipend increases for 2019 will take place in August as per the budget timetable. It was advisable to include a notional 1% stipend increase for 2019 and this would be financed by Ministries Council restricted funds. There will be discussion with the Council of Assembly Finance Group on balancing this part of the budget.

The budget for Ministries Development Staff (MDS) salaries is based on the average number of posts in place in the previous year and Council was reminded that the 2018 Budget does not provide for the number of MDS posts in Presbytery Plans.

The Development Programme has been set in motion and is budgeted from unrestricted reserves.

Council approved the Indicative Budget for the purposes of the overall Church of Scotland Budget for 2019 being presented at the 2018 General Assembly, subject to Council of Assembly approval.

Council also approved the proposal made by the Ministries Finance Committee to create a designated fund for use within the ring-fence, to include the legacy income received for maintenance of ministry less the balance on the ring-fence for 2017.

**68.2 Visa Costs:** At the December meeting Council approved a proposal to pay the Visa costs of non-EU Ministers working in the Church of Scotland. Subsequently, Council of Assembly Finance Group, have indicated their concerns about the proposal which include: the inconsistency of paying Visa costs for Parish Ministers and not for others; pressures on the 2019 budget and comment from the Law Department on the difficulties in paying Visa costs. Due to these concerns the relevant sections from the draft Ministries Council report to the General Assembly were removed.

The Ministries Finance Committee expressed its disappointment that a proposal which had received the approval of Council, was rejected. The Committee was of the view that the 2019 budget could accommodate the amounts involved and that should someone be called to work in the Church of Scotland, it was important to ensure that they do not experience financial hardship as a result.

Council agreed that representatives of Ministries Finance Committee should meet with representatives of Council of Assembly Finance Group to clarify issues of governance and for policy proposals to come forward over the next year. It will be suggested that the Ministries Finance Committee Convener should sit on the Council of Assembly Finance Group to enable effective communication and for any issues to be aired in a timely manner.

Following discussion Council agreed to no longer pursue the payment of Visas, mainly because of the issues of consistency and legality as highlighted by the Council of Assembly Finance Group. Instead the Council took the view that this falls within the larger issue of ministerial hardship and would be addressed within existing processes where hardship is experienced. In taking this approach Council makes no commitment to directly subsidise the costs of Visas. Council nevertheless would be addressing hardship and noted that the need to meet Visa costs was not, by definition, a cause of hardship.

## **69 Membership**

The Convener offered thanks on behalf of the Council to all departing members and the names of incoming members were noted.

Council was reminded that between the March Council meeting and General Assembly the allocation of Council members to Committees and Task Groups would be done. Conveners were encouraged to inform the Council Secretary if there were particular requests for the membership of their Committee or Task Group.

## **70 Council Secretary's Report**

Council received a written report *MC6-03* from the Council Secretary.

**70.1 Office Space:** Following engagement of the Staff teams within the Ministries Council in a participatory planning exercise a new office layout will be put into place in April. The

layout will accommodate the expanded staffing related to the 3-year Development Programme.

On Thursday 7 June the Ministries Council offices will be open to visitors from 1pm until 4.30pm. The invitation will be to anyone who would like to meet the staff and find out about the Council's work.

**70.2 Staffing Update:** Within the Education and Training team the staffing updates include: Alison Stewart, Administrator, started in post on 19 February. Eileen-Joann McCormick, Continuing Ministerial Development Project Officer, and maternity cover for Clare Milrine, started on 19 February. Katie Bradley, Training Officer, is due to begin maternity leave at the end of March. Isobel Armstrong-Holmes is to undertake a secondment as Training Officer from 19 March until 11 May and thereafter the maternity cover will be offered by Matt Ward.

In addition, within the Partnership Development team Angus Mathieson has been serving a secondment as Council Secretary for Mission and Discipleship Council since 1 March. Advertisement of the role of Partnership Development Secretary, as an internal secondment opportunity until the end of June 2019, was in motion. In the interim Craig Renton, Depute Council Secretary, will oversee the work of the team. Kenneth Fleming will start in post as Co-ordinator for New and Emerging Ministries on 16 April.

**70.3 Ministries Development Staff (MDS) – Backfill Cover for Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave:** Although the Ministries Development Staff Handbook outlines that all MDS are entitled to the statutory leave associated with maternity/paternity/adoptions leave it does not set out the cover arrangements.

Council agreed that details should be confirmed and communicated with MDS, Presbyteries and Congregations.

DG/CR

**70.4 Governance:** Each of the Councils of the Church are being asked to consider how their decision-making processes could be more efficient and less costly. This will be one of the considerations for Ministries Council as part of the Development Programme. The Strategic Planning Group will consider this and an outline of the issues involved and the areas for consideration will be brought to the June Council meeting.

NG/JS

**70.5 Women in Ministry:** There will be events and opportunities over the coming months to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the decision by the General Assembly to pass a deliverance that women should become eligible for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland. Ministries Council has contributed funding towards these events which are being co-ordinated by Lesley Orr in conjunction with New College and the Centre for Theology and Public Issues. Details of a day conference to take place on 28 April at New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh can be found in Life and Work and on the Church website. The conference will include workshops, panels and open sessions for discussion and sharing. There were ongoing conversations with the Assembly Arrangements Committee on how to mark the date of the anniversary of the decision which falls on 22 May during the General Assembly.

JS

## 71 General Assembly

**71.1 Attendance and Participation:** The draft timetable for the General Assembly indicates that Ministries Council will report on 22 May. Ministries Council members and staff are invited to be in attendance at the Assembly Hall during the report. Those wishing to attend should let Carron Lunt know so that seating can be reserved.

**71.2 Supplementary Report:** It was noted that there was no requirement for a Supplementary Report this year.

**71.3 Joint Reports:** Council received and noted the content of:

- *Joint Report of the Council of Assembly, Ministries Council, Mission & Discipleship Council, Panel on Review and Reform and Legal Questions Committee on Resourcing the Implementation of Local Church Review MC6-04a*
- *Joint Report of the Ministries Council and the Legal Questions Committee MC6-04b* on the 2017 General Assembly instruction to consider issues that have arisen when implementing the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriages Act (Act 1 2015)

An extract of wording from the Panel on Review and Reform Deliverance on the payment of Ordained Local Minister's (OLM) (*MC6-04a1*) was received. The Convener shared amended wording received subsequently from the Principal Clerk. Brian Porteous declared an interest as a candidate in training for OLM. It was noted that it was currently possible to offer a placement for candidates for OLM within their own Congregation. There was value however in having a placement in a Congregation away from their home church. With the upcoming recruitment review and the ongoing work on Rethinking Initial Training the Ministries Council resisted the suggested deliverance and the Convener offered to feed this back to the Panel on Review and Reform.

NG

The Discipline Act is being discussed by the Legal Questions Committee and Ministries Council awaits sight of this. Ministries Council has a duty of care and would therefore require knowledge of any absences such as suspension, sickness or absence due to disciplinary proceedings along with confirmation of when an individual returns to their role.

## 72 Priority Areas

A written report *MC6-05* providing an overview of the work of the section was received. Alan Naylor reported that he had chaired recent meetings of the Priority Areas Committee in the absence of David McLachlan.

**72.1 Priority Areas Learning Programme 2018:** The programme (*MC6-05a*) relates directly to the needs gathered and expressed through surveys and conversations last year. Further events and opportunities will be finalised and offered towards the end of 2018. The Priority Areas team would look to widen the reach of the Learning Programme and if courses were not fully subscribed in the weeks leading up to an event then others beyond Priority Areas would be able to apply to attend.

**72.2 Funded Partners:** The Committee expressed concerns about the future funding of small projects which work in partnership with Ministries Council. It was noted that existing funding will remain in place for 2019 for funded partners and then from 2020 a rolling yearly cycle of funding will be introduced. All funded partners have been made aware of the changes. There would be the option to put forward a funding proposal for Council consideration as part of the budgeting process. It would not however be possible to give a long-term funding commitment and any work funded by Ministries Council must relate to core business.

**72.3 PCUSA Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) Programme:** The next cohort of 5 volunteers will arrive in September and will be based in Glasgow. The Committee will explore possible options for the YAVs to be hosted in either Dundee or Edinburgh in 2019-2020.

Andrea Price, Convener of the Recruitment Task Group, expressed regret that the volunteer programme within Scotland was no longer being funded.

## 73 Partnership Development

A written report *MC6-06a* providing an overview of the work of the section was received

along with a verbal report from Sarah Ross, Partnership Development Vice-Convener.

**73.1 Reviewable Tenure:** Abernethy Presbytery asked Ministries Council to consider introducing legislation to ensure that all charges have reviewable tenure. It was noted that, further to discussions at the Presbytery Planning Day conference on 8 March, there was not a desire from the majority of those present to seek reviewable charge legislation.

The Committee has an ongoing commitment to consider possible improvements for deployment and recognised the need for flexibility. The Presbytery Planning Task Group will be invited to provide details on the use of reviewable tenure and whether there is a pattern of these vacancies being filled.

Although sympathetic to the intentions of the request the Committee will write a response to Abernethy Presbytery to confirm that steps would not be taken at this stage to change legislation.

**73.2 Presbytery Planning:** The rescheduled Presbytery Planning day took place on 8 March with all Presbyteries represented, with the exception of the International Presbytery as they were also meeting on this date. Participant feedback on the event was being collected and the Committee aimed to offer a team to be available to be a part of Presbytery meetings.

Key discussion points during the day included flexible tenure; sharing skills and expertise in a Presbytery and encouraging partnership working; a possible cap on the number of posts a Presbytery was able to fill rather than having mandatory figures; the role of Interim Moderators; a suggestion that Ministers be inducted to a Presbytery rather than to a charge.

MDS posts are a vital part of Presbytery Planning, particularly with hub-style ministries but also necessary for innovation and mission. With the number of Ministers reducing it was anticipated that the number of MDS would need to increase.

Council noted that the Committee will work with the Presbytery Planning Task Group, Ministries Finance Committee and the Strategic Planning Group, to develop policy regarding MDS numbers and report on progress to the June Council meeting.

**73.3 Partnership Development Review Group:** Council received reports from reviews carried out and it was noted that recommendations made by the Review Group were in the process of being implemented.

Interim Ministries Task Group (MC6-06b) – Moira McDonald, who started as Task Group Leader following the review, has been pleased with the supportive involvement from Daran Golby and the positive decisions of the Task Group.

Chaplaincy Forum (MC6-06c) – There was ongoing consideration of how communication between Ministries Council and each of the chaplaincies could be improved.

Path of Renewal (MC6-06d) – There was potential for this work to be more incorporated into work of Ministries Council. The Council Secretary offered to take this forward with both Partnership Development and Education & Support.

JS

## 74 Education and Support

Written report MC6-07 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.

In addition it was noted that a suite of policies in relation to Initial Ministerial Education were being developed to include social media, discipline, equality and diversity.

**74.1 Trinity College Funding:** An application process has been approved by the Council Convener. The application will be issued to Trinity College shortly, and final decision will be made by the Committee.

**74.2 Resilience Research:** The Resilience Research monitoring group met with Prof Francis at the end of February to discuss the findings that the research had generated. Prof Francis has been asked to produce a paper on implications for training. In future there will be reports/papers relating to recruitment and support, and the work will feed into Ascend publications. There may also be potential for collaboration with Mission and Discipleship Council on a Learn resource.

**74.3 Minister Benevolent Fund Change of Terms:** The fund is currently available to retired Ministers, along with their spouses, children and widow/er. A supporting paper (MC6-07a) gave further details of the financial capacity within the fund. The Committee made the proposal to extend the use of the Fund to support the wellbeing of active Ministers and their families for the purposes of wellbeing. The charitable purposes of the Fund would not be restricted by this change, but would be enhanced by the release of revenue to support Ministers and their families in the time before and after retirement.

Declarations of interest were noted from Ministers. Those who were not Ministers, or in a close personal relationship with a Minister, were invited to vote on the proposal and did so unanimously in favour of the change.

**75 Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland**

The Convener and Council Secretary will respond to a request received from Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland to meet to discuss future funding.

**76 Date of Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 20 June 2018 at the Assembly Hall, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LU

**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