

Mission Committee

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Resolutions	101/1. The Council receives the report. 101//2. The Council adopts the principle of establishing a Mission Committee, as outlined in the report. 101/3. The Council directs the Connexional Team to bring names for a pre-shadow Mission Committee to the next meeting of the Council.

Introduction

1. A version of this report was presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) at their September 2020 meeting. The SRC received and commented upon the report and now asks the Council to consider it.
2. The genesis of the concept of a Mission Committee can be traced to the 2019 Conference which received a report showing a number of developments in reaffirming *Our Calling* (see Agenda item 16 *Developments in Reaffirming Our Calling*). One particular area of importance discussed in the report at paragraph 23 concerns “oversight and trusteeship, considering structures with the aim of providing greater support; enabling ministry, mission and broader strategic thinking; and promoting better coordination.” This resulted in a report to the April 2020 Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) meeting, which outlined three proposed committees including a Mission Committee.
3. The SRC noted that these three committees, Mission, Ministries and Finance and Resources should have, ‘manageable workloads with members forming smaller workgroups with a solutions focused agenda then space for conferring and imaginative thinking could be maintained.’
4. Following the *Reaffirming Our Calling: Oversight and Trusteeship* report, the Conference in 2020 directed (resolution 25/4) the SRC in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee to, ‘review the constitution and function and interrelationship of all connexional committees’ and to bring interim proposals to the 2021 Conference and a full report with proposed changes to Standing Orders (SO) to the 2022 Conference.
5. The *Reaffirming Our Calling: Oversight and Trusteeship* report to the Conference in 2020 covered a breadth of oversight issues. This paper explores the ways in which oversight of the range of activities that we broadly term “mission” might be taken forward.
6. This report aims to test the mind of the Council in regards to the development of a Mission Committee from September 2022, beginning as a Shadow Mission Committee in the spring of 2021.

Definition of terms: What is Mission in Methodist Understanding?

7. From Standing Order 1000.
In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Through the Church, the Body of Christ, within which the Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place, God seeks to reconcile the world itself into a unity in Christ. In this mission, necessarily undertaken both locally and globally, the vocation of the Church is to be a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument of the Kingdom of God. (2 Corinthians 5 v.19; Deed of Union cl. 4; Called to Love and Praise para 3.2.1; All Partners Consultation; Future Mission Together report to the 2012 Conference.)
8. From ‘Called to Love and Praise’ 1999:

God's mission does not belong to the Church but the Church participates in it and witnesses to God's love through loving, suffering and service in our broken world. (The Methodist Church, 1999, Called to Love and Praise, 2.1.10 and see 1.4.3)

...the Church is a community both of worship and of mission. Its mission and its worship (which is shared by the Church in heaven), are the response to God's undeserved, unstinting love in Christ. So God's mission and kingdom are the primary 'givens', from which all derives and on which all depends. As agent of God's mission, the Church is a sign, foretaste and instrument of the kingdom (excerpted from 1.4.1)

9. From the Council Paper MC 14/46 - One Mission Working Party:
One Mission should ... recognise that local and global, evangelism and social justice is all one mission, and we are called to serve God in mission where we are, here in Britain, and also across the world. One Mission is not a new creation, but a different perception on the good work that is already happening in different places. Significantly, it is not about eroding the value of the different strands of mission taking part in their various contexts, but about bringing those strands together to form a more unified approach to God's mission.
10. To summarise, for Methodists mission holds several dimensions (justice, evangelism, advocacy, care for creation, acts of service, etc) which are related but distinctive. Mission is expansive in its nature, and its dimensions are diverse. Methodists agree that all Mission is God's Mission and not ours and that therefore mission is as broad and as wonderful and as complex as the love and vision of God. However our work is hampered when everything we do simply becomes labelled as Mission, and when we erase distinctions. Mission requires action and choices and these actions and choices demand accountability. The mission vision and direction of the Church should be overseen and measured. We might ask of any proposal – is this part of the mission of God in God's world? Do we recognise it as a calling on Methodism? is it ours to do? How might we do it better ecumenically? Where should we place our resource to bring the best return for a world transformed by the love of God? How do we explore and establish partners and nourish partnerships– what criteria do we use for this? These and others are some of the deeper questions we must answer.

Learning from the setting up of the Ministries Committee in 2010

11. The 2010 *Ministries, Learning and Development* report to the Conference proposed the establishment of a Shadow Ministries Committee, to operate during the 2010/2011 connexional year. A primary task for this committee was to 'oversee the creation of terms of reference and membership guidelines for the Ministries Committee for presentation to the 2011 Conference.' The report also recognised the possibility that the shadow body could usefully provide an interim and immediate forum for "cross-border" discussions between existing committees.
12. This report offers the Council the opportunity to consider a proposal to move this way forward; A proposal to the 2021 Conference of a shadow Mission Committee operating in 2021-22, given it will become a committee of the Council rather than the Conference. However, in a year of doing things differently could it begin life in this connexional year – a pre-shadow Mission Committee? A timetable for this might be as follows:
 - October Council – a paper and broad agreement
 - January Council – establishment of 'pre-Shadow Committee'; draft Terms of Reference (ToR); names
 - Conference – final ToR; establishment of Shadow Committee
 - October Council 2021 – names
 - Conference 2022 – birth of Mission Committee.
13. This process might enable the establishment of a Mission Committee in 2022, working to enable the Methodist Church to develop and maintain a strategic vision for its mission, both global and local, encompassing work on: evangelism and growth; mission alongside people experiencing poverty and marginalisation; mission alongside children, young people, young adults and in intergenerational

contexts with families; work for justice for people and the planet; and work on holy living in the current age.

14. A Mission Committee might enable Part 10 of Standing Orders to be given proper and deep attention.

Whilst every clause of the Deed of Union and every Standing Order is concerned with the mission of the Church and the title to, and content of, this Part does nothing to change that, these resolutions of the Conference have provided the opportunity to draw together here Standing Orders, some formerly located elsewhere in CPD, which preserve the essential elements of the Constitution of the Methodist Missionary Society, which enable and encourage the mission of the Church in Britain and across the world, and which give effect to the resolutions of the Conference.

A Mission Committee might fulfil the need to enable the Methodist Council (as set out in Standing Order 1001) to ensure the following:

(i) developing and supporting of a network of people committed to mission both local and global; (ii) challenging the Circuits and Districts to learn from and keep constantly under review the place of the Church within the world Church; (iii) sharing insights and developing vision; (iv) conferring about how the vision and policies for mission adopted by the Conference might be implemented in the Circuits and Districts.

In a way that it was once hoped the One Mission Forum would.

15. A pre-shadow and the shadow Mission Committee could test out this concept; it could be a place for strategy and tactics, for vision and policy setting, and for accountability and clear reporting, and could hone the terms of reference that a new committee would require. It could begin to explore if the work of other, smaller committees might be incorporated into the larger body or become working or task groups to enable a Mission committee to 'think bigger' and allow others to focus on the operational issues that can eat agenda time. It could allow for the development of overarching strategy to guide the work of the Council and our working together. It would need too, to be cognisant of the realities and pressures of the teams within the Connexional team and the multiplicity of the various areas of work.
16. A pre-shadow and shadow Mission Committee could explore ways of setting up a committee that is flexible to the growing change across our mission field, one that is able to facilitate reactive development within the boundaries of long term goal setting, and that does not stifle entrepreneurial development and creativity in response to need and growth.
17. As the Ministries Committee currently oversees connexional policy regarding ordained and authorised ministries, and develops and supports the processes relating to the oversight, accountability and professional development of those ministries and offices of the Church, so the Mission Committee might bring together: MCB's work in evangelism/ church growth; its part in the world church and vice-versa; its engagement with society and its encouragement of personal discipleship. In terms of work 'areas' it might consider; evangelism and growth, children, youth and families, Methodist way of life, global relationships, fellowships, apologetics, education, chaplaincy, training and formation for pioneers, etc.
18. Mission is asymmetrical, it is possible that the work of a Mission Committee might not be as easy to define as the work of the Ministries Committee nor the reporting lines as neat. For example consideration will need to be given to the ways in which Joint Public Issues Team's Strategic Policy Group (JPIT SPG), a group made up of ecumenical leaders with denominational responsibility for issues of mission and justice, fits in terms of any strategic policy setting. A shadow committee might need to establish what a good and creative relationship between the Mission Committee and JPIT SPG looks like.
19. Considering all the above it is proposed that work is undertaken prior to the 2021 Conference to establish a provisional membership of a pre-shadow Mission Committee, and that that group be

tasked with developing terms of reference, relationships and reporting lines with existing bodies. It is proposed that the names for a pre-shadow Mission Committee be brought to the January meeting of the Council. That group will then develop the terms of reference to be brought to the 2021 Conference.

20. Should it prove possible for a pre-shadow Mission Committee to establish terms of reference, ways of working, and clarity of reporting and accountability lines with existing committees, including their disestablishment if necessary, and present them to the 2021 Conference it might be possible for the Conference to approve the creation of the Shadow Mission Committee, enabling it to begin its work at the outset of the 2021/2022 connexional year. This would enable changes in Standing Orders to be presented to the 2022 Conference.

Shadow Mission Committee Membership

21. As far as possible, the members of the shadow committee between them should represent the diversity of both ordained and lay people involved in missional activities in a variety of contexts, including mission overseas and in Britain, in rural and urban contexts, with a particular focus on intergenerational, children, youth and family and young adult work city centre work and work with communities experiencing poverty and other forms of marginalisation. Taking note of the Inclusive Church report, deep consideration should be given to the diversity of this new group.
22. Representatives from existing committees whose work and reporting might be affected should also be included; the Global Relationships Committee (GRC), the ecumenical Strategy and Policy Group which oversees JPIT (JPIT SPG), the New Places for New People (NPNP) Guiding Team, the Heritage Committee, and the Methodist Modern Art Collection Committee (MMACC) for example.
23. Therefore the committee might be chaired by a former President/Vice-President, and have as part of its membership the Secretary of the Conference and/or Connexional Secretary, a representative from the GRC, a youth representative, a NPNP representative, a Public issues representative, a District Chair, a representative of the Heritage Committee, and so on.
24. The committee might invite such other members, observers or consultants, as appropriate, for example representatives from the Methodist Activists' Network, Methodists for World Mission, Methodist Women in Britain, those with an understanding of an ecumenical perspective etc. If the Mission Committee were to mirror the Ministries Committee it would comprise between 12 and 14 members and meet 3 times each year with one meeting being 24 hours in duration.
25. Were the Mission Committee to reflect the Ministries Committee, its terms of reference might look something like those in appendix 1.

Place among the Methodist Structures

26. The place of the Mission Committee and its reporting lines should be clearly articulated in a diagrammatic form in reports that enable its establishment.
27. It would seem sensible to mirror the Ministries Committee's reporting line of being annual to the Conference, through the Council. Those sub committees and reporting committees to the Mission committee should also have clear and agreed reporting timelines.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

101/1. The Council receives the report.

101//2. The Council adopts the principle of establishing a Mission Committee, as outlined in the report.

101/3. The Council directs the Connexional Team to bring names for a pre-shadow Mission Committee to the next meeting of the Council.

Appendix 1

Draft Terms of Reference of the Mission Committee

The Mission Committee will be appointed by the Conference and will meet three times per year; one of those meetings will be a two-day residential.

Membership

1. The Mission Committee will consist of no fewer than 12 and no more than 14 persons, including the Secretary of the Conference who shall act as convener, and a chair and a deputy chair of the committee. As far as possible, the members of the committee between them represent the interests of:
 - both ordained and lay people involved in missional activities in a variety of contexts, including mission overseas and in Britain, in rural and urban contexts, in ecumenical and denominational contexts, with a particular focus on intergenerational and family work, and work with deprived communities.
 - the Global Relationships Committee(GRC), the Joint Public Issues Team Strategy and Policy Group (JPIT SPG), the Heritage Committee, the Methodist Modern Art Collection Committee (MMACC), Fellowships and, the New Places for New People oversight group.
2. The committee may invite such other observers or consultants, from within and beyond the Connexional Team, as appropriate.

General Responsibilities

3. In accordance with Standing Order xxx the Mission Committee shall report to the Methodist Council to enable the Church to develop and maintain a strategic vision for Mission throughout the Connexion.
4. The committee shall be accountable to the Conference through the Council for:
 - Overseeing connexional policy regarding mission, including those relating to overseas and home mission, rural and urban mission, Church at the margins, New Places for New People, those working alongside people experiencing poverty and marginalisation, justice for people and planet, and mission among children and families.
 - Setting and overseeing the criteria for the disbursement of grants and funding for mission and missional activities.
 - Developing and supporting programmes for nourishing, equipping and resourcing those engaged in the mission of the Church here and abroad.
5. The committee may, in consultation with the Methodist Council, report to the Conference on matters of policy or process requiring the attention of the Conference.
6. The committee may convene resource groups and may recommend to the Connexional Team or the Methodist Council the establishment of other relevant bodies and consultations. In particular, the committee shall receive reports from the Fellowships Subcommittee, the Fresh Expressions Guiding Team, the GRC, the Heritage Committee, the MMAC Committee and the NPNP oversight group. These groups and committees will no longer regularly report directly to the Council, except in matters of great significance.
7. The committee shall keep in view the use of resources that are deployed to deliver prayer, worship and learning for mission across the Connexion.