

Minutes of a meeting of the Methodist Council held on 16-17 October 2017 at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon

Present: The President, the Vice-President and 47 voting members as follows:
Mr Mike Anderson, Ms Janet Baker, Mr Tim Baker, the Revd Peter E Barber, Mrs Carole Burgess, the Revd Linda J Catlow, Ms Gill Dascombe, the Revd Rory Dalgliesh, Mr Jack Delbridge, Ms Sue Draper, the Revd Mark Dunn-Wilson, Mrs Aileen Fox, the Revd Dr Andrew M Fox, the Revd Catherine Gale, the Revd Ruth M Gee, Mr Bala Gnanapragasam, Ms Ruth Hall, the Revd Novette S Headley, the Revd Beverly Hollings, Professor Peter D Howdle, the Revd Dr Jennifer A Hurd, the Revd Dr Jonathan R Hustler, the Revd Eleanor G Jackson, the Revd Philip J Jackson, the Revd Vincent M Jambawo, Ms Rachel J Lampard, Mrs Carolyn Lawrence, Deacon Karen McBride, Deacon Jonathan Miller, Professor Ken Mortimer, Dr Daleep S Mukarji, Mrs Idy Osibodu, the Revd Mary M Patterson, the Revd Gareth P Phillips, the Revd Canon Gareth J Powell (until Minute 17.3.20), Mr Pete Prescott, Mrs Anne Pryke, the Revd Sally A Ratcliffe, the Revd Peter D Sheasby, Mrs Heather Shipman, the Revd David Shirtliff, Mr Doug Swanney, the Revd Timothy A Swindell, Mrs Louise C Wilkins, Mr Richard Wills, the Revd Dr Andrew D Wood, the Revd Michaela A Youngson.

Apologies: The Revd Olufemi R W Cole-Njie, Ms Gemma Curtis, Mrs Heather Lovelady, the Revd Rachel E Parkinson, the Revd Stephen J Poxon, the Revd Dr Roger L Walton.

Substitutes: Mr Stephen H Cooper, the Revd Paul H Davis.

Observers: Mr Martin Ashford, Ms Jude Levermore, Mr Nick Moore (members of the senior leadership group of the Connexional Team), the Revd Dr Nicola V Price-Tebbutt (secretary of the Faith and Order Committee), Mr Michael Pryke (Youth President), the Revd Nigel Uden (URC observer)

In attendance: Ms Jane Bates (Minutes), Ms Louise Taylor (Administration)

Letters: The Council agreed to send a letter of greeting to Gemma Curtis.

17.3.1 Appointment of new members of the Council [MC/17/79]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/17/79.

79/1. The Council appointed the Reverend Dr Vincent M Jambawo as a member of the Council for the connexional year 2017/18.

79/2. The Council appointed the Reverend Peter E Barber as a member of the Council for the connexional year 2017/18.

17.3.2 Minutes of the Council

With the correction that at minute 17.2.23, resolutions 56/7 and 56/8, for 2016 it should read 2017, the minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

17.3.3 Matters arising [MC/17/80]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/17/80.

80/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.4 Report from the Strategy and Resources Committee [MC/17/81]

The Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee presented MC/17/81.

81/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.5 Confidential report from the Strategy and Resources Committee [MC/17/81B]

The Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee presented MC/17/81B.

81B/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.6 Connexional Team update [MC/17/82]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/17/82.

82/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.7 Work from the Conference [MC/17/83]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/17/83.

83/1. The Council received the workplan for 2017/18.

17.3.8 Update on work from the Conference [MC/17/84]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/17/84.

84/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.9 Special Resolution submitted by the 2017 Conference to the Methodist Council [MC/17/85]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/17/85.

85/1. The Council approved the Resolution.

17.3.10 Chair of the Council [MC/17/86]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/17/86, in order to test the mind of the Council.

86/1. The Council received the report.

86/2. The Council directed that a nomination panel be established with the responsibility of bringing a nomination of the next Chair of the Council to the Council in April 2018.

86/3. The Council agreed to recommend to the Conference that the Chair of the Council should serve for a period of four years, and directed that amendments to Standing Orders are prepared to effect this change.

The Council requested a more detailed paper setting out the composition of the panel and the process the panel would follow in order to bring a name to the Council. The Secretary of the Conference undertook to bring such information to the January Council, and asked members of the Council to contact him with any additional comments about this.

17.3.11 Developing a connexional strategy for the use of Methodist property in mission and evangelism [MC/17/88]

The Revd Dr Stuart Burgess, chair of the Property Development Committee, presented MC/17/88.

88/1. The Council received the report.

88/2. The Council approved the principles of a connexional property strategy as outlined in the report and directed the Property Development Committee to bring to the Council a strategy no later than April 2018.

88/3. The Council directed that work be undertaken to amend the policy behind SO 962.

88/4. The Council agreed to recommend to the Conference that it adopts the policy that trustees and consent-giving bodies must ensure that all relevant options are considered before purchasing or disposing of any property.

88/5. The Council encouraged the Property Development Committee to explore facilitating strategic partnerships at a strategic level, both within and outside the Methodist family.

17.3.12 Sale of Sidwell Street Methodist Church under Model Trust 20 [MC/17/90]

The Revd Stephen Santry, superintendent of the Exeter, Coast and Country Circuit, presented MC/17/90.

90/1. The Council received the report.

90/2. The Council approved the principle of the sale of Sidwell Street Methodist Church under Model Trust 20 to the Exeter Network Church (ENC) for £1 (one pound), delegating the agreement of the detail of the terms of the sale to the Strategy and Resources Committee.

17.3.13 Confidential updates [MC/17/93A and 93B]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/17/93A and 93B.

93A/1. The Council received the report.

93B/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.14 Appointment of the Deputy Warden [MC/17/112]

The Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order presented MC/17/112.

112/1. The Council agreed to recommend to the Conference that, pursuant to SO 315, Deacon Ruth M Richey be appointed Deputy Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order for a period of five years from 1 September 2018.

17.3.15 Exploration of connexional property developments by the Property Development Committee [MC/17/87]

The Secretary of the Conference presented MC/17/87.

87/1. The Council received the report.

87/2. The Council encouraged the Property Development Committee to continue exploring potential developments for the North Bank Estate and Oxford Place, Leeds.

17.3.16 Property Development – the benefit of a trading subsidiary company [MC/17/89]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/17/89.

89/1. The Council received the report.

89/2. The Council directed the Property Development Committee to draft Memorandum and Articles of Association for establishing a wholly owned trading subsidiary company for undertaking property development on behalf of the Property Development Committee and the Council.

17.3.17 Leasing of Methodist Premises – Sunday Trading [MC/17/91]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/17/91.

91/1. The Council received the report.

91/2. The Council amended the policy on Sunday trading to allow such trading within the curtilage of Model Trust property, following consideration of an application to three members of the Property Development Committee.

91/3. The Council directed the Property Development Committee to produce an application form and criteria for permission for Sunday trading within the curtilage of a Model Trust property.

17.3.18 Building closer relations between the Methodist Church and All We Can [MC/17/92]

The Head of Mission and Advocacy presented MC/17/92.

Thanks were expressed to the Connexional Team and All We Can for the work that this paper represented.

92/1. The Council received the report.

92/2. The Council agreed to support the direction of travel as set out in paragraphs 4.1.1 to 4.1.3 and requests the preparation of a new Memorandum of Understanding with All We Can, for approval at a future meeting.

17.3.19 Presentation from the Connexional Leaders' Forum [MC/17/DP1 and MC/17/DP2]

The Council heard from the President, the Secretary and the Connexional Secretary, who described the conversations at the Connexional Leaders' Forum following the presentation of the Statistics for Mission to the Conference. MC/17/DP1 and MC/17/DP2 represented the collated responses from the district groups to the questions which had been put to them at the Conference.

The Council discussed these issues in groups, which submitted written feedback. The following morning, the Council spent some time in a plenary feedback session on these matters. The feedback will be considered alongside the feedback from the Connexional Leaders' Forum, so that common threads can be identified. The Council expressed a wish to spend significant time on this at its next meeting, noting that this will have an impact on the rest of the agenda.

17.3.20 Committee Appointments [MC/17/99]

Noting the amendments circulated to the Council, the Council made the appointments as set out.

In addition,

99/1. The Council appointed on behalf of the Conference the following members of the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust:

Mrs Barbara Easton, Mrs Lesley Brookbanks, the Revd Sally Ratcliffe

99/2. The Council appointed on behalf of the Conference the following member of the Wesley Trust: Mr Thomas Cadman

99/3. The Council appointed Mr Michael P King as Chair of the Ecumenical Stakeholders' Forum with immediate effect.

99/4. The Council appointed The Revd Dr Roger L Walton as representative to the 8th General Assembly of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE): 13-18 September, 2018.

17.3.21 Decisions made by the Council since the last meeting [MC/17/100]

100/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.22 Connexional Manse Trustees annual report [MC/17/101]

101/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.23 Ecumenical Partnerships, Sharing Agreements, and Ecumenical Areas [MC/17/102]

102/1. The Council adopted the report.

102/2. The Council adopted the report.

102/3. The Council adopted the report.

17.3.24 Delegation of oversight of the Auxiliary Special Purposes Fund to the Connexional Allowances Committee [MC/17/103]

103/1. The Council delegated oversight of the Auxiliary Special Purposes Fund to the Connexional Allowances Committee with immediate effect.

- 17.3.25 Transfer of delegation from the Network Committee to the Property Development Committee [MC/17/104]**
- 104/1. *The Council received the report.***
 - 104/2. *The Council revoked the appointment of the Network Committee as the connexional trustee for 24 Somerset Road, Birmingham, and appoints the Property Development Committee to fulfil the role of connexional trustees and directed them to fulfil all such governance and managing trustee responsibilities for 24 Somerset Road, Birmingham.***
 - 104/3. *The Council delegated to the Property Development Committee all its rights and responsibilities set out in the lease of 24 Somerset Road to the Queen's Foundation, Birmingham.***
 - 104/4. *The Council revoked the appointment of the Network Committee as the connexional trustee for the North Bank Estate and appointed the Property Development Committee to fulfil the role of connexional trustees and directed the Committee to fulfil all such governance and managing trustee responsibilities for the North Bank Estate.***
- 17.3.26 Authorisations and Delegations [MC/17/105]**
- 105/1. *The Council received the report.***
 - 105/2. *The Council approved the list of authorisations and delegations with effect from 17 October 2017.***
- 17.3.27 Methodist Heritage Committee Annual Report [MC/17/106]**
- 106/1. *The Council received the report.***
 - 106/2. *The Council approved the recommendations for re-location of artefacts from the former Wesley College Bristol as set out in paragraph 2.2.1 and directed that a follow up report be presented as soon as practicable.***
 - 106/3. *The Council approved the criteria and method of approval for recognised heritage site status as set out in paragraph 2.3.3 and directed the Heritage Committee to implement the scheme as proposed.***
- 17.3.28 The working group considering the Methodist Diaconal Order as a religious order [MC/17/107]**
- 107/1. *The Council received the report.***
 - 107/2. *The Council amended the reporting timeline for the working group considering the Methodist Diaconal Order as a religious order, and noted that it will report to the Council in April 2019, prior to the 2019 Conference.***
- 17.3.29 Methodist Independent Schools Trust – appointment of trustees [MC/17/108]**
- 108/1. *The Council adopted the re-nominations by the Governors for the appointment of Mrs Barbara Easton and Mr Robert Cowie as Trustees of Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST), for a period of three years concluding 31 August 2020.***
- 17.3.30 Methodist Lay Employees Pension Trust Limited (MLEPTL) Directors [MC/17/109]**
- 109/1. *The Council confirmed that Mr Andrew Paul and Capital Cranfield Pension Trustees Limited, represented by Ms Ingrid Kirby, have been appointed as directors of MLEPTL for a period of three years from 1 September 2016.***
- 17.3.31 Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee [MC/17/110]**
- 110/1. *The Council received the report.***
 - 110/2. *The Council agreed the changes to the membership of the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report.***
 - 110/3. *The Council approved the list of Partner Organisations in Appendix 1.***
 - 110/4. *The Council directed that a record of all visits and work going on across the Methodist Church in Britain supporting the strategy for global relationships, as described in paragraphs 7, 8 and 12, be retained and overseen by the Connexional Secretary.***

110/5. The Council approved the addition to the category criteria for Partner Organisations listed in paragraph 11.

17.3.32 Annual report of the Connexional Grants Committee [MC/17/111]

111/1. The Council received the report.

17.3.33 Process for reviewing the Safeguarding Committee

The Connexional Secretary informed the Council that, in response to the Conference direction for the terms of reference of the Safeguarding Committee to be reviewed, work is underway to bring proposals to the Council in January. The Council noted the update.

17.3.34 Network Committee [MC/17/94]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/17/94.

94/1. The Council received the report.

94/2. The Council recommended that the Network Committee be disbanded at the end of the connexional year 2017/18, with its responsibilities undertaken by other bodies as set out in the report.

17.3.35 Risk Management update [MC/17/95]

The Connexional Secretary presented MC/17/95, which the Council discussed in small groups. The Council agreed that the risk register should be placed at the front of the Council papers, so that all Council papers are read in the light of it.

95/1. The Council received the report.

95/2. The Council approved the updated Risk Management Policy.

95/3. The Council adopted the corporate risk register.

The Council noted that the risk register is a live document, and will be amended in the light of this conversation.

17.3.36 Marriage and Relationships Task Group: Progress Report [MC/17/96]

The Revd Kenneth Howcroft, chair of the Marriage and Relationships Task Group, presented MC/17/96.

96/1. The Council received the report.

96/2. The Council approved the proposal about the nature of the task group's reporting to the Conference in paragraph 7 of the report.

96/3. The Council approved the potential timetables and process of consultation through the Conference and beyond set out in paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 of the report, noting that the task group will bring a further update to the January 2018 meeting of the Council.

The Council agreed that the paper should remain confidential at this stage, and agreed the following public statement:

The Council received a report from the Marriage and Relationships Task Group on the progress of its work towards bringing material to the 2018 Conference. The Council did not see or discuss the content of that material.

The Council affirmed the processes by which the task group will bring a draft statement to the Conference for consultation throughout the Connexion. That consultation will lead to a final decision in 2020, as required by the Conference of 2016.

17.3.37 Review of the Replacement Project Criteria [MC/17/97]

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice presented MC/17/97.

97/1. The Council received the report.

97/2. The Council directed the Connexional Team, in consultation with the Connexional Grants Committee and the Property Development Committee, to bring options to the Council by April 2018 for revisions to the replacement project criteria and or a new system for classifying replacement projects.

97/3. The Council authorised the Property Development Committee to consider exceptions to the replacement project criteria and to approve a project as a replacement where there is evidence of the project fulfilling the Council's property strategy and genuine need for the additional funds.

17.3.38 M25 (2017) – consider holding conference about opposing racism

The Connexional Secretary gave the Council a verbal update as to progress with this Memorial to the Conference. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee have considered this and felt that there is not sufficient resource to be able to organise a conference at this time. Other ways forward were suggested, and the Council was content with this approach.

17.3.39 Connexional Grants Committee Policy [MC/17/98]

The Revd Michaela Youngson, chair of the working group which had prepared this draft policy, presented MC/17/98.

98/1. The Council adopted the policy for connexional grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain.