

Minutes

Minutes of a meeting of the Methodist Council held on 26-27 January 2022 via video conferencing

Present: The President, the Vice-President and 50 voting members as follows:
Mrs Joanne Anderton (except items 22.1.9 -22.1.10), Mr Stephen Arnold, Mrs E Jill Baker (Chair), the Revd Karen Beecham, Mr Anthony Boateng, the Revd Paul H Booth, Mr Mark Braithwaite, the Revd Dr Adrian Burdon, Mr David Burton, the Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling (except items 22.1.20-22.1.29), the Revd Dr Simon C Edwards, Mr Carl Fairclough, the Revd Ruth G S Fry, Mr Peter Gregson, the Revd Jeremy H A Hackett, Ms Charlotte Hambly (except items 22.1.1-22.1.15), Ms Bet Holmes, the Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler, the Revd Helen R Kirk, Mr Joseph Lambert, Mrs Carolyn Lawrence (except items 22.1.1-22.1.8 and 22.1.20-22.1.30), the Revd Angela Long, Mr Andrew Lowe, Professor David Matthews, Mrs Val Mayers, the Revd Samuel E McBratney, Mr Alister McClure (except items 22.1.11-22.1.15), Dr Daleep Mukarji, the Revd Leslie M Newton, Mr Keith Norman, Mrs Helen Norton, the Revd Charity Nzegwu, the Revd Nicholas A Oborski, Dr Hellen Okello, the Revd Malcolm Peacock (except items 22.1.9-22.1.10), Mr Graham Russell, the Revd S Mark Staney, Ms Sandie Smith, the Revd Rebekah Stennett, the Revd Kate Strange, the Revd O Mark Street, Mr Doug Swanney, the Revd Timothy A Swindell, Mrs Jenny Taylor, the Revd Graham Thompson, the Revd Alison E Walker, Miss Margaret Webber (except items 22.1.31-22.1.34), Ms Verity Wild (except items 22.1.20-22.1.34), the Revd Michaela A Youngson, the Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle.

Apologies: Deacon Karen McBride, the Revd Michael Parker, the Revd Richard J Teal

Observers: The Revd Philip Brooks (URC observer), Mr Daud Irfan (Youth President), Mr Alan Kershaw (chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee), Ms Jude Levermore (Head of Mission), the Revd Dr Nicola Price-Tebbutt (Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee), Mr Matthew Tattersall (Director of Finance and Resources), the Revd Dr Andrew D Wood (Head of Ministries), the Revd D Paul Wood (Director of the Ministries Team).

In attendance: Ms Jane Bates (Minutes), Ms Sharon Hassanali (Events Coordinator), Ms Jillian Moody (Director of Communications)

Letters: The Council sent a letter of greeting and concern to the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

The Council received an update concerning the purchase of 25 Tavistock Place, noting that project managers are now being appointed for the refurbishment. Work continues to clear 25 Marylebone Road, and a service of decommissioning for the building is being planned. The Council will be informed of interim arrangements in due course. The Connexional Secretary thanked all those who have worked so hard to enable the purchase to be completed in the necessary timescale.

22.1.1 Membership of the Council [MC/22/1]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/1.

1/1. *The Council appointed the Revd Samuel E McBratney and the Revd Charity Nzegwu as members of the Council for the remainder of the connexional year 2021/2022.*

22.1.2 Minutes

The Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 21-22 October 2021 as a correct record. In closed session, the Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2021 and the record of decisions taken electronically by the Council on 11 January 2022.

22.1.3 Report from the Strategy and Resources Committee [MC/22/2]

The Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee presented MC/22/2.

2/1. *The Council received the report.*

22.1.4 Memorandum of Understanding with All We Can [MC/22/3]

The Head of Mission presented MC/22/3, noting that a revised version of this paper had been circulated to the Council by email.

3/1. The Council received the report.

3/2. The Council approved the Memorandum of Understanding with All We Can as set out in the report.

22.1.5 Consolidated Accounts [MC/22/4]

The Director of Finance and Resources presented MC/22/4, noting the following corrections and additions:

- Addition of Note 29:
In January 2022 the group entered into an agreement to sell Methodist Church House (the registered office and headquarters of the Methodist Church in Great Britain), which is expected to complete in June 2022. Additionally in January 2022, the group has entered into an agreement to purchase replacement premises. An estimate of the financial impact cannot be made at the point of signing the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021.
- Page 28, Financial Review:
Amend figures in paragraph 2 and 3 to match the figures on page 45.
- Amend note 2:
Leases, page 60, amend in relation to the deconsolidation of Westminster College Oxford.
- Amend note 9:
Include reference to both Westminster College Oxford and Westminster College Oxford Ltd.
- Update note 12:
Number of ministers in the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme needs to agree to page 58.
- Note 26:
Add the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice to the list of Trustees.
- Notes on the purposes of funds pages 85-86:
Include missing text at end of paragraphs.

4/1. In accordance with SO 212(1), the Council adopted the consolidated accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021, and directed that a unified statement of connexional finances be presented to the Conference as required by SO 360.

22.1.6 Report of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee [MC/22/5]

Alan Kershaw, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, presented MC/22/5.

5/1. The Council received the report of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

5/2. The Council authorised the Chair of the Council and the Connexional Treasurer to sign the Letter of Representation addressed to the external auditors, and the Trustees Report and Balance Sheet within the financial statements.

5/3. The Council authorised the Chair of the Council and the Connexional Treasurer to make any non-material changes to the presentation of the financial statements subsequent to Council approval.

22.1.7 University of Roehampton [MC/22/7]

The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean, Director of Learning for Ministry, presented MC/22/7.

7/1. The Council received the report.

7/2. The Council supported the Southlands Methodist Trust and Liaison Group's approach to negotiations with the University Council as outlined in paragraph 14, option 3.

22.1.8 Connexional Team update [MC/22/6]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/22/6, adding the following pieces of work in the Ministries area:

- retreat for ministers who have served for more than 28 years;
- work on the Ministerial Covenant;
- review of the candidating processes;
- local preachers' summer school;
- competencies for Local Lay-Pastors;
- training for new District Chairs.

6/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.9 Forces Board [MC/22/32]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/22/32.

32/1. The Council received the report.

32/2. The Council approved the proposals as set out in the report and directed that the work is undertaken to bring the necessary Standing Order amendments to the Conference to effect these changes.

22.1.10 Impact Assessment [MC/22/8]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/22/8. The Council discussed the issues raised in small groups, and submitted feedback to the Connexional Secretary.

22.1.11 Model Trust 14(2A) Policy Recommendations [MC/22/9]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/22/9.

9/1. The Council received the report.

9/2. The Council adopted the policy recommendations with immediate effect and directed the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice to document them in a form to be published on the Methodist Church website.

9/3. The Council directed the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice to work with the Ecumenical Officers in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee to produce guidance for superintendents when considering whether to give consent to Model Trust 14(2A) applications under SO 920(3).

22.1.12 Memorial 31 (2021) [MC/22/10]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/22/10.

10/1. The Council received the report.

10/2. The Council confirmed its policy that members who wish to leave the Connexion as a result of the God in Love Unites Us resolutions will not be considered to be advancing Methodist Church purposes and therefore applications by departing members to acquire or use the Church's property at below best price will not meet the requirements of Model Trust 20(1).

22.1.13 Connexional manses [MC/22/11]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/22/11, noting that a revised version had been circulated which asked the Council to endorse the principles so that work could continue on the policy.

11/1. The Council received the report.

11/2. The Council approved the principles for the policy for connexional manses as described in the report and directed that further work is done by the Secretary of the Conference in discussion with the Connexional Manse Trustees, the Connexional Secretary and the Law and Polity Committee to determine the most appropriate policy.

22.1.14 Initial budget discussion [MC/22/12]

The Director of Finance and Resources presented MC/22/12.

12/1. The Council received the report.

12/2. The Council commended further work on the budget in line with the assumptions contained in the report.

22.1.15 Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme [MC/22/13 and MC/22/13A]

The Director of Finance and Resources presented MC/22/13.

13/1. The Council received the report.

13/2. The Council approved the draft terms of reference for the MMPS review task group, with point ii expanded as follows: To set out the expected consequences of the proposals including any opportunities for the rationalisation of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church (PASLEMC).

13/3. The Council appointed the following members of the MMPS review task group:
- The Secretary of the Conference or their representative

- *A minister in the active work – the Revd Stephen Radford*
 - *A treasurer – Marianne Barrett Rogers*
 - *A member of the Council – the Revd Nick Oborski*
 - *The Director of Finance and Resources – Matt Tattersall*
 - *The Connexional Treasurer – the Revd Timothy A Swindell*
 - *A director of MMPTL – Richard Hubbard*
- 13/4. *The Council appointed a panel consisting of the Connexional Secretary (Chair); Director of Finance & Resources; one MLEPTL director; one MMPTL director; one SRC nominee, to undertake the selection of employer nominated directors to the Methodist Ministers’ Pension Trust Limited (MMPTL) and the Methodist Lay Employees’ Pension Trust (MLEPTL) Limited.*
- 13/5. *The Council delegated authority to the selection panel to appoint the MLEPTL directors and nominate the MMPTL directors to the Conference.*

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/22/13A.

- 13A/1. *The Council rescinded Resolution 79/5 passed at its meeting on 21-22 October 2021.*
- 13A/2. *The Council acting firstly under delegated authority under Standing Order 211(1)(a) for and on behalf of the Methodist Conference as the statutory employer of the Methodist Ministers Pension Scheme and secondly as the lead employer of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church authorised the following Council members to approve the final version of the Framework Agreement and other documents negotiated with the Pension Trustees of those Schemes: the Revd Karen Beecham, the Revd Paul H Booth, Mr Mark Braithwaite, the Revd Dr Simon C Edwards, Mrs Helen Norton and for any two of those Council members to sign the relevant documents.*
- 13A/3. *The Council acting under Standing Order 212(10) appointed the following Council members to consider the Model Trust 20(1) applications required for the Legal Charges to be granted over some of the connexional manses and the North Bank Estate in favour of the Trustees of the Methodist Ministers Pension Scheme and the Trustees of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church: the Revd Sonia M Hicks, the Revd Leslie M Newton, Ms Sandie Smith.*
- 13A/4. *Pursuant to the power conferred by section 333 of the Charities Act 2011, the Council acting as managing trustees (the Managing Trustees) under delegated authority under Standing Order 211(1)(a) for and on behalf of the Methodist Church in Great Britain (registered charity number 1132208) (the Charity), in connection with the proposed Legal Charges in favour of the Trustees of the Methodist Ministers Pension Scheme and the Trustees of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church to be granted over some of the connexional manses, authorised the following Managing Trustees to approve any document needed to give effect to those Legal Charges, and for any two of them to sign and execute the same, with the intention that any document executed under this authority will have the same effect as if executed by all of the Managing Trustees on behalf of the Charity: Mr David Burton, the Revd Dr Joanne Cox-Darling, Mr Peter Gregson, Mr Andrew Lowe, Mr Alister McClure.*
- [Those appointed under resolution 13A/3 abstained from voting on resolution 13A/4.]*

22.1.16 Loss of earnings [MC/22/14]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/14.

- 14/1. *The Council received the report.*
- 14/2. *The Council approved the increase of the maximum allowance for loss of earnings to £80 per day with effect from 1 September 2022.*
- 14/3. *The Council directed the Connexional Allowances Committee (under SO 212(4)) to consider the question each year and to include a recommendation for the maximum daily rate at which loss of earnings should be paid in its annual report to the Council.*
- 14/4. *The Council agreed that those who serve on bodies constituted according to the provisions of Standing Orders in sections 13, 21, 32, 32A, and 33 and Part 10 where the committee’s expenses are a charge on the Methodist Church Fund (listed in appendix A) should be entitled to claim a loss of earnings allowance.*
- 14/5. *The Council delegated to the Chair and Secretary of the Council the authority to determine whether a committee not listed in Appendix A falls within the remit of this policy.*

22.1.17 Update on the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Strategy [MC/22/17]

The Revds Charity Nzegwu and Sam McBratney presented MC/22/17, with Bevan Powell (EDI Adviser) and the Revd Dr Jill Marsh (Inclusive Church Implementation Officer) in attendance for this item.

17/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.18 Update on Methodist International Centre Limited [MC/22/15]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/22/15.

15/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.19 Stipend review [MC/22/16]

The Director of Finance and Resources presented MC/22/16

16/1. The Council received the report.

16/2. The Council noted the challenges in paragraph 7 of the report and referred the report to the Stationing Committee for further consideration.

22.1.20 Matters arising [MC/22/25]

25/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.21 Decisions made [MC/22/26]

26/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.22 Southlands report [MC/22/27]

27/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.23 EDI data for the Council [MC/22/28]

28/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.24 Peake Trust [MC/22/29]

This paper was withdrawn; but the Council noted that following further work, this may need to be circulated for a decision electronically prior to the next Council.

22.1.25 Joseph Rank Trust [MC/22/30]

30/1. The Council noted with thanks the grants provided by the Joseph Rank Trust in 2021 as detailed in the report.

22.1.26 Methodist Schools appointments [MC/22/31]

31/1. The Methodist Council adopted the re-nomination by the Methodist Independent Schools Trust Trustees of Mrs Elaine Cleland for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2025.

31/2. The Methodist Council adopted the nomination by the Methodist Independent Schools Trust Trustees of Mrs Henrietta Mbeah-Bankas for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2025.

31/3. The Methodist Council adopted the re-nomination by Methodist Academies and Schools Trustees of Mrs Anne Bolton for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2025.

31/4. The Methodist Council adopted the re-nomination by Methodist Academies and Schools Trustees of Dr Christopher Stephens for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2025.

31/5. The Methodist Council adopted the nomination by Methodist Academies and Schools Trustees of Mr Stephen Myers for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2025.

22.1.27 Oversight and Trusteeship [MC/22/24 and MC/22/24A]

The Council received MC/22/24 for information. The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/24A, which the Council discussed in groups and in plenary session.

24A/1. The Council received the report

24A/2. The Council directed the Task Group to begin detailed work as outlined in the report to reduce the number of Districts.

22.1.28 Youth President Role Review [MC/22/18]

Michael Pryke presented MC/22/18.

18/1. The Council received the report.

18/2. The Council recommended to the Conference the proposed changes to the Youth President role outlined in paragraph 18 of this report.

22.1.29 Part 11 Review [MC/22/20]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/20.

20/1. The Council received the report

20/2. The Council directed the Secretary of the Conference to work with others to finalise the report for the Conference of 2023.

22.1.30 Walking with Micah

Rachel Lampard led the Council in a presentation and discussion of the Walking with Micah project.

22.1.31 Audit of Safeguarding Practice [MC/22/21]

Nicola Sylvester, Safeguarding Policy Manager, presented MC/22/21.

21/1. The Council received the report.

It was agreed not to put resolution 21/2 at this stage, but to bring it back to the Council once there has been full consultation and further work on the framework with District Safeguarding Officers and others.

22.1.32 Action for Hope [MC/22/19]

The Head of Mission presented MC/22/19.

19/1. The Council received the report.

22.1.33 Review of SO 111(3) [MC/22/22]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/22. It was agreed that this review would include student ministers.

22/1. The Council received the report.

22/2. The Council established a small working party to examine Standing Order 111(3) regarding cases of the breakdown of the marriage of a minister, to report back to the Council in October 2022.

22.1.34 Membership of MCPOC [MC/22/23]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/22/23.

23/1. The Council received the report.

23/2. The Council recommended to the Conference the changes to the membership of the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee as set out in the report, and directed that, subject to the scrutiny of the Law and Polity Committee, the amendments to SO 321 to effect this are brought to the 2022 Conference.