

**Minutes of the Methodist Council held on 13-14 October 2008
at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon**

Present: The President, the Vice-President and 49 voting members.

Apologies: John Best, Gary Hopkins, Ward Jones, Susan Sowden

In attendance: Jane Bates (Minutes), Anna Drew (Media Officer), Norman Mann (Audit Committee), Peter Phillips (Faith and Order Committee)

Prayers: Prayers were led by the Chaplain, the Revd Ian Bell.

The Chair explained the attempts to indicate on the agenda and on the cover sheets of reports the category of business to which each item belonged. The categories were identified as follows:

to note = for information

for discussion = significant discussion time but not expecting resolutions

to approve = resolution required but appears not to need any substantial debate

for decision = resolution required and probably does need substantial debate first

08.3.1 The Minutes of the Methodist Council held on 15-16 April 2008 were agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

08.3.2 Matters arising from the Council Minutes

(i) Wesley College Bristol [MC/08/87]

John Ellis presented MC/08/87; he explained that the review of the College that the Council had requested was now expected during this connexional year and that some earlier recommendations for transitional funding had been based on incorrect information. It had become clear that there was a need for a larger scale of funding for Wesley College Bristol during this year. This paper proposed a single grant of £100,000 for this year.

There was some discussion about the review of the College referred to in the paper, and whether it was appropriate for such a review to take place during this connexional year. The reasons for the review and for its timing were briefly rehearsed and the proposals contained within MC/08/87 were agreed.

(ii) Other Matters Arising [MC/08/88]

Ken Howcroft presented MC/08/88 which represented a report on where items from the previous meeting of the Council have reached. It was felt that this type of report would enable tracking of the work between Councils. This report was noted.

08.3.3 Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 7 May, 14 July and 17 September 2008

Ken Wales, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC), presented the minutes to the Council for information, noting that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September had not yet been approved by the SRC.

The SRC agenda has recently been dominated by Team Focus and, now that it is emerging from that period, the SRC is planning to spend time considering in depth the way in which it functions and working out its responsibilities in the wider context. New members of the Council were invited to talk with Ken Wales about the role of SRC.

The sets of minutes were received.

08.3.4 Matters arising from the SRC minutes

Senior Leadership Job Titles [MC/08/89]

John Ellis presented MC/08/89, explaining that the SRC had asked for some work to be done concerning the job titles in the reconfigured Connexional Team. It had been felt to be counter-intuitive that Directors report to Managers who report to Secretaries. Research has been undertaken with other organisations. There are different audiences to whom those in the Connexional Team relate: the wider connexion; ecumenical partners; and those outside the churches (eg in involvement in public life and the media). This had led to a series of proposals for revised titles being brought to the SRC. SRC had concluded that it was appropriate for the title 'Director' to be used in certain roles (e.g. 'Director of Finance') because of the need for the Team to link with external bodies, who would be more likely to understand such terms; that 'Managers' should be called 'Heads'; and that 'Secretaries' should be known as 'Deputy General Secretaries' followed by '(Internal Relationships)', '(External Relationships)' or '(Connexional Team Operations)' as appropriate. It was emphasised, however, that the jobs themselves are not changing.

The Council emphasised that it affirmed the Team Secretaries in their roles and that it wished to support them in their work.

The Council recognised that the Team Secretaries are Conference appointments, and therefore that any proposal for amending their titles would need to be recommended to the Conference by the Council. Concern was expressed, however, about using any proposed title informally before the Conference had considered the matter.

Some concern was also expressed by members of the Council about whether it was too soon to make such changes. It was suggested that further work on the implications of this ought to be undertaken by the Law and Polity Committee and the Faith and Order Committee before the Council could make any recommendations to the Conference.

The Council agreed the following resolution:

The Council understands that the job titles currently used do not easily promote the work of the Connexional Team Secretaries and refers the titles for consideration by Faith and Order and Law and Polity and for SRC to bring a final title and reasoning to the next meeting of this Council.

08.3.5 Southlands [MC/08/90]

John Pritchard, Chair of the Southlands College Foundation Governors, was welcomed to present MC/08/90.

He updated the Council on progress relating to the items in paragraph 14 of the report:

- (a) HEFCE has already signalled its approval of these negotiations and has indicated that it is pleased to learn of the Digby Stuart negotiations. However, there is no question of any funds to facilitate the Roehampton buyout of colleges.
- (b) The discussions taking place concerning Whitelands College are reaching a satisfactory conclusion, subject to the agreement of the Archbishops' Council. There can be no certainty that their negotiations will succeed, but it would not be helpful if that was to prevent Southlands from going ahead.

It was agreed that the officers of the Council would communicate directly with their Anglican counterparts in this respect.

The draft terms of reference for the Southlands Liaison Group give it a clear mandate. The group will also be trustees for the Methodist Council Charitable Fund (Southlands) (MCCF(S)).

The Council agreed the following resolutions:

1. Council authorises the preparation of a Lease of Southlands College to Roehampton University and an Agreement relating to the Management of the College on the basis of the Heads of Terms recommended by the Governing Body of the College, together with a new Southlands Trust Deed reflecting the changed relationship of the College and University which is envisaged in the Heads of Terms.
2. Council requires the Lease, Management Agreement and Trust Deed, when drafted, to be brought to the Council in February or April 2009, for review and approval prior to their submission to the Conference of 2009 and appoints a scrutiny group to assist it in this task.
3. Council pursuant to the decision of the 2005 Conference, consents to the sale of the Mount Clare property provided that the terms of the sale meet with the approval of the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) and of the Council's designated representatives, who are Will Morrey, Ken Howcroft, Martyn Atkins, David Gamble.
4. Council approves the proposal to amend the MCCF(S) Trust Deed to bring together the work of MCCF(S) and the Southlands Methodist Centre and to create a Trustee body who shall also form the Southlands Liaison Group.

The scrutiny group referred to in resolution 2 above was appointed as follows:

Elizabeth Ovey (barrister, member of the Law and Polity Committee)

Graham Russell (Methodist Schools)

Roger Smith (financier, Southlands experience)

Helen Woodall (SRC, to convene the group).

08.3.6 Chair's business

The Chair explained that this item remained on the agenda to provide an opportunity for members of the Council to bring items of business to the Council from their Districts or other bodies that they represent.

There were no items under this heading this time.

08.3.7 Connexional Leaders' Forum report

Martyn Atkins reported on the first meeting of the Connexional Leaders' Forum (CLF). The forum had considered aspects of the programme *Mapping a Way Forward*, noting that some parts of the Church were well ahead in this process. The hope is that the CLF becomes a body committed to strategic leadership and thinking, with the aim of re-envisioning the Church.

It was emphasised that the CLF is not a decision-making or governance body.

08.3.8 Speaking for the Methodist Church [MC/08/91]

John Ellis presented MC/08/91, which set out new guidelines for implementing the report *Speaking for the Methodist Church* adopted at the 2001 Conference. The fundamental principles of the report were that all statements on behalf of the Church should be in line with existing statements and resolutions of the Conference and key Methodist documents. The new guidelines set out how those principles should be implemented following the

reconfiguration of the Connexional Team. They had been updated to reflect the different job titles in the reconfigured Connexional Team. They also take account of the changed structure in the Team which could mean that more people might need to speak on behalf of the Church. They gave an explicit reminder that it would be a disciplinary matter if the guidelines were not followed. This does not represent a change in policy or in the principles of the 2001 report.

It was suggested that it would be helpful if a record could be kept (perhaps on the website) of the occasions where people have spoken on behalf of Church.

The Council adopted the new guidelines for implementing the report *Speaking for the Methodist Church* for use by all members of the Connexional Team and as recommended best practice for those outside the Team.

08.3.9 Stationing Review Group [MC/08/92]

Doug Swanney and Siôn Rhys Evans introduced MC/08/92 and MC/08/92A. The Stationing Review Group had reported to the 2008 Conference; the Conference had referred most of the recommendations to the Council and the Stationing Committee. The documents before the Council represented the work that has been done to divide the recommendations into strategic themes and policy considerations in order to help the work going forward.

There are seven policy considerations which the Stationing Committee has begun to address. One policy consideration (Notice of Motion 119) is to be dealt with by the Council, and it is proposed that this be done at the February Council.

Of the strategic themes, it is suggested that two are incorporated into existing work priorities: Extending Discipleship and Exploring Vocation (in respect of call, vocation and nurturing leadership talent); and *Mapping a Way Forward* (in respect of the shape and role of circuits). Two are to be referred to the Director of Learning and Development and the Training Strategy and Resources Executive (TSRE), namely (a) learning, training and development for participation in team ministry, and (b) learning, training and development for superintendent ministers and the nurturing of ministers in their first appointment. Three themes are to be referred to the Team Secretaries for work before reporting back to the Council. The remaining strategic themes are to be referred to the Council itself.

Three discussion streams were identified for work in groups and the Council continued its discussions in small groups. Feedback on the work done in the small groups was given the following morning and the Team was entrusted to take this work forward.

08.3.10 Team staffing and work plan [MC/08/93]

John Ellis presented Part I of MC/08/93, explaining that the Team is still in the process of transition. 75% of the postholders have now been appointed. There are still areas of personal uncertainty and anxiety where staff members are not yet clear about their future. There is also a significant impact on staff where they are involved in covering areas of work where people have not yet been appointed to particular posts in the reconfigured Team. The Support Services cluster is where the largest number of staff have not yet been appointed, particularly in the Development and Personnel area. Work has therefore been done to develop rigorous priorities to ensure that essential things get done and to reduce the pressure.

Mark Wakelin presented Part II of the report, which emphasised the bigger context in which the work of prioritising has to take place.

John Ellis presented Part III, which represented a framework for taking the vision (as set out in Part II) and putting it into practice. For each cluster in the reconfigured Team, List A sets out what the Team believes can be delivered; List B reflects what the Team would hope to achieve if, for example, all the staff were in place.

The Council asked questions about particular pieces of work and their place on the lists. In particular, it was asked why the Youth Participation Strategy work and Pioneer Ministries work were in List B rather than List A. The answer was that it was due to the staff not yet being appointed, and was not a sign of a reduced commitment to the projects.

The Council approved the Team work priorities set out in Part III of the paper.

08.3.11 Heritage [MC/08/94]

Ken Wales presented MC/08/94 which follows up the report to the 2008 Conference. The 2008 Conference had also agreed a new system for connexional grants with which the heritage work needs to link. A suggested way of doing this is set out in paragraphs 2.1-2.3 of MC/08/94. The Council agreed the interim grant making process set out in those paragraphs.

The job description for the chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee has now been drawn up and the post advertised. The recommendation is that the appointing panel shall comprise the Chair of the Council, the General Secretary or his nominee and two others appointed by the Council. It is felt that it would be wise not to move straightaway to the full membership of the committee as it was agreed by the Conference so that the composition of the committee can be further considered.

It was asked how this committee would link with the Archives and History Committee. It is intended that, once they are appointed, the Heritage Officer will be the principal Team link with the Archives and History Committee.

The Methodist Council:

- a. approved the proposed interim membership of the Methodist Heritage Committee (MHC);
- b. delegated authority to the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the current Heritage Steering Group to appoint the interview panel for the Chair of the Shadow MHC;
- c. delegated authority to the Chairs of the Council and the Shadow MHC to oversee the appointment of the core membership of the Shadow MHC;
- d. commissioned the Shadow MHC and Connexional Team to define the most appropriate constitution and membership of the MHC and to bring recommendations to the Council for this, and for the appropriate required changes to Standing Orders.

The Methodist Council:

- a. resolved that the Methodist Heritage Officer (MHO) should be a member of the Connexional Team, appointed through the normal Team processes as soon as possible;
- b. commissioned the Connexional Team, in collaboration with the current Heritage Steering Group and the Shadow MHC, to redefine the balance of accountability and responsibility between the Connexional Team, the MHO and the MHC in light of paragraph 4.2 in the report.

08.3.12 Music Resources Group [MC/08/95]

Ken Howcroft presented MC/08/95 which sets out the progress that has been made on producing proposals for the three different formats of resource: a new baseline collection of authorised hymns and songs; a rolling resource of additional commended material to be produced annually; a constantly updated collection of material to be received and made available on a website. The group had hoped that a draft list of titles to be included in the baseline collection would be available in time for the Council meeting. However, this had not been possible and it will now be available by the beginning of November to begin a process of thorough consultation ahead of the 2009 Conference. The report to the Council included the criteria that are being used to decide what is included in the collection.

It was noted that it is anticipated that the collection will be both in printed form and an electronic version. However, this has not yet been decided by the Conference; the format has remained an open question. There are copyright difficulties with a purely electronic version. Work will need to be done on the costings of this for the Conference. There will need to be work done during this year to ensure that the costings and the rationale is spelt out for the Conference. Up to now, that work has been done between the Music Resources Group and mph; now that procedures are being developed for bringing the publishing functions under the authority of Council, there are implications for how this work is done and at whose risk.

It was asked whether the new collection would actually replace *Hymns & Psalms*. Note (b) on page 125 of the Council papers makes clear that those hymns contained in *Hymns & Psalms* which do not continue into the new collection will not lose their authorisation. Work would need to be done on how those hymns plus the new body of material would form an authorised collection.

There was some concern about the relationship between the Music Resources Group and the Council. When the Conference sets up working groups accountable only to the Conference, there are issues about how to proceed when there is a draw on the budgets in control of the Council. The Music Resources Group was not required to report to the Council but it was very helpful that it had, particularly in the context of the change of the management of Methodist publishing.

The Council noted the report and its appendix.

The Council authorised the group consisting of members of the Connexional Team, the Music Resources Group and the mph Task Group meeting on 17 October to produce proposals for the Strategy and Resources Committee to ensure the management of the work necessary to fulfil the remit of the Conference within an appropriate budget.

08.3.13 Team Communication Strategy [MC/08/96]

Toby Scott was welcomed to the Council to present MC/08/96. He explained that the Council was being asked to feed into a piece of work in its very early stages. The Council discussed the questions as set out in Appendix A in small groups, and submitted their responses to Toby for further work and consideration.

08.3.14 Implementing the future of Methodist Publishing [MC/08/97]

Ken Howcroft presented MC/08/97 in his capacity as a member of the mph Board and the implementation group. The decision had already been made that by the end of this connexional year, the mph work will transfer to being under the authority of and

accountable to the Methodist Council. Work on this is the responsibility of the Board, but the Board does not wish to act in ways that would prevent integration.

The Council asked questions about some of the detail of the report, and assurances were given.

Confidence was expressed in those who are working with the mph Board to progress this work.

The Council took note of the information provided regarding the decisions of the mph Board.

08.3.15 Committees Review [MC/08/98]

John Ellis explained that MC/08/98 represented an appeal from the Business and Economic Affairs Advisory Group and the Mission in Business, Industry and Commerce Chaplains Council for a variation to the decision of the review of committees process. It was emphasised that the Team was committed to the work of these two groups. However, the matter was being brought to the Council because it raised questions about how such requests should be dealt with in future. The note from the Connexional Team and the accompanying resolution sought to clarify what had been intended when the implementation of the review of committees was delegated to the Connexional Team.

In the light of its earlier decision, the Council delegated to the Connexional Team responsibility for

- (i) assessing requests for alternative arrangements from committees and other groups affected by the Review of Committees; and
- (ii) making recommendations to the Council about any matters that involve substantive principle.

08.3.16 Financial Market Turmoil and its Impact on the Methodist Church [MC/08/101]

Ron Calver presented MC/08/101, which sets out some of the issues that could arise for the Methodist Church as a consequence of the upheavals in the financial and property markets.

The Treasurer was thanked for bringing this to the Council's attention as part of background thinking for hard decisions that might need to be taken later in the connexional year.

The paper was noted.

08.3.17 Appointments [MC/08/99]

With the following amendments, the Council appointed those listed in MC/08/99:

(3) Ministerial and Diaconal Reinstatements Panel

Delete Beryl E Lucas

(4) Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee

Delete Wendy Kilworth-Mason

Delete Keith Davies

Andrew Wood to be District Chair on Committee

(5) Stationing Advisory Committee

Delete Deacon Ruth Poch
Add Deacon Sue Culver

(7) Diaconal Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee

after Jennifer Impey *add* (Chair)
after Margaret Cox *delete* (Convenor)

(30) Prayer Handbook Committee

Add The Revd Jenny Ellis

(52) Steering Group of the Churches Ministerial Counselling Service

Delete Carolyn Croft

Add:

The Council appoints Deacon Eunice Attwood and Mr Mike King to accompany the President and Vice-President to the Irish Conference.

Aldershot Methodist Military Trust

In connection with the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust (constituted by Deed dated 8th September 1859) the following Trustees have died since the last Appointment of Trustees made by Conference in 2000:

John Anthony Edward Alfred Cook
Robert Stirling Briscoe
Richard Martin Phillips Ludlow

And the following Trustees wish to retire:

Lt Col Kenneth William Sear
William Gerald Eric Lewis
The Revd Colin Gordon Rowe
Major Harry Frederick Argent
Joy Manners
Clive Julian Barker
Melvyn David Buckett
Alexander James Cloke
Michael Leonard Everitt
Dennis Sydney Joseph Fry
Derek John Raney
Neville Sharples
Rowland Sydney Smith
The Revd Roger Owen Bayliss

The Revd Alan Costello
Alexander Raymond Jameson
David Bridge
The Revd Peter James Howson
Ltd Cdr Shirley Angela Hewitt
The Revd John Keith Watson
Frank Norman Furner
Peter David Ewins
Herbert Robert Abbott Campion-Smith
Donald French
The Revd David Edward Wilkes
Sally Jeanette Press
George David Kendall

The Methodist Council, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Standing Order 211(1)(a) of the Methodist Church, in the name and on behalf of the Conference, appointed the following as new Trustees in place of the said deceased and retiring Trustees to act jointly with the remaining and continuing Trustees for the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust:

The Revd Clive James Larrett
The Rt Hon Colin Edward Breed MP
Ian Michael Davies
Nicholas White
Susan Mary Smith

Lt Col Jeremy Walter Drage
The Revd Timothy Lindow Wilkinson
The Revd Stewart Boris Kruger Young
The Revd Colin Michael Weir

Action for Children Trustee

Acting on behalf of the Conference, in accordance with SO 211(1), The Methodist Council appointed Heather Schroeder to NCH Council, with immediate effect, in compliance with SO 240.

Connexional Treasurer

The Council, acting under the authority of the Conference and in accordance with SO 311, appointed Andrew Gibbs as a Connexional Treasurer and as Treasurer of the Methodist Missionary Society, for six years.

08.3.18 Climate Change and the Methodist Church Environmental Policy [MC/08/100]

The Methodist Council endorsed the three Methodist nominations to the Climate Change and Theology working group; asked the Faith and Order Executive to review a report on climate change and theology prior to presentation to the Methodist Council in April 2009 with a view to bringing this report to the 2009 Methodist Conference.