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## SECTION G GENERAL REPORT (2)

This report contains those items considered by the Council and not reported elsewhere in the Agenda.

### 1.1 Governance responsibilities

In accordance with its governance responsibilities, the Council:

- received a report concerning conversations which are underway with Wesley House Cambridge and directed the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) to undertake detailed scrutiny of any potential partnership;
- received an update report from the Legal and Property Support for Managing Trustees implementation group;
- received a report from those who had attended the Special Session of the United Methodist Church General Conference in February 2019;
- adopted a revised set of criteria for Mission and Ministry in Britain grants;
- directed that an invitation be issued to the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church to participate in the *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* process as it moves forward and directed the Faith and Order Committee to explore interchangeability of ministry with those two Churches;
- authorised the Strategy and Resources Committee to oversee the approval of the Connexional Team Supervision Implementation Plan for ordained members of staff, and delegated to the Strategy and Resources Committee responsibility to approve guidance on which lay people in pastoral roles should receive supervision within implementation plans;
- endorsed the heritage strategy for 2019-2024;
- received a report concerning the explorations that had been taking place in the Wales Synod and Synod Cymru as to whether the two Synods could work towards coming together to form one new Synod, and noted that it is not recommended that proposals are brought to take effect from September 2019;
- received a report concerning necessary changes to the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance;
- approved a Statement of Intent on Health, Safety and Welfare;
- directed the Strategy and Resources Committee to consider how support might be made available to ministers stationed in parts of the Connexion which are not UK jurisdictions;

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

- agreed to an addition to the City Centre List.

### 1.2 Other business

The Council also:

- heard reflections from the President and Vice-President on their year of office;
- witnessed the attestation of the Journal of the 2018 Conference.

Should members of the Conference wish to view them, Council papers and minutes are available on the website at [www.methodist.org.uk/council](http://www.methodist.org.uk/council)

### \*\*\*RESOLUTION

#### 20/1. The Conference receives the General Report of the Council.

#### SECTION H GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS COMMITTEE

1. The Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee (GRSOSC) of the SRC was established by the Methodist Council in January 2016 “to advise and support the Connexional Secretary and the Connexional Team to oversee the implementation, development and monitoring of the strategy” for expressing One Mission through Global Relationships of the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) (MC/16/8). It reports annually to the SRC and the Council.
2. The strategic vision when the Council approved the Global Relationships in Mission policy in 2016 was “that the Methodist Church in Britain will be a distinctive and highly effective global participant in mission, by means of true partnerships with sister Churches around the world, a focus on the places and programmes where our participation can make a difference locally and globally and evolution that encourages new initiatives while maintaining the best of what has gone before” (MC/16/8). The GRSOSC has been attempting to promote this vision and support the implementation of the strategy.

#### 3. A review of the mission partner programme

The Council received a report on the review of the mission partner programme and the summary recommendations which the Council adopted are as follows:

- The mission partner programme continues to enjoy widespread support across the Connexion. It is seen as an important expression of the engagement with

the World Church and benefits the MCB, Partner Churches and mission partners themselves.

- A small minority within the life of the Connexion question the relevance of this programme today and think it may still reflect outmoded models of mission. Yet there is general belief, with the recent changes in understandings of mission and the nature of the programme, that there is contemporary relevance. Most of those consulted wanted the programme to continue and recognised it as an expression of One Mission.
- While the grants programme continues and other forms of people-to-people programmes continue to be developed, these should not be an alternative to the ongoing mission partner programme. Many wanted to see more people brought to the UK too.
- There are some serious weaknesses in the communications related to the programme: telling the stories to churches across the Connexion, poor support for some mission partners (in a few areas – experience was varied), and links with Districts could be improved. Steps are being taken regarding these concerns.
- Questions were raised about the recruitment process, preparation, and the placements. Some partners wanted more contact and experience with the Partner Church before they went out. There was a feeling the whole programme needs to be properly resourced given the demands on staff time. More pastoral support and backing should be provided. A suggestion was to have voluntary accompaniers who could maintain regular contact with the mission partners.
- Concerns were shared about the level of stipends and terms of contracts.

The Director of Global Relationships is taking forward these points.

#### **4. Visits from Partner Churches and participation in the Conference**

As part of a two-way dialogue and exchange it is thought good to invite people from Partner Churches throughout the year (possibly one a month) to visit Local Churches, Circuits, Districts and other areas of work. This will enhance district links and twinning relationships, better understanding of mission and could deepen engagement with the worldwide Church. The British Connexion will be able to listen to and learn from Christians from our Partner Churches and these visits will support mission education, advocacy and our understanding of what it means to be part of a worldwide family. To be able to do this at no extra cost the Council proposes that, instead of having twenty people from autonomous conferences, other Methodist Churches and United Churches in which Methodists have joined coming to the Conference each year, we invite only eight persons. Having twenty people at the Conference has a limited impact and little opportunity to meet British Methodists apart from those who are understandably focused on the activities of the Conference. There would still be two

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

members of the Conference appointed from the associate members under clause 14(4)(d) of the Deed of Union (SO 107(3)) and World Church representatives would still participate in the ordination services.

The Council therefore recommends that SO 107 is revised as follows:

### **107 Associate Members**

(1) [...]

(ii) **twenty eight** persons appointed by other autonomous conferences, other Methodist churches and united churches in which Methodists have joined.

### **5. Role of the Sub-Committee**

The Council received a report on the work which GRSOSC had undertaken, in consultation with the SRC, about its future. The Council was pleased to hear of the way in which the Sub-Committee has evolved so as to ensure a more robust oversight of global relationships. To ensure a more holistic overview of the entirety of our global relationships, the Council agreed that the remaining work of the World Methodist Committee as defined in SO 335(3) should be incorporated into the work of the Global Relationships Committee<sup>1</sup>.

The Council therefore approved a new name for the Sub-Committee and revised terms of reference as follows:

The Sub-Committee shall be known as the Global Relationships Committee, to express the range of its responsibilities and accountability more clearly.

The task of the Global Relationships Committee (GRC) shall be to advise and support the Connexional Secretary and the Connexional Team to oversee the implementation, development and monitoring of the strategy of expressing One Mission through our Global Relationships (MC/16/8), particularly through the annual planning, budget and review process of the Church. The GRC should be embedded in the life, the work and structures of the Methodist Church. It should play a valuable role as a 'bridging' structure between the MCB, All We Can and other parts of the worldwide Methodist family.

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1 Responsibility for oversight of the exchange of pastorates is not included in these terms of reference as the scheme is not currently in operation (SO 335(3)(iii)) and as such reference to it should no longer be included in Standing Orders.

The Global Relationships Committee shall be appointed by the Council and report to the Council via the SRC, so that the SRC can continue to oversee the strategic use of funds.

The Committee shall be responsible for:

1. the development of new programmes and the balance between these and existing work;
2. planning and monitoring of activities, budgets and programmes covered in relation to the aims set out in the strategy;
3. overseeing the list of Partner Churches and organisations with which the Methodist Church works and supporting the regular refreshing of Partner Relationship Reviews;
4. evaluating the implications of continuing dialogue with All We Can and other worldwide ecumenical partners and developing how the Methodist Church relates to and works with these bodies now and in the future;
5. taking responsibility for activities and expenditure from the World Mission Fund to implement the strategic policy for global relationships in mission;
6.
  - a. keeping in review the Methodist Church's relationship with other member bodies of the World Methodist Council and advising the Methodist Council upon matters of concern;
  - b. overseeing arrangements for the participation of the Methodist Church in the World Methodist Council and its committees;
  - c. receive reports from those nominated to participate in the World Methodist Council and its committees;
  - d. propose the process for making nominations for people to participate in the World Methodist Council and its committees.
7. The Membership of the Committee shall be as follows:
  - a. Chair
  - b. Connexional Treasurer
  - c. the Connexional Secretary
  - d. one representative from each of the following: SRC, Council, All We Can, Methodist Women in Britain, the Methodist Church in Ireland
  - e. two others for their experience and expertise.

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

The Connexional Ecumenical Officer, the Director of Global Relationships, a member of the senior staff of All We Can and a member of the senior management group of the Connexional Team shall attend as participant observers.

8. the Committee will meet at least twice per year.

The Council therefore recommends that the Conference revoke SO 335, and adopt a new Standing Order to establish the Global Relationships Committee as a committee of the Council which shall in turn be responsible for approving the terms of reference of the Committee. In order to ensure that the Council can make amendments to the terms of reference and composition of the Committee in response to changes in global relationships, the Council is not recommending that the new Standing Order contain details of responsibilities of the committee.

### **1010 Global Relationships committee**

- (1) *The Methodist Council shall annually appoint a Global Relationships committee consisting of not more than ten members which shall report to the council through its Strategy and Resources Committee.***
- (2) *The council shall determine the terms of reference for the committee to ensure that the committee shall advise and support the Connexional Team in the implementation, development and monitoring of global relationships.***
- (3) *The council shall provide reports to the Conference on the nature of global relationships.***

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

- 20/2. The Conference receives the Report.**
- 20/3. The Conference amends SO 107 as set out in the Report.**
- 20/4. The Conference revokes SO 335.**
- 20/5. The Conference adopts SO 1010 as set out in the Report.**

### SECTION I

#### **MODEL TRUST 14(2A) USE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS BY OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS**

1. The 2016 Conference received a memorial raising the question of whether paragraph 14(2A) of the Model Trust should be amended to permit a lease of Model Trust premises to another Christian denomination for worship. Model Trust 14(2A) does not permit a licence of more than 12 months to another Christian denomination of Methodist premises.
2. In considering the matter the Conference noted that the requirements of Model Trust 14(2A) mean that no security of tenure can at present be offered to another Christian church or congregation unless such a church is able and willing to enter into a Sharing Agreement under the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969. The intention of Model Trust 14(2A) was to enable other Christian churches and congregations who did not wish to commit to a long-term agreement to use Methodist premises and to ensure that managing trustees know that no person, service or meeting for religious worship denies or repudiates the doctrinal standards as required by Model Trust 14(3). The Conference recognised that there are ongoing questions around the application of Model Trust 14(2A), particularly in respect of what is required in terms of a continuing local Methodist church when a licence is granted. The Conference also recognised that there are cases where worship by other Christian churches or congregations in part of a set of Methodist premises need not in any way impinge on Methodist worship in or other use of the remainder. The Conference directed the Methodist Council, in consultation with the Law and Polity Committee, to provide guidance on the application and use of Model Trust 14(2A) both in terms of its flexibility and limitations. The Council was also directed, in consultation with the Law and Polity Committee, to consider whether it is desirable to make any amendments to Model Trust 14(2A) and to bring any recommendations to the 2018 Conference.

#### **3. Consideration of paragraph 14(2A) by the Law and Polity Committee**

Paragraph 14 of the Model Trusts has, in its totality, raised numerous policy questions in recent years which go beyond whether it is possible to amend paragraph 14(2A) to allow for a longer licence or lease. The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) have produced guidance on the process for seeking permission to grant a licence of premises to another Christian denomination. TMCP have also produced a precedent licence for worship by another Christian denomination. So far as connexional policy is concerned the current practice is to grant consent under Standing Order 920 to licences within 14(2A) on the condition that continuing Methodist worship is taking place.

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

The Law and Polity Committee has given consideration to the question of whether or not paragraph 14(2A) can be amended to permit a longer licence or a lease of Methodist premises for Christian worship. Counsel's Opinion was obtained on that point and on whether the requirement of continuing Methodist worship is necessary in law. That Opinion has been carefully considered by the Committee and its conclusion is that whilst there may be practical matters that managing trustees need to consider, there is no legal or constitutional reason why paragraph 14(2A) should not be amended to permit a licence over twelve months or a lease, and nor is there any need for a requirement that Methodist worship be still continuing. Clearly managing trustees can currently and would continue to be able to enter into a Sharing Agreement with another Christian denomination rather than offering the licence or lease under paragraph 14(2A). Even if a longer licence or lease were permitted, a Sharing Agreement will still offer more security of tenure to another Christian church and ensure that there is parity between the sharing denominations where money has been invested into a Methodist building by another denomination.

### **4. Consideration of granting a lease or longer licence**

Managing trustees will need to consider a number of practical matters before granting a lease or longer licence to another Christian church or congregation, particularly if there is no continuing Methodist worship on the premises. Managing trustees need to consider how they can fulfil the requirements of SO 920 in keeping under review the teachings of non-Methodist public religious meetings which will be more difficult where there is no continuing Methodist local church utilising the site. Superintendent ministers and the connexional ecumenical officer will still need to consent to the issuing of a licence or lease under paragraph 14(2A) to ensure the Christian church or congregation will "not preach or expound God's Holy Word or perform any act as to deny or repudiate the doctrinal standards" which would be a breach of paragraph 14(2A), proviso (ii). Appropriate clauses for longer licences and leases will need to be drafted with a precedent being available to managing trustees to ensure compliance with the requirements of Standing Orders and the Model Trust.

There is no ability under the current Model Trust 20 policy of the Council for Methodist premises to be leased at an undervalue. Any lease or licence to another Christian church or congregation would still have to be upon the basis that they pay a market rent or that the best terms obtainable have been achieved.

### **5. Proposal**

In light of this the Council now proposes that the Conference amends Model Trust 14(2A) to remove the limitation of 12 months as follows:

2A) Notwithstanding that any of the members of any church or congregation hereinafter mentioned may not subscribe to the doctrinal standards, the managing trustees may with the consent of such person or persons as the Conference may by Standing Order prescribe permit the use of a place of worship or any other premises comprised in the property by members of one or more Christian churches or congregations, either for particular occasions or for a period ~~which shall not in any case exceed twelve months~~ **determined by the managing trustees**, provided that (i) such permission shall be given only upon terms that it is revocable by the managing trustees and (ii) such consent as aforesaid shall be given only in cases where to grant such permission would not (having regard to all the circumstances) offend the doctrinal standards.

### 6. **Practicalities of consultation**

A change to paragraph 14 of the Model Trust can only be made by deferred special resolution. Such a resolution is defined by section 2(1) of the Methodist Church Act 1976 as “a resolution of the Conference passed in one year by a special [ie 75%] majority and, after full consultation down to and including Local Church level, confirmed in the second following year by a special majority”. In other words, consultation is not just with the Synods, but with Circuit Meetings and Church Councils too, and the confirmation vote takes place two years, not one, later. SO 126 sets out that the Synods shall consider the deferred special resolution in the year following the passing of the resolution by the Conference with each Church Council and Circuit Meeting considering any such resolution in or before March in the second year (ie March 2021). Each Synod shall then in the second year consider the reports of the Church Council and Circuit Meetings (ie April/May 2021) and after giving its own final consideration to the resolution shall report its approval or disapproval to the Conference. As such a final decision on the amendment to the Model Trust will not be made until the 2021 Conference.

If the Conference wishes to propose the making of this amendment further work will need to be undertaken to develop a policy on the application and use of paragraph 14(2A). The Council proposes to undertake this work in conjunction with the Property Development Committee. The policy would clarify:

- (i) whether the upper limit for licences under paragraph 14(2A) should be increased, and if so to what extent or altogether;
- (ii) whether or not the requirement of continuing Methodist worship should be continued;
- (iii) whether leases should be permitted under paragraph 14(2A), and if so within what parameters as to length or otherwise.

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

Once a policy has been determined the Connexional Team will work with TMCP to produce a precedent license and lease.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

*The following resolution requires a 75% majority:*

**20/6. The Conference amends Model Trust 14(2A) as set out in the Report.**

**20/7. The Conference directs the Methodist Council to work with the Property Development Committee on the production of a policy in relation to Model Trust 14(2A) in its amended form and to consider such a policy no later than January 2021.**

### SECTION J

#### ONE MISSION FORUM

1. The 2014 Conference established the 'One Mission Forum' (OMF). It was envisaged that by 'meeting together to confer, share insights and develop vision' the Forum "will assist the Church in developing and implementing a strategic vision for mission which is both local and global."<sup>2</sup> Through this, we will work towards a vision of 'a world transformed by God's love, of being a confident Church motivated to share God's love and a Methodist people celebrating being part of a worldwide family.'<sup>3</sup>
2. Since 2015, the approach has been to hold two meetings of the forum each year to which representatives from each District were invited; although only one gathering was held in 2018 due to bad weather causing the cancellation of the March event at short notice.
3. Having indications that the OMF was not fulfilling all the original hopes and expectations for it, a decision was taken early in 2019 not to hold the planned March 2019 OMF event, and to explore whether there may be better ways to achieve the aims of SO 1001. Under the leadership of Dr Jill Barber who chairs the Forum, and to assist this discernment, a provisional decision was taken to hold a small number of district One Mission events that will enable the sharing of insights, conferring and developing of vision. The first such 'roadshow' is planned for the Cornwall District in November 2019, with promotional presentations and/or exhibition stands offered to the Districts for their Synods in the meantime.

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2 Conference 2014 Report 36: One Mission Working Party

3 Conference 2012 Report 25: Future Mission Together

4. The Council believes that it would be helpful to move towards more of a district focus and bring event/s to Districts, so that a broader constituency of Methodism can engage with One Mission thinking, resources and inspiration more locally. The Connexional Team currently has the capacity to support such an initiative and can reallocate budget to finance it.

5. The Council therefore proposes that SO 1001 is amended as follows:

**1001 One Mission Forum:** (1) The Methodist Council shall annually appoint a ~~One Mission Forum to discharge the following responsibilities~~ **ensure that the Connexional Team has the requisite resource to provide occasional events in the Districts that assist in:**

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

The Council proposes that clauses (2), (3) and (4) are revoked.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

20/8. **The Conference adopts the Report.**

20/9. **The Conference amends SO 1001(1) as set out in the Report.**

20/10. **The Conference revokes SO 1001(2), (3) and (4).**

### SECTION K MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The Council received a report on the work of the Ministries Committee.

#### 1. **Revised terms of reference and responsibilities**

The Committee reported to the Council that during the past year it had reflected on the additional responsibilities that had been allocated to it as a consequence of the disbanding of the Network Committee. Attention was also given to the ways in which

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

its work had developed since its inception in 2011. In light of this consideration the Council agreed to revise the terms of reference of the Committee to ensure that they better reflect the work required of the Committee by the Conference and the Council.

As part of this revision it was noted that the Committee now has responsibilities for developing and supporting the Church's partnerships that support learning and training and also for supporting the quality assurance, of learning, scholarship, research and development. Consequently the Council recommends to the Conference that SO 32A1(2) be amended to reflect this new responsibility.

### **2. The learning institutions**

- 2.1 Amongst the Ministries Committee's new responsibilities is reporting on the relationship with The Queen's Foundation and Cliff College. The Committee has reviewed a draft partnership agreement with The Queen's Foundation which was commended to the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC). In light of further work on the agreement the Committee expects to be updated on progress in May.
- 2.2 The Council agreed revised terms of reference for the Cliff College Committee.
- 2.3 The Committee has asked both Cliff College and The Queen's Foundation to report to it annually at its first meeting of the connexional year. This will give an opportunity for reflection on the previous academic year and enable early identification of areas that require work in the course of the year. The Principal (and some of the governors) of The Queen's Foundation will be invited to be present for that discussion; the Principal of Cliff College is, in any case, a consultant to the Ministries Committee.
- 2.4 The 2018 Conference adopted an amended reply to Memorial 2.

#### *M2 Local options for ministerial training*

*The Cumbria District Synod, Representative Session (Present: 76; Voting: 74 for, 0 against) wishes to express its gratitude for the work undertaken by the Faith and Order Committee since memorial M3 of 2017. The Synod would however like to express its deep concern that no additional work has been undertaken in relation to the encouragement of the Methodist people to consider vocational exploration for self-supporting ministry and appropriate options for training for such ministry at a time where many Districts are facing a shortage of ministers.*

*The Synod believes that the Mission and Ministry in Covenant report offers a timely opportunity for the Conference to consider how Methodism may benefit from a form of ministry that is so widely used by our Anglican colleagues through their non-stipendiary ministers. At a time when the numbers offering for Methodist ministry*

are so worryingly low we believe that there is a great deal to learn from the Church of England and the increase in candidates that they are seeing. In addition, the Synod strongly believes that local training is an important part of this imbalance in Methodist/Anglican ministry statistics.

The Synod therefore asks the Conference to:

- (a) *Instruct the Ministries Committee to explore the possibility of a trial whereby Cumbrian candidates for ordained ministry be allowed to train with their Anglican colleagues on the Common Awards Scheme training run by Cumbria Christian Learning.*
- (b) *Instruct the Discipleship, Ministries and Learning Network/Ministries Committee, in light of the Faith and Order report to the 2018 Conference, to prepare material encouraging the Methodist people to consider the vocational opportunities offered by self-supporting ministry.*

Reply

*The Conference is grateful to the Cumbria District Synod and understands the urgency with which it believes that this issue needs to be addressed. The memorial touches on a number of pieces of business that are to be considered by this Conference. Mission and Ministry in Covenant invites us to explore areas that relate to the mutual recognition of ordained ministries; Ministry in the Methodist Church asks the Church to consider the role of the ordained within the ministry of the whole people of God and raises questions about our understanding of itinerancy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; the report of the Methodist Council in response to the Review of Training considers whether or not initial ministerial training could or should be offered in more than one institution. The view of the Ministries Committee is that the low numbers of accepted candidates make it inappropriate to make any immediate change in the number of institutions through which initial formation is offered. The report on initial ministerial training the Ministries Committee presented to the Conference includes details on the non-residential training options that are open to accepted candidates.*

*The Conference accepts the first of the requests and directs the Ministries Committee to consider a possible pilot or pilots for training on local common award scheme courses, and how such training may be integrated with the Queen's Connexional Course.*

*The Conference is also aware of the changes in the Connexional Team that have been reported to the Council and which include the creation of the Ministries: Vocations and Worship Team. That team is already engaged in producing material to encourage members of the Church to consider a call to ordained ministry and that should include*

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

*encouragement to those who see their call as local and self-supporting to explore that with others and to offer for ministry in ways that are already open to them (as outlined in the response to memorials M2 and M3 in 2017). The Conference therefore accepts the second part of the memorial and directs the Ministries Committee to report to the Council in 2019 on the progress that has been made in this area.*

- 2.5 The Committee was directed to consider a possible pilot or pilots for accepted candidates to train with Anglican colleagues on a local ministry training programme within Common Awards and how it might be integrated with the Queen's Connexional Course. Detailed work uncovered the difficulties that such a pilot would create with the Office for Students. The Committee concluded that the risks involved for both The Queen's Foundation and the Methodist Church as the funding institution outweighed any benefit that a pilot might offer and therefore recommends that at this point no further exploration of a pilot is undertaken. In making this response, the Committee noted the value of the Circuit Based Learning Pathway which enables a student to undertake a significant part of her/his training in a Circuit close to her/his home and was pleased to learn that this is being widely promoted and that students are identified at an early stage. The Committee noted the desire of the Conference to see opportunities for self-supporting ordained ministry more widely supported and recognised that this needed to form part of the Vocations Strategy. The Exploring Ordained Ministries days and conversations with District Candidates' Secretaries will be used to ensure that all candidates are aware both that it is possible to candidate with limited deployability and that ministers are not obliged to accept a stipend.
- 2.6 As part of its continued reflection on the Training Review, the Committee considered the recommendation that initial ministerial formation (IMF) be a year longer than at present. The Committee was alert to the range of pathways that students pursue and to the way in which the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee (MCPOC) has enabled those students who would benefit from an extra year to extend their training, and concluded that the benefits of a longer course as normative are not apparent. The Committee therefore encouraged the Queen's Foundation and MCPOC to continue its policy of flexibility in allocations and welcomed the clearer assertions which are now made in candidating material and conversations with The Queen's Foundation that there are reasons why IMF might be extended by a year.

### **3. New places for new people**

#### **3.1 CIEMAL Programme**

The Ministries Committee in September 2017 considered the proposal for a scheme to invite mission partners from the Methodist Churches who are part of the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean (CIEMAL) to work with Circuits or Districts to help to revitalise their evangelism. The Ministries Committee

suggested that a pilot might be run. The Committee was therefore pleased to hear of progress in the Newcastle District with the support of the World Church Relationships Office and the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee to run a pilot.

### **3.2 Pioneers and Fresh Expressions**

- 3.2.1 The Committee was directed by the 2018 Conference [Resolution 32/6] “to continue to give attention to pioneer ministry and to ensure that there is a gathering of learning and opportunities for collaborative reflection on questions of practice, policy and theology”. It was therefore pleased to learn that, although the funding stream of Venture FX is coming to its end, two VFX projects will continue in different ways, that the VFX practitioners continue to hold learning and support days, organised by the practitioners themselves, and are exploring together how the experiences of VFX can inform future mission and especially the Methodist Pioneering Pathways, and that one of the first publications for the relaunched Cliff College Publishing brand will be a volume of theological reflections on the Venture FX experience.
- 3.2.2 The Fresh Expressions Community gatherings have grown in size with 70-100 people attending and are a very useful clearing house for sharing a lot of developments that are taking place across the ecumenical pioneering community.
- 3.2.3 The Methodist Pioneering Pathways (MPP) continues to grow and now constitutes 64 pioneers with one application in process. This is remarkable growth considering the very limited publicity that the scheme has received. Each region has a community of practice to support the pioneers and training is adapted to each pioneer’s specific needs. The Cliff College short course on pioneering is well used by this programme. Each pioneer is allocated a coach and work has taken place this year to establish a short course on *Coaching Christian Leaders* at Cliff College to better equip them. The regional communities of practice work in different ways and many of them are cooperating with other ecumenical pioneer gatherings.
- 3.2.4 Having appointed the Fresh Expressions Guiding Team, the Committee was supportive of a suggestion that, given the similar objectives of it and the MPP Implementation Group, the work of these two groups might be brought together in one guiding team so that a more coherent strategy can be developed for the ‘new places for new people’ work.

## **4. Lay ministries**

### **4.1 Church stewards**

The 2018 Conference passed Notice of Motion 109 directing the Ministries Committee to conduct a review of Standing Orders pertaining to church stewards and to bring any proposed amendments to the 2019 Conference. It seems premature to

suggest amendments to Standing Order 633. Standing Order 634, however, is more prescriptive and the Committee agreed that it no longer fits the practice or the need in many places. The Council has therefore directed that the joint work of the Faith and Order, Ministries and Stationing Committees on changing patterns of ministry includes a review of the particular duties of church stewards as set out in SO 634.

### 4.2 Supporting lay ministry

The Committee continues to consider how effective support can be offered for accredited local lay ministry and is pleased that progress has been made towards an apprenticeship standard for lay people who have significant roles in the life of the Church. The Committee has been kept up to date on the progress of an Apprenticeship Standard for Church Ministry (both lay and ordained), which is being developed by several ecumenical partners including the Methodist Church. The Church Ministry Apprenticeship Standard will give opportunities to the church to enable people to explore ministry and study for an apprenticeship degree. The standard has been benchmarked against the Common Awards (validated by the University of Durham) and Cliff College (validated by the University of Manchester) is developing a degree programme.

### 4.3 Local preachers

The Ministries Committee has:

- Seen and commented on a draft of an annual service at which local preachers are invited to reaffirm the promises made at admission.
- Seen guidance on the new peer review and guidelines for local preachers' meetings.
- Considered the needs of the Chinese congregations and the complexity of translating Worship: Leading and Preaching. It has therefore given permission for anyone exploring ministry as a local preacher within the Chinese work to be permitted to train on the Mandarin translation of *Faith and Worship* beyond March 2021.
- Received a report from the Local Preacher and Worship Leaders Studies Board proposing a change to its terms of reference for the Board. At present, the Studies Board is asked to report directly to the Council but both the Board and the Ministries Committee have agreed that this creates a confusing overlap of responsibilities which would be clarified if the Board were to report to the Ministries Committee.

### 4.4 Necessitous Local Preachers' Fund (NLPF)

This fund was formed in 1940 from the merger of three pre-existing funds designed to support local preachers in need and there are no remaining trustees. The Council

agreed that the Ministries Committee should now assume responsibility for it on the Council's behalf.

## 5. Matters relating to ordained ministries

- 5.1 The Committee recognised the huge amount of work that goes into our processes for discerning who is called to ordained ministry in the life of the Church. These processes are subject to constant revision and improvement. The Committee received reports from the Ministerial Candidates' Selection Committee on the integration of the new criteria (2016) into all the paperwork and interviews.
- 5.2 The 2018 Conference received a Memorial (M1) that asked the Conference to consider how those people who feel called to local ordained ministry, often non-stipendiary, might be trained. Although the Conference declined the memorial it asked the Ministries Committee to continue to bear in mind the issues raised in the memorial in the light of the Ministry in the Methodist Church report. The Committee was also asked to keep under review work to produce material to encourage members of the Church to consider a call to ordained ministry that should include encouragement to those who see their call as local and self-supporting.
- 5.3 The Committee received a brief report on a piece of research that will explore the reasons why some of those who consider candidating do not go any further. Those responsible for candidates have been clear with Superintendents and others about the possibilities of candidating with limited deployability and non-stipendiary ministry. This will also be apparent in the *Called to Ordained Ministries* days.
- 5.4 The Council was alerted that there is a discrepancy between the guidance given to candidates about the responsibility for submitting the notice of candidature form. The Council is minded that it is more appropriate for this to be the responsibility of the candidate than the Superintendent and recommends that SO 711(1) be amended accordingly, as follows:

(1) A candidate intending to offer for the diaconate or the presbyterate shall inform the Superintendent of the Circuit and, if different, the presbyter in pastoral charge of the church in which he or she is a member. ~~The Superintendent shall send one completed copy of a notice of candidature form to the secretary of the district Candidates Committee and one to~~ **The candidate shall request a notice of candidature form from** the Connexional Team member responsible for diaconal or presbyteral candidates **and shall return the form** no later than the date determined by the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee. The notice of candidature form shall include the assurances and assessment required under Standing Order 710(3)(a) and (b), a statement by the candidate about his or her

developing sense of call to the presbyterate or the diaconate, details of his or her present and future financial obligations and resources, and in the case of presbyteral candidates confirmation of his or her standing as a local preacher, **and in the case of a candidate for the diaconate confirmation of his or her standing in respect of the training programme as set out in SO 680(1)(ii).**

### 5.5 Manses Group

The Committee reported to the Council that, although the Conference had determined that the group should be chaired by a Past President, the manses subgroup had had no success in the attempt to find a past President of the Conference to replace the current Chair. Reflecting on this, the group suggested that it was not necessary for the chair to be a Past President but that it needed someone with an understanding and experience of stationing matching but who is not currently a member of the Stationing Matching Group. The Council therefore proposes to the Conference that its terms of reference be changed to read (i) a former Chair of District (chair).

### 5.6 Ministers of other Conferences and Churches

The 2017 Conference agreed the establishment of a small oversight group for Ministers of other Conferences and Churches in order to receive reports on the recommendations of the Ministerial Candidates' Selection Committee, the outcomes of initial stationing, the engagement of the Ministerial Coordinator for Oversight of Ordained Ministries with ministers of other Conferences and Churches, and on the supervision of the ministers of other Conferences and Churches. The Ministries Committee has now appointed such a group.

- 5.7 The 2017 Conference adopted a reply to M6 to consider the general issues around ministers serving in other denominations.

#### *M6 Serving another denomination*

*The Scotland District Synod, Presbyteral Session (Present: 36; Voting: 21 for, 9 against), is grateful for the ecumenical partnerships and working that are now available to us in Scotland and that our Standing Orders allow membership of more than one denomination. We express our sadness however that the procedures for presbyters wishing to serve another denomination (where there would be no requirement for re-ordination) are not being followed by all of our partner denominations and ask that the Ministries Committee collaborate with the appropriate partner denominations to improve the way in which these matters are conducted for a better serving of the present age with a view to reporting to the Conference of 2019.*

### Reply

*The Conference, like the Presbyteral Session of the Scotland District Synod, is grateful for the ecumenical partnerships in Scotland. It is also grateful that people can be members of the Methodist Church as well as of other Christian communions (Deed of Union, 8(e)(i)).*

*The Methodist Church has benefitted from the ministry of presbyters and deacons of other conferences and churches in various ways, usually by those individuals being recognised and regarded, authorised to serve, or associate ministers. Some other conferences and churches have their equivalent procedures but there are factors (for example, the way that oversight is exercised or the legal requirements of the nation in which the other church is located) that make reciprocity difficult in some instances. Our procedures for permitting ministers to serve another conference or church are set out in Standing Order 735. It is for each conference or church, including the Methodist Church, to follow its own procedures in these matters and it is desirable that conferences and churches understand each other's procedures and the reasons for them; in this way fruitful ecumenical sharing and learning can take place.*

*Standing Order 736(1) says, "The Conference shall seek to enter into mutually acceptable arrangements with other conferences and churches as to the well-being and terms of service of and their respective responsibilities for ministers of one conference or church serving for the time being under another." Whilst declining the specific request made in the memorial (as the Conference considers that this relates to the procedures of other denominations), the Conference does recognise that all such arrangements need to be kept under review and directs the Ministries Committee to consider the general issues raised by this memorial and to report to the Conference in 2019.*

Detailed consideration was given to the question; the Ministries Committee recognised in the light of the *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* proposals and the Covenancing Partnership in Wales that issues about exchange of ministry cannot be separated from broader issues about the relationships between Churches. The committee, therefore, will continue to work with the Connexional Ecumenical Officer to ensure that the wellbeing, terms of service, and respective responsibilities for ministers of one Conference or Church serving in another are considered in the context of meetings between Church leaders and that our information is clear and available to other Churches. The Committee does not believe that any more detailed reply can be given to M6 (2017).

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

**20/11. The Conference receives the Report.**

**20/12. The Conference amends SO 32A1(2)(iii) as follows:**

Developing and supporting the Church's structures, **partnerships** and resources for learning, training, **quality assurance**, scholarship, research and development;

**20/13. The Conference adopts the Report in paragraph 2.4 as its further reply to M2 (2018).**

**20/14. The Conference amends SO 711(1) as set out in paragraph 5.4.**

**20/15. The Conference amends the terms of reference of the Ministries Committee Manses Group to read (i) a former Chair of District (chair).**

### SECTION L MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

1. During the course of the year both the SRC and the Council gave some thought to a number of matters relating to oversight and trusteeship. Some of that consideration will be presented in one of the workshops to be held during the Conference.
2. The Council gave particular attention to the composition of the Memorials Committee. The Committee is established by SO 138 and meets once a year in late May to consider the memorials submitted by Circuits and Districts and to propose the replies which are to be put before the Conference. The Committee comprises a number of representatives from the Districts (on a rota basis). Each of the district representatives is intended to serve for three years to ensure some continuity – although this is often not possible for a variety of reasons. The prescribed membership of the committee is 20 persons.
3. The Council acknowledges that whilst the current composition of the Committee enables representation of just under half the Districts at any one time, the Committee is not connected to the full range of strategic thinking in the Church undertaken by other bodies. There is, for example, with the exception of the Secretary of the Conference and the Connexional Secretary, no overlap with the membership of the Council or the Strategy and Resources Committee. The deadlines for the submission of memorials and the short timescale for the drafting of replies to resource the Committee mitigate against a considered overview of the range of questions being

raised in a particular case by the Council, the SRC or any other committee charged with proposing policy. The Council concluded that it is not helpful for the Committee to stand alone in this way from other decision-making bodies given the importance of giving careful consideration to the view of the Districts and the Circuits as expressed in Memorials.

4. The Council therefore recommends to the Conference that the composition of the Committee is reviewed with a view to it being changed to include those who have more intentional links with other parts of the Church's oversight processes. This would serve to achieve greater coherence as the Conference seeks to honour the importance of the Circuits and Districts submitting memorials to the Conference, and ensuring that those memorials are given careful replies that relate to the activities of a range of bodies.
5. The Council is alert to the fact that any new composition would, whilst benefiting from being smaller, need to ensure a range of participation that reflects the breadth of connexional life drawn from a cross-section of Districts. In achieving this there would, as in all Committees, need to be careful listening both to the business of the relevant committee and the concerns of the wider Connexion.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**20/16. The Conference directs the Methodist Council to undertake a review of the role and composition of the Memorials Committee and to bring recommendations to the 2020 Conference.**

### **SECTION M THE UNFINISHED AGENDA**

1. The 2017 Conference received a report from the Council on 'The Unfinished Agenda – Racial Justice and Inclusion in the Methodist Church'. While commending the Methodist Church's long-standing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and examples of current good practice, the report noted with deep shame and sorrow that racism is still evident in the Church today. It explored a number of recurring themes over the past 50 years (belonging and exclusion, assimilation, inclusive leadership and participation and tokenism) and demonstrated that significant work is still required in order to give expression to the Church's belief that 'racism is a denial of the gospel' (Standing Order O13B).
2. The 2018 Conference received a progress report from the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee which recommended that a symposium be held in the

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

2018/2019 connexional year to consider the following key questions:

- A. What might we reasonably believe to be God's design in bringing together in the Methodist Church in Britain today preachers and members of such diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds?
- B. What might prevent people from diverse backgrounds from exercising leadership through engagement with the Church's committees and governance structures?
- C. What can be learned from examples of good practice in the life of the Church with regard to inclusion and participation (eg 3Generate)?

### 3. Work since the 2018 Conference

- 3.1 The EDI Symposium, entitled: Racial Justice: What is our Calling? was held on 1-3 March 2019. There were 80 representatives from across the Connexion, although sadly some Districts were unable to send anyone. The planning group for the Symposium wanted to adopt an approach that would not simply add to the list of resolutions passed and policies recommended, but would help participants to discover transformational possibilities for themselves and for the whole Church.
- 3.2 It was an ambitious undertaking, and the planning group, through its own reflection and the feedback received from participants, has identified a number of ways in which the event could have been more effective and helpful. For all the participants, coming with their own expectations, this way of working was a new experience. The richness of sharing both pain and joys were at the heart of the weekend which brought the Symposium to the cusp of developing prototypes that could be tested across the Connexion. The continuing work of the EDI Committee is now to develop these and find appropriate ways of sharing them across the Connexion.
- 3.3 Those attending the Symposium were encouraged to embrace the concepts presented which led to a more creative approach to examining issues through story-telling, the making of models and social theatre, resulting in the co-creation of prototypes which could potentially tackle the barriers to achieving racial justice and ultimately contribute to the Methodist Church's aspiration of becoming a truly inclusive Church.
- 3.4 The Council heard that the EDI Committee is now in the process of examining the information that was collected over the weekend as well as the feedback which has subsequently been submitted. However, in spite of the acknowledged incompleteness of the Symposium, the Council noted that following gains have been recognised:

- a. This was the largest and most diverse Methodist gathering in recent years to explore how the Methodist Church can be more truly 'an inclusive multi-cultural community of faith';
  - b. The focus on story-telling, and the repeated encouragement to listen intentionally and respectfully, allowed a number of the participants to broaden their awareness of the issues involved, and to develop deep relationships with people from very different backgrounds, whom they were meeting for the first time;
  - c. There is now, around the Connexion, a significant number of people who have gained some experience of the approach utilised at the symposium and as such they have seen how specific practices of 'Theory U' which was used at the Symposium can be used to make explicit the complexities of structures and relationships that can be hindrances as we try to discern what it means to be 'an inclusive, multi-cultural community of faith' within the 'single new humanity in Christ';
  - d. The Connexional Team has already made an investment in this way of working through the Learning Network, and the EDI Committee hopes that in other parts of the Connexion there will be more engagement with this practice;
  - e. The EDI Committee intends to make this a dimension of its further work with those who attended the Symposium.
- 3.5 During the Symposium, several participants pointed to the parallels with the issues of equality and inclusion that were seen in relation to disability, sexuality, gender and age, and emphasised the importance of intersectionality (that is, unfavourable treatment resulting from the overlap of various social identities). In light of this the Committee has expressed its commitment to understanding discrimination more fully, and addressing it across all protected characteristics, ensuring that no false hierarchy is created.
- 3.6 Both the Council and the Committee recognise also that the practice of hospitality lies at the heart of what it means to be a truly multi-cultural inclusive community of faith. This must be the basis of what we should offer as the Church, both locally and connexionally, and will encourage and empower people from all areas of society to feel safe, equal and affirmed among us.
- 3.7 The Committee would like to develop and offer 'transformative pathways' for individual members as well as groups and Committees in the Church. Using the framework of *Our Calling* it aims to help people become more aware of the particular

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

challenges of diversity, and to respond in creative ways that will enrich the whole Connexion and wider society.

### 4. Increasing participation

4.1 The 2017 Conference directed the Methodist Council to develop and implement measurable and time bound plans that will increase participation and inclusion, and to report to the 2018 Conference on how the plans are progressing. The Symposium was the first stage of addressing this, however, the Council was concerned that this work has not evolved with sufficient urgency and as such:

- i. *Directed the Committee as a matter of urgency to propose to the Strategy and Resources Committee a costed and measurable programme to take forward the work identified by the Symposium.*
- ii. *In order to assist the Committee in its work of shaping the Methodist Church to be the inclusive Church we have long committed ourselves to be; agreed to establish a task group to:*
  - (i) *define the Council's EDI strategy giving careful attention to all areas of inclusion.*
  - (ii) *work closely with the connexional EDI adviser*
  - (iii) *review the composition of the EDI Committee.*
  - (iv) *bring an initial report to the next meeting of the Council, and a final report to the Council no later than March 2020.*

5. The Council, along with the Committee, acknowledged that there is still much work to be done. The Symposium was not a means of providing complete answers to the key questions that the Conference has previously highlighted, rather it offered a way of deepening understanding of the first, and of developing a transformative framework for engaging with the second and third.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

**20/17. The Conference receives the Report.**

**20/18. The Conference, aware of the amount of work still to be undertaken in addressing the sin of racism, acknowledges the hurt and pain that continues to be caused by racism, which results in exclusion and an unwelcoming environment.**

### SECTION N

#### APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL BETWEEN CONFERENCES

1. At present only the Conference is permitted to appoint voting members of the Methodist Council, unless there is a particular delegation for a specific purpose. This enables the Conference to exercise its oversight responsibility and to maintain an overview of the membership of the Council in any given year.
2. The Council believes, however, that there are times when it seems appropriate for the Council to be able to make an appointment of a voting member of the Council. It does not seem reasonable for a District, for example, to lose their vote on the Council because their appointed representative finds that they are unable to continue on the Council part way through the year.
3. It is proposed that this provision would only apply where a replacement was needed owing to a resignation from the Council (perhaps for reasons of ill health or a change of circumstances) or loss of eligibility or qualification between the close of the Conference and the start of the second meeting of the Council in a connexional year.
4. Such appointments would apply to the particular connexional year only, and would be reported to the next Conference.
5. It would still be the case that a substitute who attended meetings during the year on an ad hoc basis would have the right to speak but not vote.

#### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

**20/19. The Conference adopts the Report.**

**20/20. The Conference amends SO 210 as follows:**

**210 The Methodist Council.** (1) There shall be a Methodist Council appointed annually by the Conference which in addition to the ex-officio members shall consist of:

(i) to (ii) *(unaltered)*

(iii) four district Chairs nominated by the Chairs' Meeting with a view to meeting the needs of the Council and reflecting the varying experience of the Chairs across the Connexion;

(iv) one representative of each home District, being either a lay person or a minister

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

(other than a district Chair), nominated in accordance with clause (2)(a) below;

(v) to (x) (*unaltered*)

(2) (a) The persons appointed under head (iv) of clause (1) above shall be nominated by their respective Synods for a period of four years, having regard to concerns for equality, diversity and inclusion, being in each case a person who would be entitled under Standing Order 417(1) to be a representative of that District to the Conference. If a person ceases to be so qualified, the Synod shall make a new nomination **for appointment by the next ensuing Conference** for the remainder of the term. The Conference shall periodically approve a rota for the purpose of determining from year to year which Districts shall be represented by lay persons and which by ministers.

(2)(b) to (7) (*unaltered*)

**(8)(a) If, more than fourteen days before the date fixed for the second meeting of the council in any connexional year, a person appointed to the council under clause (1)(iii), (iv), (vi), (viA), (vii,) (viii) or (ix) above resigns, ceases to be eligible under clause (6) above or, if appointed under clause (1)(iv), ceases to be qualified under that clause, the council shall have authority to appoint to its membership with immediate effect until the next Conference an eligible and (where appropriate) qualified replacement for that person.**

**(b) Any appointments made under this provision shall be reported by the council to the Conference.**

### **SECTION 0 CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

1. Under SO 136 the Council is required to send a nomination to the Conference in respect of the chair of the Conference Business Committee (Representative Session). The chair must be an ex-President or ex-Vice-President and serve for three years. There is no prohibition on the term of the appointment being extended.
2. The Council recommends to the Conference that Mr David Walton be appointed to serve as Chair of the Conference Business Committee for two further years (the Conferences of 2020 and 2021).
3. David Walton has brought considerable wisdom and experience to the role of Chair of the Conference Business Committee since assuming the role in 2017. David has brought his experience of chairing the Methodist Council, the Law and Polity Committee and as a Vice-President of the Conference and Record Secretary to this

role. He is recognised as a good Chair of the twice daily meetings of the Committee during the Conference, preparing thoroughly and expediting business efficiently and effectively within the time available. He represents the Committee to the Conference and to individuals firmly and yet sensitively. He is an excellent judge of the mood of the Committee, and also of the Conference, and is able to contribute appropriately to discussions in the light of that. The Council is confident in David's ability to discern carefully the needs and work of the Conference for a further period of two years, and warmly nominates him to the Conference for appointment as Chair of its Business Committee until the adjournment of the Conference in 2021.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**20/21. The Conference appoints Mr David S Walton as Chair of the Conference Business Committee for a further period of two years, until the adjournment of the Conference of 2021.**

## **SECTION P METHODIST SCHOOLS COMMITTEE**

### **Introduction**

1. The primary purposes of the Methodist Schools Committee are to ensure positive and constructive collaboration between the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST), the Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST), the Wesley Trust and their schools, to share resources, to encourage the development of the Methodist ethos in all our schools and to provide annually a coordinated report to the Conference through the Methodist Council on behalf of all Methodist Schools.

### **Joint Working and Initiatives**

2. The Trusts have worked together in the following ways:
  - a. Actively engaging with the Methodist Schools Committee (MSC).
  - b. Commencing through the MSC the necessary processes of discussion and identification of key areas of work required to enable the MSC, in due course, to submit to the Conference a Schools' educational strategy for the Church.
  - c. Through the Ethos Development Group sharing experience and needs across the Trusts including, for example, the new Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools (known as SIAMS).
  - d. The website, [www.methodistschools.org.uk](http://www.methodistschools.org.uk), launched in September 2017 has

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

- been added to with new resources for school worship, assemblies, governance and leadership.
- e. MAST and MIST have held conferences inviting Heads and/or Trustees from each Trust to attend; at the MIST Schools Conference in April we welcomed Heads of Methodist Schools not only from the UK but also Ireland, South Africa and Australia.
  - f. Adapted staff responsibilities, made new appointments and established arrangements for servicing needs of the three Trusts from a shared Methodist Schools office.
  - g. Collaboratively preparing and presenting materials and resources for worship at the Conference and working together to offer a Methodist Schools' presence for Conference representatives to meet with and engage.

### **Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST)**

#### 3. Facts and Figures:

- There are currently 66 Methodist maintained schools under the Council's oversight, educating approximately 15,000 children.
- 26 of our schools are solely Methodist and the rest held in partnership trusts, most commonly with the Church of England. All are in the primary phase.
- About half of our schools are in the North West of England (predominantly in the Districts of Lancashire and Bolton and Rochdale), with the rest scattered across England covering, in all, 40 different Local Authorities and 18 Dioceses.
- Currently 13 MAST schools are academies in non-Methodist groups; this requires a particular kind of MAST oversight to ensure that the academy chains are honouring the schools' Methodist foundations.
- In OFSTED terms, just over 91% of Methodist schools are currently judged good or outstanding.
- In the SIAMS framework 98% of our schools are good or better; 65% are outstanding. Amongst church schools across the country, this is a particularly good marker.

4. In September 2017, Mr Alan Davies succeeded the Revd David Deeks as Chair of MAST. With the creation of the Wesley Trust as a separate vehicle for the academies developments, MAST has been able to refocus its work and concentrate on its primary responsibilities, as delegated to it by the Methodist Council, of securing standards and ethos across all the Methodist schools in the maintained sector. Within this, priority has been given to ensuring that the schools are visited, their performance is monitored and that they are supported when they encounter periods of difficulty or transition.

5. MAST schools are well regarded for their standards as a group overall, which is testimony to the quality of their work; where they have gone through periods of vulnerability, MAST can demonstrate that it has a creditable track record of supporting schools to improve. This is particularly important as, in most parts of the country, Local Authorities are no longer able to support school performance. However, Methodist schools are about much more than test results and all our schools are required to give a high profile to breadth of curriculum and well-being across the life of the whole school.
6. A particular project for MAST this year has been the development of the new Church school inspection framework (SIAMS), in partnership with the Church of England. This is the primary means by which the Council's responsibilities for the Christian character of its schools is secured. Although both churches have shared a strong inspection programme for a number of years, cumulative changes in education and wider society have led to the development of a deeper schedule focused on the strands of: vision, wisdom, hope, community and dignity. The Methodist appendix has been reworked to give schools and inspectors a richer language with which to talk about our distinctive perspective. Although schools are busy places and change is always challenging, initial consultation suggests that this more reflective approach has been welcomed.
7. MAST has been able to give significant high quality support to a number of schools and become a more familiar presence for the majority of Methodist schools over the course of the year. MAST has run two major schools' conferences, governor training, SIAMS training and new Headteacher support. There has been particular work with a small number of schools experiencing complex issues. Almost all the schools have been visited at least once and some several times. In the support of the schools, the love of the local Circuit and Methodist congregations is invaluable. However, as a small organisation with a limited infrastructure, the ongoing issue for MAST is one of capacity, not capability. Going 'to those who need us most' sometimes means that those with more general needs have felt less part of the group and two part-time education leaders brought in by the group have been very stretched. From spring 2019, the support of the Southlands Methodist Trust and the Westminster College Oxford Trust has meant that MAST has been able to appoint a full-time Head of Service. This will ensure that the substance and reach of the excellent support MAST has been able to provide to schools in targeted areas will be extended much more widely and with much greater impact. This will also be true of MAST's already strong reputation in the wider national education community.

### Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST)

#### 8. Facts and Figures:

- There are currently 21 independent schools linked in some way to MIST: Trust Schools (9), Acquired Schools (5), Associated Schools (3), Affiliated Schools (4) – a full list and details can be found on the website: [www.methodistschools.org.uk](http://www.methodistschools.org.uk)
- MIST is directly responsible for the 9 Trust Schools and as Sole Member of the Trusts of the 5 acquired schools; the General Secretary of MIST is a Governor at the Associated Schools and one of the Affiliated Schools.
- There are over 10,000 pupils on roll in Methodist Independent Schools.
- Fifteen schools have boarders as well as day pupils giving a significant national and international reach to the work of Methodist Education.
- Four schools are for children of nursery and primary age only, two have pupils from 11 to 18 only and the rest offer continuity of education from 3 to 18.
- All the schools are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspection Service (ISI) which reports to OFSTED; all such inspections in the past academic year have confirmed high standards in all the schools. Copies of independent school inspection reports are published on each school's website and at [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)
- Chairs of District are ex-officio Governors of any Methodist Independent Schools in a District.
- In academic year 2017/2018 MIST schools provided £5,867,000 in means-tested bursaries to help hundreds of children to attend the schools whose family circumstances would otherwise restrict access; these bursaries are funded by a mixture of funds raised from using school facilities out of term or school time and from diverting a proportion of the fees paid by all to support the costs of others. In addition the Methodist Bursary Fund made awards for Methodist families attending MIST (Trust and Acquired) schools totalling £80,000 and a further £32,000 for such families attending Associated or Affiliated schools.

9. The Department for Education has now launched the Boarding School Partnership Scheme (BSP), inviting schools to offer long-term bursaries for young people currently Looked After in the care of their Local Authority. More than 25% of the first schools to get involved in the scheme are Methodist Schools. Lord Agnew commented, *"We know that boarding schools can be highly effective in improving both social and educational outcomes for vulnerable young people who could otherwise have quite chaotic lives. This commitment from so many of our best boarding schools to work with local authorities and subsidise boarding school placements will have a hugely positive impact on many vulnerable children"*.

10. Outside of this scheme, Methodist Independent Schools have a strong reputation for working with young people in need. For example, at Queens College (Taunton) and at

Shebbear College (Devon), several Syrian refugee children continue to benefit from a fresh start at school in the UK thanks to partnerships with local charities.

11. Methodist schools are actively engaged in local community partnerships with a wide range of social groups, sports clubs and schools; putting their facilities to good use for wide benefit. Some such activities are informal, others subject to more formal agreements. Woodhouse Grove School and One In A Million Free School (OIAMFS), Bradford, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding detailing a new collaboration between them. Kent College has established a social mobility fund to enable disadvantaged young people from the inner city to join the College in the Sixth Form. Following the dissolution of Cornwall Council's music service at the end of 2014, Truro School was instrumental in helping to establish The Cornwall Music Service Trust (CMST) which is now hosted at Truro School. CMST now employs and manages well over 100 peripatetic music teachers and music therapy teachers, delivering a music service to 82% of all Cornish schools.
12. Methodist schools are also actively engaged in international outreach and partnerships. Ashville College in Harrogate, Kingswood School in Bath and Culford School in Suffolk, for example have long-established links with sustainable projects in Malawi. This summer, students and staff from Kent College Canterbury visited their school and community partner schemes in Tanzania. Since 2005, Kent College Pembury (KPC) has sponsored the Shree Deurali Primary English School based in the remote region of Lahachok in Nepal; over these years KPC has funded new classrooms, toilets, fresh water supplies, provided teaching resources and funded teacher training. In all such partnership activity, however, the student visits leave a lasting impression. A student provided a personal experience presentation at the Training Day for leaders of G2L AIMS (Global to Local Action in Methodist Schools); that day the delegates also participated in useful sessions from All We Can, the National Citizenship Service and Action for Children. These international partnerships are making a lasting impact in the communities and changing attitudes in our students.
13. Methodist Independent Schools are determined to continue to provide an all-round education infused with a strong Christian ethos informed by their Methodist foundation in an era of political, economic and social scepticism, uncertainty and change. They are committed to doing everything within their power to increase the number of bursaries available to enable the offer of places to as wide a cross section of the community as possible, though several schools are currently working within the constraints of deficit budgets. The announcement of a 43% increase in the employer's contribution to teachers' pension scheme, the likelihood of business rates relief being withdrawn and the possibility of VAT being applied to school fees threaten to make them less, rather than more, affordable.

### **The Wesley Trust**

14. The Wesley Trust was created in 2017 to provide a vehicle for maintained Methodist Schools to become academies: to provide support and services where Local Authorities no longer have the capacity; whilst being more closely associated with the Methodist Church. The Trust is unusual in being accepted by the DfE as a new multi-academy trust with aspirations to cover the whole of the UK whilst encouraging its schools to maintain and develop flexible local relationships as they chose.
15. Since its establishment the Wesley Trust has brought together an impressive Board of Trustees with an appropriate range of skills including eminent educationalists as well as those with expertise in law, HR, finance and property, both from within, and independent from, the Methodist Church. Its Founding Chair is Mr Alan Davies who provides a useful overlap (along with a number of other Trustees) in also chairing MAST (Methodist Academies and Schools Trust). A small but dynamic Executive Team has been established with expertise in the running of schools and school improvement as well as the financial and legal aspects required in establishing academies and Multi Academy Trusts. The CEO is seconded part time from one of the MIST schools and there are close relationships envisaged with the newly appointed staffing in MAST.
16. The Wesley Trust converted its first academy on 1 September 2018 following a great deal of work to resolve various issues in gaining approval by the Schools Commissioners' Office. The first academy is Nutgrove in St Helens. (It is likely that Nutgrove was also the first maintained Methodist School in the country having been first opened in 1811.) The second school became an academy on 1 December 2018: Rosehill Methodist School which is in Oldham.
17. A number of other discussions are continuing with schools in the North West. A particular area of work is being undertaken with the Manchester Diocese to find a way forward for jointly founded Anglican/Methodist Schools. Work has also progressed in other areas of the Connexion for the Wesley Trust: meetings with Heads and Governing Bodies of schools have been undertaken around Canterbury and Ashford, in Telford, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.
18. Another opportunity for the Wesley Trust is the creation of new schools in line with the Education Commission's recommendation to the 2012 Conference.

### **Our Calling is lived out and reflected in the life and work of the Trusts and the Schools:**

19. Methodist Schools continue to be distinguished by their commitment to a distinctive ethos. This has particularly been reinforced over the 18 months through the focus

on context and vision in the new SIAMS schedule, prompting schools to revisit the fundamental questions of 'Who are we? Why are we here? How then do we live?' or, phrased in Methodist terms, 'What is the work of God in this place?' and then ensuring that this distinctive understanding of purpose is understood across the whole school community.

20. It is common for church schools to describe worship as the 'beating heart' of the school. Worship is collective rather than corporate, invitational not compelled, taking into account the range of standpoints and experiences of people in the school. Its character is distinctively Methodist but its traditions can vary according to the context of the school. For example, at one of our schools the recent inspection commented on the vibrant nature of worship and the ways in which it enriches the already strong relationships with the local church. Our schools are committed to ensuring that worship is engaging, creative and participative – in the planning and delivery but also in the monitoring and evaluation. 'Assemblies' are not only important for the children, but also for the parents and families who also sometimes attend. They are often the only contact which people have with the message of the Church and the person of its ministers. They have often led to the reported comment from parents, "For us, you are our church".
21. All our schools are heavily invested in Learning and Caring. The quality of pastoral care remains an outstanding feature and one which strongly attracts parents from all backgrounds to Methodist education. Mental health and wellbeing is given particular priority. Many of our schools have invested in Mental Health First Aid training and the new SIAMS framework asks inspectors to consider how the school contributes to the wellbeing of people within and, sometimes, beyond the school. The Methodist Schools website continues to develop as a home for supportive resources for learning themes which particularly support our ethos including a training module for school staff, and SIAMS inspectors, about the Methodist story and approach in education. There are strong contributions from the Pastoral Visitor, as lead chaplain of the group who supports staff with a range of assembly resources. There are also strong links with All We Can, with a growing number of Methodist schools taking up the Partner Schools programme and widespread take up of the seasonal resources. It is a hallmark of our schools that children learn about living 'on a wider map'.
22. "For us, you are our church". As public bodies, Methodist Schools might be cautious in their use of the language of 'evangelism' but, in reality, telling God's story is their full-time occupation. Our schools live out the words of Psalm 67, "that your way may be known upon earth" (NRSV). They keep the 'rumour of God' alive, often within communities for whom the gospel message seems distant or irrelevant. Through the schools' work with children and their wider communications with families, the seed of the message can fall on otherwise barely cultivated ground. All the schools

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

express a clear Christian vision for their work and articulate Christian values, exploring constantly with children what it might mean to live them out. Under SIAMS our schools' vision and policies are measured according to the extent to which they articulate Christian imperatives such as forgiveness and reconciliation. Children who have struggled elsewhere speak of finding a fresh start or life-changing opportunities through moving to one of our schools. The Christian way of being is the visible plumbline toward which the life of the school aspires, from Early Years to Sixth Form.

23. As schools construct their ethos more visibly around the headings of *Our Calling*, they are supported by the local minister or chaplain and are supported centrally by the Ethos Development Group.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTION

#### 20/22. The Conference receives the Report.

#### SECTION Q HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1. The 2018 Conference passed Notice of Motion 2018/207 on human trafficking and:
  - iv directed the Methodist Council to appoint a task group in conjunction with the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), to review the existing available resources and, drawing upon them, produce a set of easily accessible theologically reflective and practical materials (to be made available via the Methodist Church website) which can be used to raise awareness among Methodists, to assist in individual and collective decision making, and to influence government policy at a local and national level in response to the reality of Modern Slavery and Human Traffickingand required the task group to report to the Conference of 2019.
2. The Methodist Council appointed a working group<sup>4</sup> made up of the signatories of the notice of motion to take on this work. They worked with Bethan Laughlin, the intern working with the Joint Public issues Team, to put together the resources requested by the Conference.
3. A web page has been created within the JPIT website which will be launched in time for the Conference.

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4 The Revds David Hardman, Paul Worsnop, Ian Rutherford, Sheryl Anderson, Cathy Bird

4. Due to the immense amount of work being undertaken by many anti-slavery/trafficking organisations, the web-page predominantly signposts people towards other resources. These will help individuals, classes, ministers, young people and congregations get involved with learning, acting and praying to end modern slavery, exploitation and human trafficking. Resources include: information on the scale of modern slavery nationally and internationally; theological reflection; sermon ideas; videos/media that could be shown in services; resources for young people, youth leaders and children's workers; and ideas for political action.
5. There will be some new video interviews with organisations such as Adavu, giving people an insight into the work done by anti-trafficking organisations.
6. Additionally, a number of posters will be available for churches to download. These will aim to help people to 'Spot the Signs' of exploitation and modern slavery in the UK and know how to report it and help.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

#### **20/23. The Conference receives the Report.**

#### **20/24. The Conference encourages churches to use the resources referred to in the Report and to increase their awareness of human trafficking and what they can do to prevent it.**

### SECTION R

#### **M22 (2016) SAFEGUARDING SYSTEMS**

1. The following memorial was brought to the 2016 Conference, and the reply shown below was adopted:

*M22            Systems for recording safeguarding cases*

*In light of the revised guidance Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for Church of England and The Methodist Church, the Southend and Leigh (34/10) Circuit Meeting (Present: 43; Voting: unanimous) recommends and requests that the Methodist Church develops a secure connexional online system for safeguarding recording and reporting to ensure consistent and effective compliance with data protection legislation, and good practice. This system could be part of the Methodist online suite.*

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

### *Reply*

*The Conference thanks the Southend and Leigh Circuit Meeting for highlighting the importance of storing the required safeguarding information and that this be in a secure and compliant environment.*

*The revised guidance Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for Church of England and The Methodist Church should be followed across the Connexion and is available on the Church website.*

*The Conference directs the Methodist Council to oversee an investigation of the potential feasibility and cost of a system as described in the memorial and to report back no later than the 2018 Conference.*

2. The 2018 Conference was informed (Referred Memorials and Notices of Motion, page 553 of the 2018 Conference Agenda) that the Council had identified a set of principles to be followed as well as areas that require further testing, and that a costed plan would be brought to the Council in 2019.
3. This report is brought by way of further update, noting that it is not yet possible to bring a costed plan.
4. It is clear that there would be a substantial cost to this work, both financial and in terms of staff resource, but that the level of this (and the balance between finances and staff resource) would depend on the type of system that is envisaged. Some work has been done on identifying the options and what the preferences might be, noting the particular issues relating to data protection which apply both to current practices and to any future developments.
5. It is also understood that work is underway in this area within the Church of England. It therefore seems sensible to consult with colleagues there as to whether there is any synergy to be achieved.
6. The Council therefore informs the Conference that there has been a delay to this work while further research is undertaken. Explorations will be undertaken with the Church of England and other potential partners over the next six months with a view to bringing proposals forward to the Strategy and Resources Committee before the end of 2019 for inclusion in the budget for 2020/2021.

**\*\*\*RESOLUTION****20/25. The Conference receives the Report.****SECTION 5  
NET ZERO EMISSIONS**

1. In 2009 the Methodist Church published *Hope in God's Future* in order to set out a Methodist understanding of the challenges facing our global ecology and the theological and ethical implications. The report provided an account of the peer-reviewed science and the implications for Christian discipleship. It was compiled in conjunction with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the United Reformed Church. In 2011 *Hope in God's Future* was adopted by the Conference as a Statement of the Judgment of the Conference.
2. *Hope in God's Future* endorses the UK Government target for reductions in greenhouse gas as legislated in the 2008 Climate Change Act. The Climate Change Act requires UK-wide emissions reductions of 80% by 2050 and requires five year carbon budgets that are currently agreed as far as 2032. The Methodist Church seeks to reduce its own emissions in keeping with these targets, although this is not possible to measure with any precision.

**New evidence on urgent action to tackle climate change**

3. Since the national targets were identified, both the scientific evidence and the global ambition for action have developed further. In 2015 the international Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published the Fifth Assessment Report to bring policy makers and the public up to date. The report concluded that changes to global climate already observed are unprecedented over decades to millennia. In Paris in 2015, governments agreed to take the action necessary to constrain global average temperature rise to well below two degrees above pre-industrial levels. In 2018 the IPCC published a report on the impacts of a greater than 1.5 degree global warming and provided an assessment of the actions required to avoid this scenario. Consequently the UK Government has asked the Committee on Climate Change to provide advice in 2019 on a net-zero emissions ambition for the UK.
4. The IPCC report on the impact of 1.5 degrees global warming states that for stabilisation of global temperatures at this level global net zero carbon emissions would most likely need to be achieved around 2050 (with an interquartile range of 2045 to 2055). However this relies on the availability and affordability of substantial amounts of carbon capture and storage technology in the latter half of the 21st Century, a scenario that seems uncertain at best.

## 20. Methodist Council, part 2

5. It is clear that the commitments of both the Methodist Church (as represented in the Statement of the Conference) and the UK Government to advocate for concerted global action to avoid potential catastrophic effects of climate change now requires a reassessment of our UK carbon targets.
6. If global net zero emissions is to be achieved at 2050 then developed nations (as these nations still have higher per capita emissions than most) must achieve a zero carbon economy before 2050. On the basis of the scientific evidence available today, it is clear that the UK's resources, technology and ingenuity should be used to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the UK well before 2050.
7. The Council therefore recognised that, since the publication of *Hope in God's Future* in 2009, the peer-reviewed science around climate change suggests that the UK and other nations must accelerate their ambition to reduce emissions. This will enable the Methodist Church, through the Joint Public Issues Team, to continue its advocacy work on climate change, and, along with many others, push for net zero carbon emissions in the UK well before 2050.
8. In January 2018 the Methodist Council endorsed proposals for the development of Eco Circuits and Eco Districts, along with the well-established Eco Church awards. Eco Church is a programme of A Rocha (a Christian organisation engaging communities in nature conversation) and run in partnership with a number of Churches including the Methodist Church. Eco Church, Eco Circuit, Eco District are one accessible and corporate way in which people throughout the Connexion can engage with the need for more ambitious climate change targets.
9. The Council commended those churches and Circuits that have expressed interest or have received awards, and acknowledges this movement to be an important expression of the concern of the Methodist people to protect our common future.

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

**20/26. The Conference receives the Report.**

**20/27. The Conference, noting that *Hope in God's Future* advocated a reduction in UK greenhouse gas emissions of at least 80% by 2050, acknowledges that the achievement of net zero emissions in the UK before 2050 implies further ambitious work in relation to this target.**