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Agenda and Timetable

Paper B1

Children's and youth work committee

Executive summary of CYWY review report

Basic information

Contact name and
email address



Executive summary of CYWC review report

1. Matthew 18:1-19:14: Jesus puts a child in the midst of his disciples and challenges them to become like, welcome, not cause to stumble in faith or lose any of the young.
2. Review aims: enabling local churches to engage with children and young people in ways meaningful for their own contexts and advocating (within and beyond the URC) for the denomination's agreed aims for children's and youth work – by asking:
 - What are we doing?
 - Why are we doing it?
 - Is it effective in meeting our core objectives?
 - Is it helpful in equipping the whole URC in working with children and young

8. Higher education: many students will experience personal, social and emotional challenges whilst going through HE. Student services provision and the support from university chaplains can be complemented by local churches offering community support. URC has fewer than ten university chaplains and contributes to many ecumenical chaplaincy teams. There is no oversight of this area.
9. The United Reformed Church: with an inclusive ethos, URC advocates that the needs of children and young people should be catered for in all areas of the denomination's life and work. At denominational level there is a head for children's and youth work and support staff, whose work is directed by a committee headed by a convenor. At synod level there are children and youth development workers (CYDOs), though not all synods employ CYDOs. At local church level there is the role of children's and youth elder, though not all congregations have this role or give it much attention. In 1990 the URC adopted a Charter for Children in the Church, although its implementation is varied.
10. Review focus: the URC has a long-standing and well-developed commitment to children and young people and is engaged in a wide variety of activity with children and young people in and through local churches. There is a lack of connection and coordination between different elements and groups. The 'missing generation' of 20 to 40s is symptomatic of a variety of difficulties in faith development and church connection in a changing environment.
11. Quantifying what we are doing in the local churches: the numbers of churches recorded as engaging in particular activities with children and young people are given.
12. Hearing from children: children share what they like about church and what they would like church to be more like: *'wish that my school friends were here to enjoy the fun with me'* *'Church for most of our children is not on a Sunday but during the week.'*
13. Hearing from young people: they want *'people to go on this journey with.'* **'take us seriously!'** and to share *'our ideas – most may have improvements the church could take up if we were given the opportunity to share.'*
14. Hearing from local churches: their greatest joy in relation to children and young people was largely the children and young people themselves, who they were, what they brought to the church. Many saw themselves offering a safe, welcoming space where faith could be encountered and explored within a loving community, an extended or second family. A number of churches identify as having 'no children and young people'. Most URC churches have good facilities beyond a worship space, including rooms or halls, kitchens and accessible toilets. Most are enabling work with children and young people to happen in their community through being a good landlord, providing space for other organisations and groups to meet and offer their services. Guiding and Scouting and Messy Church were the most common activities, alongside junior church and all-age services, followed by Girls and Boys Brigade. Gaining the Child Friendly Church Award has been a significant process for some.
15. Hearing from Pilots: the URC programme for children and young people aged five to 18, run by dedicated volunteers in local churches. Numbers of companies and average size have declined in recent years. There is a clear appetite to retain the ethos of Pilots whilst revising the form for those looking to set up new provision for children and young people.

Paper B2

Children’s and youth work committee

Children’s and youth work review report 2018

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Jenny Mills (committee convenor) revdjmill@btinternet.com
Action required	

Draft resolution(s)

1. **Children’s and youth work committee: review report.** Mission Council welcomes the 2018 review of children’s and youth work in the URC and reaffirms its longstanding commitment to enabling children and young people to play their part in the mission of God and its desire for this to be integral to the whole life of the United Reformed Church.
2. **Children’s and youth work committee: future strategy.** Mission Council directs the children’s and youth work committee to strengthen and support local congregations in their engagement with children and young people through the implementation of the proposed strategy.
3. **Children’s and youth work committee: reshaping the ‘CYDO Programme’.** Mission Council encourages all synods to play an active part in developing, delivering and benefitting from Assembly-level resources, programmes and events in conjunction with the children’s and youth work committee through a reimagined CYDO+ Programme.
4. **Children’s and youth work committee: future of Pilots.** Mission Council authorises children’s and youth work committee, through P4000-Engage (UJW) by work committee

documents	2011 Review of the CYDO programme 2016 Review of the Head of CYW role 2008 Vision document 2013 five year plan.
Consultation has taken place with...	General Secretariat CYDOs Synods Individual churches Young people Children

Children's and youth work review report 2018

1. Matthew 18:1-19:14 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

Jesus put a child in the middle of his disciples and said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.' [(Matt 18:3-5)

'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.' (Matt 18:6)

'Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.' (Matt 18:10-11)

'So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.' (Matt 18:14)

Even so shortly afterward he had to prevent his disciples from turning away people bringing children to him: 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.' (Matt 19:14)

How hard it is to put into practice the values we endorse in theory, to treat others in truly counter-cultural ways, to be as inclusive, intercultural and intergenerational as Jesus.

2. Review aims

The core objectives of the United Reformed Church's General Assembly programme of children's and youth work involve:

- enabling local churches to engage with children and young people in ways

- the place of children and young people in the life of the URC and efforts to cater for their needs across all areas of the denomination's life and work
- overall decline in organised children's and youth work in society reflected in our local churches
- perceived rise in the number of local churches without any children or young people involved in any way with the life of the congregation.

These concerns need to be assessed, in close detail, through a review which asks:

- What are we doing?

4. Present review

This review was recommended in the 2016 report and approved by Mission Council. Terms of reference were agreed by CYWC in November 2017. It has been conducted over eight months (January to August 2018) by a core group of four: the Revd Mary Hawes (CofE national children and youth advisor), the Revd Samuel Silungwe (URC minister), Steve Summers (URC CRCW development worker) and Dr Sam Richards (URC head of children's and youth work). We are grateful to everyone who contributed through questionnaires, meetings, phone conversations, visits, and enabling us to hear the perspectives of children and young people. We would like to thank Helen Corbett, Heather Wilkinson and Lorraine Webb for their administrative and wider support.

5. Context

Poverty in Britain is at post-war highs and is set to increase yet further. There were four million children living in poverty in the UK in 2015 to 2016; 30% of children, or nine in a classroom of 30.¹ According to the Institute of Fiscal Studies², inequality is projected to rise between 2015 and 2022. Food bank queues are growing, levels of severe deprivation have been rising, and increasing numbers of children are left with their most basic needs unmet. The demise of children's centres has withdrawn essential parental support for young families. The pressures on parents and carers to go to work while also finding quality time for their chi

Grandparents and extended families are either less accessible due to geographic dispersal or relied on heavily for

clubs on INSET days would be more helpful than adding another week in the holidays.

There is so much to celebrate and be thankful for! Throughout history, inspired Christians have collaborated for the common good, striven for justice, shared the Gospel and ultimately got involved with God's work. Young Christians from diverse backgrounds have been called to be faithful innovators and change agents of this generation. With support, they will shape the future through communities of faith. How should local churches and individual disciples recognise and encourage these change-makers? ¹²

6. Children and young people in education

All children and young people are required to be in education from five to 16, in further education, training or employment from 16 to 18, and nearly 50% engage in higher education. Most churches or church members have contact or the opportunity for contact with a local school, college or other educational establishment

Churches vision and policy for Further Education,¹⁴ makes clear the significant part FE plays for developing young people and for the communities where churches are based. There is a clear resonance between the values that drive FE and the core values at the heart of the Free Church heritage and continuing commitment to local communities, mission, outreach and social justice. FE colleges are places where young people from all backgrounds are brought together, many needing support and mentoring, and those in urban settings have a higher proportion of students from minority ethnic communities.

The report includes the recommendation to 'Encourage local congregations to consider the potential opportunities of working with and supporting their local FE college and other FE providers' and also aims to 'Produce practical guidance for local congregations'. An excellent accompanying resource¹⁵ suggests the kinds of opportunities for local churches' intentional engagement with FE.

Case study – *FE College student Reuben (URC Youth Southern rep) has been fighting to have a CU in his college. The college have refused to provide a meeting space (due to their anti-radicalisation policy), so a local church has stepped in. The CU are exploring how to be good news in the college and advertise their existence.*

8. Higher education

The comprehensive 'Hope in Higher Education' report¹⁶ emphasises how *'Higher education (HE) is a massively significant part of contemporary society, with an enormous cultural,*

9. The United Reformed Church

By call, identity and nature, the URC as a denomination has an obligation to ensure that its ministry and mission are absolutely inclusive. That is, taking into account the aspirations and needs of all age groups. This task calls for a collective responsibility at all levels of the life of the church. The essence of the children's and youth work review is to enable the church to look at God's mission through the lenses of children and young people.

The Council for World Mission (CWM) to which the URC is affiliated affirms a local church as a focal point for the church's mission. That is, all the primary functions of the church are best, and effectively executed at a local church level. The URC children's and youth work review is an attempt to examine how the denomination views and supports children and youth work.

The main question being: How does the URC enable its

Holiday clubs – 144 * – one

'The children felt that, generally, church meetings were not relevant to them. They enjoyed all age services if they were aimed at younger people ... most weekly activities clash with school/hobbies'

Children were invited to share 'Two Stars and a Wish' (two favourite things and one thing they would like). There was a very wide spread of responses including:

Stars: going outside, singing and praying in church, meeting friends, the range of activities, leaders and church members kind and friendly, breakfast at the beginning of messy church, stories, songs, learning about stories from the Bible, being able to be part of the Nativity play, colouring and painting/craft, that we get to make things on our own and are taught how to do it, acting, Fete every year, boys brigade, Bouncy Days, biscuits, communion, taking part in services, playing with the toys and playdough, imaginary play, themed activities, joining in with the singing, the church looks after people, lots of activities, church hall, pictures on the wall, drinks and biscuits after services.

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13. Hearing from young people

Young people were asked three questions at Youth Assembly and The Big Speak Out:

a)

Their greatest joy in relation to children and young people was largely the children and young people themselves, who they were, what they brought to the church. It was sometimes particular moments, like requests for baptism, their participation in worship or church life, or seeing them grow in faith. Pilots groups were particularly mentioned by a few churches. The deepest issues were commonly a lack of children and young people in the worship congregation; losing them as they grew older; or a lack of volunteers to work with the children and young people they did have.

Churches took children's and youth work very seriously, many run or support a range of activities, sometimes with ecumenical partners, and had hopes for future developments. Some were struggling to support the very few they currently had contact with. Many commented on having groups use the church premises but not engage with the church very much. Many saw themselves offering a safe, welcoming space where faith could be encountered and explored within a loving community, an extended or second family. They also mentioned hope, teaching, moral values, prayer, worship, pastoral care, discipleship, fun, friendship.

'church for our children is not on a Sunday'

Churches which described themselves as having 'no children or young people' were often apologetic about this and referred back to earlier times when they had families, or Junior Church. On deeper enquiry it became apparent that all have members with children and young people in their extended families or other connections through their work or community engagement. However, these children and young people in the hearts and minds of regular worshippers are not considered in the worship or life of the church, and there is no support offered for this engagement as discipleship or mission. Others have groups of children or young people using their premises (for example Guiding and Scouting, dance classes), and even ran occasional parade services. Some have schools visiting the building annually for lessons or carol services. Nonetheless, their identity is that of 'no children and young people'. CYWC produced 'Some thoughts for churches which have no children as part

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The process is seen as overly bureaucratic by some, but important and rigorous. There is no regular contact with those churches who have received this beyond a reminder when renewal is due. There is no development or progression built into the renewal process. The CYDO team are interested in revising this process.

15.

'Local church stuff like Messy Church/ Pilots/tots groups/youth clubs etc. Dedicated leaders unpaid and paid.' 'Increasing number of children and young people attending some local churches and increased participation by some of these in the activities of the wider URC.'

However, there was a clear sense of a growing number of churches with no children or young people, and the need to support churches in relating to children, young people and families beyond the traditional Sunday-based activities.

'Difficult to answer as there are no children in any of the ten or so churches I have taken services over the last two years.' A sense that 'compromise needed, changes needed' to tackle 'the sadness of churches who feel they have no young people and the need to support isolated YP in their churches;' and to 'help children and youth feel part of a Christian community that is relevant and meaningful to their lives.'

In terms of strategy, synods often referred to their CYDO or other appointed staff, with a couple having clear aims.

'Greater experimentation/ exploration of new ideas and ways of serving the needs of children and young people in our communities.'

In terms of what was 5.5 (o4.8 (a))1 (w)ua2640.283 01 Tc -er)5 (e hi)7 (ghl)7 (i)7.1 (g)0.9 (ht)6.1 (e)0.9 (d:)1 low. So we ought to be investing in places currently with a group of children and young people – plus aiming to grow new communities through carer and toddler or messy (l)5.5 (dr)3.5 edyofa (of)50.5 (eea25.70er)3.8 (5 (c4 (a)1 (ppe)1 ()3.5 (tdo t)6 ((c(2)6 (pl)10 Tc)Tj-24.6

variations on the orat

URC churches are supposed to have a nominated Children's and Youth Elder, and the CYW office sends mailings to these people twice a year. However, in practice a number of

21. URC yearbook statistics on children (under 18s)

Year	Data collected	Average congregation including children	Children worshipping at main service	Children associated with the life of the Church (excluding those in main service)
2018	31/12/2016	53379	14188	30784
2017	1/1/16 to 31/12/16	55979	14778	33978
2016	1/1/15 to 31/12/15	56134	15108	38758
2015	1/1/14 to 31/12/14	58347	16273	41124
2014	1/1/13 to 31/12/13	59828	15473	42076
2013	30/10/2011	62430	16018	47744
2012	27/10/2010	65802	14735	53279
2011	26/01/2010	70306	15997	57310
2010	13/11/2008	70711	17142	67691
2009	16/08/2007	74087	17849	67658
2008		76438	18476	66775
2007		79324	20018	70269
2006		80446	21852	72384
2005		82613	22843	84928
2004		86336	23718	89451
2003		87798	25559	89769
2002		89473	25773	93386

Year	Number of companies	Number of Pilots	Average (mean) company size
2006	86	1639	19
2007	87	1584	18
2008	90	1486	17
2009	87	1378	16
2010	81	1193	15
2011	88	1260	14
2012	81	1139	14
2013	75	1161	15
2014	65	1059	16

Kingston Park St John LEP, Newcastle – children's worker – Hannah Middleton
 Redland Park URC, Bristol
 Harrold URC, Bedfordshire
 Taunton URC
 St Andrew's Roundhay, Leeds – Children, youth and family worker – Beverley Gilbert
 Chandler's Ford URC, Hampshire
 United Church, Winchester
 Bulwell URC, Nottingham – Children's youth and families leader – Eleanor Rice
 Wade Street, Lichfield – Youth Worker – Anthony Narain and Children's and Families Worker
 – Ann Richardson
 Wellingborough URC
 St John's Orpington, Kent
 Trinity, Abingdon
 Sedlescombe Chapel, E Sussex
 Christ Church, Lewes
 Clapton, London
 Well St United, Buckingham
 Parkminster URC, Cardiff
 City URC, Cardiff
 East Kilbride, East Mains, Righead and Hamilton (by phone)

Pilots Companies visited:

Ilford, Gosport, Chesham and The Michael, Sheffield

Community Youth Projects:

Genesis – Jon Oliverio, South Devon
 The Edge, Bradford

Also met with:

General Secretary and Deputies
 CYDOs – four individually, and whole group discussion
 Karen Morrison – previous HCYW
 Simon Peters – previous Programme Officer
 Dan Morrell – past YA Moderator
 Sarah Lane-Cawte – FCG Education Officer
 Mark Steel – Crossfire
 Congregational Federation
 Methodist Church
 Open the Book
 Wayne Hawkins CWM
 Lucy Moore Messy Church / BRF
 Boys Brigade
 Girls Brigade
 URCGSF
 URC Youth Exec

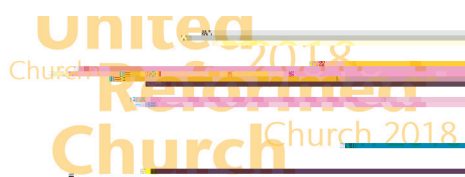
Questionnaire responses: (and return rates)

Youth Assembly – 11 (approx. 10%)
 The Big Speak Out – 16 (approx. 35%)
 Pilots Management Committee – 7 (approx. 75%)
 Mission Council – 24 (approx. 30%)
 All churches – 94 (approx. 7%)
 General Assembly – 29 (approx. 9%)
 Under 11s – 27 churches (and 7 'no children') (approx. 3.5%)
 Pilots Companies – 30 (approx. 75%)

Paper B3

Children's and youth work committee

CYWC outline strategy



CYWC outline strategy

Fan into flames

- already have the glowing embers – need to encourage, rekindle
- tradition is not worshipping the ashes but tending the flame

URC – aim: thriving local congregations with inclusive, intercultural and intergenerational ethos which are growing those inside and reaching those outside

Purpose for CYWC: **children and young people playing their part in the mission of God**

Strategy: support and strengthen local congregations in five key areas:

- Faith – sharing spiritual resources
- Community – sharing relational resources
- Identity – sharing stories

- Connect with other areas of URC to impact positively the lives of children and young people (JPIT, CRCW, FCG)
- Promote partnerships with other agencies to foster engagement in issues impacting children and young people (Action for Children, TLG, etc).

2. Initiate deliberate culture change – non-competitive intergenerational whole life missional discipleship throughout whole church

- *Walking the Way* and *Stepwise*
- LICC – training and learning hubs
- Charter for Children – review and revise for 2020 GA
- Church House culture
- Synod culture
- Child Friendly Church Award – local church culture
- RCLs, EM1, EM2, EM3 – training for ministry
- *Yearbook* and annual returns
- *Prayer handbook*
- All-age worship training and resources
- Widen view of 'church' to more than Sunday morning
- Church and society, ecumenical and interfaith relations, global and intercultural ministries.

3. Focus on churches with 'no' children and young people

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Paper D1

Education and learning

Honouring the Windermere Centre's legacy through the discipleship development strategy

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Professor Neil Messer, Convenor The Revd Fiona Thomas, Secretary fiona.thomas@urc.org.uk
Action required	Discussion in groups with written feedback.
Draft resolution(s)	None – not applicable.

Summary written on 27 (ona.) 6eu5(eb5(ej5)1.3 (s)5n5(ed5(es)5p4))0v s 827 00()9519.20 4

being offered by synods. It was also apparent that some of the questions could have been framed more clearly; that the answers to the questions did not always come from the people who had the necessary information; and that some synods gave narrative answers rather than the figures that had been requested.

2.2

4. Seeking a steer towards May 2019

- 4.1 Mission Council passed a resolution in March 2018 commending the work being done on the discipleship development strategy and anticipating that a final paper would be brought to it for decision in May 2019. To help the relevant committees to reach that point, it would be helpful to have feedback from discussion groups at the November meeting of Mission Council on possible uses of the funds to be explored over the next six months. The rest of this paper outlines these and ends with questions for groups to consider. The groups are also invited to make further suggestions in addition to the examples given below.

5. Menu of options for using the proceeds from the sale of the Windermere Centre

- 5.1 The net proceeds from the sale of the Centre are likely to be about £850,000. To put this amount in some sort of perspective, the education and learning committee's budget for 2018 is £1.8 million, and this goes towards supporting eleven teaching and educational administrative staff posts in three Resource Centres for Learning, 5.5 full-time equivalent posts in the education and learning team, academic fees and support for ministerial students, grant support for continuing ministerial development including lay preachers, development of *Stepwise*, and networking between synod field officers. The capital from the sale of the Windermere Centre is equivalent to:
- 47% of the committee's budget for one year, or
 - approximately 3.5 new middle level staff posts for five years, or
 - a one-off grant of £65,000 to each of the 13 synods

Option one: using interest only

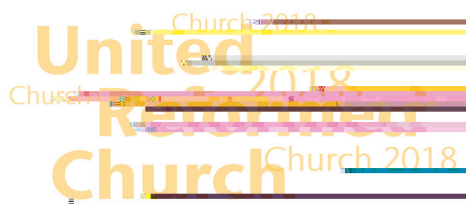
- 5.2 If the whole of the proceeds from the sale of the Centre were invested at a notional interest rate of 6%, some £51,000 per annum could be generated to fund aspects of individual and congregat

needed for the sake of equity – see section four of p

Paper G1

Finance committee

Budget for 2019





Paper G1

Finance committee

Budget 2019

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Ian Hardie ianzhardie@googlemail.com
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council adopts the budget for 2019 as set out in the Appendix to paper G1 for November 2018 Mission Council.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s) The paper presents a budget for 2019 for decision and financial projections for 2020

Budget 2019

1. Attached in column three of the Appendix is the draft budget for 2019 which the finance committee presents to Mission Council. This budget has been reviewed by the URC Trustees and has their support.

Income

2. Our income comes predominately from local churches through their Ministry and Mission Fund ('M&M') contributions. Estimates supplied by the synods over the summer suggest around a 1.6% reduction in giving compared with the 2018 budget figure. The ongoing decline in URC membership means that this still represents an increase in average giving to M&M per member.
3. The budget projects only a small increase in rental income in the year because of the delay in letting the third floor flat while staff are displaced from the lower basement of Church House.
4. It is also anticipated that an additional contribution towards the cost of ministers' pensions will come from a number of synods during the year. This is discussed more fully in a separate paper G2.

Stipends and ministers

5. More than two-thirds of our expenditure relates to paying stipends and directly related costs of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Workers in local settings.
6. Mission Council has delegated the task of setting the stipend to the finance committee in conjunction with the URC Trustees. The recommendation for 2019, which is built into this budget, is 2.65%. This increase has been calculated using a formula applied consistently for a number of years based on the consumer price index and average weekly earnings movements at consistent annual rests. Such a rise would increase the stipend by £696 to £26,880.

other parts of the discipleship department budget have modest uplifts on 2018 other than safeguarding where a one off exercise to digitise records is planned for 2019.

9. The mission department budget is broadly maintained at current levels apart from a reduction in CWM support for funding *Fresh Expressions*.
10. The administration and resources department budget is at approximately the same level as in 2018 though it now includes for the first time costs of projects which cross departmental boundaries and also recharges a portion of the Chief Finance Officer's costs to RMHS and URC ministers' pension fund (also for the first time). The admin budget in 2019 is flattered in comparison with 2018 because of advice from the auditors that we did not need to depreciate the costs of the Church House refurbishment.

Overall 2019 position

11. As a result of all of this, the 2019 budget projects a virtually 'break-even' position. Should Mission Council be minded not to accept the finance committee recommendation to invite additional financial support from synods to help meet the increased costs of contributions to the ministers' pension fund there might be a deficit of up to £200,000. Finance committee indicated to Mission Council that it would not seek to address such a budget shortfall for 2019 but would be prepared to reduce our reserves until the actual position became clearer during that year itself.

Resolution

12. **Mission Council adopts the budget for 2019 as set out in the Appendix to paper G1 for November 2018 Mission Council.**

Projections for 2020 and 2021

13. The final two columns in the Appendix show projections for 2020 and 2021. These are not based on detailed discussions with every budget holder but incorporate estimated adjustments for likely changes within major budget categories. Accordingly, these figures should be regarded as very rough approximations only.
14. In both years we have projected a 1.5% drop in M&M giving and 2.5% increases in stipends. It would be good if our assumption about donations from local churches and synods proved pessimistic.
15. '*Walking the Way*' will no longer be funded from CWM in 2021 and decisions will need to be taken about its funding in that year. For the moment we have assumed the costs remain at levels similar to the present. Similarly, we have increase the General Assembly costs for 2021 in line with 2018 Assembly decisions but have not made any adjustment to Mission Council costs at present.
16. The position in 2021 in particular may prove challenging but, bearing in mind the caution that the figures should be regarded as rough approximations only, we believe that we will have time to consider the position further and respond to issues arising in practice over the next year or two. Consequently we are relatively comfortable with these initial projections; particularly for 2020.

Paper G2

Finance committee

URC ministers' retirement costs –
making best use of our shared
financial resources





Paper G2

Finance committee

URC ministers' retirement costs – making use of our shared financial resources

Basic information

Contact name	Ian Hardie ianzhardie@googlemail.com
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council recognises that additional financial contributions to the URC ministers' pension fund are required and, having noted that several synods are already committed to giving financial support to the pension fund by setting aside for this purpose a percentage of the sale proceeds of redundant non-manse buildings, encourages the other synods to consider giving 10% of the net proceeds of sales of their similar properties to enable the URC to meet its required contributions to the ministers' pension fund. Mission Council believes such giving now

Summary of impact

Financial	Balancing the central URC budget without putting further strain on M&M giving.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None.

URC ministers' retirement costs – making best use of our shared financial resources

1. Various papers produced by finance committee during the past year have referred to the anticipated pressure on the URC budget as a result of the perceived level of increased contributions the URC would be required to make to its ministers' pension fund from 1 January 2019. This was expected to be triggered by the triennial valuation of the fund's assets and liabilities as at 1 January 2018; although when all of those papers were produced the final result of that valuation was not known.
2. Indeed, discussions with the scheme actuary are still ongoing: but it looks virtually certain that the annual contributions required from 1 January 2019 will be around £550,000 towards reducing the fund's (dramatically decreased) deficit and £2.15m in respect of future benefits. This will represent a total increase in budgeted annual contributions of the order of £250,000, which is less than envisaged in some of those earlier papers.
3. These increased pension costs are reflected in the draft 2019 budget contained in the separate finance committee paper G1. This suggests that the denominational budget can be kept in balance in 2019, even with these additional pension costs and without putting further pressure on M&M giving by local churches, if additional funding of around £200,000 can be found from other sources. An alternative approach could have been to seek to maintain the pension costs at the current level by making a capital contribution from the reserves of the URC Trust

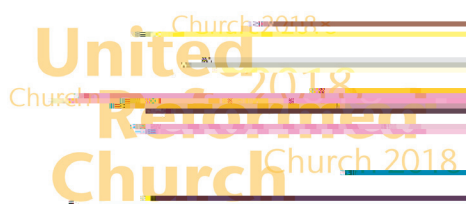
early years after 2006 they have been playing a far less essential part in the funding of the society in more recent years. (See paragraph 12 below).

11. When 2018 General Assembly was asked to recognise the continuing needs of the society and encourage appropriate giving in future to aid its work, a number of speakers expressed concern that they saw the financial needs of the RMHS as less pressing than those of the ministers' pension fund, but did not feel this was reflected in the resolution. The URC Deputy Treasurer explained that the finance committee had not had an opportunity to consider the 2017 accounts for the RMHS but would do so in September and was likely to bring this paper to Mission Council re the relative needs of the two worthy potential recipients of synod generosity. The convenor of the ministries committee expressed his personal view that the needs of the pension fund were greater at this time but his resolution, which he saw as compatible with this view, was withdrawn before it was voted on.
12. Finance committee has now had an opportunity to consider the 2017 RMHS accounts. These show that at the end of that year the society held property with a value of £37.467m. Its net indebtedness to other parts of the URC family was £6.179m and the surplus it achieved in the year was £1.68m. Total donations from synods during the year were £115,258.
13. Because fewer ministers requiring housing have been retiring than was formerly the case, the society's stock of houses is slowly reducing; with the surplus made on selling the excess housing contributing substantially to the society's financial results. For each of the past few years the annual surplus has been in excess of £1m. The society is now undertaking substantial work to safeguard, maintain and improve its properties and it is therefore likely to incur significantly increased costs over the next few years. Nonetheless it is anticipated that similarly large surpluses will still be generated.

Paper H1

Ministries committee

Explaining possible variations in operating a call procedure





Paper H1

Ministries committee

Explaining possible variations in operating a call procedure

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Paul Whittle moderator@urceastern.org.uk
Action required	For information.
Draft resolution(s)	None.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	General Assembly 2018 requested the ministries committee to bring advice on the implementation of resolution 28 which reminded Assembly of the varying provisions within the Manual with respect to calling a minister to a post.
Main points	Whilst not wanting to suggest legislation, and encouraging flexibility, this paper aims to offer some examples of how our call process may be appropriately exercised in a changing context.

Explaining possible variations in operating a call procedure

1. General Assembly 2018 passed the following resolution (resolution 28):
General Assembly encourages a flexible approach to how ministerial calls are issued and concurred, noting the variety of existing practice and the provisions of sections 1(1)(b), 1(1)(c), 2(1)(vii), 2(4)(A)(iii) and 2(4)(A)(vii) of the Structure of the URC.
2. The cited sections of *the Manual* (Section B Structure) state:
1.(1)(b) Where two or more Local Churches together, and in consultation with the synod, decide that their mission will be more effective if they share resources and ordained ministry, they may, with the approval of the synod, form an association known as a group of churches with a structured relationship and a constitution governing the way in which they relate to one another as to the sharing of both resources and the ordained ministry. Each church within the group shall retain its own identity, and its Church Meeting and elders' meeting shall continue to exercise all their functions in relation to that church, save that, so long as the constitution shall so declare, decisions relating to the calling of a minister (see paragraph 2(1)(vii)) may be taken by a single group Church Meeting at which all the members of each of the constituent churches in the group shall be eligible to attend and vote.
3. 1.(1)(c) Where two or more local churches together, and in consultation with the synod, decide that their mission will be more effective if they share ordained ministry (but not other resources), they may, with the approval of the synod, form an association known as a joint pastorate, with a structured relationship with respect to the provision of ordained ministry only and a statement of intent governing the way in which they relate to one another in relation to the sharing of ordained ministry. Each church within the joint pastorate shall retain its own identity, and its church m

in fellowship with the local church, any ordinations and/or inductions of Ministers and any commissioning and induction of Church Related Community Workers within the synod.

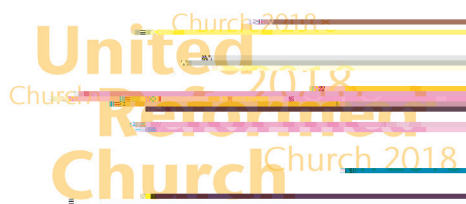
6. The reason this was taken to General Assembly was to reflect the significant discussions on call that have occurred in various places, but not least Mission Council, over the past months, and so to remind General Assembly of the variety of ways in which pastorates may legitimately be structured in order to enable flexibility of scoping and effective mission and ministry.
7. This paper responds to a request to offer further explanation and provide examples. It seems that part of a helpful response is to isolate the relevant portions of *the Manual*, and so that has been done above.
8. We live in a day where the church is in the context of a fast-changing society. Our calling is surely to provide flexible and appropriate ministry. The day when a single congregation calls a person to be its minister as a full-time single pastorate is largely over. Of course, it has never been as universally present as many like to imagine.
- 9.

17. A group of four churches becomes accredited as a CRCW project and jointly calls a CRCW to work with them. They agree to use the CRCW on a shared basis, focussing on each church and its community in turn.
18. A group of six churches calls two ministers, allowing them to work together but with clearly defined pastoral responsibility.
19. A group of eight churches calls two ministers, but with a clear agreement as to which four are under the care of which minister. When one minister leaves, the situation is reviewed and the remaining minister retains just one out of their part of the pastorate, and takes up responsibility for three of those that were previously in the other section.
20. A group of 12 churches calls three ministers to a team ministry. Each congregation can identify its 'primary' minister though that may, from time to time, change. Particular gifts and specialisations are shared across the congregations.
21. A group of 14 churches calls two ministers, but is able to additionally identify four local leaders and two retired ministers who are willing to contribute. There is also an NSM who can give ten hours a week. Pastoral responsibilities are identified and reviewed every two years.
22. Of course, none of this prevents,

Paper H2

Ministries committee

Non-stipendiary ministry of Word and Sacraments



Paper H2

Ministries committee

Non-stipendiary ministry of Word and Sacraments

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Paul Whittle moderator@urceastern.org.uk
Action required	Decision.

Draft resolution(s)

1. **Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, authorises a model 4 non-stipendiary ministry which will provide for locally ordained ministers, as outlined in paper H2, November 2018.**
2. **Mission Council directs the ministries committee to ensure that plans for this model of ministry are appropriately complementary to other ministries of the church – including stipendiary ministry, current models of non-stipendiary ministry, local leadership (recognising that this is currently directed by synods) and the eldership, including the specific role of authorise.**

2. **Mission Council direct-Mat thit thapt ths**

Non-stipendiary ministry of Word and Sacraments – model four

1. In February 2015 ministries committee, with the subsequent endorsement of Mission Council in May 2015, established a working group on non-stipendiary ministry with a remit to explore current practice with respect to non-stipendiary ministry and to make recommendations about how this form of ministry might be better supported and used. The full report of the group is available at www.urc.org.uk/ministries-resources
2. As a result of the report of the working group, ministries committee brought a series of six resolutions to Mission Council, five of which were agreed by consensus. These resolutions concerned, respectively, training requirements, the appointment process, review, retirement and transfer between different forms of ministerial service.
3. Following facilitation, the sixth resolution was also agreed by consensus and then read: 'Mission Council instructs the ministries committee to develop a fourth model of non stipendiary ministry, based in a local church or mission project, whose training is locally focused, to meet the needs of the congregation and the community it serves. The proposal shall be brought to a future General Assembly or Mission Council.' As a result of that instruction the ministries committee brought draft resolution 29 to General Assembly 2018. However, pressures of time meant that it was not possible to reach consensus and the matter was remitted to Mission Council.
4. We assume that the request to do this piece of work, whilst not implying that a resulting proposal would be accepted, suggests that Mission Council recognised that this could well be a useful contribution to future URC ministry. Ministries committee believes that to be the case. Having carefully considered the points raised at General Assembly and their implications, we believe that this is a model that should be adopted and would ask Mission Council to do that.
5. The original vision for NSM within the URC was established by resolutions passed in 1979 and 1980 and was incorporated into section K of *the Manual* as follows:
There are three models of non-:

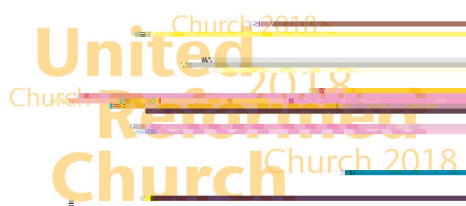
adding value to the total ministry of the church and sitting alongside the range of ministries to which members of the United Reformed Church are called.

9. While great value is placed on all forms of ministry within the URC, it is clear that most congregations want to be able to relate to an ordained minister and to have a sufficient 'slice' of that person. The introduction of authorised elders at General Assembly 2016 clarified and strengthened questions of lay presidency at the sacraments, but was not intended to address broader questions of ministry provision.
10. It is a highly valued element in URC theology that there are very few roles which are absolutely restricted to a minister. However, we do recognise the value of ministers and that their calling has a role that, though not exclusive, can add value to the ministry we offer in Christ's name. Ministers are recognised in ecumenical and community situations. Responding to the calling places a minister under the discipline of the church. Offering this particularity in this new way has much potential in our current context, where small churches are frequently offering valuable service with diminishing resources of personnel.
11. We hear the call to consider whether there should be a denominational scheme of local leadership. We hear also the call to further support elders in their vital role. We believe that a model 4 NSM will enhance these other ministries, as it sits alongside them, and that it will certainly not undermine them.
12. The call to ministry for model 4 NSM should be determined in the same way as other calls to ministry of word and sacraments through both the synod candidating process and the Assembly's assessment conference. It shall be for the assessment board with the guidance of the education and learning panel to determine what training needs to be undertaken.
13. Training would be tailored according to previous experience (e.g. elders' training, TLS, Stepwise would be considered in determining a training programme) with a minimum standard. Training should be placement-based and should include discipline leading to a minimum standard. Training should be placement-based and should include discipline leading to a minimum standard.

Paper I1

Mission committee

Update on current work



Paper I1

Mission committee

Update on current work

Basic information

Contact name and

6. Methodist/URC United Areas

There have been several requests from United Areas for a constitution which is robust enough to register with the Charity Commission and which complies with both the Structure of the URC and Methodist Constitutional Practice and Discipline (CPD). After considerable work, the Methodist/URC Liaison Group has now finalised a document which has been approved by the law and polity groups of the URC and the Methodist Church. For those United Areas who are seeking to update their constitutions this is now the only version which is endorsed by both denominations. Anyone wishing a copy may contact Philip Brooks at Church House.



Finances

- Contributions are received by the programme officer. The URC has responsibility for processing all contributions
- Of the money raised, currently Christian Aid receives 75% of the total. Global Justice Now receive 5% and the remaining 20% is used for education and administration of the scheme by the URC
- Christian Aid's allocation is divided evenly across the four country areas
- The cost of resources produced by Christian Aid will be divided equally between CfL and CA
- Any additional resources are the responsibility of CfL.

The URC's responsibilities

The URC will be responsible for:

- keeping records of church and individual donations
- managing the mailing of resources to churches
- working with volunteers to promote and encourage participation in synods and churches.
- having stories checked for 'fact and tact' by Christian Aid
- coordinating the signing of CAW endorsement letter by moderators of General Assembly for mailing
- working closely with the Christian Aid link person on design and content for resources
- sending the CA share each month.

Wider Church/denomination commitments

Recognising the importance of this partnership agreement and the unique role of CfL, the URC will promote Commitment for Life beyond just the supporting churches by:

- Sending worship resources to all churches and synods every year
- Organising Commitment for Life slots at the Councils of the Church
- Using media and social media platforms to regularly promote Commitment for Life news, stories, updates and resources
- Promoting Christian Aid Week and Christian Aid Campaigns to wider churches.

Christian Aid's commitments

Staffing

Christian Aid will provide a dedicated staff member with responsibility for Commitment for Life. This will be, as far as possible, a long-term project or role to allow for good working relationships which help Commitment for Life to flourish. As part of their role they will:

- Attend reference group meetings and produce such updates and reports as may be required
- Oversee the writing of content and production of resources
- Develop the relationship with Commitment for Life staff
- Maintain the working relationship wi

Country programmes

Christian Aid's country programmes in Bangladesh, Central America, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Zimbabwe are stakeholders in the Commitment for Life partnership. Their responsibilities include:

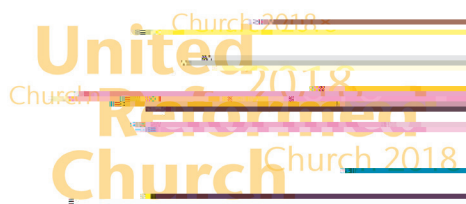
- Budgeting to spend their share of the Commitment for Life money on programmes.

This is a code one offset and can be used to identify the programmes

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Paper 12

Mission and discipleship





Paper I2

Mission and discipleship

Walking the Way – entering a new phase

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Richard Church richard.church@urc.org.uk Francis Brien francis.brien@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council a) gives thanks for the work carried out as part of <i>Walking the Way</i> (2017)
	a)

Entering a new phase

1. The success of phase one

- 1.1 Since its launch in late 2017, the ethos of missional discipleship contained in *Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today* has been well received across the URC. Every synod is responding in some way to the call to equip more people in recognising and responding to God's call to mission in everyday life. Some have established their own discipleship programmes, whilst some are promoting existing resources and materials to help deepen their relationship with Jesus. Others have hired staff to empower local congregations in being God's presence of love in the community around them.
- 1.2 Each of these diverse and innovative responses, shaped and tailored according to the needs of each differing context across the URC suggest that the core message of *Walking the Way* is being endorsed. The URC is recognising a need to support its members in thinking about how we walk with Jesus throughout the entirety of our lives, from cradle to grave, supermarket to workplace, morning run to evening social club.
- 1.3 The message of *Walking the Way* is also sparking conversations with ecumenical partners with similar priorities, including members of Churches Together in England, the Church of Scotland and the United Church of Canada.
- 1.4 In its first phase, *Walking the Way* has sought to spread this message in several practical ways, including the distribution of an introductory leaflet, bookmark and prayer cards, supporting the *URC Daily Devotions* e-mail system, and visiting and contributing to synods and some of their associated committees, bodies and local churches. The promotion of *Holy Habits*, participation in the development of *Stepwise* and general contact with various networks (TDOs, CYDOs, Mission Enablers, etc.) have also helped to share existing experience and wisdom around, preventing the reinvention of the wheel and promoting fresh, innovative thinking and solutions for discipleship development across the URC.
- 1.5 This continues with a series of URC-specific videos on each of the *Holy Habits*, which



Objectives of the task group

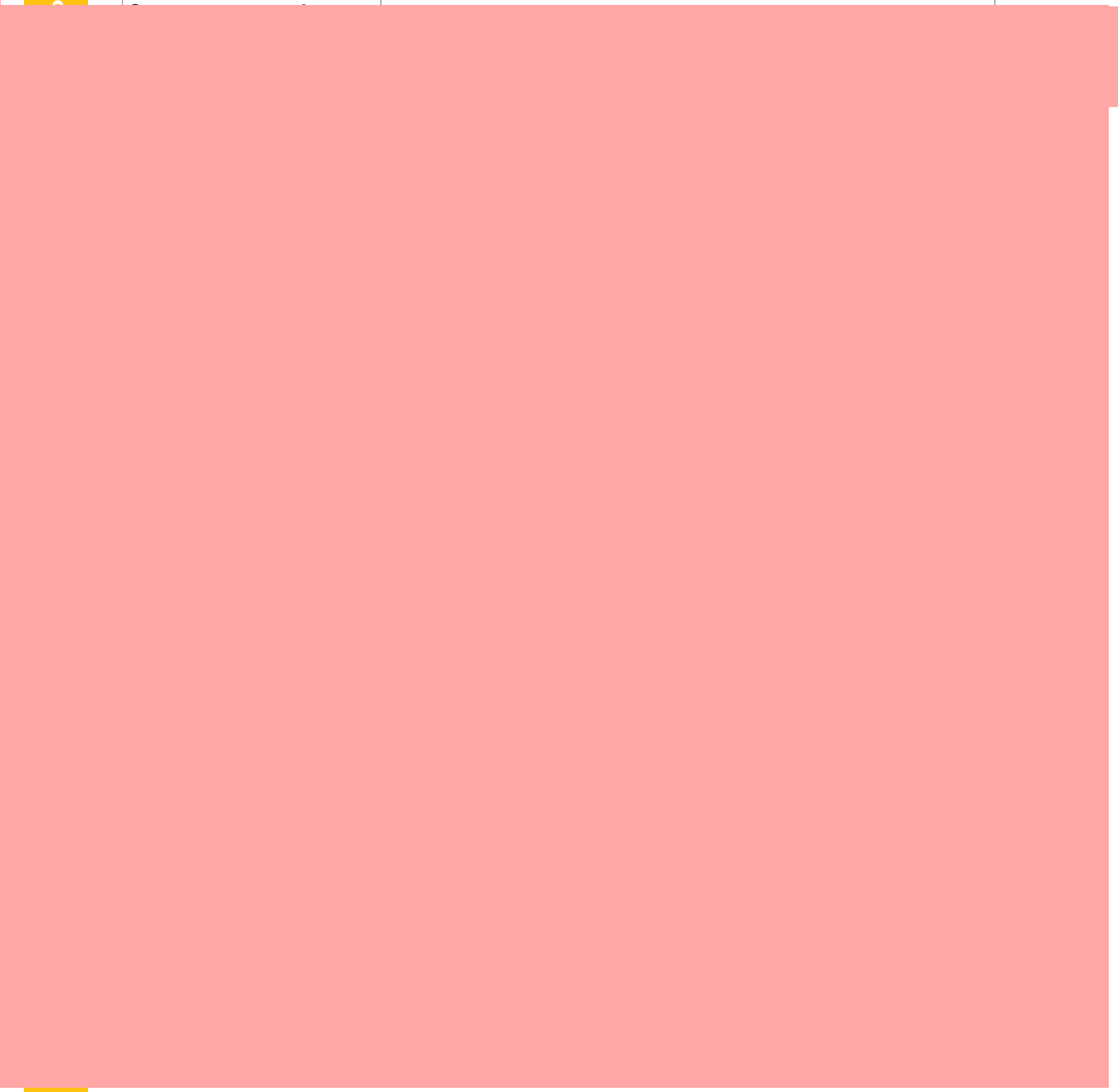




Paper J1

Nominations committee

Basic information

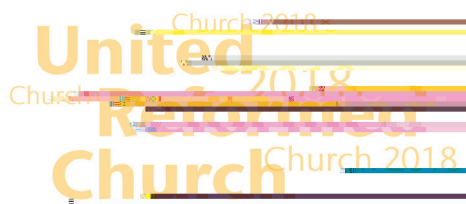






Paper L1

URC Trust







Church 2018
United
Church 2018
Reformed
Church 2018
Church



Listening in the URC: a discussion starter

1. A conciliar church is a listening church. It takes account of the discernment reached by its constituent parts. It listens for the voice of God in its members' voices, in the voices of its ecumenical and interfaith partners, and in the world's voices. These were key elements of Nigel Uden's moderatorial address in July 2018, which argued that the United Reformed Church must listen if it is to be worth listening to.
2. Listening is always prudent, but perhaps in times of change, transition and uncertainty it's all the more so, if the church is to move forward with as much unity as possible. Transition is unavoidable; change is essential as a sign of the church's life, just as not changing inevitably portends its death. Transition, though, is not easy. As Nigel has cited elsewhere, William Bridges eloquently describes the vulnerability that it creates, speaking of a time of transition as 'a nowhere between two somewheres'.
3. We sense that there is a significant strand in the denomination which feels we may be at just such a moment – an uncomfortable 'nowhere'. If we are, then we believe it could be fruitful to listen deliberately to the elders and ministers of the United Reformed Church – to have our own 'listening project', borrowing the title from Radio 4 and Fi Glover. The Ministers' Gathering in spring 2018 was well received and engendered for ministers a real sense of belonging to the URC, but it was more a time for them to listen to speakers than to be listened to.

12 and 13
14 and 15
16 and 19
23
25

Trinity and scripture

Baptism and communion

Mutual commitment; service and discipleship

Elders

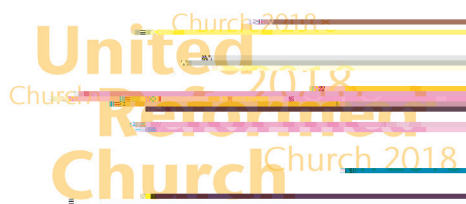
Worship is catholic (related to the life of the whole Church),

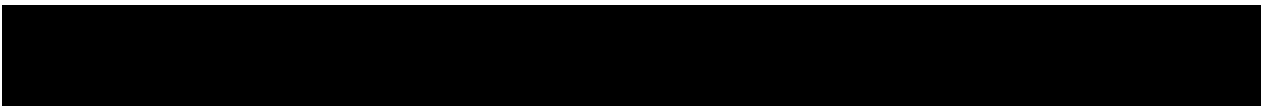
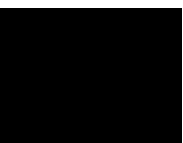
as well as local (what we do .6 (e j0g)0.2a.5 ()0.5 (4j3c.333 0 15 (al)o)0.5 (g3.5 (

Paper M3

Moderators of Assembly

Recruitment of General Secretary
and DGS (discipleship)





2.5 Identification of remaining members of the nominating group

Winter 2018/19

Church 2018
United
Church 2018
Reformed
Church 2018
Church

11. After discussion, the parties were recalled, and the Convenor gave the decision:
 - a) The commission affirmsimplied any ysiri r

Paper N1

Task group on the future of General Assembly

Paper 01

Human resources advisory group

Report on recent work

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Mr Geoff Shaw, convenor geoffshaw2810@sky.com
Action required	Take note.
Draft resolution(s)	None.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	To update Mission Council on the recent work of the group.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	Previous HRAG reports to Mission Council.
Consultation has taken place with...	General Secretary, Church House staff.

Summary of impact

Financial	
------------------	--

HRAG report on recent work

1. Membership

Geoff Shaw (Convenor), Alastair Forsyth, Bridget Fosten, Mike Gould, the Revd John Proctor, General Secretary (ex officio), Jane Baird, Deputy General Secretary (Administration and Resources) (ex officio).

These members bring to the group a wide range of HR and management experience within the Church, the public sector and industry.

2. Remit

HRAG was established in October 2012 and its remit reviewed by the May 2015 meeting of Mission Council. The remit is to provide a unified reference point on HR matters for Mission Council/General Assembly/URC Trust and Church House staff.

3. Routine work

HRAG endorsed the system and encouraged its wider use and agreed to support HR staff in further analysis of existing roles in Church House.

3.6 Facilities management

Synod moderators	▼				
Principal of Westminster College			▼		
Members of Westminster College Senatus					▼

ACTS - Action of Churches Together in Scotland
 CTBI - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
 CTE - Churches Together in England
 Cytun - Churches Together in Wales

GWM - Council for World Mission
 DECC - Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council
 FCG - Free Churches Group
 WORC - World Communion of Reformed Churches

Officers of Assembly: the serving moderators of General Assembly, the General Secretary, the Clerk, the Treasurer, and the Convener of the Assembly arrangements committee.

Paper O2

Human resources advisory group

Terms of reference

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Mr Geoff Shaw, HRAG Convenor geoffshaw2810@sky.com
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	<p>a) Mission Council adopts the amended terms of reference for the human resources advisory group with immediate effect.</p> <p>b) Mission Council extends the service of Mr Geoff Shaw (Convenor), Mr Alastair Forsyth and Mrs Bridget Fosten so that the end of service dates for the current members of the human resources advisory group become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Gould, end of General Assembly 2020 • Alastair Forsyth, end of General Assembly 2021 • Bridget Fosten, end of General Assembly 2022 • Geoff Shaw, end of General Assembly 2023.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Updating the terms of reference for current needs and circumstances. Confirming terms of service for current members and clarifying periods of service for new members.
Main points	Membership and terms of service.
Previous relevant documents	Terms of reference agreed Mission Council November 2015 (paper O2 refers).

Terms of reference

1. In November 2015 Mission Council agreed updated terms of reference for the human resources advisory group (HRAG).
 2. The 2015 terms of reference specified membership, frequency of meetings and quorum levels for this group which, in the light of experience, should be updated to meet current needs and circumstances. Such changes would not impact on the level of support being offered by the group. There is also a need to clarify service periods for current members since in some cases no terms of office were specified.
 3. HRAG wishes to come in line with other committees which set an expectation for the period of service by setting an initial period of four years extendable by up to an additional two years.
 4. HRAG proposes the following end of extension of service for the following appointed members:
 - Alastair Forsyth, end of General Assembly 2021 †
 - Bridget Fosten, end of General Assembly 2022 †
 - Geoff Shaw, end of General Assembly 2023 †
- † denotes those who have been invited to extend their period of service
5. The proposed amended terms of reference are included as an appendix to this paper.

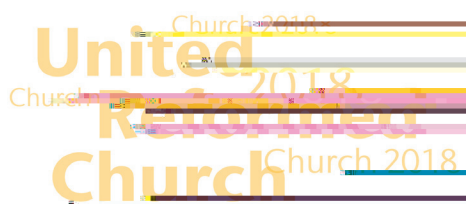
5. Review of constitution and terms of reference

- 5.1 These terms of reference will be reviewed by both the HRAG and Mission Council at least once every four years.

Paper P1

Law and polity advisory group

Marriage in Jersey





Marriage in Jersey

1. The government of Jersey has approved a law permitting same-sex couples to marry, which is operative since July 2018. This paper proposes a URC response to the new law.
- 2.





Learning from the Past Case Review

	<p>Ioannis Athanasiou safeguarding@urc.org.uk Richard Church richard.church@urc.org.uk</p>
	<p>Receive the published report produced by the learning group. Commit to implementing its recommendations. Instruct SAG accordingly.</p>

	<p>The report captures the learning generated through the two phases of the Past Case Review (May 2015 to June 2017) and supports the URC on the next steps that need to be taken in order to effect cultural change in the safeguarding policies and practices throughout the church.</p>
	<p>The PCR Learning Group report recognises that the Church needs to be more systematic and attentive to matters of safeguarding and protection.</p> <p>The report points at a range of areas of operation to review and improve, including relationships with survivors of abuse, the need to clarify the definition of safeguarding, standardizing policy, training and record keeping.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to a new disciplinary process with safeguarding training of panels.</p> <p>Recruitment processes also need to be informed by safeguarding processes.</p>

Mission Council reports from March 2015 onwards. Most recent ones include:

Paper R1 November Mission Council 2017

Paper R2 March Mission Council 2018

Mission Council report to General Assembly 2018, Appendix seven, *Book of Reports* p38.



6. Mission Council is asked to instruct the safeguarding advisory group to take forward the PCR learning report's recommendations and implement a comprehensive strategic safeguarding plan for the whole Church in the next five years (2018 to 2023). The synods will make their own arrangements to standardise practices and report progress annually in alignment with the requirements of Good Practice 4 Safeguarding Guidance. The safeguarding advisory group will be responsible and accountable for maintaining an oversight of systematic changes in safeguarding policies, practices and procedures of the United Reformed Church, and for reporting to Mission Council pe.178 Td2





7. Those who act on behalf of the denomination should be vigilant in assessing each

or volunteering position), emphasizing the specific requirements and duties of the post, the frequency and period of time over which the work is to be done, and how the work will be supervised. The job or role description should say whether it is eligible for and requires a criminal records check, and if so the level of the check. Detailed job descriptions and thorough attention to regulated activity, workforces and supervising activity criteria are important for those who request disclosure applications and handle recruitment decisions and appointments throughout the URC.

12.

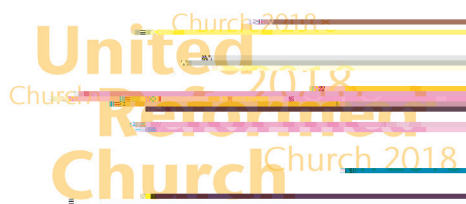
responsible for appointments should consider first whether the individual undertakes



Paper T1

MIND (ministerial incapacity and discipline advisory group)

Update



Paper T1

MIND (ministerial incapacity and discipline advisory group)2w 028[Tc 3.7 0230 038g0T62 gsTT



The Greenbelt festival

Introduction

1. Legacy Fund money supported the Church's mission and communications committees in planning and delivering an active URC presence at the Greenbelt annual Christian arts and music festival in 2016 and 2017.
2. Many people who were aware in one way or another of the URC input in these two years were keen to see continued involvement, and some imaginative and effective work was planned and delivered in 2018.
3. However, the experience of planning activities and of gathering money a year at a time seemed unsatisfactory and somewhat unpredictable. If involvement were to continue, it would be important to look a few years ahead.
4. The Mission Council advisory group therefore asked that two people review what was being achieved in 2018 and bring a recommendation to Mission Council for the years 2019 to 2021. Mr Alan Yates was asked, as a senior figure in the Church who had not been involved in planning our input previously. He was joined by a nominee of the planning group, the Revd Anne Sardeson from Thames North Synod. The resulting paper was drafted by Alan and Anne. While their work on it was commissioned by MCAG, their conclusions have not been tested by MCAG, as MCAG believes this is a task for Mission Council.
5. The finance committee has included a sum of 30k for inter-committee projects in the draft 2019 budget. This paper clearly recommends that the bulk of that budget line be used on Greenbelt, and hopes for similar provision in 2020 and 2021.
6. The paper and recommendations prepared by Alan Yates and Anne Sardeson now follow. Alan Yates will speak to this at the Mission Council meeting.

The Yates-Sardeson review paper: Greenbelt 2019 to 21

Background

1. The URC has been a Greenbelt (GB) associate for the past three years. This provides us with a small (by Greenbelt standards) tent, permission to put on three 'Cake and Debate' sessions for youth, and access to the site to stage things such as contemplative walks, worship, discussions and art installations. A large planning group, under the leadership of Steve Summers, was established prior to the 2016 event, and has continued, with a few changes of personnel, for all of the three GBs.
2. Anne Sardeson (one of the GB Planning Group) and Alan Yates were asked by MCAG to review our involvement in GB and to provide a report to Mission Council (MC) to facilitate a decision on future investment in GB for the next three years.

3. The authors would like to thank all those who have taken the time to provide responses to this review.

Approach

4. Our aim with the data collection was to estimate the value our relationship with GB brings so that MC can assess value for money and affordability. Note that we were asked not to publish the cost of being a GB Associate as this data is 'commercial in confidence'. Therefore, the majority of people who provided us with feedback did not know how much the involvement in GB costs the URC. This is why MC is being asked to consider costs and benefits.
5. The following groups have been invited to contribute to the review:
 - Synod clerks and moderators
 - Mission Council members
 - Mission committee members
 - URC festival goers
 - Non-URC festival goers
 - URC GB planning group
 - URC tent visitors
 - Paul Northup, GB Creative Director
6. In addition, Anne and Alan have provided some insights based on their time at GB.

Results

7. Synod clerks and moderators – eight responses
 - All are aware of our involvement and all but one (who wanted more data) wanted to continue our involvement
8. Mission Council members, Mission committee members and URC festival goers – 149 responses
 - 94% want to continue our involvement, 62% say our involvement encourages them to go, 91% agrees it gives a positive view of the URC, 76% say their GB experience is enhanced by our involvement and 49% say our involvement has a positive effect on our local churches.
 - Note that we had URCers from all synods except Northern and Scotland

current demographic. But this might be a stronger value for money partnership than what was evidenced in 2017 and 2018 – but it might have demanded more £££.’

- ‘I wanted to reinforce that I feel that involvement with Greenbelt has been beneficial for raising the profile of the URC. I spoke to many people who loved what was done and said that the children's activities were great.’
- ‘I have found the input of the URC to be valuable at Greenbelt. It provides a space for people to come and talk and it raises the profile of the church. The past two years have been great interactive events at GB and pulled people in and then allowed for conversations. My only comment would be that if someone did not have children I wonder if they would as easily come into the space?’
- ‘It is hard to think that the URC being at Greenbelt adds much to our URC numbers – as I think most people at Greenbelt are already involved in some kind of church and aren’t looking for a new one.’
- ‘The carefully planned and prepared items and activities in the URC tent at Greenbelt, and the thoughtful 'treasure hunts' around the grounds, have been valuable contributions for people of all ages to share in exploration and conversations on topics of faith and Christian life. The way these have been prepared has involved individuals and groups from many churches throughout Britain making things to be used in the festivals. This has spread the sense of belonging and sharing in a large-scale enterprise of the URC in Christian celebration and witness.’

9. Non-URC festival goers

We interviewed 83 non-URC GB festival goers, asking three simple questions: Were you aware of the URC before GB?

- **Yes:** Do you know more about the URC now?
if yes: Does our presence put the URC in a favourable light?
No: Are you aware of the URC now?
if yes: Does our presence put the URC in a favourable light?
- 90% said they were aware of the URC, 35% said they now knew more about the URC because of our involvement and 30% said it put the URC in a good light.

10. URC GB planning group

- The members of the planning group were, in addition to contributing to the survey, asked to provide estimates of the effort that went into planning and delivering our GB activities, but we did not get enough responses to estimate total resource. We suspect that the total effort exceeds 120 person-days. Note that most of this time is given free-of-charge and is given because the people have a passion for GB (in other words we cannot assume that this effort would be available for other initiatives).

11. URC t

commented on the longer-term effect our contribution has had. One summed up what many have said about the creativity and energy of the URC: 'Brilliant stuff URC. Thank you. Very thoughtful a

- Greenbelt offers a way of being church that is a place of exploration and openness; a safe place to ask questions and explore ideas that might be shut down in other settings; a place to be creative and find connection. Something I call 'being church in a field' – not all polished, but exciting and challenging and wet and wng 1ig nd 8d and excvhd,c

- If we are to continue should we modify its focus and how should we govern it?

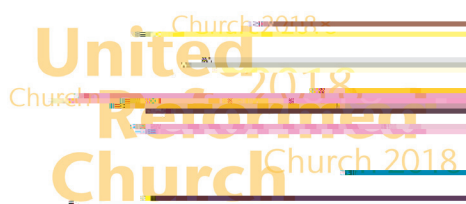
Resolutions

21. Three draft resolutions are therefore offered to Mission Council, as shown in the table on page 152.

Paper U2

Mission council advisory group

Future tenure of General Secretary





Paper U2

Mission council advisory group

Future tenure of General Secretary

Basic information

Contact name and email address

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Action require

Future tenure of General Secretary

1. The recent appointment of the Revd Paul Whittle for a third term as Moderator of Eastern Synod reminded many people that synod moderators are not limited to two terms, despite a widespread belief that this was the case. The relevant part of the Rules of Procedure reads as follows:

...

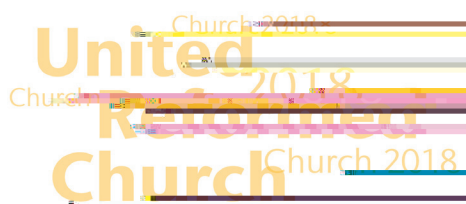
2. Other Assembly appointed m

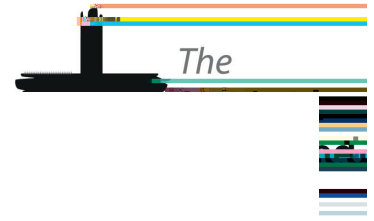


Paper Z1

Church House management group

Terms of reference





Paper Z1

Church House management group

Terms of reference

Basic information

Contact name and

Terms of reference

1. In November 2015 Mission Council agreed updated terms of reference for the Church House management committee (CHMG).
2. The 2015 terms of reference did not specify any length of service for its members.
3. CHMG wishes to come in line with other committees which set an expectation for the period of service by setting an initial period of four years extendable by up to an

Appendix – Church House management group terms of reference

1. Membership

CHMG will consist of:

- 1.1. Convenor: Deputy General Secretary (administration and resources) [DGS(A&R)]
- 1.2. Ex officio: General Secretary, Chief Finance Officer.
- 1.3. Four members appointed by General Assembly (or Mission Council on its behalf) on the recommendation of the nominations committee, who have experience in buildings and IT management, including finance and general management.

3.3 CHMG shall ensure the development, implementation, maintenance and monitoring
o





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