

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

Assembly Hall, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LU

Wednesday 20 June 2018

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Convener: Neil Glover

Vice-Conveners: John Dent
Eleanor McMahon
Bob Mallinson

Members & Observers: 29 Members as recorded in the Register of Attendance

Staff in Attendance: Jayne Scott plus 8 staff as recorded in the Register of Attendance

Also in Attendance: Susan Brown, Moderator

Apologies: Apologies were noted in the sederunt

ACTION

1 Opening Worship

The meeting was opened with prayers and all those present introduced themselves. Declarations of interest from ministers, and those in a close personal relationship with a minister, were recorded on the Register of Attendance. Apologies were noted.

2 Minutes

The Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 21 March 2018 was approved.

3 Convener's Report

Council received a written report *MCI-01* from the Council Secretary.

3.1 General Assembly: The Ministries Council report and subsequent discussions were positive and the Convener thanked the staff for their work in preparing the report.

The Council of Assembly met on 18 June where there was discussion around the General Assembly debate on the Strategic Plan which did not receive approval. Cross-reference made in the Ministries Council report to the Strategic Plan were duly reviewed and the Council of Assembly has been asked to produce a radical action plan for next year.

Further to discussions during the General Assembly a host of options around pre-97 pensioners will be explored and the Convener will update Ministries Council on future developments.

3.2 Committee and Group Membership: The revised membership of committees and groups was shared just prior to the General Assembly and several Council members had expressed their upset at being moved without consultation. The Convener apologised for the way the movements were handled.

3.3 New Council Convener: The Convener commended the role of Convener and reminded members to put forward names for consideration prior to our September

overnight meeting. The Council Secretary offered to compile a document, for early circulation, to describe the role with details of the duties involved and a note of support made available. Members were asked to pray about this.

JS

3.4 Rethinking Initial Training: Printed copies of interim report *Transforming Recruitment & Training* produced by the Rethinking Initial Training group were available during the meeting and it was noted that the report was also available on the Church website.

4 Priority Areas

Written report *MCI-02* providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from Bob Mallinson, Priority Areas Vice-Convener.

4.1 Priority Areas Directory: One of the key objectives in the coming year is to produce a “directory” that captures the breadth of the work that is taking place across each of the 64 Priority Areas. Outcomes from doing this will include extending relationships and engagement; promoting good practice across our network; widening the reach of the work as well as learning from the wider church.

4.2 theGKexperience: The Committee expressed concerns around the challenges of sourcing long term core funding for theGKexperience in order to develop the work and will continue to monitor this.

5 Governance and Efficiencies

Paper *MCI-15* was withdrawn from the agenda and will be re-submitted to the Strategic Planning Group before being brought back to Council. The Convener offered to answer any questions on this in the meantime.

6 Finance

Written report *MCI-03* providing an overview of the work of the Ministries Finance Committee was received along with a verbal report from Alan Naylor, Ministries Finance Committee Convener.

6.1 Management Accounts to April 2018: The accounts and commentary were received (*MCI-04a&b*). An interest charge was queried and the Finance Manager explained that this was an internal charge applied to each general ledger balance. The charge has also been applied to the Housing and Loan Fund and the Convener offered to raise this with the Council of Assembly.

NG

There was a request for additional comments to explain the changes to figures between 2017 and 2018 provided for the reserves.

The Committee is aware of instances where individuals are not claiming expenses which they are entitled to. Dr Naylor would encourage everyone to make claims as appropriate.

6.2 Convener Support and Expenses: Details of the support available and expenses claimable were set out in paper *MCI-05* and the needs can be reviewed by Council in the future.

6.4 Elizabeth Dailly Retirement: Elizabeth Dailly, Finance Supervisor within the Stewardship and Finance Department, will retire at the end of June after almost 50 years of working for the Church of Scotland. The Convener will pass on the thanks of the Council.

NG

6.5 Visa costs for Ministers and employees: The Council will continue to consult with the Council of Assembly regarding the possibilities of financial support in meeting visa costs for ministers who enter Church of Scotland ministry from another country of origin.

6.6 Reserves Policy: Work continues in relation to de-restricting some of the reserves. The Committee will work towards a Council reserves policy.

7 Education and Support

Written report *MCI-07* providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from the Eleanor McMahon, Education and Support Vice-Convener.

7.1 Code of Conduct: Council received the *Code of Conduct MCI-08* which is made available to those receiving support from the Ministries Council's Pastoral Support Team. This is a statement of the ethical values and principles that underpin good pastoral practice and guidance regarding what can be expected of the Pastoral Support Team. The *Code* sets out the basis for safe, effective and compassionate care which safeguards the wellbeing of both those in the Pastoral Support Team and those in their care. There will be further thought around how the *Code* relates to Ascend services and GDPR compliance.

7.2 Admissions First Five Years (FFY) Support: With changes to legislation ministers with less than 5 years' experience in their own denomination can now take up a charge or appointment. All ministers in their FFY will receive Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) payments of £200 per year for the first five years. Subsequent study leave will be extended to Admissions candidates and an annual Ministerial Development Conversation (MDC) will take place. In addition, a short conference will be arranged annually for all admissions ministers to attend during familiarisation which will allow for peer group formation and will cover elements of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Support.

7.3 Review of Recruitment Practice: The Recruitment Review Project will feed into the wider development of the recruitment strategy. The work will be fully consultative and engage a full range of stakeholders with an interim report given by the end of August and a completion date of the end of October. Further details were provided in the proposal from Blake Stevenson (*MCI-09*) who have been commissioned to undertake the review. It was noted that this was building on earlier work from Blake Stevenson through the Review of Initial Training Project Group.

7.4 Trinity College Funding: Following a series of meetings a one-year extension to the funding has been agreed. This will provide additional finance for practical theology to Initial Ministerial Education candidates.

7.5 Initial Ministerial Education (IME) Policies: The Committee recently had sight of a suite of policies which have been developed for candidates and probationers. Mairi Thomson, IME Operations Manager, is the lead on this project.

7.6 Readership: There is ongoing discussion around training and support for Readership and this will be brought back to Council. The Council Secretary highlighted that primary support and superintendence of Readers shall be exercised by Presbyteries as per the Readership Act (1992 Act 17). It was noted that Kenneth Fleming, recently appointed as Co-ordinator for New and Emerging Ministries within the Partnerships and Development team, has been identified as the point of contact within the Ministries Council staff team for both Readers and Ordained Local Ministers.

7.7 Ministerial Development Conversation (MDC) Impact Report: The report outlines a very positive reception from ministers. A copy of the report can be requested by contacting David Plews, Education and Training Secretary.

7.8 Support Task Group: Council noted with concern that the Group has been unable to meet due to lack of availability. The raises questions over the responsibilities of the Committee regarding the oversight of policy decisions. The work of the staff in support of our recognized ministries continues and the Convener was pleased to share that there was much positive praise of what is offered by the staff team.

7.9 Long Term Illness Act (LTIA) and Income Protection Policy (IP): The Council is due to report to the General Assembly of 2019 to ensure consistency between the

LTIA and IP provision. In addition to the discussion paper *MCI-10* a presentation of the current provisions along with possible options for direction of travel was given by Lezley Stewart, Recruitment and Support Secretary. The team can be actively supporting up to 20% of ministers with around 6% being off ill at present.

Following a full and lengthy discussion of the provision and consideration of 4 possible options Council voted in favour of option 2 with a reduction to 15 months as set out below (Option 1 – 0; Option 2 – 23; Option 3 – 2; Option 4 – 0):

Reduce IP deferred period to 64 weeks and integrate into a new Act, meaning:

- Ministers would be fully paid for 64 weeks rather than 104 weeks
- Would allow a pastoral and clearly defined policy
- Individual/Presbytery/Congregation would all know terms
- IP contract would cost more, but the need for Special Arrangements would lessen
- The framework could be applied clearly and consistently, and would be medically justified

The next steps would include:

- a) Consultation with the Housing and Loan Fund
- b) Obtain quote for IP at 15 months (cost would be incurred to obtain a quote)
- c) Take legal advice on who should be part of consultation in taking matters forward
- d) Draft new integrated Act for GA 2019 (to include medical assessment framework for return to work)
- e) Communications would need to be explicit over when the changes would apply and who they would apply to

On return from lunch break the Convener wished Carron Lunt well for a 12 month secondment as Senior Administration Officer within the Department of the General Assembly beginning in July.

8 Strategic Projects

8.1 Tomorrows Calling: Council received a position paper *MCI-11* along with a proposal to move towards using only the Church website for Recruitment content.

The Tomorrow's Calling website was created as part of promotions around Vocations and Recruitment with a particular focus on younger people in ministry. Subsequently the Tomorrow's Calling website has widened out its portrayal of ministry to all ages and forms of ministry, while retaining the original videos and holding up-to-date information on the vocations processes of the Church. Whilst Tomorrow's Calling has helped to raise the profile that you do not have to be a certain age to be in ministry, there is no evidence to suggest that it has changed the number or profile of the people who come forward for training. A questionnaire which will be developed as part of the Recruitment Review can be designed to offer figures and details around the use and impact of the Tomorrow's Calling website on recruitment.

There is an ongoing annual cost of retaining Tomorrow's Calling of circa £8-10K paid to Sunstone who created the site and now have a maintenance contract for it. Council agreed that material from the Tomorrow's Calling site should be embedded into the main Church website. Existing content on the Church website around Recruitment would be reviewed in order to make this more prominent and accessible. The *Vocations – It's Your Call* branding would be used going forward and not the Tomorrow's Calling branding. Once integrated there would be no ongoing costs for the information to be available on the Church website.

This work will be carried out in collaboration with the Communications Department over the coming months and the Education and Support Committee will report to Council on progress.

9 Partnerships and Development

Written report *MCI-06* providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from Daran Golby, Partnerships and Development Secretary.

The amended name for the section was noted as Partnerships and Development in place of Partnership Development.

9.1 Interim & Transition Ministry: Appointments have been made for Interim Minister (Central) and Transition Minister (Arrochar and Luss). Recruitment to the team is in process for Interim Minister (Central) and Transition Minister (Shetland).

Coatbridge: Calder lw Coatbridge: Old Monkland have resubmitted an application and there were no new applications.

Ian Murray (Interim Minister North East) continues working with Shetland Presbytery in preparing them for Transition Ministry and is facilitating discussions with Shetland and Aberdeen with a view to exploring the option of a Presbytery union. Both parties met for the first time earlier in June to start discussions about the associated implications without any obligation.

9.2 Hub Style Ministry Pilot Groups: To date, 4 of the 5 pilot groups are progressing well with their plans and have met with, and continue to work with, Kenneth Fleming, Co-ordinator for New and Emerging Ministries. The 5th group recognised that they were not in a position to submit proposals to the pilot working group and therefore have agreed to step down at this stage to permit them more time to explore their plan. There has been consultation with another Presbytery, possibly two, to fill this slot. Interest remains from other presbyteries but these are not being pursued at this time whilst we concentrate on the designated pilot group.

9.3 Property: The Committee authorised a further roof survey for Greenhills Church Extension to allow all the interested parties move forward with raising Greenhills to full status, as previously agreed by the Ministries Council. The report was received and discussions are in place with the General Trustees about work to be carried out on the windows, not the roof. The Committee will report on progress at a future Council meeting.

9.4 Presbytery Planning Task Group: In order to support presbyteries in a different way towards shaping their ministry into the future Council agreed to the following proposals made by the Committee:

- a) The Presbytery Planning Task Group to include the Principal Clerk plus one representative each from Stewardship and Finance, General Trustees and Council of Assembly.
- b) The Presbytery Planning Task Group to have two sets of business – the ongoing current administration of presbytery plans and a second section for ‘planning for the future’ with the new members in attendance.
- c) The remit for the ‘planning for the future’ section is to produce a workable and user-friendly model for presbyteries to use in planning for the shape of ministry within their bounds from 2022 onwards – to include drafting legislation to support the planning processes and design planning sustainable and fit for purpose tools.

9.5 Co-option to Presbytery Planning Task Group: Council agreed that Abi Tomba Ngunga and Sam Scobie be co-opted to the Presbytery Planning Task Group.

10 Council Secretary’s Report

Council received the Council Secretary’s Report *MCI-12*.

10.1 Open Day: A Departmental Open Day scheduled for 7 June was cancelled due to lack of numbers registered to attend. This will be re-scheduled for a date in the autumn.

10.2 Staffing: Daran Golby has been seconded as Partnerships & Development Secretary and Mairi Thomson joined the staff as Initial Ministerial Education Operations Manager on 9 April.

From 1 July Carron Lunt, Administration Manager, will begin a 12 month secondment as Senior Administration Officer within the Department of the General Assembly.

In addition it was noted that Isobel Armstrong-Holmes, Senior Administrator, has indicated her intention to leave the position in the autumn when she will relocate to Cornwall.

The Council Secretary expressed appreciation of the work carried out by the staff team.

11 Operational Plan

The *Operational Plan MCI-13* will be updated as progress is made.

12 Development Programme

The Council of Assembly has agreed to the Development Programme (*MCI-14*) and that between 2018-2021 the Ministries Council will Increase staffing capacity in order to deliver the Programme and then reduce staffing costs by 2021.

13 Constitution

The amended constitution document along with current membership of committees and groups was received (*MCI-16&16a*).

Members were asked initially to contact the relevant Vice-Convenor with any queries or comments around membership and then to contact the Convenor/Council Secretary in order to address the issues.

14 Code of Conduct for Voting Members of the Ministries Council

The Code (*MCI-17*) is issued annually to all voting members of the Ministries Council who are asked each year to confirm that they have read and understood its contents. It is the responsibility of members to make sure that they are familiar with the Code and that their actions as a Council member comply with its provisions.

15 Unincorporated Councils and Committees Conflict of Interest Policy - Register of Interests

On appointment, trustees are required to complete a Declaration of Interests form (*MCI-18*). The Register of Interests must be reviewed on an annual basis and updates received from members when a material change occurs.

16 Date of Next Meeting – The overnight meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 5 to Thursday 6 September 2018 at The Erskine Bridge Hotel, Riverfront, Erskine PA8 6AN

The Convenor thanked those present for their contributions and the meeting closed with the Grace.

.....
Convenor Date

.....
Secretary Date