

## Report from the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC)

The Committee met on 28 November 2013 and makes the following report to the Council.

1. **Re-grading of Team Posts** [SRC Papers SRC/13/28 and SRC/13/36 and Minute 13.4.2a]
  - 1.1 As part of a discussion around recruitment and retention of Finance Office staff, the SRC had instructed the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) to commission work on a Pay and Grading Review. The initial work was undertaken by the former Director of Development and Personnel, Carmila Legarda, and an external consultant, Michelle Marcano (formerly Head of Human Resources of the United Reformed Church with oversight of a similar project).
  - 1.2 The SLG received a report from the consultant via the Head of Support Services, which identified a number of issues and recommended that a detailed review be conducted, starting with a comprehensive bench-marking exercise. Issues identified included the following:
    - The decision was taken during Team Focus not to review any aspects of pay and conditions, making the existing system significantly removed from the way that the market and the Church now work;
    - The current system of automatic annual incremental scales is outdated and serves only to provide generous increases for the first five years in post followed by cost of living increases irrespective of performance;
    - Some system of 'performance-related pay' may be more beneficial;
    - There is no mechanism for linking Council pay scales to market rates – the Annual Voluntary Sector Survey could be used;
    - The existing methodology of grading is overbearing and makes equalisation of grades and pay across the Team difficult – tools such as the Equal Value Estimator (EVE) Tool could be investigated;
    - The current system places very low weighting on line management responsibilities or those relating to professional qualifications.
  - 1.3 Having reviewed the report from the initial work and verified information about the historical development of the current situation, a sub-group of the SRC agreed that now was the time to initiate a full review of the Council's pay structure and grading processes and recommended this to the SRC.
  - 1.4 Irrespective of the wider work, annual cost of living pay increases need to be agreed and these should continue to form part of the budgeting process, gradually being informed by the work that has already been done.
  - 1.5 The first step in the review process could be to transform the existing Job Grade Evaluation Committee into a formal Grading & Remuneration Committee. It would be accountable to the SRC, with a remit to cover the salaries of all Council employees and would replace the D&P Sub-Committee which has been suspended for the time being as the result of an unclear/ineffective remit. New Terms of Reference would need to be agreed and the membership reviewed, with the addition of an SRC representative. The existing Job Grade Evaluation Committee comprises a range of individuals that already consider grading on behalf of the Council so has developed some relevant expertise and experience. Apart from relating to the Team via D&P it currently has no other links or accountability to any governance or oversight bodies. The existing chair, Norman Mann, is supportive of the approach outlined above and of the proposed change to the JGEC.

- 1.6 Terms of Reference for the new Grading & Remuneration Committee can be drawn up and presented to the SRC's next meeting in March, in order for it to recommend them to the Council at its meeting in April.
- 1.7 A draft project plan will be produced and presented to the SRC's March meeting for approval. There will be the need to engage a consultant that specialises in job grading etc. in order to assess the current grades of roles against the proposed new system. It is proposed that an initial sum for this work be incorporated into the 2014-15 budget.
- 1.8 Pay and grading being naturally sensitive subjects, the intention would be to advise the Staff Association committee of the proposed course of action and within the project plan to include appropriate levels of consultation with staff individually and via the Staff Association.

**\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**3/1. Pursuant to SO 213(2B) the Council directs that the Job Evaluation Committee and D&P Subcommittee be replaced by a Grading & Remuneration Committee.**

**2. Churches' Mutual Credit Union [SRC Minute 13.4.7 and paper MC/14/4]**

- 2.1 The SRC noted that the Church of England plans to establish a Credit Union and has invited the Methodist Church to be a member. It was agreed that the Council should be invited to consider becoming a partner in the Union but that the Committee would offer no particular steer to the Council. The Committee had a number of reservations about the scheme with particular reference to membership and the impact on other such schemes.
- 2.2 It was agreed that the Connexional Secretary should assess the likely level of support for such a Credit Union, consider what the Credit Union would offer compared to the Chapel Aid car loans scheme and review the amount of deferred shares to be made available and the extent of membership.

**3. Ecumenical Subscriptions [SRC Minute 13.4.10]**

3.1 In April 2013 the Council agreed:

29/7. That the Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team be instructed to carry out, within the next six months, a review of the Ecumenical grants and membership fees paid from the central services budget, taking account of:

the needs of the whole connexion.

the aspirations of Methodist ecumenical involvement as set out in various Conference statements on ecumenism.

the need to ensure an appropriate and fair use of the resources of the connexion (SRC Minute 13.2.9).

- 3.2 That review was presented to the SRC by the Connexional Ecumenical Officer on 28 November 2013 in a report entitled 'Ecumenical subscriptions and grants' [SRC/13/42]. Following an introduction, the paper outlined 'the aspirations of Methodist ecumenical involvement' as set out in the Conference Statement *Called to Love and Praise* (1999) and two reports to the Conference, "Towards an Ecumenical Strategy" which was adopted by the Conference in 2001 and "Our Ecumenical Calling: Making a Difference Together in the Twenty-first Century" which

was received by the Conference in 2009. In its third section, the report offered observations on each subscription/grant included in the list 'combining all relevant items under a single cost centre' (see MC/13/29, para 43). In the light of the second and third sections and of the terms of the instruction of the Methodist Council as set out above, the fourth section discussed the ecumenical instruments in Britain and the fifth the Conference of European Churches (CEC). Section six drew some conclusions and made some recommendations.

- 3.3 The SRC noted a clear historical record of ecumenical subscriptions [SRC Minute 13.4.10] and adopted the recommendations in paragraphs 6.9, 6.12, 6.13, and 6.14 (second option). This means that the subscription to the World Council of Churches will be paid from the World Mission Fund (6.9), that the Methodist Church will remain committed to working in and through CEC in partnership with others, reviewing the financial situation as soon as possible and the developments in CEC following its next General Assembly in 2017 (6.12), that those closer to the work of the Free Churches' Group Education Officer should decide whether the Methodist Church wishes to contribute to the post (6.13), and that, in principle, the Methodist Church should make subscriptions to ecumenical instruments and then, if it wishes, contribute to particular projects (6.14 second option).
- 3.4 The budget for ecumenical subscriptions and grants for 2013-14 from the Methodist Church Fund has been brought below the target figure of £194,000; the one remaining grant under this heading is being phased out by 2015-16.

#### **4. Sale of Wing Grange, Leicestershire**

[SRC paper SRC/13/47 and minute 13.4.17] Consents Project ID 34677

- 4.1 Wing Grange, Rutland comprises a main dwelling, out-buildings, and 17.4 acres of agricultural land. The overall area is approximately 22 acres. The house has been converted to provide sheltered accommodation for ex-offenders in the care of the Langley House Trust. The agricultural land is managed under a small agricultural tenancy between the Langley House Trust and a farmer.
- 4.2 The property is held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) on trusts set out in a Trust Deed dated 1 October 1924 and a conveyance dated 21 August 1969. The managing trustees of the property as set out in the deed are the Home Mission Committee and the Council, as the successor body to the Home Mission Committee, are therefore the managing trustees. The Council is able to direct that the property be sold and determine how any proceeds of sale are to be utilised.
- 4.3 An agreement to occupy for a term of 25 years commenced on 13 February 2002. Langley House Trust served notice to quit on the property 19 July 2013 with the agricultural tenancy ending on or before 4 April, 2015.
- 4.4 A Qualified Surveyors report (QSR) was commissioned from Messrs. Carter Jonas LLP, Chartered Surveyors. The report dated 22 August, 2013 provides an estimated market value at £1,150,000.00 and recommends sale by private treaty since there could be a number of potential uses for the property such as leisure, residential, or commercial. Pre-application advice is being sought by Carter Jonas LLP from the local planning authority in terms of permitted development, change of use etc. This will inform how the property is marketed to obtain best consideration.

#### **\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

#### **3/2. The Council provides consent to the sale of Wing Grange, Rutland.**

The SRC agreed that Andrew Gibbs, along with the Connexional Property Co-ordinator, should liaise with Langley House Trust about the Trust's use of the premises set out in the report SRC/13/47. Further consideration should be given to the use of the proceeds of sale of Wing Grange by the Trust for the potential purchase of a new property.