

**THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND - MINISTRIES COUNCIL
COUNCIL**

Church Offices, 121 George Street, Edinburgh

Wednesday 22 June 2016 at 10.30am

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Convener: Rev Neil Glover

Vice-Conveners: Rev Colin Brough
Dr John Dent
Rev Dr Marjory MacLean
Rev Derek Pope

Members: 26 others recorded in the Register of Attendance

Staff in Attendance: Acting Council Secretary, Mrs Catherine Skinner, plus 8 staff as recorded in the Register of Attendance

Also in Attendance: Mr David Bradwell, Refugee Coordinator and Ms Debra Livingstone, Audit and Compliance Officer

Apologies: Apologies were noted in the sederunt

ACTION

1 Welcome, Opening Worship, Apologies, Updates and Any Other Business

The Convener opened the meeting with worship and welcomed new members Rev Mike Goss, Rev Dorothy Granger, Rev Hilary McDougall, Mr Iain Macleod, Rev Tommy MacNeil, Mr Brian Porteous and Rev Ian Taylor as the Housing & Loan appointed member. Ms Debra Livingstone, Audit and Compliance Officer and Mr David Plews, Training Development Manager were also in attendance. Apologies were noted.

2 Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 23 March 2016

The Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 23 March 2016 was approved.

3 Staffing

Congratulations were offered to Ms Shirley Grieve who was in attendance and due to begin as Priority Areas Secretary on 18 July. Ms Grieve is currently the *Go For It* Fund Manager meaning there will be a vacancy within the Council staff team in addition to the Ministries Support Officer post following the departure of Mr Noel Mathias.

The Rev Jayne Scott begins as Council Secretary on 11 July. Mrs Gabrielle Dench is on maternity leave and Rhona Dunphy, Pastoral Support Officer, began in post on 2 May. Dr Katie Bradley has been seconded from the World Mission Council to work in the Education & Support section for a 12 month period from 20 June.

Interviews for a Senior Administrator within the Education & Support section will take place on 28 June with Mrs Dorothy Davidson due to retire in the autumn.

4 Convener's Report

The Convener offered thanks and the appreciation of the Council to Mrs Catherine Skinner for serving as Acting Council Secretary and for all the support offered to the Rev Dr Martin

Scott throughout the transition phase prior to acting up. Council received the Convener's Report *MCI-01* and points were discussed as set out in the report.

4.1 General Assembly Reflections and Ministries Council Deliverance 2016-17:

There was much discussion during the General Assembly around the appointment of the Rev Jayne Scott as Ministries Council Secretary and the working relationship between Mrs Scott and her husband, the Rev Dr Martin Scott, as the incoming Secretary to the Council of Assembly. Assurances were given that protocols would be put in place which would include the production of a *Managing Personal Relationships at Work* policy to be adopted by all of the staff team in due course. Mrs Scott as Council Secretary from 11 July will be line-managed by the Convener of the Council of Assembly, Dr Sally Bonnar. Dr Bonnar would also line manage the Rev Dr Martin Scott. Any potential conflict of interest will be addressed in protocols with the aim that these should be in place prior to Mrs Scott's start date in post and will be communicated to all staff. The Convener thanked Council Vice-Conveners and staff for their time in handling the matters.

Council was pleased to receive many positive comments during the Ministries Report to the General Assembly. In particular there was a realisation that the current situation demands a new approach and there were a lot of comments on hub style ministry from those keen to do this in their local area. There was also a recognition that this was not a new idea and some felt that they were doing this type of ministry already. There was an additional deliverance to affirm the work undertaken by the West Angus Area Ministry (WAAM) in establishing a flourishing team ministry and for the Council to consult with them on hub-style ministry. How to enable and allow hub-style ministry and how to support Presbyteries should be addressed along with issues around training needs, those able to conduct sacraments and legal issues around the right to call. Readers and Elders have a ministerial contribution to make and should be considered in discussions. Clear guidance would be needed in order to take things forward. This area of work will sit with the Presbytery Planning Review Group.

Comment was made that the General Assembly can be an intimidating place to be. The Convener offered to feed this back to the Assembly Arrangements Committee.

NG

Any changes or additions to the draft of the *Ministries Council Deliverance 2016-2017 MCI-02* should be passed to Mrs Catherine Skinner, Acting Council Secretary.

4.2 Take A Pew: Many suggestions have been made as to future locations for Take a Pew and the possibilities are being explored. The videos are made for a full audience across society and not only those in the Church of Scotland. A topic for discussion is agreed but there is an open discussion amongst those involved. For future filming sessions the aim will be to release several short videos. Members suggested inviting those on the margins who perhaps struggle with their relationship with the Church but who want to belong within the Church.

The upcoming Take a Pew videos include former Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood and Scottish Conservative Leader, Miss Ruth Davidson. There was a discussion with a wider panel as well as a more focussed discussion between Dr Hood and Miss Davidson where Miss Davidson talks of her Church membership and the reaction to her engagement to her partner.

4.3 Council Membership: The Table of Membership was reviewed and new members added with the intention of matching people's skills and interests (*MCI-03*). Members were invited to consider whether they would wish to be part of the Recruitment Task Group which currently has few members. The Group sees through the processes for recruitment and assessment as well as the whole area of vocation.

Council approved the proposed convenership/leadership of newly formed groups included in the table: the Rev Sarah Ross as Convener of Partnership Development Review Group; Rev Tony Stephen to lead the Presbytery Planning Review Group and Rev Hilary McDougall to

lead the Pioneer Ministry Pilot Project Group.

Council noted that the Rev David McLachlan will be appointed as a member which this brings Council membership up to the full complement. Mr McLachlan will sit on the Priority Areas Committee.

The Council's representative on the General Trustee completed their term on Council in May. Mrs Catherine Skinner reported that the Trustees may look to do things differently in future and would confirm the position.

CS

4.4 Partnership Development Remits & Joint Emerging Church Group: The Partnership Development Committee has completed a review its work. The Partnership Review Group has been created and remits for all of the groups in this area have been reviewed. Council approved the revised remits as set out in papers *MCI-04 and 4a*.

Furthermore, the work of the Joint Emerging Church Group (JECG) has evolved over time with some pieces of work now fitting with Mission & Discipleship. Council noted plans that were being made, together with Mission & Discipleship Council, to have a meeting to examine how the agenda of the JECG might best be taken forward. A further update will given at the December Council meeting.

4.5 Presbytery Planning Review Group: Council will discuss Presbytery Planning during the overnight meeting on 31 August – 1 September. This will include hub-style ministry, Pioneer ministries, best practice in Priority Areas, issues relating to buildings and how to support Presbyteries in forming and implementing Presbytery Plans. Presbytery Planning will also be the main focus for the Presbytery Conference to be held on 12-13 October. Council Members who wish to attend the conference should contact Mrs Carron Lunt, Administration Manager.

4.6 Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme: Despite reminders and follow-up phone calls some ministers are still to complete the appropriate paperwork relating to PVG scheme membership. 42 ministers were re-sent the papers to be completed by 9 June. Mr Daran Golby, Human Resources Manager – Ministries Council, agreed to establish the reasons for non-compliance and to communicate the details to Presbytery. Mr Golby will explore the potential next steps in terms of a complaint made to Presbytery as this is a disciplinary issue. If Presbytery does not action appropriately then the correct course would be for the Church to report the matter to the Authorities.

DG

4.7 Council of Assembly Roadshows: The Convener confirmed that the deliverance from the Council of Assembly reads as follows:

Instruct the Council to work together with the Mission and Discipleship Council, the Ministries Council, the World Mission Council and the Panel on Review and Reform in conducting Regional Roadshows engaging the widest possible range of Presbyteries and congregations in discussion about the future of the Church, its ministry and its discipleship.

Following initial conversations with those involved the aims of the Roadshows were listed in the Convener's Report. It was suggested that rather than 'our' vision for ministry we should look at Church/Jesus/God's vision and how we define this vision. To explore how we provide, resource and support deployment of ministry. The Rev Tony Stephen will lead the discussions on this with the Presbytery Planning Review Group.

4.8 Council Feedback: At the March Council meeting questionnaires on improving the experience being part of Ministries Council meetings were issued for completion. The Strategic Planning Group discussed the feedback and some key points were provided in the Convener's Report. Papers and reports brought to Council should clearly state whether the information is for noting, discussion, agreement, action or decision. Members also asked that the papers be circulated in good time ahead of the meeting. The Convener would be pleased to receive further feedback.

4.9 Diaconate Council, 20-22 June at Dundee West Park: The Convener attended the conference along with the Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Vice-Convener for Education & Support and look forward to welcoming Miss Marion Stewart, the new President of Diaconate Council, as a member of the Council at a future meeting.

5 Refugees and The Church

Mr David Bradwell, Refugee Coordinator, was invited to offer a brief report on the response of the Church so far to the refugee crises.

The Council of Assembly on 20 June agreed to extend this project until May 2020 to look at the medium to long-term questions. Mr Bradwell is exploring how the Church of Scotland can offer well-resourced ministry. To support and equip ministries to respond to the challenges which migration presents.

A network of people will be set up, to be a mixture of staff and others, as a core group to share ideas and to drive forward this agenda for the Church of Scotland. Council members who would like to be part of such a network should inform Mrs Carron Lunt, Administration Manager. The Priority Areas Committee should also keep these issues on their agenda.

14-26 June is Refugee Week with a period of refugee festivals and the opportunity to celebrate the contributions which refugees make. The European Union referendum has created tensions and fears. Mr Bradwell regularly arranges visits in a local setting and would be happy to respond to any suggestions or requests from Council members in making future arrangements.

6 Partnership Development

A written report providing an overview of the work of the section was received *MC1-05*.

6.1 Co-option to the New Charge Development (NCD) Task Group: Council agreed to the co-option of the Rev Dr Jacobus Boonzaier to the NCD Task Group.

6.2 Aberdeen: Cove New Charge Development (NCD): A final review of Cove NCD was carried in April 2016, by a team convened by the Rev Hilary McDougall. The NCD Sub-group of the Joint Emerging Church Group discussed the contents of the Review Report at a meeting on 3 May 2016, at which the minister; representatives of the Commission (the equivalent of the Kirk Session); and Leadership Team; and the Presbytery of Aberdeen's Planning Committee were present. The meeting resolved to recommend that the life of Cove NCD be brought to a close.

Council agreed to bring Cove NCD to an end and to remit the Council's involvement in the winding up of this congregation to the NCD Task Group in consultation with Mrs Elaine Macadie, Ministries Finance Manager and Mr Archie McDowall, and to work with the Presbytery as it deliberated on the future of mission and ministry in this area.

It was also noted that that staff from the Council of Assembly Finance Group will guide the Commission members in the appropriate redistribution of assets and also that Commission members are willing to serve to 31 December 2016 to ensure an orderly transition.

Council passed on their thanks to all those involved in taking this forward.

6.3 St Mark's Stirling: Permission To Sell Former Manse: The General Trustees have purchased a replacement Manse for St Mark's Stirling, and the Partnership Development Committee now asks Council to grant permission to market the redundant former manse. Council agreed to the sale and noted that the proceeds would go into General Revenue.

The Council thanked the Rev Colin Brough for his final report on behalf of the now disbanded Partnership Development Committee. Mr Brough will work on policy and guidance relating to Church of Scotland email, encryption and data protection during his final year as Vice-Convener of the Council.

7 Finance

7.1 Ministries Finance Committee Remit: Council noted the revised Committee remit *MCI-06*. The Committee will make recommendations to Council but not take decisions and recognised the importance of considering emerging risks. There were ongoing discussions with the Council of Assembly Finance Group around reserves, to confirm what is available for general use and whether some of these funds may be released for use.

7.2 Budget Process: Council received details for the Ministries Council 3 year budget process set out in paper *MCI-07* and noted that this was in line with the other Councils Departments of the Church.

7.3 Management Accounts April 2016: The accounts were received with the usual commentary highlighting the key points for noting (*MCI-08*). The number of ministers is at higher level than forecast and the Rev Colin Brough, Vice-Convener, will work with the Rev Dr Fiona Tweedie, Mission Statistics Co-ordinator, and Mrs Elaine Macadie, Ministries Finance Manager, on retiral predictions and ministerial numbers.

7.4 North East Theological Fund: Christ's College, Aberdeen sought an increased return on investment as they required additional income of around £10k per annum in order to part-fund a new member of staff. Details of current investment were provided in paper *MCI-09*. Council agreed to the recommendation from the Ministries Finance Committee to convert £50k of Growth Fund Investments to revenue and the proposed move of the remaining investments from the Growth Fund to the Income Fund which will allow the college to spend the revenue balance over the next four years as planned. This is on the basis that the Council are fully aware that they are reducing the revenue account and that after four years will only receive grant funding in line with dividend income to the fund.

7.5 Emerging Risk: The current payroll system does not offer all of the functions needed & there is no HR system through which information can be managed. This sits on the Councils Risk Register and has been an area of concern for the last two and a half years. Having gone through a stringent procurement process, supported by PwC a preferred supplier was chosen but there were some contractual issues which caused a delay. The Council of Assembly has since opted to explore other possibilities with the current provider. The Ministries Finance Committee had expressed their concerns over the ongoing risks and the delays in addressing the issues. This will come back to Council at the Autumn overnight meeting if no further progress has been made.

8 Priority Areas

The written report (*MCI-10*) giving an overview of the work of the section was mostly for noting. The work of the Committee has carried on and developed and those who have contributed to this were commended.

The committee has worked closely with the *Go For It* Fund and is delighted to be welcoming Ms Shirley Grieve as the new Priority Areas Secretary in July.

There was not a formal link between the Chance to Thrive Steering Group and Presbyteries which have a Chance to Thrive member congregation and members asked that this be considered? There has been positive research into the effects of Chance to Thrive and there should be a way to share that learning and the evaluation information with Presbyteries. Rev Fred Vincent may wish to attend Glasgow Presbytery meetings to offer a verbal report.

In the year ahead the Priority Areas Committee will:

- a) Engage with and listen attentively to the 65 Priority Area congregations, enabling them to shape the work beyond 2017.
- b) Revisit the Priority Areas Action Plan to see what more can be done by the Church to give priority to the poorest between now and May 2017.
- c) Review relationships with key partners.

- d) Participate in the Presbytery Planning process where it impacts on Priority Areas. The Priority Areas list has changed since Presbytery Plans were made. Structural issues should be considered in conversation with the Presbytery Planning Review Group and the Presbytery Planning Task Group.
- e) Work with the Church & Society Council in relation to the causes of poverty and develop local responses to it.

8.1 Vice-Convenor, Priority Areas: The Council was pleased to note that the General Assembly suspended standing orders to allow the Rev Derek Pope to serve as Vice-Convenor for Priority Areas for a fifth year.

8.2 Priority Areas Committee: Council agreed to the co-option of the Rev John Miller and the Rev Stuart Matthews. The Rev David McLachlan is to join Council and sit on the Priority Areas Committee. Looking for Mr McLachlan to be Priority Areas Committee Convenor from May 2017. Dr Alan Naylor, who sits on the Priority Areas Committee, will attend Church & Society Council meetings as a representative from Ministries Council. The Council of Assembly is still to confirm that 3 members from Church & Society Council are able to attend Ministries Council meetings as full members as well as sit on the Priority Areas Committee.

9 Education & Support

A written report providing an overview of the work of the section was received *MCI-11*. The Education & Support Vice-Convenor expressed a note of gratitude to staff who have managed a considerable amount of work through a period of staff changes and shortages. This would be passed onto the staff team.

9.1 Task Group Co-opts and Membership: Council agreed to the co-option of the Rev Andre Groenewald to the Training Task Group.

There was a plea for members to consider joining the Recruitment Task Group in order to extend the size of this group to ensure a quorate. Should the Recruitment Task Group have 2 voting members rather than 3 and there is a decision which cannot wait until the next meeting the Convenor and Secretary to the Group will send decisions for agreement by email to those who have not been able to attend a meeting with decisions effective from that point. Where no agreement is reached the matter will be held back to a further meeting.

9.2 Assessment Conference Reports: There has been a change to the process meaning that members of the Recruitment Task Group would no longer be invited to read all Assessment Conference Reports. Instead a representative of the Recruitment and Training Task Groups meet with recruitment and training staff to hand over and agree the training pathway.

9.3 Funding of Candidates who attract International or Rest of UK fees (RUK fees): The result of the EU referendum vote will effect this issue. A report will be brought to a future meeting for decisions on the way forward and on funding.

9.4 Volunteering Vocations: Council noted that the scheme will run this year with 3 volunteers in Arbroath. This will continue with a recruitment focus for a second year and then to be reviewed.

9.5 Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD)/Ministerial Development Review (MDR): It was noted that the online learning hub project was under way and attracting interest. The MDR consultations are also underway and again attracting considerable interest. The Ascent publication, which describes the processes including CMD and MDR, is now available in print and via the Church of Scotland website: www.churchofscotland.org.uk/cmd. There was a well-attended session on supervision offered during the General Assembly and growing interest and enthusiasm for supervision. This will be designed to sit with a holistic approach to CMD.

9.6 Ministries Council Representative on the Learning Disability Working Group: The Mission and Discipleship Council requested a representative from Ministries Council to participate in the work of the Learning Disability Working Group. It was noted that the Rev Rosie Addis, Deaf Development Worker, has been attending this group and could be the Ministries Council representative. This was to be highlighted with Mission & Discipleship Council.

9.7 Re-thinking Initial Training: Dr John Dent, Vice-Convener, reported that the project team was established; work has started and was now at the stage of a research plan (MCI-12). Once in post, the Council Secretary will also contribute to the work of this group.

10 Strategic Projects

10.1 Church of Scotland Email / Data Protection: The Rev Colin Brough, Vice-Convener, reported that there were challenges for some in setting up their church email account. Further to a meeting with representatives from the IT Department and the Law Department a guide was drafted to help with set-up and which points people to an overview of data protection. Basic details for encryption are included. The aim would be to make this document available towards the end of the summer. Mr Brough is a member of a Facebook Group called 'Overwhelmed by Data Protection' and has been sharing drafts of the guide with this group and receiving their comments.

The IT Department were asked to explore the possibilities for having local IT providers who could offer help but they have struggled to make progress on this and how it might be offered.

A Church policy is needed, stating who should receive a church email address, with Council of Assembly making the decision on this. There are questions around those who retire but are still in active service or who temporarily leave the service of the Church but they believe that they will return at some point and therefore wish to retain their church email account.

Some practical issues were raised by members during the meeting which Mr Brough noted, will follow up on and factor into the guide.

11 Date of Next Meeting – The Council overnight conference will be held on Wednesday 31 August – Thursday 1 September 2016 at Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4AE.

The Convener thanked members for their contributions. The meeting closed with the Grace

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Convener Date

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Acting Secretary Date