

**THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND – MINISTRIES COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

The Erskine Bridge Hotel, Erskine, PA8 6AN
Wednesday, 7 November 2018 at 1.00pm

MINUTE

PRESENT:

Convener: Neil Glover

Vice Convener: Bob Mallinson
Eleanor McMahon
Sarah Ross

Members & Observers: 21 others recorded in the Register of Attendance

Staff in Attendance: Jayne Scott plus 7 staff, as recorded in the Register of Attendance.

Apologies: Apologies were noted in the Sederunt

ACTIONS

31. Opening Worship

The meeting was opened with Psalm 121 by The Convener, Neil Glover. He apologised for the need to change the meeting date due to an unavoidable clash in Committee diaries.

32. Apologies

Apologies were noted in the Sederunt.

33. Minutes

The Minutes of the September Council meeting were approved, as circulated.

34. Convener's Report

4.1 Appointment of New Convener – applicants had been shortlisted and interviews were being held next week.

4.2 Special Commission– It was asked what the relationship was between governance and strategy for this remit and it was clarified that Special Commission was focused on governance and how we work rather than the content of our work. The overall focus was on Council of Assembly work. It is possible that likely recommendations will move to Ministries Council in due course.

4.3 RIT – David Plews tabled a diagram ('placemat') illustrating the flow of the RIT process, which outlines the plan for rethinking our current Training and Capability Framework. A more comprehensive paper will be brought to the December Council meeting with the future objective being that we can tailor training needs in accordance with both the overall vision and local knowledge and requirements.

A brief discussion resulted in the following initial thoughts:-

- is this purely a description of parish ministers?
- what about someone who says 'God is not good'?
- it is person-centred – needs connection with the wider Church?
- the diagram shows segments as equal size – reality is very different
- what is new in this diagram?
- DP trying to be more intentional in his planning – trying to provide more depth
- When is this due?
- NG to obtain high level sign-off at next Council of Assembly.
- How long have we been discussing this? - First discussed 5 years ago, but worked on several different versions since.
- JS said that several layers required to progress curriculum, piloting, etc.
- God is Good should be at the heart – with the rest surrounding it.
- Focus should be on the breadth of ministry – not just Word and Sacrament.

4.4 Capability Framework – postponed until after the General Assembly has approved Formation Framework. David Plews warned that there was a risk to the Formation Framework, if it was seen purely as a tool to bring about a Capability Framework. Seek agreement to postpone report to 2020. **Approved.**

4.5 Special Commission – The Convener commented that this work was ongoing. There had yet to be any formal contact with Ministries.

4.6 Long Term Health - Consultation is ongoing. Presentations have been held and feedback will be provided to Council when available.

4.7 Radical Action Plan

Made up of 3 work streams, one of which JS sits on. Concern at lack of consultation and sharing of information. Small think tank approach does not reflect thoughts of the wider group.

JS said that consultation happened at Presbytery Conference and it is down to attendees to cascade information to relevant departments. There is a planned second meeting in January to focus again on action plans and check progress. Work stream groups will not produce large consultative document, simply concise action plans. Deadlines are tight. Feedback on Presbytery Conference content not positive – limited timescales and consultation will hinder effectiveness of findings.

Council agreed that the Presbytery Planning Task Group and Priority Areas are involved in the consultation process – **JS will feed this back to work stream.**

JS

Concern also on where CoA is getting its change management advice?

JS stated that there is much expertise available within our Council, but individual members could not be present at every meeting and we therefore have to place trust in our representatives at each forum.

NG will convey these concerns and thoughts into Council of Assembly, and JS was asked to convey these to the working group.

NG/JS

35. Finance Committee

5.1 Budget 2019 – A draft indicative budget was presented to Council.

5.2 Finance Committee Report

- Council was asked to make a cut of £213k to expenditure, due to a £86k cut in Mission and Renewal, and £127k reduction in legacies. Options considered were a reduction in Partnership Funding, taking money from reserves, and a reduction in Go For It funding for the remainder of 2018 (achieved through not allowing funds returned from previous years).

Council agreed to this means of funding the reduction.

The Convener of Go For It spoke to express concern about some of the implications of the reduction. In particular a request was made to guarantee funding for successive years – in the same way that this had been granted to the Council's partners. **The Convener expressed reservations about this suggestion, but agreed to look into the possibility.**

NG

Stipend Increase – The Ministries Council sub-committee (delegated to make this decision) had recommended a 2.5% stipend and salary rise. This has been scrutinised by Council of Assembly Finance Committee and will be considered by Council of Assembly.

Benevolent Fund – Council agreed to reorganisation of this Fund (through application to OSCR) – as it currently only benefits retired ministers and spouses. The proposal is to include ministers in charges and their spouses in future.

36. Partnerships and Development

6.1 Go For It – this is a valuable asset for local congregations. There has been a welcome increase in applications.

6.2 Chaplaincies' Forum Remit – Council agree to a revised remit for the forum, with the proviso that it be amended to include 'appropriately' in the first bullet point to read 'ministries are appropriately included'.

Concern was expressed that Chaplains not on the Ministries Council personnel database. This highlights the need to find an effective method of communicating effectively. There is concern that Chaplains do not feel involved or supported.

6.3 Deaf Ministry – An appointment has been made in Aberdeen. Rosie Addis is departing for a new post after much hard work and a tremendous contribution to her role.

6.4 Emerging Models of Ministry I and II – papers on the ongoing development of Hub Ministries were presented and discussed.

6.5 Interim Ministers – There is much appreciation of the working happening in Shetland, with the support of Aberdeen Presbytery.

ACTIONS

It was asked if a press release be issued on the progress so far, rather than a post on social media? NG said that the situation is currently still of a sensitive nature, but that a release could be issued in due course. There is also a need to create a record of the learning for future work. JS felt that Ministries Council had taken the more direct (and effective) way of responding to the Shetland situation – 3 Ministers visited Shetland during a 9 month period to liaise and communicate with those in situ.

6.6 MDS numbers – 120 f/t equivalent posts going forward. There was an element of risk as we do not currently have significant mechanisms to support the process – needs to be capped in some way. Council needs to identify the mechanism for doing this. Some posts were put in place because Presbyteries were going to make an adjustment. It was asked if Presbyteries could contribute towards funding? Concern was also expressed that if an MDS' relationship with a Minister breaks down, we have no control from an employment perspective and as the employer therefore Ministries Council carries a significant risk. NG asked SR to continue with the good work.

6.7 OLMs – Council asked to agree with the deliverance as per the submitted paper. Issues raised included: –

- number of hours not mentioned in the paper
- should OLMs be paid or not if in a vacant charge?
- Vocational Ministry – definition needs clarity
- is it possible to ask those who have retired?
- who are 'the others' referred to in the consultation?
- does the Act need to be changed to include 10 hour? Need to remind Presbytery of what is in the Act
- what is the objective of introducing payments for OLM – how do we place value?
- Readers working group looking at Readers' identity!

Council approved the proposal (7 votes in favour/2 against).

6.8 Hub Style Ministries – paper sent out late and missed deadline for distribution. General positive reception around Hubs. **Any comments to SR.**

6.9 Fresh Expressions - awaiting Board report in conjunction with Mission and Discipleship.

37. Priority Areas

7.1 Vice-Convenor – Priority Areas Committee had been considering the usefulness of designating a member of the Committee to be a “vice-convenor”, to stand in for the Convenor on occasional times. This discussion had arisen as a result of the unfortunate situation whereby a previous Convenor had been ill for a significant length of time. It was agreed at the September meeting of PAC to opt for working on an ad-hoc basis this year, review this at the March 2019 meeting and take recommendations to Ministries Council at that point.

7.2 Operational Plan – significant level of work completed.

7.3 Big Conversation – there were 180 attendees over 2 day event. This was an overwhelming success and totally inspiring

7.4 PA Family Holiday – also a huge success but required a very high level of organising and supporting. PA Staff Team have been working very hard for a long time– and the

individual skills the combined team bring are very effective.

38. Education & Support

8.1 Long Term Ill Health Act - 3 live consultations conducted – update will be given at next meeting (in December). **LS**

8.2 Student Finance - Looking at models on student poverty/student funding – will bring paper to future meeting. **MT**

8.3 Trinity College – concern at lack of reporting for funding of circa £28k pa received from Ministries Council. The Depute Secretary will investigate the matter along with the E&S Convener – otherwise the funding may be terminated.

8.4 Training Age Limit – it was proposed that all training cycles must commence at least 10 years prior to the Candidate’s state retirement age. **Council Agreed.**

8.5 HR Network Award - the CoS Ascend Team had been nominated for the prestigious HR Network Award. Despite not being awarded the prize, they had done very well to be shortlisted.

8.6 D Plews – Education & Secretary Resignation –the Council thanked David for all his hard work whilst in post as Education & Training Secretary and wished him all the very best for his future career.

39. Sacramental Ministries

Paper had been 18 months in planning and the Committee were extremely grateful to Panel on Review and Reform for producing such a professional and coherent working document. Any comments to the Secretary so that we can provide a Council response.

Secretary asked to send email to Council Members asking for comments by 29th November. **JS**

- a. **Register of Ministers – Associate Ministers**
Categorisation of Associate Ministers now needs to be put in place following **JS** formalisation of the Act – so that they are categorised as ‘E’ rather than ‘O’. The secretary to liaise with all Associate Ministers to explain the process and will report back at December Council meeting. Lezley Stewart will also need to prepare a corresponding paper on Admissions.

40. Council Secretary’s Report

10.1 Radical Action Plan – report to be prepared for next Council Meeting. **JS**

10.2 Staffing

- Departures of David Plews and Rosie Addis (as previously mentioned).
- Sheila MacRae (our Ministries Receptionist and Support) recently celebrated 30 years’ service within Ministries Council.

Education and Training Secretary post replacement –discussions are currently underway with HR on the way forward.

41. There being no other matters for discussion, the Meeting closed at 5.50pm

**Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday, 12th December 2018 10.30am – 3.00pm
121, George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN**

Neil Glover

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Convener

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Date

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Secretary

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Date