INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS IN 2027

NAME OF STANDING COMMITTEE/AGENCY:
Legal Questions Committee

CONVENER/CHAIR:	Rev Dr Marjory MacLean
VICE-CONVENER(S):	Rev Katherine Ann Taylor
SECRETARY:	The Principal Clerk

REMIT:

- To advise on legal questions, whether of Church or civil law, referred to it by the General Assembly, by the Principal Clerk or by any agency of the General Assembly;
- To assist in formulating responses to consultations opened by the Scottish and UK Governments and other bodies;
- To provide the legislative drafting service for agencies of the General Assembly;
- To advise on reform to Church law in terms of practice and procedure;
- To report to the General Assembly on proposed amendments to Standing Orders; and
- To inspect annually records of Agencies of the General Assembly.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE SOUGHT AT THIS TIME:
Most members of the Committee are very experienced in the governance of the Church (e.g. as experienced ministers, former senior members of other Assembly agencies, Presbytery Clerks or the like). Many are qualified, practising or retired civil lawyers. A few belong to both categories.

EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:
Normally members will be required to read about 30-40 pages of materials, including discussion-papers, provided one to two weeks before each meeting. They will be expected to contribute to the discussion from their own expertise in either civil law or Church law (and normally it is not expected that anyone will have expertise in both).

MEMBERSHIP AND ANTICIPATED VACANCIES:
Convener, Vice-Convener and 10 members appointed by the General Assembly; and the Clerks of Assembly, the Procurator and the Solicitor of the Church as members *ex officiis*.
Members are normally appointed for a term of four years, which may be renewed.

It is anticipated that there will be vacancies for Convener, Vice-Convener and three members to be filled with a start date of June 2027.

FREQUENCY, TIMING AND VENUE OF MEETINGS:
5 or 6 half-day meetings per year, held on a week-day, via Microsoft Teams, or in person at 121 George Street, Edinburgh.

DETAILS OF SUB-COMMITTEES/GROUPS:

Small groups drawn from the Committee's membership may tackle particular technical issues for a few months within any annual cycle and sometimes these groups will embark upon an extended period of work lasting for more than one calendar year. Currently the Committee has several sub-groups dealing with remits from previous General Assemblies, for example, one considering certain aspects of the Discipline Process and the Complaints Process. Sub-groups are convened by a member of the Committee.