

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	John Ellis, Secretary for Connexional Team Operations (EllisJ@methodistchurch.org.uk; 0207 467 5297)
Status of Paper	Final
Resolution	The Conference receives the Report.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	The Report provides the Conference with a summary of work done by the Council during the current Connexional year which does not appear elsewhere in the Conference Agenda.
Main Points	<p>The Report gives a flavour of how the Council has approached its work.</p> <p>It then lists the subjects addressed by the Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ in its governance role ∞ in response to requests from the Conference ∞ in response to requests from other groups or on its own initiative ∞ in reviewing draft Conference reports.
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	The full Council minutes and papers are available on the Church website www.methodist.org.uk .

29. Methodist Council

1. The Council has undertaken its varied work with prayer, passion and care, taking seriously the roles of spiritual leadership, discernment, articulating vision, governance and trusteeship entrusted to it, and mindful of its responsibilities to the Church and the Lord of the Church. The full range of papers presented to the Council and the outcomes of the Council's deliberations on them have been available on the Church's website (www.methodist.org.uk) during the year. This report mentions some of the major themes. It also lists the actions taken by the Council, within the powers allocated to it by the Conference, on issues which are not presented to the Conference for the Conference's own judgement.

Working on Key Themes

2. The Council has made significant contributions on several themes where there appears to be a widespread desire in the Church for new wineskins. None of these topics are simple and views about precisely what a new form might look like are rarely unanimous. On several occasions the Council has worked in small groups as a sounding board for the Connexion's views. These groups have tested and refined initial ideas presented to them by the Connexional Team. Often these ideas have themselves been generated from elsewhere in the Connexion, for example the Connexional Leaders Forum. These sessions have been very helpful in formulating more definite proposals to return to the Council and other bodies later.
3. One such topic was the report of the Stationing Review Group, which the Conference asked the Council to work on. The update coming to the Conference was shaped in the light of the Council discussions. Another topic that affects the whole Connexion is the question of communications, not least with the spread of electronic options. The Council responded to some possibilities for future priorities, which will help shape the medium term work of the new Communications staff in the Team. At its February meeting the Council spent time exploring what might be the distinctive marks of Methodist discipleship today.
4. Despite the weight of business, at each meeting the Council seeks to look beyond the immediate internal concerns of the Church and its structures. In this it is helped by the ministry of its chaplain, who for this year has been The Revd Ian Bell. The Council has also endorsed the Stamp Out Poverty campaign, which has broad support across the denominations, and asked for more work on the possibility of taking a stronger line on the Living Wage campaign.
5. Before each meeting of the Council, an induction session has been held

for members new to the Council this year. At the end of the final meeting of the year, the Council expressed its thanks to its retiring chair, The Revd Will Morrey, who had guided the Council for the last three years with clarity and independence. David Walton was elected as the next chair.

Governance Responsibilities

6. In accordance with its governance responsibilities, the Council:
 - 6.1 Set up a review of Wesley College Bristol
 - 6.2 Considered and provided feedback on proposals relating to the future of Southlands College. Work on these proposals will continue into the next connexional year
 - 6.3 Received for information a report on the impact of the current financial situation on The Methodist Church
 - 6.4 Appointed those committees who are responsible to the Council
 - 6.5 Appointed the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust on behalf of the Conference
 - 6.6 Appointed an additional member of the NCH (now Action for Children) Council on behalf of the Conference
 - 6.7 Appointed a second Connexional Treasurer on behalf of the Conference
 - 6.8 Adopted the annual accounts for 2007/2008
 - 6.9 Received reports from committees and trustee bodies which are accountable to the Council
 - 6.10 Made decisions about the future of the Pension and Assurance Scheme for Lay Employees of the Methodist Church, including an increase in both the employer's and employees' contribution to the scheme
 - 6.11 Considered and provided input into the proposals to be brought to the Conference relating to the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme
 - 6.12 Agreed to extend the appointment of the Safeguarding Adviser for one further year (until 2010)
 - 6.13 Agreed to the venue (Portsmouth) and date of the 2010 Conference
 - 6.14 Approved the provision of a President's Assistant for an extended term
 - 6.15 Approved a further term of office on the board of Westminster College Oxford Trust for two members
 - 6.16 Appointed Mission Partners
 - 6.17 Resolved to undesignate the balance held in the Flame Magazine Fund
 - 6.18 Approved the revised European Methodist Council constitution
 - 6.19 Appointed a Connexional Advocate for the complaints and discipline system
 - 6.20 Authorised an additional signatory for Model Trust consents
 - 6.21 Appointed Companions in the pilot programme
 - 6.22 Approved the Memorandum of Understanding with MRDF
 - 6.23 Approved interim update to *Expectations of Various Groups* document
 - 6.24 Witnessed the attestation of the Conference Journal for 2008
 - 6.25 Recommended the Team budget to the Conference
 - 6.26 Considered the Safer Recruitment

29. Methodist Council

- Policy and agreed that administrators and safeguarding contacts should be enabled to be verifiers for disclosure applications, subject to safeguards
- 6.27 Coopted members to the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee and the Diaconal Candidates Selection Committee
- 6.28 Approved a process for identifying the next Chair of the Conference Business Committee
- 6.29 Approved the Special Resolutions referred to the Council
- 6.30 Appointed Conference letter writers, precentors and an additional member of the Conference Business Committee for 2009
- 6.31 Approved the rota for diaconal representation for the 2010 Conference
- 6.32 Appointed two associate members to be voting members of the 2009 Conference
- 6.33 Appointed the Memorials Committee for 2009.
- Other Business**
7. In response to requests from the Conference, the Council has:
- 7.1 Received reports and provided feedback in relation to the implementation of the Stationing Review Group report to the 2008 Conference
- 7.2 Appointed the Connexional Grants Committee which is reporting separately to the Conference
- 7.3 Taken forward the recommendations of the Heritage report to the 2008 Conference
- 7.4 Considered regular reports on the progress of the mph integration with the Team and provided feedback and resolutions where appropriate
- 7.5 Welcomed work undertaken in regard to closer partnerships with the United Reformed Church (following the District Resolution to the 2008 Conference)
- 7.6 Responded to the resourced debate at the 2008 Conference
- 7.7 Considered the further work on the Annual Development Review (ADR) and made recommendations to Conference in regards to the timing of the implementation of the ADR
- 7.8 Agreed that there should be major discussion on Joint Implementation Commission issues at the Council's September 2009 meeting
- 7.9 Received for information reports on the progress of the review of committees
- 7.10 Considered and approved suggested replies on the Notices of Motion and Memorials that were referred to the Council
- 7.11 Considered and endorsed (subject to conditions) the use of internet banking
- 7.12 Received reports on the progress of the Youth Participation Strategy.
8. In acting on its own initiative or in response to requests from other groups in the Connexion (eg the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) or the Connexional Leaders Forum (CLF)), the Council also:
- 8.1 Adopted new guidelines for implementing *Speaking for the*

- Methodist Church* in the light of the new structures within the Connexional Team
- 8.2 Approved work priorities for the Connexional Team
 - 8.3 Received for their information reports on the ongoing work of the Music Resources Group
 - 8.4 Contributed to the initial work on a Team Communication Strategy
 - 8.5 Agreed that the *Mapping a Way Forward: Regrouping for Mission* process should be extended to include reviews of district patterns and structures
 - 8.6 Discussed questions and provided feedback on the arrangements of the Conference
 - 8.7 Discussed questions and provided feedback on the area of discipleship
 - 8.8 Following conversations in CLF, agreed to delegate some specific responsibilities relating to local preachers to the Connexional Team
 - 8.9 Endorsed the Stamp Out Poverty campaign
 - 8.10 Requested work on the Living Wage and the impact of making it mandatory
 - 8.11 Approved a new pattern of meetings for 2009/2010
 - 8.12 Considered the job titles of the Team Strategic Leaders and decided not to suggest changes.
9. The Council received for information and noted the report of the Faith and Order Committee which will be presented to the Conference and approved the following reports for presentation to the Conference:
 - 9.1 Connexional Allowances Committee, with amendments to be made
 - 9.2 Fresh Ways Working Group
 - 9.3 World Church Relationships Staffing
 - 9.4 Hope in God's Future.
 10. In addition the Council agreed that:
 - 10.1 There should be a consultation about personnel files for ministers with a report to the 2010 Conference
 - 10.2 The Equalities and Diversity report requested by the 2008 Conference should be deferred to the 2010 Conference
 - 10.3 The consultation period for responses to the Covenant Relationship report of 2008 should be extended, with responses to be sought in time for report to the 2010 Conference.

***RESOLUTION

- 29/1.** The Conference received the Report.