

## Financial Support to Ministers in non-UK Jurisdictions

<b>Contact Name and Details</b>	Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary cs@methodistchurch.org.uk
<b>Action Required</b>	Decision
<b>Resolutions</b>	59/1. The Council directs the Strategy and Resources Committee to consider how support might be made available as outlined in paragraph 4. 59/2. The Council agrees to the approach outlined in paragraph 12 about stationing matching of ministers in non-UK jurisdictions.

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	To consider the issues raised in the Connexional Allowances Committee report to the 2018 Conference about ministers in non-UK jurisdictions
<b>Main Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support required for ministers with Children in Higher Education in non-UK jurisdictions</li> <li>• Lack of information available about ministers affected by issues raised makes assessing impact difficult</li> <li>• Stationing matching arrangements must continue to assess financial implications for ministers in non-UK jurisdictions</li> <li>• As every eventuality cannot be legislated for, the most important question is whether the basic stipend for such territories is enough to live on</li> </ul>
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	Connexional Allowances Committee report to the 2018 Conference. Connexional Allowances Committee report to the 2016 Conference.
<b>Consultations</b>	District Chairs of the affected territories

### Summary of Impact

<b>Wider Connexional</b>	Stationing matching processes to consider financial implications when appointments are made
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## Financial Support to Ministers in non-UK Jurisdictions

1. The Connexional Allowances Committee (CAC) report to the Conference in both 2016 and 2018 requested that further work be undertaken by the Council to clarify issues relating to supporting ministers stationed in parts of the Connexion that are outside the United Kingdom's jurisdiction. These territories are the Channel Islands (CI), Isle of Man (IoM), Gibraltar and Malta.
2. Three issues were raised:
  - (i) University students in the CI are not eligible for student loans. Ministers with children approaching student age are therefore at a disadvantage, which deters some from being stationed to these territories;
  - (ii) Ministers and dependants returning from the Channel Islands to UK may not be fully eligible for UK state (child) benefits when they return. The CAC recommended that the Council consider the arrangements with CI, IoM, Gibraltar and Malta and child benefit arrangements with these places;
  - (iii) Spouses of ministers serving in the IoM who have worked in UK public sector may be disadvantaged if they work in IoM for a certain period of time. The CAC recommended that this is explored for CI, IoM, Gibraltar and Malta so that the legal position is established and ministers advised accordingly.
3. Issue (i) was considered by a working group and addressed in the 2018 CAC report to the Conference by providing an interim solution: an annual grant from the Fund for Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD) to address the shortfall in university maintenance costs; and grants from the Methodist Church Fund (MCF) to ministers' student children to cover travel costs to and from the UK.
4. It is now necessary to consider whether these arrangements should become long-term measures and become entrenched as part of stationing arrangements. The CAC did not view grants as a long-term solution. However, having consulted some of the Chairs in the affected areas, the view from those consulted is that financial support should be made available to those affected, so that those with children are not discouraged from taking appointments in these areas. It is therefore recommended that the Strategy and Resources Committee be asked to consider how support might be made available.
5. The CAC report requested that issues (ii) and (iii) be considered by the Council prior to the 2019 Conference. An assessment has therefore been undertaken to establish the impact for ministers in the scenarios raised in the CAC report.
6. Regarding issue (ii) - the UK government website information is vague as it states that when leaving the UK to work abroad, individuals may be eligible for benefits. However to get a definitive outcome, individuals are required to contact the government department with their individual circumstances to obtain specific advice. Furthermore, it is not clear what the situation is when returning to the UK.
7. Regarding issue (iii) – there does not appear to be any information available online about this specific issue, or if there is it is not easily located.
8. As the CAC Conference reports did not give any specific details on the issues raised, attempts have been made to find out the level of financial disadvantage from anyone affected in these territories.

9. The Chairs of the Districts that cover these territories have been consulted. The Connexional Secretary has met with some of the District Chairs to discuss these issues, and all were sent a letter asking if they know about any ministers who may be affected by such issues, so that the level of impact could be assessed.
10. Having done this, it has been difficult to find any known cases of financial hardship in these areas. Only one or two people have been suggested who could be in such position. It has therefore been difficult to establish the scale of the issues raised and consider what support needs to be given. It does not seem that these are widespread problems faced by a number of ministers.
11. It is also worth noting that Malta will no longer have a Methodist appointment (as it is the turn of the Church of Scotland to provide ordained ministry), and it is not anticipated that the minister in Gibraltar will change for some time.
12. Given the lack of evidence available, and the subjective nature of these issues, the suggestion is that ministers who may be stationed in these territories are made aware of potential changes to financial circumstances and if necessary investigate individual financial arrangements with HMRC before an appointment is confirmed.
13. As these issues have been considered it has become clear that it is not possible to legislate for every eventuality, but the Conference should continue to station ministers to appointments in these jurisdictions and that they be matched properly.
14. The most important issue for ministers in these territories remains whether the basic stipend is enough to live on. The 2016 report to the Conference confirmed an additional allowance of 16% of stipend for all ministers stationed in the Shetland Islands, the Scilly Isles, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. This allowance will continue to be reviewed by the CAC as appropriate.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**59/1. The Council receives the report.**

**59/2. The Council directs the Strategy and Resources Committee to consider how support might be made available as outlined in paragraph 4.**

**59/3. The Council agrees to the approach outlined in paragraph 12 about stationing ministers to appointments in the jurisdictions covered by this report.**