

Minutes of the Conference and Directory

MC/23/34

Date of meeting	25-27 March 2023
Contact name and details	The Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler, Secretary of the Conference SoC@methodistchurch.org.uk
Resolutions	34/1. The Council receives the report. 34/2. The Council commends the report including the proposed amendments to SO 124 to the Conference.

Minutes of the Conference and Directory

1. In the light of GDPR legislation and in response to legal advice, the *Minutes and Directory* has been available to a restricted circulation since 2019. Some of the address lists, particularly those relating to lay officers, previously contained therein were removed due to difficulties of obtaining consent and uncertainty about whether they were, strictly, required. Other lists are available on the Methodist Church website, which enables them to be kept up to date during the year, and are accessible to a wider group of people.
2. The effect of this is that those sections of the *Minutes* which report on the proceedings of the Conference are no longer available to those who are not ministers or holders of particular offices.
3. The proposal is now made that the *Minutes and Directory* be split into two volumes, one of which would contain those items which constitute the *Minutes* while the other would be the *Directory*, containing the address lists. The *Minutes* could then be on general sale again, while the *Directory* would be restricted to ministers. We envisage the *Minutes* comprising sections Parts I-III of the present *Minutes and Directory*, along with other Conference material such as the Pastoral Address and the Presidential and Vice-Presidential addresses. This would require a revision of the present Standing Order 124, along the following lines:

124 Publication of Proceedings. (1) Subject to clause (9) below the general resolutions and other proceedings of the Conference required by clause 37 of the Deed of Union to be printed and published shall be issued as a book under the title of *The Minutes of the Annual Conference and Directory of the Methodist Church* and the year of the Conference concerned.

(1A) *There shall be a Directory of the Methodist Church published each year containing the contact details of presbyters and probationers, deacons and probationers, and such other lists as are deemed necessary.*

For cl. 37 of the Deed see Book II, Part I.

(2) ~~It~~ **Both volumes** shall be prepared for publication by the Secretary of the Conference.

(3) *[deleted]*

(4) Persons whose names and addresses are listed in the ~~Minutes of Conference~~ **Directory of the Methodist Church** shall be entitled to have printed any degrees, distinctions or professional qualifications, held by them, of which they have given particulars to the Secretary of the Conference. In the case of degrees, the name of the awarding body shall be stated and the prefix 'Hon' shall be added to all honorary degrees.

(5) Every minister in the active work and every probationer shall possess a copy **of both volumes**, the cost of which shall be an expense recoverable, in the case of persons in appointments within the control of the Church, from the Circuits or other bodies responsible for provision of their stipends.

(6) A copy **of both volumes** shall be presented to every supernumerary, the cost being defrayed by the Methodist Church Fund.

(7) A copy of the memorial service which incorporates that section of the Minutes of Conference containing the obituary notices of those ministers and probationers who have died shall be presented to the

nearest relative of every such person whose obituary is printed in the issue of that year, the cost being defrayed by the Methodist Church Fund.

(8) A copy **of both volumes** shall be presented to the spouse or civil partner of any deceased ministers who makes application, the cost being defrayed by the Methodist Church Fund.

For committee lists to be included in the Conference Agenda and Minutes of Conference see S.O. 204.

For inclusion of names of ministers now in United Churches or autonomous conferences see S.O. 736.

As to obituaries see S.O. 153 and 182.

(9) Those general resolutions of the Conference embodied in Standing Orders shall be published with the Deed of Union, the Model Trusts and other appropriate texts under the title *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church*. Amendments or an amended edition shall be published annually and prepared for publication by the officer for legal and constitutional practice. Every minister in the active work and every probationer shall possess a copy and receive annually the amendments or amended edition, the cost of which shall be an expense recoverable, in the case of persons in appointments within the control of the Church, from the Circuits or other bodies responsible for provision of their stipends.

(10) Ministers without appointment shall each be entitled, if they obtain the publications specified in clauses (1), **(1A)** and (9) above, to recover the cost of one copy of each per annum from the respective Circuits in which they reside.

(11) A brief summary of the transactions of the Conference shall be published annually for wide circulation in the Church. This summary shall highlight possible action points for individuals and Local Churches or questions that could be addressed at local level. The cost of publication shall be a charge on the Methodist Church Fund and arrangements for it shall be made by the Methodist Council. Responsibility for the content of the summary shall lie with the person or persons appointed to edit it, who shall be responsible for taking the following action:

- (i) consulting the Secretary of the Conference on the factual content; and
- (ii) ensuring that the master copy reaches Methodist Publishing so that it can be distributed by the end of August.

The Conference of 1999 directed that the following note be inserted here:

In 1999 the Conference, after debate, adopted a motion directing that reports and publications referred for consultation in the Districts and Circuits should be published by 30th September following the Conference where the business is to come back to the following Conference, and by 30th November in any other case. In giving this direction, the Conference acted on the basis that the responsibility for meeting the deadline lay both with those preparing the material for publication and with the Methodist Publishing House [now Methodist Publishing], and that there might be circumstances in which, despite the best endeavours of all concerned, the deadline could not practically be achieved.

For Methodist Publishing, see the details at the beginning of this volume.

(12) Any member of the Conference reporting the public proceedings of the Conference for the news media shall be personally responsible for the information given.

***RESOLUTIONS

34/1. The Council receives the report.

34/2. The Council commends the report including the proposed amendments to SO 124 to the Conference.