

41. Appreciations

John Bell has served as Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee since 2010. During this time he has overseen a major review of additional allowances, sought to clarify a number of processes by which ministers and their families are assisted, and overseen the day-to-day work of a number of trusts for which the Committee has responsibility. In all of this, Mr Bell has brought a deep understanding of the needs of ministers and their dependants. He has been alert to changing circumstances in society and has sought to ensure that the Committee responds not only to the present moment, but to the longer-term needs of individuals and the Methodist Church. His deep pastoral heart means that those who have approached the Committee for assistance have found a thoughtful, compassionate and wise Chair, never afraid to be honest in the interests of ensuring that the Committee plays its part in watching over the flock in love.

Mr Bell has balanced the economic constraints of various funds with an ever-growing need. In doing so, he has challenged and guided various bodies to think about what sort of longer-term support is needed for ordained ministry. A host of individuals and the Conference have cause to be thankful to God for the skill, grace and pastoral integrity with which Mr Bell has served the Connexion as Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee.

***RESOLUTION

41/1. The Conference expressed its gratitude to Mr John A Bell for his service as Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee and wished him well for his ongoing ministry.

Peter Howdle has served as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee since 2012. In a demanding role that requires detailed attention to a wide-ranging agenda, Prof Howdle has enabled the Committee and the Council to see their work always in the context of the broader sweep of the Christian tradition. His award by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 2017 of the Lambeth Cross for services to ecumenism is a reflection of the map upon which Prof Howdle lives and exercises his vocation. In the course of considering both embryonic ideas and detailed financial plans, Prof Howdle has encouraged in others, as well as displayed himself, the ability to make connections to ensure robust and sustainable strategic planning. In this, he has been a wise counsellor to many across the Connexion.

His grounding in his own Circuit and Local Church, which he has continued to serve with great diligence, coupled with his keen interest in all whom he encounters has meant he has approached each item of business with a holistic view. He has with grace and insight challenged committees, individuals, and the Conference to ensure that the impact of decisions is carefully and fully understood. His primary concern has only ever been the faithful witness of the Church of Jesus Christ and the evolution of the Methodist tradition within that of the Church apostolic. His service as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee has been an expression of pastoral ministry for which the Conference now and in years to come has cause to give thanks.

***RESOLUTION

41/2. The Conference expressed its gratitude to Prof Peter D Howdle for his service as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee of the Methodist Council and wished him well for his ongoing ministry.