

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Methodist Council held on 29-30 January at the Wesley Hotel, Euston**

**Present:** The President (for the first session), the Vice-President and 45 voting members.

**Apologies:** The Revd David Gamble, the Revd Ken Howcroft, the Revd Robert Hufton, Mrs Jean Jackson, The Revd Ward Jones, The Revd Loraine Mellor, The Revd Leo Osborn

**Observers:** The Revd David Grosch-Miller (URC Observer), Mr Ted Awty (Connexional Treasurer), Mr John Chastney (Chair of the Audit Committee), Ms Jude Levermore, Mr Nick Moore (members of the senior leadership group of the Connexional Team), the Revd Nicola Price-Tebbutt (Secretary, Faith and Order Committee), Mrs Louise Wilkins (Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice), Mr Andrew Maxfield (maternity cover for Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice)

**In attendance:** The Revd Michaela Youngson (in place of Ward Jones), Mrs Helen Woodall (in place of Jean Jackson), Anna Drew (Media Team), Jane Bates (Minutes), Sharon Hassanali

In the absence of the Chair of the Council, it was agreed that the meeting should be chaired by the President, the Vice-President and the Ex Vice-President respectively.

### **14.1.1 Letters**

The Council agreed to send letters of greeting to Mr Roger Davies, retiring Chief Executive Officer of Methodist Homes, and to Mr Adrian Bagg, newly appointed CEO of Methodist Homes.

### **14.1.2 Appointment of new members of the Council [MC/14/1]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**1/1. The Council appoints Joy Blake as a representative of the Sheffield District to the Methodist Council until the end of the connexional year 2013/14.**

### **14.1.3 Minutes of the Methodist Council**

Deleting the words 'be appointed' at minute 13.3.24, the minutes of the Methodist Council held on 14 and 15 October 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **14.1.4 Matters Arising [MC/14/2]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**2/1. The Council notes the report.**

### **14.1.5 Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 27 November 2013**

Peter Howdle, Chair of the SRC, presented the draft minutes of the SRC.

The Council noted:

Minute 13.4.11, and the urgent work that needs undertaking in relation to Methodist Church House;

That funds are in place to cover these costs.

### **14.1.6 Report from the Strategy and Resources Committee [MC/14/3]**

Peter Howdle presented MC/14/3.

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**3/1. Pursuant to SO 213(2B) the Council directs that the Job Evaluation Committee and the Development & Personnel Sub-committee be replaced by a Grading & Remuneration Committee.**

The Council noted that the SRC will consider the details of the use of the proceeds of the sale of Wing Grange and report to a future meeting of the Council on the use of the proceeds for the support of property held for the support of the Langley House Trust.

***The Council agreed the following resolution:***

***3/2. The Council provides consent to the sale of Wing Grange, Rutland.***

#### **14.1.7 Churches' Mutual Credit Union [MC/14/4]**

Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary, introduced the Revd Canon Antony MacRow-Wood, who made a presentation about the Churches' Mutual Credit Union.

***The Council agreed the following resolutions:***

***4/1. The Council agrees to become a partner to the Churches' Mutual Credit Union.***

***4/2. The Council agrees its financial support for the Churches' Mutual Credit Union as set out in para 13.2 a) and b).***

***4/3. The Council delegates to the Strategy and Resources Committee responsibility for confirming those being eligible for Methodist membership of the Churches' Mutual Credit Union, and directs the Strategy and Resources Committee to ensure that Methodist participation is as wide as possible.***

#### **14.1.8 Diaconal Appointments – Response of the Connexional Grants Committee [MC/14/5]**

Ian Harrison, Chair of the Connexional Grants Committee, presented MC/14/5.

***The Council agreed the following resolution:***

***5/1. The Council receives the report.***

The Council declined to accept the advice of the Connexional Grants Committee in this respect. The representatives of the Chairs' Meeting agreed to take the matter back to the Chairs' Meeting for further discussion in the light of the comments from the Connexional Grants Committee.

#### **14.1.9 Update on stationing matching**

Gareth Powell, Assistant Secretary of the Conference, updated the Council on the stationing matching situation for this year (minute 13.3.8).

The Council noted:

There is no longer expected to be a shortfall of diaconal appointments;

There is now likely to be a shortage of presbyters rather than a shortage of appointments;

Work has already begun on projections for future years;

The complexities of undertaking work on projections.

***The Council noted the report.***

#### **14.1.10 Review of the Mission Alongside the Poor Programme [MC/14/6]**

Ian Harrison presented MC/14/6.

***The Council agreed the following resolutions:***

***6/1. The Council receives the report.***

***6/2. The Council recommends that the Conference directs that a review of the Mission Alongside the Poor programme be undertaken by the Council, with the terms of reference as outlined in section 5 of the report.***

***6/3. The Council directs that the review should be funded out of the budget of the grants team within the Connexional Team, and that a report should be made to the Conference no later than 2016.***

#### **14.1.11 Report from the Senior Leadership Group**

The Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team updated the Council on four areas of work, as follows:

(a) *Support for the Street Child World Cup*

(b) *Belonging Together*

Work is continuing with a small group, who will bring proposals to the April Council.

(c) *Fresh Expressions*

Martyn Atkins has been appointed as Chair of the Fresh Expressions Board.

(d) *District Chair appointments*

Martyn Atkins asked the Council to note that the date for expressions of interest or nominations for a Chair of District appointment has been extended. He asked members of the Council to think about suitable presbyters known to them who may be invited to consider applying for such a post.

#### **14.1.12 Boycotts, Sanctions and Investments**

The Council discussed how it can best respond to a direction of the 2013 Conference that it ensures the production of a briefing on the arguments for and against the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and to make a report to the 2014 Conference on Boycotts Divestment and Sanctions. After a long and careful consideration the Council resolved to return to the matter in April.

#### **14.1.13 Report from the Connexional Leaders' Forum (CLF)**

Martyn Atkins gave a report from the January meeting of the Connexional Leaders' Forum.

The Council noted that the following matters had been discussed:

- Aspects of financial good practice, especially considering deliberate financial mismanagement;
- The principles and priorities of funding through changes in the reserves policy;
- Mental health issues;
- An update on the work of the same sex marriage working party;
- A review of the role and responsibilities of the CLF and Chairs' Meeting;
- Consultation about the report of the Joint Implementation Commission;
- An update from the Heritage Committee concerning a collections policy;
- The rebranding of MRDF.

#### **14.1.14 Connexional Team Appointments**

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**7/1. The Council recommends to the President that, pursuant to clause 29(b) of the Deed of Union, the Revd Dr Tim Woolley be stationed to serve the Connexional Team from 1 May 2014 until the adoption of the stations at the 2014 Conference and recommends to the Conference that, pursuant to SO 315(4), Dr Woolley be appointed to continue in that appointment for a period of four years from 1 September 2014.**

**7/2. The Council recommends to the Conference that the Revd Dr Timothy A Macquiban be appointed to serve, pursuant to SO 315(4), for an initial period of five years from 1 September 2014 as Minister of Ponte Sant' Angelo Methodist Church, Rome and the Methodist representative to the wider ecumenical community in Rome.**

#### **14.1.15 Consolidated Accounts [MC/14/25]**

Peter Howdle introduced the accounts to the Council. Maureen Sebanakitta, Director of Financial Operations, presented them to the Council in detail.

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**25/1. In accordance with SO 212(1), the Council adopts the consolidated accounts for the year ended 31 August 2013, and directs that a unified statement of connexional finances be presented to the Conference as required by SO 360.**

#### **14.1.16 Report of the Audit Committee [MC/14/8]**

John Chastney, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented MC/14/8.

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**8/1. The Council receives the report of the Audit Committee.**

**8/2. The Council appoints Baker Tilly as auditors for the year 2013-14.**

John Chastney alerted the Council to examples of financial irregularity around churches, Circuits and Districts. He shared examples of good practice in order to prevent such irregularities, and asked members of the Council to be alert to the issue.

#### **14.1.17 Connexional Central Services Budget [MC/14/9]**

Nick Moore, Head of Support Services, introduced MC/14/9. The Council considered the questions in paragraph 7 of the paper.

#### **14.1.18 Item from Chairs' Meeting**

Stephen Wigley expressed the concern of the Chairs' Meeting in relation to the Syrian crisis, and the plight of refugees from that region. The Council noted that District Chairs are proposing to send a letter to the government in respect of this matter.

#### **14.1.19 Investment Property – Application of Standing Orders [MC/14/10]**

Louise Wilkins, Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, presented MC/14/10.

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**10/1. The Council directs the Connexional Team to undertake a review of the current restrictions on the use of investment property and to report to the Council no later than January 2015.**

#### **14.1.20 Configuration of initial ministerial training [MC/14/11]**

Gareth Powell explained that MC/14/11 represented the response of the Ministries Committee to Memorial M6 at the 2013 Conference.

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**11/1. The Council receives the report and adopts the recommendation of the Ministries Committee.**

#### **14.1.21 Joint Implementation Commission [MC/14/12A, 12B and 12C]**

Neil Stubbens, Connexional Ecumenical Officer, presented the report of the Joint Implementation Commission, and invited the Council to offer its response. Paragraph 4 of paper MC/14/12C suggested a first draft of a response from the Council. The Council made some suggestions, particularly in relation to advocacy and the need to include stories of where things are happening well locally.

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**12A/1. The Council receives the report.**

**12A/2. The Council directs that the Council and Secretary of the Council approve the report for submission to the JIC.**

#### **14.1.22 Response to the recommendations of the Commission of the Covenanted Churches in Wales [MC/14/13]**

Neil Stubbens presented MC/14/13.

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

- 13/1.** *The Council invites all the district policy committees except those of Synod Cymru and the Wales Synod to submit comments on the Commission's recommendations to the Ecumenical Officer by 28 February 2014.*
- 13/2.** *The Council directs the Connexional Team to report to the Council in April 2014, in order that the Council may advise the Conference on its response to the Commission.*

#### **14.1.23 Committee and Other Appointments [MC/14/14]**

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

- 14/1.** *Under Standing Order 136(1C), the Council appoints Deacon Eunice Attwood to be a member of the Conference Business Committee for the 2014 Conference.*
- 14/2.** *The Council appoints the Revd Michaela A Youngson to the Medical Committee.*
- 14/3.** *The Council appoints, on behalf of the Conference, the Revd Margaret P Jones as an Oversight Tutor for the Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme (STETS).*
- 14/4.** *The Council appoints the Revd Stephen J Radford to the Finance Sub-Committee of the Strategy and Resources Committee.*
- 14/5.** *Further to the committee appointments made by the October meeting of the Council, the Council appoints Dr Malcolm Stevenson to the Diaconal Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee.*
- 14/6.** *The Council nominates the Revd Dr Elizabeth A Smith and the Revd Dr Stephen D Wigley to be members of the governing body of the Queen's Foundation.*

*The Council also noted that, further to the list of those to be invited to the 2014 Conference as associate members of the Conference, in place of a representative of an Orthodox Church, a representative of the Presbyterian Church of Wales is to be asked to attend.*

#### **14.1.24 Renewal of the group bank overdraft facility with HSBC Bank PLC [MC/14/15]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

- 15/1.** *The Council authorises the Revd David Gamble to act as signatory along with the Revd Gareth J Powell in respect of documentation required to renew the overdraft facility as set out in paper MC/12/58.*

#### **14.1.25 Signatories for Methodist Church Accounts [MC/14/16]**

Members of the Council noted that a revised version of MC/14/16 had been issued, and **agreed the following resolution:**

- 16/1.** *The Council appoints the additional signatories as set out in the revised MC/14/16.*

#### **14.1.26 Authorisations and Delegations [MC/14/17]**

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

- 17/1.** *The Council receives the report.*
- 17/2.** *The Council appoints Andrew J Maxfield under SO 331(1) to fulfil the duties assigned in the Model Trusts or in Standing Orders to the Property Secretary or to the General Secretary of the Property Division.*
- 17/3.** *The Council approves the list of authorisations and delegations with effect from 31 January 2014.*

#### **14.1.27 Reviewing the Role of District Chairs (Larger than Circuit) [MC/14/18]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

- 18/1.** *The Council approves the Terms of Reference.*

#### **14.1.28 Administering the Extraordinary Property Fund – Transfer to the Connexional Grants Committee of the responsibility for making recommendations for grants from Trust 17A and consequential operational changes [MC/14/19]**



*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**19/1. The Council receives the report.**

**19/2. The Council delegates its functions under Trust 17A, Extraordinary Property Fund, to the Connexional Grants Committee.**

**14.1.29 Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd Appointments [MC/14/20]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**20/1. The Methodist Council approves the nomination by the Board of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for appointment by the 2014 Methodist Conference of the following person as Director, for a further three year period from 1 September 2014:**

***Mrs Susan R Howdle;***

***and further recommends to the Conference that it should resolve, under Article 36 of the Articles of Association of WCOT Ltd, that a period of one year's non-service upon the Board should not be required of Mrs Howdle.***

**14.1.30 Methodist Church House Management Committee [MC/14/21]**

The Council noted that MC/14/21 was withdrawn, and a report would come to the April meeting of the Council.

**14.1.31 Documents signed or consent provided on behalf of the Methodist Council [MC/14/22]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**22/1. The Council receives the report.**

**14.1.32 Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST) [MC/14/23]**

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**23/1. The Council delegates its responsibilities under SO 342(1) to the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust and directs that the Trust shall report to the Council at least once in each connexional year.**

**23/2. The Council directs the Director of Education to work in consultation with MAST on all matters relating to Methodist and Methodist/ecumenical schools and academies.**

**14.1.33 Appointments made by the Scrutiny Group on behalf of the Council [MC/14/24]**

*The Council agreed the following resolution:*

**24/1. The Council receives the report.**

**14.1.34 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE**

**14.1.35 Wesley Study Centre, Durham [MC/14/27]**

Louise Wilkins presented MC/14/27.

*The Council agreed the following resolutions:*

**27/1. The Council authorises Mr Ian White and Prof David R Matthews to negotiate on behalf of the Methodist Council the termination of the agreement and such other outstanding matters with the Council of St John's College, Durham with a view to the agreement being terminated by 31 August 2014.**

**27/2. The Council directs the Connexional Team to bring an update to the Council in April 2014 as to the progress of the negotiations with St John's College and the likely terms of the termination.**

**14.1.36 Legal Costs *The President of the Methodist Conference v Preston (formerly Moore)* in the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom [MC/14/28]**

Louise Wilkins presented MC/14/28.

***The Council agreed the following resolution:***

***28/1. The Council approves acceptance of at least £230,000 from the Respondents' insurer in full and final settlement of the legal fees, disbursements, VAT and interest in the case of The President of the Methodist Conference v Preston (formerly Moore).***

**14.1.37 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE**

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