

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

St Andrew's and St George's West Church, 13-17 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Wednesday 14 February 2018

**MINUTE**

**PRESENT:**

**Convener:** Neil Glover

**Vice-Conveners:** John Dent  
Eleanor McMahon  
Sarah Ross

**Members & Observers:** 22 Members and 1 Observer as recorded in the Register of Attendance

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

**Apologies:** Apologies were noted in the sederunt

**ACTION**

**54 Opening Worship**

The meeting was opened with prayers and apologies were noted.

**55 Minutes**

The Minute of the Ministries Council meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2017 was approved with minor amendment.

**56 Finance**

**56.1 Management Accounts to December 2017:** The Ministries Finance Manager, Elaine Macadie, reported that an operational loss of £1,498k had been budgeted for. The Ministries Council management accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 (MC5-01a&b) show, after adjustment for net transfers to other Councils and unrealised investment gains, the Council was in surplus by £2,806k.

The major variances against budget included underspends in stipends, with 37 fewer ministers than budgeted, also on the Path of Renewal project and delays on recruiting Interim Ministers. Notification was received before the year end of a substantial legacy left to the Church of Scotland for Maintenance of Ministry. Whilst this was not physically received before the year end it has been adjusted for in the December management accounts. It was noted that £15.3m of the total reserves were unrestricted which was up from £13.7m as at 31 December 2016.

The balance on the ring fence was still to be calculated as money may need to be returned under the ring fence agreement. It was also noted that recent changes in the stock market were not reflected in the figures provided.

**56.2 Pensions:** Ongoing costs will be discussed with Pensions Trustees and details will be brought to a future Council meeting.

**56.3 Restricted Funds Update:** Project Accountant, Gill Coghlan, has been in post since September 2017 to conduct investigations into the restricted funds of the Unincorporated Councils of the Church of Scotland with a view to freeing up as much as possible to

unrestricted reserves, and making the remaining restricted reserves usable. A total of £465k was transferred from restricted Ministries Council reserves to unrestricted in 2017. Further details of the figures were provided in paper MC5-02.

Work is ongoing with a large number of funds still having outstanding queries which are being worked through before conclusions can be made on them. Some will require reorganisation through The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) to allow them to be used.

**56.4 Income Protection:** The Long-Term Illness of Ministers Act (Act 15, 2002) will be looked at in the coming year alongside discussions around the Income Protection policy. The Ministries Finance Committee will monitor the costs.

## 57 Convener's Report

Council received a written report MC5-03 from the Convener.

**57.1 Corresponding Member for General Assembly:** The name of the Corresponding Member at the General Assembly will be brought to the March Council meeting for agreement.

NG

**57.2 Invitation to Presbytery Meetings:** The Convener has been invited to speak about Hub-style Ministries at upcoming meetings of the Presbyteries of Perth and Moray and would be happy to receive further such invitations.

**57.3 Ministries Finance Committee Convener:** With Allan Sim due to complete his term on Council in May there were ongoing discussions around the future Convenership of the Ministries Finance Committee. A name will be brought to the March Council meeting for agreement.

NG

**57.4 Housing and Loan Trustees:** Ministries Council nominates 4 of the Trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund. Council approved the appointment of Eilidh Renwick as a Trustee in place of Dorothy Anderson who is due to complete her second 4-year term in May 2018. Council also agreed to the reappointment of Joanne Hood who is due to complete a 4-year term in May 2018. The 2 other current Trustees are Ian Taylor and Neil McNaught.

## 58 Council Secretary's Report

Council received a written report MC5-04 from the Council Secretary.

**58.1 Staffing:** A document showing the Ministries Council staff team structure has been made available on the Church website. In addition details of changes to staffing are communicated through Ascend. Council noted that part-time Administrator, Nicky Nicholls, started on 9 January as part of the Secretariat team.

**58.2 Office Space:** Staff in the Councils and Departments based in the Church offices are required to significantly reduce storage space. This is taking place within the wider context of the use of the building and the General Assembly will look at the longer-term view. Staff teams within the Ministries Council are now engaged in a participatory planning exercise to look at how the office space can be reconfigured to improve their communication and efficiency as teams. It is anticipated that the new arrangements will be in place by April. Then on Thursday 7 June Ministries Council will host an Open Day, from 1-5pm in the department, to which anyone can come and see the department, meet the staff, receive information about what we do and have afternoon tea.

**58.3 Council/Committee/Task Groups:** Issues around the administrative burdens of current processes, how we handle business, timing and accessibility of meetings, as well as succession planning for membership and leadership of our committees and groups will be discussed. Options for the future, along with remits of the committees and groups of the

Council, will be brought to the June Council meeting for discussion and agreement.

Council had previously discussed whether there were issues around governance where Council Members were staff of the Ministries Council. The Convener confirmed that advice would be sought from the Law Department as required.

## 59 General Assembly Reports

**59.1 Ministries Council Draft Report to the General Assembly 2018:** The length of the draft report (MC5-05) has been reduced following a request from the Principal Clerk for brevity when preparing material for the report. Web link references for further information have been provided throughout the report. Council considered the draft report and amendments were noted. Members were asked to send a note of any corrections to grammar or typographical errors to the Council Secretary who will further edit the Report and submit by the given deadline.

JS

*Prior to breaking for lunch the Convener reported that Angus Mathieson, Partnership Development Secretary, will begin a 15 month secondment to the post of Council Secretary to the Mission & Discipleship Council from 1 March. Council wished Mr Mathieson well in this role.*

**59.2 Joint Emerging Church Group Report:** Council received the draft report (MC5-06) which will feature as part of the Mission & Discipleship Council Report this year.

**59.3 Discipline Act:** A restricted number of representatives of the Ministries Council were permitted to have first sight of a draft of the Discipline Act shortly before Christmas. It was therefore not possible to give a view of the Council at that time and a request to bring the draft document to February Council meeting was declined. Ministries Council is looking to work positively on this and other processes in conjunction with the Legal Questions Committee and to receive confirmation that Ministries Council would be consulted where procedures affect ministers and employees of the Ministries Council.

## 60 Priority Areas

A written report MC5-07 providing an overview of the work of the section was received and the scoping of the ongoing work was noted.

## 61 Partnership Development

A written report MC5-08 providing an overview of the work of the section was received along with a verbal report from Sarah Ross, Partnership Development Vice-Convener. It was noted that due to a number of apologies the Partnership Development Committee meeting scheduled for 1 February would now take place on 27 February.

**61.1 Amendment to Schedule of Charges in the International Presbytery:** Council concurred with an amendment, subject to satisfactory negotiations being concluded, to the schedule of charges in the International Presbytery Act (Act 2, 2016). Conversations were ongoing about the future of the congregation of Trinidad and Tobago and, should they leave, Council noted that this would result in the allocation for the International Presbytery reducing to 11.5 from its existing 12.5 posts. The Presbytery Planning Task Group will communicate this concurrence with the congregation.

**61.2 Joint Emerging Church Group Interim Report:** Further to the draft report from the Joint Emerging Church Group received earlier on the agenda under General Assembly Reports an interim report on the work of the Group was positively received (MC5-09).

**61.3 Pioneer Ministry Research Interim Report:** The Council is working with the Panel on Review and Reform on a research project into Pioneer Ministry. This is being carried out by the University of Glasgow and the Rev Dr Sandy Forsyth. Council noted the

content of the interim report (MC5-10).

Mrs Ross offered thanks on behalf of the Committee to Mr Mathieson for all the work done.

## 62 Education and Support

Written report MC5-11 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.

**62.1 Trinity College Grant Funding:** David Plews, Education & Training Secretary met with the Trinity College Committee in January 2018 to discuss a funding arrangement. The Education & Support Committee put forward a proposal to continue the funding until 2021 with the following provisions:

- a) Clear monitoring and reporting of funds.
- b) Prior to funds being awarded, a documented breakdown of how funds would be deployed should be submitted to the Education & Support Committee.
- c) Timeline of payments relating to satisfactory reporting demands.
- d) Subject to annual review following the structure of a revised partnership funding agreement.
- e) Funding to be sourced from restricted funds assigned to practical theology training.

Council agreed to the terms of the proposal and that the Education & Support Committee should proceed to ask for a formal application from Trinity College.

Council was mindful of the requirement for a Business Case to be prepared where there will be a large financial commitment. It was noted that a template document was available from the Ministries Finance Manager.

**62.2 Age Restriction:** Falkirk Presbytery asked the Council to consider raising the age for completion of training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and for Diaconal Ministry. With retirement age being variable and with the possibility of increasing the Education & Support Committee was minded to review the position. Council agreed that the Committee should discuss the potential implications of raising the age restriction, including financial and pastoral, and bring proposals to a future Council meeting.

**62.3 Archbishop's Committee on Mental Health & Wellbeing:** David Plews, Education and Training Secretary, and Gabby Dench, Pastoral Support Manager, are part of a steering group with the Archbishop of Canterbury for a project exploring mental health and the Church. A request was made by Angus Mathieson for Mission and Discipleship Council to be part of these discussions.

## 63 Correspondence

**63.1 Reviewable Tenure:** Abernethy Presbytery has asked Council to take steps to introduce legislation to ensure that all charges have reviewable tenure. The Convener confirmed that this will be discussed by the Partnership Development Committee.

**63.2 Assessors to the Presbytery of Jerusalem:** Acting under delegated authority from the Legal Questions Committee and in terms of Act V 2001 the Principal Clerk wrote to the Council Secretary to confirm his intention to agree to the appointment of John P Chalmers, Presbytery of Dunfermline, and Ian Alexander, Presbytery of Edinburgh, as assessors to the Presbytery of Jerusalem. The Presbytery is not currently quorate and the appointment of the assessors would allow them to take forward the union of the congregations on Jerusalem and Tiberias and, thereafter, ordain and introduce John McCulloch as the Mission Partner/Minister of the Charge.

**ACTION**

**64 Date of Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 21 March 2018 at St Andrew’s and St George’s West Church, 13-17 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

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

..... Date  
Convener

..... Date  
Secretary