

Legal and Property Support for Managing Trustees – Progress Report

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Status of Paper	Progress report
Resolution	59/1. The Council receives the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To update the Council on the work of the Legal and Property Support for Managing Trustees working party, in order to enable the Council to bring a report on progress in this area to the 2017 Conference
Main Points	Introduction Progress Future plans
Background Context and Relevant Documents	Memorials M26 – M29 to the 2016 Conference
Consultations	A sample of District Property Secretaries The Chair of the Board of TMCP Members of staff from TMCP Facilities and Property Coordinator (Connexional Team) The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The 2016 Conference received four memorials (M26 – M29) relating to the work of TMCP and the level of support and advice available to managing trustees. In response, and recognising the need to be faithful in the use of the resources of the whole Connexion, the Conference directed the Methodist Council and invited the Board of TMCP to appoint a joint working party to:

- (a) Clarify the extent of the application of SO 931(3) and the role and responsibility of the custodian trustee under the Methodist Church Act 1939 and charity law.
- (b) Clarify the need for SO 931(3) in its current form and where appropriate suggest amendments.
- (c) Assess what steps are necessary to ensure that the Connexional Team has available to it an appropriate level of resource so as to fulfil the terms of SO 931(3).
- (d) Clarify the requirements placed upon Managing Trustees in respect of disposals and contracts and identify ways to speed up transactions, taking into account the views of the Law and Polity Committee on the role of the custodian.
- (e) Clarify and define respective areas of responsibility so as to resource the mission and ministry of the whole Connexion most effectively.

(f) Establish a full review of the needs of Managing Trustees in terms of property and legal advice and consider the benefit of professional legal services being provided by the Connexional Team.

- 1.2 The Conference directed the Council to bring a report on progress in this area to the 2017 Conference.
- 1.3 The working party consists of Mrs Susan R Howdle (Chair, appointed by the Conference), Mr Graham Danbury (appointed by the Board of TMCP), the Revd Jennifer M Dyer (appointed by the Council), the Revd Richard W Oldroyd (appointed by the Council) and Mr G Alan Pimlott (appointed by the Board of TMCP). Although appointed by different bodies, the members of the working party recognise the need to work cohesively in the interests of the wider Church. Recognising the breadth of its remit, the working party chose at an early stage to amend its name from the TMCP working party to the Legal and Property Support for Managing Trustees working party.

2.0 Progress

- 2.1 To date, the working party has met four times: in October and November 2016 and January and February 2017.
- 2.2 The working party is aware of the need to consult widely in its work, and has so far held conversations with:
 - Three District Property Secretaries
 - The Chair of the Board of TMCP
 - A number of members of staff from TMCP
 - The Connexional Team's Facilities and Property Coordinator
 - The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice.
- 2.3 In addition, the working party has endeavoured to establish close links with the newly appointed Property Development Committee.
- 2.4 The working party will continue to consult with the Law and Polity Committee as and when required.

3.0 Future plans

- 3.1 The working party is aware of the breadth of its terms of reference and the need to focus on the full range of support required by managing trustees (and not simply the issues raised in memorials to the 2016 Conference relating to TMCP).
- 3.2 As such, it has so far identified a range of key questions and will continue to consult widely in its work and to report to the Council and seek its views on key questions. The timing of a final report to the Conference has not yet been confirmed, but it may be possible to bring recommendations to the 2018 Conference.

*****RESOLUTION**

59/1. The Council receives the report.