

## Draft Supervision Policy

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<b>Status of Paper</b>	Final
<b>Action Required</b>	Decision
<b>Draft Resolutions</b>	86/1. The Council adopts the draft supervision policy.  86/2. The Council, in fulfilment of recommendation 7 of the Past Cases Review Report agrees to implement a pilot programme of structured supervision in two Districts commencing in March 2016.
<b>Alternative Options to Consider, if Any</b>	None. Failure to implement the recommendations of the Past Cases Review Report would seriously impact on the Church's reputation and standing.

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	To introduce a policy on the principles and procedures of implementing structured supervision for all ministers.
<b>Main Points</b>	Aims and Functions of Supervision Definition of Supervision Procedures required for implementation of structured supervision for all ministers
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	Recommendation 7 of the Past Cases Review Report to the Conference 2015 stated: That a system of structured supervision for ministers be instituted to address the identified weakness in relation to accountability and support in terms of safe practice. Further that: A draft supervision policy is produced by a working party that has the knowledge/skills to reflect the relevant dimensions of accountability and important theological underpinning. The draft policy to be considered by the Methodist Council in October 2015.
<b>Consultations</b>	The Past Cases Review Implementation Group The Supervision Working Party and senior, accredited and experienced supervision practitioners and educators.

### Summary of Impact

<b>Standing Orders</b>	New Standing Orders may be required if the policy is adopted as required action rather than as guidance notes.
<b>Faith and Order</b>	Consultation about the nature of accountability in ministerial practice would be helpful and the theology of supervision and oversight.
<b>Financial</b>	Considerable resources required for the training of supervisors, delivery of courses, and the funding of supervision for Chairs of District.
<b>Wider Connexional</b>	There are resource implications for implementing the policy and a need to train and resource those who will supervise.

## Draft Supervision Policy

### 1.1 Introduction

Recommendation 7 of the Report on the Past Cases Review 2013-15 (*The Courage, Cost and Hope*) states:

- That a system of structured supervision for ministers be instituted to address the identified weakness in relation to accountability and support in terms of safe practice. The urgency of this requirement is recognised but also the capacity/skills/resource issues that are raised. Ideally the timescales would be as follows:
- A draft supervision policy is produced by a working party that has the skills/knowledge to reflect the relevant dimensions of accountability and important theological underpinning. The draft policy is to be considered by the Methodist Council in October 2015.

### 1.2 Scope

This draft Supervision Policy provides an overarching framework outlining the requirements for supervision for all ministers in the active work in order to ensure that there is greater accountability of ministerial practice. This draft policy is intended to include Chairs of District, all ministers appointed to circuit appointments, and supernumeraries undertaking roles under SO 792(2). It should also apply to ministers in District or Connexional Team appointments. A pilot programme of structured supervision will be implemented in two Districts (Liverpool and South East) commencing 1 March 2016. The supervision working party will report back on the results of the pilot and any changes to this draft policy to the Council in October 2016.

This policy does not currently extend to lay employees in pastoral roles but should be extended to them as soon as practicable. It does not currently extend to ministers in appointments outside the control of the Church who normally can expect to receive structured supervision in the organisation they work for, such as in chaplaincy appointments. It is acknowledged that implementing this policy is a major undertaking and will impact considerably on workloads but in order to establish better accountability it is required and necessary not just to reduce poor practice but to develop best practice.

### 1.2 Purpose of supervision

Supervision has two main aims:

- to support the vocational development of the person ministering;
- to ensure that the ministry offered in the name of the Methodist Church promotes the fullness of life for which Christ came.

This involves a range of functions:

- to enable learning, formation and development in ministry;
- to encourage adherence to the Methodist Church's policies and code of good practice;
- to support and challenge ministers;
- to offer opportunities for reflection on theology and ethics in practice;
- to assist in the interpretation of contexts and relationships.

### 1.3 The aims of supervision are<sup>1</sup>:

Normative:

- To explore the practices and habitus of ministry within the horizon of God's mission
- To ensure good practice in ministry which enables the flourishing of all and to challenge and manage any poor practice
- To safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Formative:

- To explore creative approaches to demanding issues of ministry and relationships as they arise.
- To contribute to the continuing vocational and professional development (CPD) of ministers.

Restorative:

- To ensure that the vocation and work of the minister is valued and nurtured;
- To ensure that health and well-being issues for ministers are addressed.

### 1.4 Theological imperative

Supervision is a formative and developmental process and one of the best means of enabling the learning of another through appropriate oversight.

Oversight is the means by which the Church remains true and faithful to its calling. It is a corporate and shared activity undertaken by the Conference and by groups and individuals working on behalf of the Conference. Oversight is best viewed as a community of love, discipline and accountability. It involves aspects of "watching over in love", monitoring, discerning, directing, guiding, encouraging and caring.<sup>2</sup> Oversight expressed through regular supervision should be intentional and focused. In order to fulfil the Church's mission most effectively, persons in ministry must be publically and continually responsible for its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ. At ordination authority is given to representatively selected persons to hold responsibility for God's people. Such persons are to represent God to the world and the world to God and, with their diverse gifts and graces, be a focus of unity. Ordained ministry is constitutive of the life of the Church, rather than derivative and so those selected and set apart for the "special duties" of ordained ministry are given status and privileges within the Church but equally have obligations and responsibility to live lives worthy of their calling. This is the covenant relationship with the Conference that all those in Full Connexion with the Conference are bound by. A Methodist model of supervision should therefore be an expression of our covenant relationship with the Conference.

### 2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

A team of senior and experienced supervision educators and practitioners will be responsible for both training the Chairs of District in supervision and for being their supervisors.

*In this draft policy*

Chairs of District are responsible for:

- Ensuring that superintendent ministers are fully aware of their role and responsibility in relation to supervision and that supervision is provided in accordance with the Methodist Church policy on supervision.

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<sup>1</sup> The PCR Report quoting from the National Crime Agency paper CEOP Thematic Assessment

*The Foundations of Abuse: a thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions* noted that, "Studies have demonstrated that one of the most effective safeguards within organisations or professional settings is to provide frequent, open and supportive supervision of staff".

<sup>2</sup> *The Nature of Oversight* Conference Report 2005

- Ensuring that ordained ministers in District appointments receive regular supervision.
- Leading developments in supervision practice in the District.
- Ensuring that ministers serving in District and Circuit appointments receive supervision in line with the Methodist Church policy on supervision and taking action to address this if this is not the case.

Circuit Superintendents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all deacons and presbyters in circuit appointments are fully aware of their role and responsibility in relation to supervision and that supervision is provided in accordance with the Methodist Church's supervision policy.
- Leading developments in supervision practice.
- Ensuring that they receive supervision in line with the Methodist Church policy on supervision and taking action to address this if this is not the case.

Connexional Team line managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all ordained ministers within the Connexional Team receive regular supervision in accordance with this policy.

The ministers mentioned above are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they receive supervision in line with the Methodist Church policy on supervision and taking action to address this if this is not the case.
- Ensure that they provide records of supervision (1:1 and group supervision) to the Superintendent Minister, District Chair or line manager of a connexional team appointment if he/she is not the supervisor or supervision group facilitator and be willing to discuss the contents in an accountable way. A connexional pro forma will be provided.

## 2.1 Definitions

The following definition of supervision by the Association of Pastoral Supervisors and Educators is the working definition of supervision within this policy

Supervision is ....

- .... *a regular, planned and intentional space* in which a practitioner skilled in supervision (the supervisor) meets with one or more other practitioners (the supervisees) to look together at the supervisees' pastoral practice
- .... *a relationship* characterised by trust, confidentiality, support and openness that gives the supervisee(s) freedom and safety to explore the issues arising in their work
- .... *theologically rich* – works within a framework of theological understanding which is brought to life in discussion of the supervisee (s)'s work
- .... *psychologically informed* – draws on relevant psychological theory and insight to illuminate intra-personal, inter-personal and contextual dynamics
- .... *praxis based* - focuses on a report of work and /or issues that arise in and from the supervisee(s)'s pastoral ministry
- .... *attentive to* issues of fitness to practice, skill development, and management of boundaries, professional identity and the impact of the work upon all concerned parties

- .... *a way of growing in:*
- ministerial ability
  - self awareness
  - theological reflection
  - pastoral interpretation
  - quality of presence
  - accountability
  - response to challenge
  - mutual learning

.... *undertaken for the sake of* the mission of the Church in the world. It is an expression of the good news of Jesus Christ that all should know abundant life.

Supervision is not the same as spiritual direction, counselling and/or line management (although some elements of these may be present within supervision). At best, supervision is an inquiry into ministerial practice and thus is one part of effective oversight. Supervision can be a compassionate, supportive and appreciative inquiry into a ministerial life which decreases isolation, provides a framework of accountability, and enables growth and development. In supervision ministers can learn to examine and re-write the stories of their ministerial practice because supervision interrupts practice by providing an opportunity to stop our constant activity and examine in the company of an experienced minister or wise lay leader what we are really doing and how we might do it better. Viewed in such terms supervision is a form of experiential learning. Supervision is reflection-on-action in order to result in reflection-for-action.

## **2.2 Supervision can be:**

- Provided within the circuit or district or place of appointment
- Provided by a trained and experienced supervision practitioner
- One-to-one
- In a group (with a facilitator present although it should be noted that peer supervision is the hardest to engage in effectively and accountably)
- By telephone or video conferencing (if appropriate and through agreement. It is important that at least one session per quarter is face to face and 1:1)

### *Procedures*

## **2.3 Supervision Covenant**

Action: All Supervisors

1. Establish a supervision agreement for all ministers in their first supervision session of the connexional year to provide a structure and framework for supervision using the template provided.

Action: All ministers in circuit, district or Connexional Team appointments. Ensure that you have a supervision covenant in place.

1. If you do not, you should speak to your supervisor to arrange this.

## **2.4 Reviewing supervision covenant**

Action: All supervisors

1. The supervision covenant should be reviewed at least annually at the beginning of a new connexional year.

## 2.5 Content of supervision

Action: All supervisors

The content of supervision must regularly address:

- An update on agreed actions from previous supervision.
- Review of ministry practice, key relationships and evaluation of both the processes and outcomes in a range of key relationships
- Health, resilience and well-being issues
- Equalities and diversity issues.
- Safeguarding issues.
- Learning, development and support needs.
- Additional agenda items brought by either the supervisor or supervisee.

**Not all of these issues will be covered in every supervision session. Over a number of sessions they will all be covered.**

## 2.6 Practical Arrangements

Action: All supervisors

1. Supervision must take place in a confidential and uninterrupted setting (this may be via phone or video conference if appropriate and through agreement by both parties but at least one session per quarter should be face to face and 1:1).
2. Ensure that the venue, date and time have been agreed in advance of the supervision session. Dates of supervisions for the connexional year can be agreed in advance.

## 2.7 Frequency

Action: All supervisors

1. The ministers previously mentioned who are in full-time appointments should receive a minimum of 10 individual supervision sessions lasting one hour during the connexional year, spread accordingly over the year. This would assume an average 4-6 weekly cycle of supervision, accounting for leave and other absences. In exceptional circumstances, and only with the agreement of the District Chair or Superintendent Minister, a maximum of 4 of the 10 sessions per year may be group supervision.
2. Ministers in part-time appointments should receive supervision at 6-8 weekly intervals relevant to the hours and frequency they are working and depending on the nature of the work; they may require supervision more frequently.

Action: All ministers previously mentioned

1. Ensure that you are receiving the minimum requirements for supervision.
2. If you require more frequent supervision, for any reason, or feel that supervision is not meeting your needs, discuss this with your supervisor.
3. If you are unhappy with the response that you receive from your supervisor, discuss your concerns with those who have responsibility for your oversight.

Action: District Chairs and Superintendents

1. Where you agree for up to 3 supervision sessions to be group sessions, you should satisfy yourself that ministers also receive the necessary one-to-one supervision each quarter to enable them to minister effectively and safely.

## **2.8 Recording supervision**

Action: All supervisors

1. Ensure that a written record of the supervision sessions is kept.
2. Ensure that all actions are clearly identified.
3. Ensure that actions are followed up in subsequent supervision sessions and an outcome is recorded.
4. Share the supervision record with the supervisee prior to the subsequent supervision session.
5. Approve the record at the start of the subsequent supervision. Any amendments or disagreement regarding the content of the record, should be recorded on the relevant supervision record by the person who wrote the record.
6. Ensure the supervision record is dated and identify the person who wrote the record.
7. All supervision records should also identify the time and length of supervision.

Action: All ministers in circuit, district or connexional team appointments

1. Ensure that you have read the record of the last supervision session prior to your next session.
2. If you are not in agreement with the content of the record, you must notify your supervisor. Any amendments or disagreements should be noted on the supervision record by the person who wrote the record.

## **2.9 Recording information regarding supervisees**

Action: All supervisors

1. The names of those with whom a minister is in pastoral relationship with or colleagues must not be explicitly referenced in supervision records. Initials must be used instead.

## **2.10 Access to supervision covenants and records of supervision**

Action: All supervisors

Supervision records should be held by the supervisor **and** supervisee and stored either in locked cabinets or electronically in a safe format.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**86/1. The Council adopts the draft supervision policy.**

**86/2. The Council, in fulfilment of recommendation 7 of the Past Cases Review Report agrees to implement a pilot programme of structured supervision in two Districts commencing in March 2016.**