

Minutes

Minutes of a meeting of the Methodist Council held at Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa on 25-27 March 2023

- Present:** The President, the Vice-President and 39 voting members as follows:
The Revd Richard M Andrew, Mr Stephen Arnold, the Revd Karen Beecham, the Revd Paul H Booth, Mr Mark Braithwaite, the Revd Dr Adrian Burdon, Mr David Burton, the Revd Deborah L Caulk, the Revd Steven R M Cooper, the Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling, the Revd Simon C Edwards, the Revd Ruth G S Fry, Mr Peter Gregson, the Revd Sonia M Hicks (Chair), Ms Bet Holmes, the Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler, the Revd Helen R Kirk, Mr Joseph Lambert, the Revd Angela Long, Mr Andrew Lowe, Professor David Matthews, Mrs Val Mayers, Deacon Karen McBride, Mr Alister McClure, Dr Daleep Mukarji, Mrs Helen Norton, Dr Hellen Okello, Mrs Sheila Pollard, Miss Bridget Quint, the Revd Mark Roberts, Deacon Kerry Scarlett, Ms Sandie Smith, the Revd Rebekah Stennett, the Revd Howard J Stringer, Mr Doug Swanney, the Revd Timothy A Swindell, Mrs Jenny Taylor, Ms Verity Wild (until item 23.2.19), the Revd Michaela A Youngson
- Apologies:** Mrs Joanne Anderton, Mrs Barbara Easton, Ms Eleanor Dixon, the Revd Jeremy H A Hackett, the Revd Gillian M Newton, the Revd Leslie M Newton, Mr Keith Norman, the Revd Charity Nzegwu, the Revd Dr Calvin T Samuel, the Revd S Mark Slaney, the Revd Dr Marcus Torchon
- Substitutes:** Mrs Carolyn Hothersall (in place of Carl Fairclough who had resigned from the Council), the Revd John Malnutt (in place of the Revd Jeremy H A Hackett)
- Observers:** The Revd Philip Brooks (the United Reformed Church), the Revd Mark Rowland (Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee), Ms Jude Levermore (Head of Mission), the Revd Dr Andrew Wood (Head of Ministries)
- In attendance:** Ms Jane Bates (Minutes), Ms Louise Taylor (Administration)
- Letters:** The Council sent a letter of greeting and thanks to David Humphreys on his retirement as General Secretary of Methodist Independent Schools Trust. The Council sent a letter of support to Cliff College.

The Secretary of the Conference clarified the understanding of confidentiality in respect of the Council's papers, confirming that those papers which are not on the website are to be understood as being confidential. For this meeting, that applied to MC/23/26, MC/23/27, MC/23/37, MC/23/41.

23.2.1 Minutes

The Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 25-26 January 2023 as a correct record.

23.2.2 Matter arising: District reconfiguration

The Secretary reported that, further to the decisions of the January Council in respect of the Districts in the North West of England, the consultation with Circuit Meetings is underway and a report will be taken to each of the District Synods. The Council agreed to appoint a scrutiny group to review the responses received from the circuits and the proposed report to the Synods, to ensure that the report that is brought to the Synods is a fair reflection of the views of the circuits. The Council noted that, should the proposals be received positively in both the circuits and the District Synods, and to ensure that it can be brought to this year's Conference, the Council will need to consider this matter further after the Synods have met.

The Council appointed a scrutiny group of David Matthews, Jenny Taylor and Ruth Fry to consider the responses received from the Circuits to the consultation under SO 401(2) and to ensure that the views of the Circuits are appropriately reflected in the proposals put to the District Synods and to present a summary report to the Council.

23.2.3 Report from the Strategy and Resources Committee [MC/23/26]

The Chair of the SRC presented MC/23/26.

26/1. The Council received the report.

26/2. The Council directed that a management fee of £0.5m is paid to the Central Finance Board in lieu of an increase in management fees to all Methodist clients and that this fee is funded from the Pension Reserve Fund.

26/3. The Council approved a budget of £10.5m including contingencies for the redevelopment of 25 Tavistock Place as the new Methodist Church House, and delegated to the SRC authority to spend up to that figure.

26/4. The Council directed that the project continues to be managed by the Connexional Secretary with oversight from the Property Development Committee.

The Connexional Secretary reported to the Council that there had been a break-in at 25 Tavistock Place, and that squatters had taken up residence there. The Council agreed the following resolution:

26/4a. The Council noted the situation in regard to 25 Tavistock Place, approved the initiation of legal proceedings to recover possession and authorised the Connexional Secretary, the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice and the Secretary of the Conference to sign any necessary documentation on the Council's behalf.

The Council considered resolution 26/5 in closed session, and received additional background confidential information.

26/5. The Council recommended to the Conference that SO 340 is revoked.

23.2.4 Connexional Central Services Budget [MC/23/27]

The Connexional Treasurer presented MC/23/27.

27/1. The Council received the report.

27/2. The Council recommended the revised Reserves Policy to the Conference.

27/3. The Council recommended the draft budget for 2023/24 to the Conference.

27/4. The Council recommended to the Conference the district allocations of the assessment to the Methodist Church Fund set out in the paper.

23.2.5 Connexional Team Report [MC/23/31]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/23/31. In addition to the report, the following updates were given:

- A risk management training video has been shared with the Council;
- The President has offered to help with pastoral care and support for forces chaplains;
- Conversations are continuing about Asbury House following the decisions of the January meeting of the Council, and owing to various complexities, this may need to come back for further decision;
- 25 Marylebone Road has now been fully stripped, including the wood from the Thomas Coke Room and the Richmond Room for use in 25 Tavistock Place;
- The work involved in the move to the temporary office space was immense, and has impacted various aspects of the Team's work;
- The World Methodist Council and Conference, delayed from 2020, are planned to take place in 2024.
- An update on the work of the European Methodist Council.

31/1. The Council received the report.

23.2.6 Standing Order 111(3) [MC/23/32]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/32.

32/1. The Council received the report.

32/2. The Council accepted the recommendations of the Working Party that SO 111(3) be removed from CPD and replaced with guidance.

32/3. The Council directed the Working Party to produce draft guidance and to report to the

Council in January 2024.

The present system will be continued until the new guidance is in place, and the Standing Order will be retained until 2024.

23.2.7 Methodist Schools Committee [MC/23/29]

The Revd Dr Roger Walton presented MC/23/29.

The Council discussed the way in which Ofsted operates, particularly in the light of recent news reports, and asked the President and Vice-President to send a letter expressing concern.

29/1. The Council received the report.

23.2.8 Mission Committee [MC/23/30]

The Chair of the Mission Committee presented MC/23/30.

30/1. The Council received the report of the Mission Committee.

30/2. The Council approved the following as the purposes for 3Generate (the Methodist Youth Assembly (SO250)). 3Generate should be:

- **A place of celebration, inspiration and empowerment for all children and young people associated with the life of the Methodist Church in Britain.**
- **A place where dialogue happens across generations.**
- **A place for the Christian discipleship of children and young people in the Methodist tradition.**
- **A place for the upskilling and inspiring of those with a ministry among children, young people and their households.**
- **A place where vocational experiences and opportunities are presented for all attendees.**

30/3. The Council requested the advice of the Law and Polity Committee regarding the CYF strategy and the purposes of 3Generate in relation to the provisions of SO 250.

30/4. The Council directed that invitations to global partner representatives to the 2024 Conference be given as in appendix 2.

30/5. The Council approved the text of paragraph 10 for inclusion in its report to the Conference, with an appropriate draft resolution.

30/6. The Council agreed to place a resolution before the 2023 Conference as follows: "The Conference supports the call for a fourth UN Special Session on Disarmament at a future UN General Assembly."

Rachel Lampard was welcomed to the Council to present the Walking with Micah report, which formed part of the Mission Committee's report to the Council. The Council engaged in discussion of the report, both in plenary and in smaller groups.

30/7. The Council approved the report of the Walking with Micah project for presentation at the 2023 Conference with the following draft resolutions:

- **The Conference adopts the report, and commends it to the Methodist Church for prayerful study and action throughout the Connexion.**
- **The Conference directs the Methodist Council to agree a plan to enable and embed the proposals and suggestions set out between paragraphs 247 and 252 of the report in collaboration with key stakeholders, and oversee its implementation.**
- **The Conference directs the Methodist Council to review at least every five years through a transparent and participative process the Principles, Priorities and Practices adopted in this report to ensure that they still meet the needs of the Methodist Church and the world.**
- **The Conference thanks all those who participated in and contributed to the Walking with Micah project.**

23.2.9 Standing Order 793 [MC/23/33]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/33.

33/1. The Council received the report.

- 33/2. *The Council accepted the recommendation to amend SO 793 to allow the President to grant permission for a supernumerary to return to the active work in case of emergencies.***
- 33/3. *The Council referred this to the Law and Polity Committee to draft the necessary changes to the Standing Order.***

23.2.10 The Minutes of the Conference and Directory [MC/23/34]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/34.

- 34/1. *The Council received the report.***
- 34/2. *The Council commended the report including the proposed amendments to SO 124 to the Conference.***

23.2.11 Conference Scrutiny Sub-Committee [MC/23/36]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/23/36, noting that this represents work so far and that there is still work to be done. This paper proposes a transition this year as part of an evolutionary process.

The Council discussed paragraphs 5 and 7 of the report in smaller groups.

- 36/1. *The Council received the report.***

23.2.12 The President and Vice-President

The President and Vice-President each offered some reflections on their year of office so far, after which the Council shared in a service of Holy Communion.

23.2.13 Composition of the Conference [MC/23/35]

The Assistant Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/35, which the Council considered in smaller groups.

- 35/1. *The Council received the report.***
- 35/2. *The Council recommended to the Conference the allocation of seats at the Conference as set out in the report and asked that the Special Resolution process be initiated in respect of the required changes to the Deed of Union.***

23.2.14 Confidential minute: Mission Committee part 2 [MC/23/37]

The Chair of the Mission Committee presented MC/23/37, emphasising the confidential nature of the report.

- 37/1. *The Council received the report.***
- 37/2. *The Council agreed to the changes to the Mission Partner programme outlined in paragraph 10.***

23.2.15 Review of the City Centre list [MC/23/38]

The Head of Mission presented MC/23/38.

- 38/1. *The Council received the report.***
- 38/2. *The Council agreed to discontinue the requirement for City Centre List members to undertake a review of their mission and ministry every five years.***
- 38/3. *The Council requested the advice of the Law and Polity Committee regarding the change agreed in 38/2 in relation to the provisions of SO 440.***

23.2.16 Membership of the Memorials Committee [MC/23/39]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/39.

- 39/1. *The Council received the report.***
- 39/2. *The Council agreed that the Mission Committee should be represented on the Memorials Committee and asked the Law and Polity Committee to prepare the necessary amendment to SO 138 for presentation to the 2023 Conference.***
- 39/3. *The Council appointed Matt Forsyth to the Memorials Committee as a non-voting member in 2023.***

23.2.17 Faith and Order Committee general report [MC/23/46]

The Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee presented MC/23/46. The Council engaged in discussion about the *Methodist Worship Book* in small groups and offered some thoughts to be fed into the consultation process as that progresses.

46/1. The Council received the report.

46/2. The Council agreed that the Faith and Order Committee should design and conduct a suitable consultation process in order to develop proposals for a revision of the Methodist Worship Book.

23.2.18 Ministries Committee [MC/23/40]

The Head of Ministries presented MC/23/40 and an additional paper concerning the selection criteria for candidates for ministry.

40/1. The Council received the report.

40/2. The Council recommended to the Conference the proposed approach regarding a Discernment Process for Senior Posts, as outlined in the report.

40/3. The Council recommended to the Conference that the final sentence of Standing Order 715(1) which reads "For (iii) above". is removed.

40/4. The Council recommended to the Conference that from 2023 onwards the length of probation for all probationers in part time appointments shall normally be three years, and proposed changes to Standing Order 721(2).

40/5. The Council approved the appointments relating to the new candidating scheme, as listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

40/6. The Council appointed the Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling and Dr Hellen Okello with the Warden of the MDO to work with the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee, the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Ministries Committee or their representative, and the appropriate member(s) of the Connexional Team to revise the wording of the Criteria for Selection for presentation to the Conference for adoption and publication.

23.2.19 Cliff College Governance [MC/23/41]

The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean, Director of Learning for Ministry, was welcomed to the Council to present MC/23/41, noting an amendment to paragraph 14.

41/1. The Council received the report.

41/2. The Council agreed the membership of the interim Cliff College Committee as described as in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report, to replace the current Committee from September 2023 under SO 341.

23.2.20 Safeguarding Committee [MC/23/42]

Judith Davey-Cole, Chair of the Safeguarding Committee, was welcomed to the Council to present MC/23/42.

42/1. The Council received the report.

42/2. The Council directed the Safeguarding Committee to nominate for appointment by the Council a small group with responsibility on the Council's behalf to review and amend the Safeguarding Policy and to report through the Safeguarding Committee to the Council.

23.2.21 Review of Safeguarding Policies and Procedures [MC/23/43]

Judith Davey-Cole presented MC/23/43.

43/1. The Council received the report.

23.2.22 Decisions made [MC/23/49]

49/1. The Council received the report and ratified the actions reported.

23.2.23 Matters arising [MC/23/50]

50/1. The Council received the report.

23.2.24 Nominations and Appointments [MC/23/51]

51/1. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 320(1)(ii), nominated to the Conference the following persons as members of the Ministerial Candidates'

Selection Committee: The Revds Dr Iain M Ballard, Nicola Briggs, Richard J Byass, Benjamin P Clowes, Ashley Cooper, Dr Jonathan Dean, Dr Graham Edwards, David R Emison, Gyula Fiak, Dr Jonathan K Gichaara, Mark P Hammond, Dr David Hinchliffe, Catherine Hutton, Philip J Jackson, David Jebb, Naomi Kaiga, Saidu Kanu, Dr Elizabeth A Kent, M Susan E Lawler, Farai Mapamula, Vindra Maraj-Ogden, Paul Mellor, Andrew C Moffoot, Anthony J D Morling, Charity Nzegwu, Dr Claire R Potter [SO 320(1)(i)], James Pritchard, Stephen E Robinson, Mary Sachikonye, Cleopas Sibanda, Tina F Swire, Stuart Wild, D Paul Wood [SO 320(1)(i)], Deacons Melanie Beaven, Dawn N Canham, Joy Everingham, David Keegan, Belinda S Letby, Pamela Luxton, Jonathan Miller, Kerry R Scarlett, Sian M Street, Suzie Viana, Linda Watkin, Ruth Yorke, Ms E Jane Allin, Ms Winnie Baffoe, Ms Charlotte Ballard Scott, Mr Geoffrey Best, Ms Anne Browse, Ms Jenny Cheung, Ms Sharon Clutterbuck, Mr Peter Dawe, Ms Deborah Harrison, Ms Jo Henderson-Merrygold, Mr Paul Kybird, Mrs Jane Lloyd, Ms Victoria Loveday, Mrs Catherine Roots, Mrs Anne Vautre, Mr Joshua Wilson

The Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order has the right to attend but not to vote.

51/2. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 213(2), nominated to the Conference the following persons as members of the Strategy and Resources Committee of the Council:

(i) Dr Daleep S Mukarji (Chair)

(iA) Ms Janet Arthur, Mrs Anne Bolton, Mr Nick Garrett, Professor David Matthews, Mrs Shelagh Morgan, the Revd Nicholas A Oborski, the Revd Marcus Torchon

(ii) to be confirmed (Connexional Treasurer)

(iii) *deleted*

(iv) *deleted*

(v) The Chair or Deputy Chair of the Ministries Committee: The Revd Gillian M Newton

(vA) The Chair or Deputy Chair of the Mission Committee: The Revd Dr Calvin T Samuel

(vi) District Chair: the Revd Kerry Tankard

(vii) The Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, Connexional Secretary (non-voting): the Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler, the Revd Michaela A Youngson, Mrs Joanne Anderton, Mr Doug Swanney.

51/3. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 321(5)(b), nominated to the Conference the following persons as Oversight Tutors:

Where more than one oversight tutor is appointed for the same institution one shall be identified as having oversight responsibility. In the following list, that person is identified by an asterisk.

Queen's Foundation, Birmingham: * The Revd Dr Jane Craske, Deacon Melanie Beaven, the Revd Dr Christine Dutton, the Revd Dr Barbara Glasson, the Revd Dr Catrin Harland-Davies, the Revd Dr Gary P Hall, Deacon Julie Hudson, the Revd Dr Paul Nzacahayo, the Revd Dr Judith Rossall

51/4. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 322, nominated to the Conference the following persons as members of the Stationing Committee:

(i) Lay Chair: to be confirmed

(ii) The Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Conference: The Revds Dr Jonathan R Hustler and Michaela A Youngson

(iii) Seven district Chairs and seven district Lay Stationing Representatives:

South-East	The Revd Nigel Cowgill
	Mr Keith Norman
South-West	The Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye
	Mrs Mary McNaughton
Wales/Midlands	The Revd Rachel Parkinson
	Mrs Val Mayers
Yorkshire	The Revd Leslie Newton
	Mrs Gill Daly
East Midlands	The Revd Julian Pursehouse
	Mrs Sue P Walters
North-	The Revd Philip Gough
	Mr Malcolm Aspey
North/Scotland	The Revd S Mark Slaney
	Mr Bill Offler

(iv) No more than two Team members with responsibility for presbyteral and diaconal selection; and for the stationing of probationers: The Revd Dr Claire Potter

(v) *deleted*

(vi) *deleted*

- (vii) The chair of the Stationing Advisory Committee: The Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle
- (viii) The Warden or deputy Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order: Deacon Karen McBride
- (ix) The chair and a lay member of the Diaconal Stationing Sub-committee: The Revd Dr David Hinchliffe; to be confirmed
- (x) The chair of the group responsible on behalf of the Stationing Committee for overseeing the matching of particular presbyters to appointments: The Revd Jennifer A Impey
- (xi) The convener of the Stationing Action Group: The Revd Dr Stephen J Lindridge
- 51/5. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 213A, nominated to the Conference the following persons as members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:**
Mrs Sarah Atwell-King, Mr Adrian Burton, Mr Alan Kershaw (Chair), Mrs Susan M Mortimer, Mr Michael Rickard
- 51/6. Pursuant to SO 212(7), the Methodist Council nominated to the Conference the following representatives.**
- (a) *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI): Annual General Meeting*
Mr Bala Gnanapragasam
- (b) *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland: Senior Representatives' Forum:*
Mr Bala Gnanapragasam; the Revd Michaela A Youngson
- (c) *Churches Together in England (CTE): Enabling Group*
The Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye, the Revd Michaela A Youngson
- (d) *Scottish Christian Forum (formerly Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS)): Members' Meeting:*
The Revd S Mark Slaney; the Revd A James Patron Bell
- (e) *Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales): Enabling Group*
The Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd
- Proxies:* The Revds Dr Ian D Morris, Philip A Poynor
- 51/7A. Pursuant to SO 116B, the Council appointed the Revd Nathan Falla as Precentor for the Presbyteral Session of the 2023 Conference.**
- 51/7B. Pursuant to SO 116B, the Council appointed Mr Matt Beckingham as Precentor for the Representative Session of the 2023 Conference.**
- 51/8. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 116B, appointed the Revd Alan J Bolton to be the letter-writer for the Presbyteral and Representative Sessions of the 2023 Conference.**
- 51/9. The Methodist Council, acting under Deed of Union Clause 14(4)(d) and Standing Order 107(3), appointed the following two associate members of the Conference as (full, voting) members of the 2023 Conference:**
The Revd Eduardo Conde Almeida (Igreja Evangelica Metodista Portuguesa)
Presiding Bishop the Revd George T Mawire (Methodist Church Zimbabwe)
- 51/10. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 138(1), appointed the Memorials Committee for the 2023 Conference as follows:**
- (i) a former President or Vice-President appointed for three years who shall chair the committee; **The Revd Kenneth G Howcroft**
- (ii) **the Secretary of the Conference and the Assistant Secretary of the Conference;**
- (iii) **the Connexional Secretary;**
- (iv) **the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice;**
- (v) **the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee;**
- (vi) a member of the Ministries Committee; **Mr Peter Baffoe**
- (vii) a member of the Strategy and Resources Committee; **Mrs Shelagh Morgan**
- (viii) one district Chair, **the Revd Dr Andrew Lunn**
two presbyters, **the Revds Jill Pullan and Georgina Bondzi-Simpson**
one deacon, **Deacon Ruth Yorke**
one synod secretary **Mrs Susan Smith**
and two lay persons, **Ms Katharine Crew and Mr Michael Pryke** each nominated by a district Policy Committee from a different stationing region, according to a rota.
- The President and Vice-President designate and the Chair of the Business Committee shall be in attendance but without a vote.
- 51/11. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 136A, appointed the Financial Committee for the 2023 Conference as follows:**
The Revd Timothy A Swindell, Mr Doug Swanney, the Revd Karen Beecham, Mr Andrew Lowe, Ms Sandie Smith
- 51/12. The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 139, appointed the Revd Philip**

Jackson as Chief Scrutineer for the Presbyteral and Representative Sessions of the 2023 Conference.

51/13. *The Council recommended to the Conference that the following churches and Christian bodies be invited to appoint associate members of the 2024 Conference (SO 107(1)(i)):*

If there are to be six: The Church of England, The Church in Wales, The Scottish Episcopal Church, The United Reformed Church, The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Malankara Orthodox Church

If there are to be four: The Church of England, The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, The United Reformed Church, The Scottish Episcopal Church

51/14. *The Methodist Council, acting under Standing Order 105(1A), approved the following rota for diaconal representation at the Conference of 2024:*

Birmingham, Bristol, East Anglia, Manchester and Stockport, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham and Derby, Southampton, Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury, Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire, London, South East

51/15. *The Council appointed Mr James Carver and the Revd Mark Slaney to accompany the President and the Vice-President to the Irish Conference.*

51/16. *Pursuant to SO 326A, the Council appointed the Revd Dr David H Mullins as convener of the Candidates' Appeal Committees.*

51/17. *The Council appointed the Revd Ian Howarth as chair of the Singing the Faith Reference Group.*

51/18. *The Council appoints the Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt to the British Methodist-Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission.*

51/19. *The Council appoints the Revd Dr Reynaldo F Leao-Neto as its representative to the United Reformed Church General Assembly 2023.*

51/20. *The Council appointed Mr Bala Gnanapragasam and Mr Nick Garrett to the Interim Nominations Committee.*

23.2.25 MMPS Employer-Nominated Directors [MC/23/52]

52/1. *The Council received the report.*

52/2. *The Council recommended to the Conference the appointment of Mr Luke Wilcox and Mr Pete Harris as directors of the Methodist Ministers' Pension Trust Limited for a period of three years commencing 1 September 2023.*

23.2.26 Trust 18331 - Dr Frank Lathe Gilbert Deceased [MC/23/53]

53/1. *The Council received the report.*

53/2. *The Council agreed:*

(a) *to relinquish the reversionary gift to the Superannuation Fund under Trust 18331; and*

(b) *to authorise the release of the capital from the Trust to enable the managing trustees of Corbridge Methodist Church to pursue the release of capital in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 provisions.*

23.2.27 City Centre report [MC/23/54]

54/1. *The Council received the report.*

23.2.28 Changes to Global Relationships representation at the Conference [MC/23/55]

55/1. *The Council received the report.*

55/2. *The Council agreed that La Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en Bolivia and The United Church in the Solomon Islands each be invited to send a representative to be an Associate Member of the 2023 Conference.*

23.2.29 Theology of safeguarding resources [MC/23/56]

56/1. *The Council received the report.*

23.2.30 Southlands College [MC/23/57]

57/1. *The Council received the report.*

57/2. *The Council approved the nomination of Mrs Barbara Easton as a member of the Southlands Liaison Group and trustee of the Southlands Methodist Trust from September 2023.*

23.2.31 President's Assistant [MC/23/58]

58/1. The Council agreed to the provision of a President's Assistant in the Sheffield District for the connexional year 2023/2024.

23.2.32 Part 11 review [MC/23/44]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/23/44.

44/1. The Council received the report.

44/2. The Council directed that an interim report is made to the 2023 Conference, and that a final report is made to the 2024 Conference.

44/3. The Council directed the Secretary of the Conference to appoint a Task Group to assist the external consultant and to recommend the final report to the Conference, comprised as follows:

**The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, or their representative
Up to two representatives of the Law and Polity Committee and/or the Complaints and Discipline Sub-Committee**

A representative of the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Committee

A presbyter or deacon with appropriate pastoral experience

A representative of the Safeguarding Committee

Up to two other persons with particular, relevant expertise

23.2.33 Positive working together [MC/23/45]

Richard Armiger, Director of Learning and Development, presented MC/23/45.

45/1. The Council received the report.

45/2. The Council made the following recommendations to the Conference:

(a) The Conference adopts the recommendation for the 5-year programme, in partnership with Place for Hope, to offer the integrated approach in support of Positive Working Together and extending the Reconciliation and Mediation Team as a Connexion-wide programme;

(b) The Conference directs the Methodist Council to recommend and approve a revised steering group for the work going forward with appropriate representation from:

i. Place for Hope

ii. Chairs of District

iii. The Connexional Team

Resolutions 45/3 and 45/4 were withdrawn.

23.2.34 Connexional Allowances Committee [MC/23/28]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/23/28. The Council discussed the preaching fee for supernumeraries and agreed to ask the Connexional Allowances Committee to review it again during the next connexional year.

28/1. The Council received the report.

28/2. The Council adopted the Report and the recommendations in sections 1, 2 and 3.

23.2.35 Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity [MC/23/47]

The Revd Angela Long presented MC/23/47, with Jill Marsh in attendance.

47/1. The Council received the report.

47/2. The Council agreed the addition of Worship Leaders to the list of those roles who need to undertake the mandatory EDI training.

47/3. The Council agreed that the document "Accessibility Support Needs: Guidance" should be made available to all appointing and employing bodies?

47/4. The Council agreed the principles of the proposal for the next phase of the Truth & Reconciliation Process, and requested the JDS Committee to initiate a task-group which will bring to the Council a budgeted plan for this work.

It was noted that this should form part of the budgeting process, and should therefore be brought back to the Council in January 2024.

47/5. The Council agreed that pronouns be asked for, and included where people choose this, in all Methodist work (eg on social media, electronic signatures, all connexional meetings, reports and Conference business).

47/6. The Council directed that as far as possible, and with consideration of the addressee's preference, gendered titles which disclose the marital status of a woman should be avoided in all connexional meetings and correspondence.

23.2.36 Anglican-Methodist Covenant [MC/23/48]

The Revd Dr Jonathan Pye was welcomed to present MC/23/48, which the Council discussed in smaller groups.

48/1. The Council received the report.

48/2. The Council directed the Faith and Order Committee to explore with the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England the most suitable next steps in considering Mission and Ministry in Covenant and to work with that Commission to draft such liturgical, legislative and other texts as may be needed.

23.2.37 Dates for the Conference

Pursuant to SO 212(6), the Council recommended to the Conference the dates for the 2024 Conference and provisionally the dates for the 2025 and 2026 Conferences as follows:

Methodist Conference 2024 – Thursday 27 June – Wednesday 3 July

Methodist Conference 2025 – Thursday 26 June – Wednesday 2 July

Methodist Conference 2026 – Thursday 25 June – Wednesday 1 July

23.2.38 The Journal of the Conference

The Journal of the Conferences of 2021 and 2022 were attested, as far as was possible given the absence of the Ex Vice-President and one of the attestors. The attestation will be completed at the Conference.