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SECTION K METHODIST CHURCH HOUSE

The 2020 Conference received the report that the Council had agreed to pause the rebuilding project until the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic were clearer. The Council considered the significant changes in circumstances since it had made the decision to rebuild Methodist Church House. It also noted the need for a gathering place for the Connexion, where a number of the connexional functions can be housed, and where connexional meetings can take place. Following detailed work by the Property Development Committee and the Strategy and Resources Committee, the Council agreed that the redevelopment of Methodist Church House be discontinued.

The Property Development Committee, the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Council have now concluded that the best course of action is to sell Methodist Church House, and to use the proceeds of the sale for alternative office provision for the Connexional Team in London. Various options for alternative office space are being pursued, including potential partnerships for the sake of mission. The project needs to be financially manageable, with an emphasis on fulfilling *Our Calling*, as a gathering place for the wider Church and a home for the Connexional Team is sought.

There is some ambiguity in the Centenary Hall Trust Deed as to the process of making the decision to sell Methodist Church House. The Charity Commission's interpretation of the Trust Deed's provisions has therefore been sought. A response is awaited, and an update and formal resolution regarding the proposed sale will be presented in the Order Paper.

*****RESOLUTION**

25/1. The Conference receives the Report.

SECTION L CONNEXIONAL GRANTS PROCESSES

The Council agreed that there should be a redesign of the connexional grant-giving processes, in particular those grants which are made from the Mission in Britain Fund, the Fund for Property, and the World Mission Fund. The Mission in Britain Fund is now to be used for funding New Places for New People projects and Methodist Action on Poverty

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and Justice. The Epworth Fund is being invested in the Evangelism and Growth strategy. The Fund for Property is being transferred to the oversight of the Property Development Committee. The World Mission Fund is to be overseen by a task group of the Global Relationships Committee.

The changes outlined above will enable streamlined and efficient processes in respect of the three funds which have previously been under the oversight of the Connexional Grants Committee.

In the light of these changes, the Council recommends to the Conference that the Connexional Grants Committee be disbanded and the proposed changes to Standing Orders are shown below.

212 Particular Functions.

- (1) - (2) [*Unchanged*]
- ~~(2A) The Council shall be responsible for formulating the grants policy to be implemented by the Connexional Grants Committee.~~
- (3) *and following* [*Unchanged*]

213 Strategy and Resources Committee.

- (1) (i) – (iii) [*Unchanged*]
(iv) ~~the chair of the Connexional Grants Committee or his or her representative;~~
- (2) – (5A) [*Unchanged*]

(5B) The Committee shall oversee and administer the Methodist Mission in Britain Fund.

(5C) The Committee shall oversee and administer the Connexional Priority Fund.

~~213B Connexional Grants Committee~~ (1) ~~The Methodist Council shall each year appoint a Connexional Grants Committee, its sub-committees, and bodies subsidiary to the sub-committees to be known as grant streams.~~

~~(2) The committee shall be responsible for all connexional grants, for which it will establish a clear published application process and set criteria, but not so as to include grants made to meet expenses or in return for services or membership, and in the following clauses of this Standing Order ‘grants’ means grants within the committee’s responsibility.~~

~~(3) Apart from grants for chaplaincy work or property projects and from the World Mission Fund, grants shall be available only for work of connexional significance.~~

~~(4) The committee shall consist of a chair, one representative from each of the sub-committees and three other persons.~~

- (5) The committee shall meet at least once a year.
- (6) It shall have the following functions:

- (i) to implement the grants policy adopted by the council;
- (ii) to operate within an annual budget for all grant making set by the council, taking into account current priorities and all relevant sources of income;
- (iii) to set clear criteria for all grant-making processes, including the thresholds for grants approval by the sub-committees and grant streams, the definition and interpretation of 'connexional significance', and the general allocation of unrestricted funds for specific purposes;
- (iv) to monitor all grants made by the sub-committees and grant streams;
- (v) to recommend to the council the number and focus of the grant streams working under each of the sub-committees;
- (vi) to approve the processes used by the sub-committees and grant streams for making decisions between scheduled meetings, and to set limits on decisions that may be delegated for officer action;
- (vii) to monitor grants made by Districts from their share of the Connexional Priority Fund and to make recommendations to the council;
- (viii) to establish clear processes for the longer term monitoring and evaluation of grant expenditure and to make recommendations based on these results.

335 Global Relationships Committee.

(1)-(1A) [*Unchanged*]

(2) The council shall determine the terms of reference for the committee to ensure that the committee shall advise and support the Connexional Team in the implementation, development, **resourcing** and monitoring of global relationships. ...

432 Funds

(1) [*Unchanged*]

(1A) The committee shall oversee and administer the District Advance Fund and present a report of its oversight at least annually to the Synod.

(1B) The committee shall also oversee and administer any allocation received from the Methodist Mission in Britain Fund in accordance with Standing Order 432A and present a report of its oversight at least annually to the Synod.

(2)-(3) [*Unchanged*]

A new SO 432A will be brought on the Order Paper.

936 Historic Artefacts

(1) [*Unchanged*]

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~~(2) Grants for the care and safety of such property shall be applied for from the Connexional Grants Committee in accordance with Standing Order 213B.~~

963 Advance Funds

~~(3) ... for the support of personnel serving in the District or any of its Circuits, for property projects within Standing Order 930, **for the support of work in furtherance of the Church's mission** and for ecumenical work. The Synod shall establish a process and criteria for dealing with such grants. An annual report shall be sent to the Connexional Grants Committee by the end of October each year, covering the previous connexional year. A copy of the report shall be presented to the Synod.~~

971 The Committee. The fund shall be administered by the Connexional Grants-**Strategy and Resources** Committee.

974 Purposes (1) The purposes of the fund are:

- (i) to distribute annually to some or all of the district Advance Funds the appropriate proportion of the balance between the total received and the total refunded in the previous year through the levy charged under Standing Order 970(1), the amount (if any) payable to each such fund being determined by the Connexional Grants-**Strategy and Resources** Committee;
- (iA)-(ii) [*Unchanged*]
- (iii) subject to (i) and (iA) above, to make payments out of capital to the Mission in Britain Fund when so directed by resolution of the Conference ~~to support the payment of grants from that fund to Local Churches and Circuits for the furtherance of the Church's mission in cases which are beyond the normal resources of the Local Church or Circuit and are judged to be a priority;~~

and for the purposes of heads (i) and (iA) above, 'the appropriate proportion' means in each case such proportion as may be determined by the Conference from time to time.

Section 99 Property Development Committee

991 Terms of Reference (1)

- (i)-(iii) [*Unchanged*]
- (iiiA) administer the Methodist Fund for Property**
- (iv)-(viii) [*Unchanged*]

Part 10 The Church in Mission

1002A World Mission Fund Grants Committee.

- (1) In fulfilment of the commitment of the Methodist Church in Britain to work**

in partnership with Churches across the world the Global Relationships Committee shall annually appoint the World Mission Fund Grants Committee, establish criteria for nomination to the committee and determine its terms of reference.

- (2) **The committee shall consist of no more than eleven people:**
 - (i) *A chair, appointed from within its membership, who shall be a member of the Methodist Church in Britain;*
 - (ii) *A representative of the Methodist Church in Ireland;*
 - (iii) *Additional members so that a majority of the committee shall have been nominated by partner Churches across the world;*
- (3) **Members of the committee shall be appointed annually and shall serve for a maximum term of six years.**
- (4) **The committee shall administer the Methodist World Mission Fund.**
- (5) **The committee shall account at least annually to the Global Relationships Committee for its administration of the fund.**

*****RESOLUTIONS**

25/2. The Conference receives the Report.

25/3. The Conference amends Standing Orders as set out above.

**SECTION M
MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**

The Council received a report on the work of the Ministries Committee.

The Learning Institutions and Continuing Development in Ministry (CDIM)

1. One of the Ministries Committee's responsibilities is to report on the relationship with Cliff College and the Queen's Foundation. The Committee received annual reports from the two institutions at its September meeting, which were highly encouraging.
2. **Cliff College**
 - 2.1 The vision of Cliff College is to be a beacon of excellence for training in mission and evangelism, serving the church especially in the UK, but also internationally. As the Methodist Church's college, working under the oversight of the Council through the Cliff Committee, and with deep roots in the Wesleyan theological tradition, it exists to train people in mission and evangelism. This training should

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impact all sections of the Church and serve the widest possible constituency. It achieves this through:

- a range of validated courses and programmes with mission and evangelism at their core, including accredited degree programmes at all levels;
- short courses, schools and Cliff Local serving the needs of lay people in the church;
- evangelists acting as a catalyst for mission and evangelism in the church;
- an annual Festival offering a vibrant programme for all ages;
- the Cliff Year offering young people a year of vocational exploration;
- the conference centre providing accommodation for individuals and groups;
- Global Partnerships supporting lay and ordained training across the globe;
- a series of resources promoting the themes of mission and evangelism.

2.2 The College continues to celebrate and treasure its relationship with the Methodist Church and works in partnership with the Church in a wide variety of ways:

- supporting the Connexional Team in the delivery of *Worship: Learning & Preaching*, and enabling students to train in ways that meet their own learning needs;
- working alongside the Evangelism and Growth team, and with members of the team embedded in the Cliff staff, to ensure a co-ordinated approach as the *God for All* strategy is implemented across the Connexion;
- providing a meeting place for groups and committees;
- supporting the Local Church through short courses that provide learning for those in ministry roles, and Cliff Local that makes this learning more local;
- offering hospitality and opportunities for learning from those in ministry locally;
- supporting the global Methodist Church through the enhancement of strong relationships and partnerships, the training of those in lay and ordained ministry and the development of new and appropriate ways of learning, in close collaboration with the Global Relationships Committee and staff team;
- supporting online learning and training opportunities through TheologyX, a platform which is under development as a key connexional hub for virtual learning opportunities;
- being a major provider of degree courses and research opportunities which benefit the whole Church, nurture future theologians and theological educators, and stimulate wider reflection and discernment.

2.3 The biggest challenge for the College during the COVID-19 pandemic has been the move to online teaching. When lockdown was introduced in late March 2020

all on-site course delivery was stopped and moved online virtually overnight. This required the faculty, administrators, librarian, and colleagues across the College to deliver learning in a completely different way at a crucial point of the year. The aim was to minimise the impact on students and enable them to complete their work remotely. Cliff College is uniquely positioned to meet the changing demand through technology and learning innovation.

- Its nimble structure already allows it to facilitate creative and timely short courses. With this same nimbleness, it has reimaged all its programmes to ensure Cliff is at the cutting edge of dynamic, responsive, flexible and engaging course delivery.
- TheologyX, alongside its media studio, has given it a head start as the pandemic forces all institutions to rethink their delivery model. Through TheologyX, it is well positioned to provide high-quality online learning at all academic levels to students worldwide.
- It is working with leading student services providers, such as TalkCampus, Global Digital Theological Library and the Church of the Nazarene's GNECsis system to ensure students engaging online receive an unrivalled e-learning experience. Through these partner providers it will provide enhanced mental health provision, access to over 600,000 theological texts, and an easy-to-use student management system – all of which will support the student in learning.

2.4 The staff team at Cliff College led by the Principal, the Revd Ashley Cooper, has developed a new identity statement document that will help it to develop a new vision document and business plan for September 2021 and the following five years. 'Vision21' is a process that the whole College is currently undertaking, to develop its work so that it is fit for purpose, meeting the needs of the Church and working within a clear and sustainable financial framework. It is also engaging with a number of its partners in this process, including colleagues in the Connexional Team and All We Can.

3. **The Queen's Foundation**

3.1 The Queen's Foundation has continued, on behalf of the Methodist Church, to receive all those candidates accepted by the Methodist Conference for initial ministerial training. The Centre for Ministerial Formation includes those Methodist students (about half of the total) accepted as student ministers for initial training, who learn and undergo that formation in community with their Anglican counterparts in a fully ecumenical setting. The COVID-19 virus and the measures taken to contain its threat had a huge impact on its activities and, following public health advice and the guidance of partner universities and sponsoring

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churches, it changed all face to face learning to online learning at the end of the spring term. This meant that the three Easter schools had to be rapidly re-shaped to this new mode, retaining not only high-quality teaching but also as much formational learning as possible. At the same time, it developed plans to move all summer term learning and formation for first year students, including placements, into the autumn term and to move some autumn term teaching into the summer term. It put processes in place as additional support for those writing dissertations beyond probation studies (as well as for other Queen's students writing dissertations), to help them complete their programme. The pandemic has disrupted studies in a number of ways for people, so Queen's also invited ministers hoping to complete work to push their studies into the coming year, 2020/2021, if their situation demanded that. Once it had been confirmed that the University of Durham would waive the continuation fee for this year for those affected, a number have been enabled to continue with studies from which they might otherwise have withdrawn.

- 3.2 The whole allocations process took place on Zoom and Queen's has learned the advantage of having the conversation online between each recommended candidate and a Queen's tutor and member of the Allocations Panel, as well as any necessary conversations between the Church's Wellbeing Adviser and recommended candidates, and might seek to continue that practice.
- 3.3 The Queen's Periodic External Review was carried out under the auspices of the Quality in Formation Panel and the final report gave a verdict of unqualified 'Confidence' in the work that Queen's is doing. The Governors in early July agreed the Foundation's responses to the recommendations made in the final report. Under the Partnership Agreement with the Methodist Church, there continues to be a regular pattern of meetings between the Principal, the Director of Methodist Formation and senior members of the Ministries Team, as well as an annual meeting between the Foundation leadership and members of both the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) and Ministries Team. Methodist governors, nominated from both the Ministries Committee and the Council, are playing a full part in the governance and oversight of the Foundation's work. Professor Clive Marsh took on the role of Principal from 1 September 2020.
- 3.4 The strong growth of the Centre for Black Theology has led to the launch of a new undergraduate pathway focused on black theology for Black Majority Church members, on the model developed originally for the (Methodist) Queen's Connexional Course. This also builds on the expertise developed through taster pathways for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and MA provision that foregrounds Black Theology within a (Newman University) course in Theology and Transformative Practice. The Centre for Black Theology is also

supporting a number of new research students. The generosity of the Methodist Church, under the oversight of the Global Relationships Committee and staff team, has enabled Queen's to develop another of the Governors' priorities, in developing work with theological educators in the global South, in its Partnership in Theological Education Project.

4. **Wesley House Cambridge**

Work has continued through the year on establishing new frameworks for partnership between the Connexion and Wesley House, which will culminate in a new Memorandum of Understanding being drawn up with the trustees for approval at their May meeting, and by the Ministries Committee in June. This will be the first fruit of the CDiM strategy's goal of new agreements with Methodist-related institutions, and will pull together both existing shared work, and also aspirations for future collaboration. The Director of Learning for Ministry has been grateful to attend meetings of the trustee body at Wesley House, and will seek to continue to strengthen this connection in future months.

5. **HE Awards Criteria**

- 5.1 The Awards Panel met via Zoom in August 2020, and was able to confirm the awards for 2020/2021. Despite a lower annual budget because of the impact of the pandemic on connexional funding, all those with valid applications which met the criteria were given awards towards tuition costs. Because of the Ministries Committee's work on revising the criteria, the Awards Panel was able to exercise some flexibility in giving slightly more to those pursuing doctoral research likely to be of broad benefit to the Church, and which is also in general more costly. The Director of Learning for Ministry and the Secretary of the Faith and Order Committee have had individual conversations with all those undertaking research and higher degrees and in receipt of this funding, to build up a better sense of what is being worked on and what opportunities might exist to offer the fruit of such research to the wider Church and its mission. Two online research conferences, one for Master's level students and one for those pursuing doctoral research, have been scheduled for June.

6. **Continuing Development in Ministry**

The new strategy for Continuing Development in Ministry (CDiM) was adopted by the Ministries Committee in February 2020. The strategy contains five main recommendations, four of these are in progress and/or complete: the implementation of 'live' profiles for ministers which include accurate and up-to-date information about ongoing learning and development; the integration

of supervision with Ministerial Development Review (MDR); the amendment of SO 745 in relation to funding (approved by the 2020 Conference); and ongoing conversations with Methodist-related learning institutions, with a view to the development of new memoranda of understanding which may undergird and support CDiM provision. The Director of Learning for Ministry continues to progress these conversations, and the first gathering of a new forum for these institutions took place on 25 February 2021. One recommendation is outstanding, relating to the provision of 'new' money which ministers may claim for CDiM purposes. Because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on finances, and thus future budget-planning, not to mention the huge disruptions it has caused in when and how ministers may undertake CDiM, the Ministries Team, with the approval of the Ministries Committee, has concluded that this recommendation cannot be an urgent current priority. The intention is to return to its implementation as soon as is practical, and certainly by the beginning of 2022.

7. Global Theological Education

The Committee received feedback on the exciting work going on with partner Churches overseas. It was pleased to hear that a clearer sense of strategy is emerging, building on the growing work with worldwide partner Churches and the work of three British institutions (Cliff College, The Queen's Foundation and Wesley House) sponsored by the Global Relationships Committee. The Director of Learning for Ministry has established helpful and collegial relationships with relevant team members in both the Irish Connexion and the United Methodist Church (UMC), as well as within the European e-Academy and Methodist Theological Schools in Europe (MTSE) group of Methodist-affiliated institutions in Europe. It is hoped that firmer proposals for shared work, especially between the British and Irish Conferences, can be brought soon for discussion and approval.

LAY MINISTRY

8. Training Resources for those who receive an Authorisation to Preside

The 2020 Conference adopted the following resolution arising from the report on Changing Patterns of Ministry:

- 34/4. The Conference directed the Ministries Committee in consultation with the Faith and Order Committee to make available training resources for those who receive an authorisation to preside at the Lord's Supper.

These resources are now available on the website. It should be noted that District Chairs are not obliged to follow the guidelines within those resources if they have other protocols in place.

9. Local Lay-Pastors in the context of Changing Patterns of Ministry

The Committee has considered the work of the Changing Patterns of Ministry group in relation to Local Lay-Pastors and has contributed through its representatives to that report.

10. Worship: Leading and Preaching

- 10.1 One of the consequences of COVID-19 has been the rapid adoption and acceptance of online technology. Following cancellation of the Worship, Leading and Preaching (WLP) Summer School at Cliff College an online version was attended by 80 students. The success of this resulted in a plan to run similar *Explore Online* sessions twice yearly in January and July. The January event confirmed that this is meeting a real need, especially for those students whose circuits struggle to provide adequate tutorial and mentoring support. Additionally, a fortnightly programme of *WLP Online Inductions* commenced in October. All newly-enrolled students and their tutors are invited to attend a 90 minute online session introducing the course and the learning process. Take-up and attendee feedback have been most encouraging and reflected in reduced anxiety amongst new students and tutors. In reviewing the future role of local preachers and worship leaders, we need to draw on the valuable lessons learned, particularly in the light of anecdotal evidence that the experience of online worship has enabled many beyond the boundaries of church to encounter faith and join with worshipping communities. The blend of physical and online church (sometimes referred to as hybrid church) is an area where local preachers and worship leaders might contribute greatly, and they need to be equipped with the understanding and skills to minister effectively in the changing context.
- 10.2 The Board of Studies instigated a comprehensive review of the portfolio assessment process, which resulted in a radical overhaul of the portfolio process for WLP. Intensive development work, with significant contributions from the Learning Network, enabled version 3.0 of the course website to be opened in September 2020 for new enrolments. From November 2020, all eight modules in WLP 3.0 were opened to students who wish to transfer from version 2.0. There are now 267 enrolled users on WLP 3.0 and user feedback has been encouraging. More details on WLP 3.0 are available at www.methodist.org.uk/wlp3.
- 10.3 A pilot *WLP in a Year* programme was launched in September 2019. Based around WLP Spring and Summer Schools and three additional residential weekends, this supplemented the work of circuit Tutors and Mentors for students who wished to commit to intensive study for one year. Of the eleven students who started, four

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completed the course on schedule and are now recognised as local preachers. For the remainder, COVID-19 significantly disrupted their intentions but several are on track to complete their studies this year. After a year's pause, *WLP in a Year* will restart in September 2021 with a higher proportion of online delivery.

- 10.4 In 2021 the *Faith & Worship* course, which was the authorised training course for Local Preachers for nearly 30 years, comes to an end. *Faith & Worship* transformed lay theological education in the church, and countless local preachers and ordained ministers discovered the wonder of theology and the possibilities of preaching through studying it. We celebrate the vision and commitment shown by the creators of the course material and the tutors, mentors and connexional assessors who have accompanied and supported so many on their journey through *Faith & Worship*.
- 10.5 Development of Worship Leaders and Preachers (M25/2019) – The 2019 Conference agreed that the Ministries Committee will receive an annual report on the work of worship leaders and local preachers, and in particular their initial training and ongoing development., which will then be included in the reports of the Ministries Committee to the Council. As of January 2021, there were 5,952 active local preachers recorded on the connexional database, a decline from 6,171 the previous year.

Concerning those in training:

- 405 had a Note to Preach, and there were 655 persons On Trial as local preachers.
- 197 portfolios were successfully completed on the *Worship: Leading & Preaching* course in 2020, compared with 201 the previous year. Of these, 14 were from worship leaders (2019: 31), who have successfully completed modules 1-4. 89 were LP Portfolio A, (2019: 88), and 84 were LP Portfolio B, (2019: 82) indicating completion of LP training. (NB worship leaders complete one portfolio, local preachers complete two.)
- During the year, 80 new students enrolled as worship leaders, and 155 as local preachers.
- (Previously 104, 167). These figures are encouraging, given the disruption to public worship due to COVID-19, but work continues as part of the Vocations Strategy to encourage people to consider worship and preaching as expressions of their call to discipleship.
- On the *Faith & Worship* course, 62 portfolios were assessed in 2020 (four are submitted during the entire course). Of these 40 were for Section D, which provides an indication of those who completed their training during the year. The comparable figures for 2019 were 111 and 51, the decline being

the consequence of *Faith & Worship* ending in spring 2021.

- 108 new local preachers were accredited during 2020, as indicated by the number of President's Letters requested, a slight increase from 103 in 2019.

The deaths of 236 local preachers were reported during the year.

VOCATIONS

11. Vocations Strategy and Vocations Sunday

There is a clear direction for this work to move forward. The Committee notes the following:

- There is now one programme content for Exploring Ordained Ministry days, for in-person events and online events, being led in part by the Ministries: Vocations and Worship (M:VW) team and in part by the Learning Network. The programme ensures consistency of content and tone. 119 people attended the M:VW-led Exploring Ordained Ministry Days over the previous two years.
- A series of 13 reflective postcards is available from Methodist Publishing relating to 12 forms of vocation within church life. Each one has an image that can be used as an aid to reflection and contemplation, whilst engaging with any of the discernment questions on the reverse. Each postcard links to the website to help people explore their next vocational steps.
- A diverse range of local preachers has been filmed sharing why they 'love being a local preacher'. These will be placed on the website and will be used in the #LoveThisCalling campaign (patterns show that when there is a group of local preachers in training from one place candidating numbers increase – this trend is being further explored by the officer for Worship and Local Preachers).
- A new vocations campaign #LoveThisCalling – ran from January to May 2021. The campaign built up to Vocations Sunday on 2 May 2021, with a follow on Living Library event for those who are exploring a calling within church life. This campaign is a partnership between the Connexional Team, 12 Baskets (and The Vine), and Singing The Faith +
- The Committee has approved the setting of Vocations Sunday in the Methodist Church as the first Sunday in May for five years up to and including May 2025.
- A new vocational reflection booklet is being devised for churches to distribute.-
- Vocations is now embedded in workplans across the Connexional Team including: Communications, Children Youth & Family, Learning Network, Evangelism & Growth, Global Relations, Armed Forces Chaplaincy, and of course M:VW.

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- An increasing number of Districts now have intentional vocations strategies.
- We are gathering learning from 'sending' churches, Circuits, and Districts, with intentional vocations strategies. This runs alongside conversations with churches with a desire to increase the confidence of BAME leadership. All of this will form the basis of a new light-touch resource to enable church, circuit and district to be strategic about creating a culture to enable vocational exploration.

12. Discernment Process for Senior Posts (Resolution 25/5 (2020))

The Committee considered proposals for a discernment process for senior posts and commended them to the group coordinating the various streams of work following the 2020 report *Reaffirming Our Calling: Oversight and Trusteeship*. The proposals are detailed in the report of that group.

13. Candidating numbers

At the request of the Council the Committee considered the policies relating to candidating for ordained ministry in order to identify and mitigate as far as possible those things which might prevent people discerning or responding to a call to presbyteral or diaconal ministry. The Committee affirmed work in progress and will keep these matters under regular review.

MATTERS RELATING TO ORDAINED MINISTRY

14. Supervision Reference Group and draft Reflective Supervision Policy 2021-2026

The Committee scrutinised and recommended to the Methodist Council the draft Reflective Supervision Policy. The Committee recommended to the Methodist Council a review of the implementation of the policy, including its extension to relevant lay roles, to be brought to the Conference of 2026. The Reflective Supervision Policy is to be found elsewhere in the Conference Agenda.

15. The Ministry of Deacons in Proclamation and Preaching

This work follows on from the 2019 Conference report on the Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate and Methodist Diaconal Order, which required further actions from the Ministries Committee.

The 2019 Conference adopted the following resolution:

- 25/5. The Conference affirmed that preaching is part of the ministry of deacons and directed that from 1 September 2020:

- a. deacons shall no longer be listed as Local Preachers on the Plan;
- b. the list of ministers on the Plan will follow the order listed in Standing Order 785(4)(a);
- c. all deacons will be members of the Local Preachers' Meeting.

The Interim Director of Ministries has written to all Superintendents to ensure this is in place throughout the Connexion. A series of FAQs have been answered by him and by the Warden of the Diaconal Order and placed on the Methodist Church Website and can be seen at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/local-preachers-and-worship-leaders/deacons>

The 2019 Conference also adopted the following resolution:

- 25/11. The Conference directed the Ministries Committee to ensure that there are resources to support and equip deacons in a preaching ministry which can be made available to deacons, probationer deacons and those who began initial ministerial training before 2020 who are not, or are not training to be, Local Preachers. The Conference further directed the Warden of the Order to make such resources available as appropriate.

A working group was formed to work through the implications for those who have already trained as deacons. The Committee has:

- agreed the new pathway for those seeking to offer as a candidate for the diaconate;
- agreed that the training, learning and formation in relation to proclamation and preaching already in place for student deacons in initial formation is sufficient to reflect the changes enacted by the 2019 Conference's adoption of the Report;
- approved a suggestion for how the ministry of proclamation and preaching may be integrated into diaconal probation;
- adopted suggested provisions as a first response to Resolution 25/11, and emphasised the need for flexibility in relation both to the particular nature of diaconal ministry, and to individuals' differing needs, but also for coherence with other connexional training, which the provisions reflect.

16. Churches Ministerial Counselling Service (CMCS)

A request was made by the Wellbeing Adviser that the committee consider a proposal for the CMCS to change status to that of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The Committee was in principle content for this proposal to be put

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to the Council subject to further assurance that the counselling would continue to be effective in terms of quality and cost effectiveness. The Council approved the change of status at its meeting in January 2021.

17. Further work on M23/2019 Obituaries

The 2019 Conference, in response to the memorial from the Isle of Man District, agreed to review the formula at the end of ministers' obituaries indicating the length of time the deceased had served as a minister. The Ministries Committee recommended a revision of the phrase and the 2020 Conference agreed a new form of words (resolution 22/13) as follows.

22/13. The Conference amended the phrase which appears at the end of obituaries "*in the xxx year of their ministry*" to read "*in the xx year of their presbyteral or diaconal ministry.*"

The revised wording highlighted additional complexity as there are some ministers who have served in both orders. Having consulted the editor of the obituaries and members of the Faith and Order Committee, it is proposed that where a minister has served as a deacon and then been accepted as a candidate for presbyteral ministry (or vice versa), the last line of the obituary should read:

'N died in the xth year of her/his age and having previously served y years in diaconal ministry, in the zth year of her/his presbyteral ministry'

Or

'N died in the xth year of her/his age and having previously served y years in presbyteral ministry, in the zth year of her/his diaconal ministry'

18. Ministerial Development Review (MDR)

The Committee has considered proposals for the future of MDR with particular emphasis on the relationship of MDR with supervision. A small working party was formed and in February 2021, the committee received a report recommending that a more focused approach and revised guide to MDR, supported by training materials, be prepared and implemented in September 2022.

The working group recommend that any appropriately adapted approach to MDR should:

- complement the Supervision experience offering a space where oversight and accountability can be considered openly,
- include a robust element of 360-degree feedback drawn from the experience of local church members, peers and the Minister in Oversight,

- pay attention to the requirements of the Ministerial Covenant and the Competencies for Ordained Ministry,
- focus on a particular aspect of ministry within the local context,
- encourage consideration of elements of ministry that may not naturally arise in other ways, and
- offer a clear and deliberate opportunity for the “lay voice” to be heard distinctly.

The Committee directed the Ministries Team to complete the work around MDR in accordance with the principles and direction of travel outlined.

19. Ordained Probationers

Occasionally when ministers apply to transfer to Full Connexion with the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB) from another Church or Conference, a recommendation is made that they should spend a period on probation. The Ministries Committee proposes amendments to Standing Order 730 to enable oversight of their probation to rest with the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee.

The Law and Polity Committee has drafted amendments to Standing Order 730 specifying a number of matters in relation to the length and nature of probation, in the rare cases when an ordained transferee under SO 730 is accepted onto probation.

730 Ministerial Transfer between Churches...

(9)... (ii) whether he or she should be admitted into Full Connexion or upon probation, and if the latter the number of years to be spent as a probationer;

(9A) (a) This clause relates to applicants admitted upon probation, and in this clause they are referred to as “ordained probationers”.

(b) Ordained probationers shall be under the oversight of the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee, which shall determine the content of their training, including any orientation studies to be undertaken at the Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham.

(c) The length of probation shall normally be two years, but the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee may in what it judges to be exceptional circumstances set a shorter or longer period.

(d) The Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee shall obtain and take into account annual reports on each ordained probationer, as follows:

(i) from the Queen’s Foundation on any orientation studies undertaken there;

(ii) from their Superintendent an assessment according to competencies prescribed by the committee;

(iii) from their Chair of District an assessment according to those competencies;

(iv) in the case of diaconal probationers, from the Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order an assessment according to those competencies, and of how they inhabit the diaconal religious order and order of ministry.

(e) The Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee shall annually make recommendations to the Conference on the progress of each ordained probationer.

20. Ministers of Other Conferences and Churches (MOCCs)

The 14 ministers of other conferences and churches who began their ministry in MCB in this most challenging of years were all able to arrive by the end of October 2020. The group of MOCCs have formed a close-knit and supportive cohort through social media and a weekly online gathering. Induction processes are all continuing online. It is hoped that the forthcoming elements of the induction year will be able to be held in person. At the three month visit, it has been clear that all of the MOCC ministers have settled in well and are enjoying developing their ministry in the new context despite all the restrictions due to COVID-19. Their superintendents and circuit stewards have universally expressed gratitude for their collegiality and the fresh approaches they are bringing. The induction year events are now overseen by the Learning Network. COVID-19 has created a huge challenge for immigration. The closure of many visa offices around the world created backlogs in processing all applications. That caused delay in arrival for the new MOCCs and additional difficulties for some of their family members to travel with them.

21. Immigration Costs

Following detailed advice from the Ministries Committee, the Council directed that the HR immigration team be given authority to take reasonable steps to enable ministers from other Conferences and Churches who are accepted to work in the Methodist Church in Britain to be able to do so legally, and to make arrangements for this in the most cost effective way. This would be done on a case by case basis. This may include naturalisation or may not. This would also cover the situation for ministers who renew their R&R status beyond their first appointment but who do not apply to be received into Full Connexion. The Council wished to emphasise that this would not include removing someone's citizenship against their wishes.

22. Transferring Candidates and Probationers

The Committee discussed the challenges and benefits of receiving accepted candidates and probationers by transfer from other Churches following a meeting of the Ministries Team, the Queen's Foundation and the Global Relationships Team to explore all the issues. It was clear there is little parity between the way we send ministers abroad and how we receive ministers from abroad. The costs, complications, morality and a lack of equivalence with the possibilities open to British Methodist ministers wishing to serve abroad, were weighed against the experience (for the minister and the MCB) and response to a clear calling some candidates and probationers discern to serve the MCB. The Committee recommended to the Council that the Methodist Church in Britain should no longer accept candidates and probationers by transfer from other churches and that consequential amendments to section 73 of CPD be brought to the Conference in 2021. The Law and Polity Committee has drafted the following amendments to Standing Order 730.

730 Ministerial Transfer between Churches...

(2) (a) Persons ordained to the ministry of word and sacraments in other conferences or other Christian churches, ~~probationers for such ministry, accepted candidates for such ministry,~~ ordained deacons of the United Methodist Church or of a church with a threefold order of ministry and officers of the Salvation Army who wish to be admitted into Full Connexion with the Conference as presbyters ~~or admitted upon presbyteral probation or to enter initial training as accepted candidates for presbyteral ministry~~ shall apply in writing to the President, by the date annually determined by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, and the President or the Vice-President on his or her behalf shall arrange for the application to be considered as set out in the following clauses.

(b) Ordained deacons of other conferences or Christian churches, ~~probationers for such ministry, accepted candidates for such ministry~~ or officers of the Salvation Army who wish to be admitted as deacons in Full Connexion with the Conference ~~or as diaconal probationers or to enter initial training as accepted candidates for diaconal ministry~~ shall apply in writing to the President, by the date annually determined by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, and the President or the Vice-President on his or her behalf shall arrange for the application to be considered as set out in the following clauses.

23. Review of CPD section 73

The Ministries Committee in February 2020 requested that the Methodist Council

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set up a review group to carry out this work. The Council in March 2020 directed that a small group be appointed and in January 2021 the Council was informed that a scoping exercise had begun, overseen by the Assistant Secretary of the Conference and the Ministerial Coordinator for the Oversight of Ordained Ministries, consulting with others as appropriate. This scoping work has involved a consideration of the whole of Section 73 taking account of the recommendations made by the Ministries Committee regarding the transfer of accepted candidates and probationers. Recognising that this major review of Section 73 could not be prepared for report to the Conference in 2021, the Council therefore deferred the reporting on this piece of work to the 2022 Conference and appointed a review group.

STUDENT MATTERS

24. Mental Health

The 2020 Conference adopted the following resolution from the 3Generate 2019 report.

- 12/4. The Conference directed the Ministries Committee, in conversation with the Queen's Foundation, to explore how mental health awareness is included in presbyteral and diaconal training and to report to the 2021 Conference via the Methodist Council.

Representatives of children and young people in the Methodist Church have been consistent over a number of years in raising the profile of mental health and well-being, for children, young people and others throughout the Church and society. This has been of great help to the whole Church. The Queen's Foundation welcomed this concern and the request to explore how these issues are raised and included in presbyteral and diaconal training. The Director of Methodist Formation brought a paper to the Committee describing what is already in place and indicating plans for developing provision.

25. Candidating, Training and Stationing processes

The 2020 Conference adopted the following resolution arising from the Changing Patterns of Ministry report.

- 34/12. The Conference directed the Stationing and Ministries Committees to review the candidating, training and stationing processes in order to:
- a. explore how it can be ensured that there is a clear process for enabling some presbyters to serve in local, pioneer and specific cultural/language appointments;

- b. explore how this possibility could be clearly communicated to those involved in the candidating, training and stationing matching processes; and
- c. prepare provisional guidance for those considering such appointments; and report to the 2021 Conference.

A Candidating Review Group has been set up, substantial work has been identified and begun and a scoping document has been approved by the Committee.

26. Cultural and Language Specific Ministry Particularly with Regard to Candidating and Ministerial Training (Memorials M19 and M20 to the 2019 Conference)

The 2019 Conference directed the Ministries Committee to work with the Circuit-Based Learning Pathway working group to investigate where appropriate possibilities might be found to nurture the call to presbyteral and diaconal ministry in Chinese speaking and other ethnically based congregations. This is a substantive piece of work for the Committee and it is necessary to address policy issues as limited deployability is currently defined geographically rather than in other ways (eg in terms of language). Conversations continue, taking account of the deliberations of the 2020 Conference on Changing Patterns in Ministry.

The Committee directed that this work be taken forward in conjunction with the Queen's Foundation and the Fellowship Groups sub-committee, taking account of the work of the Changing Patterns of Ministry group. It reported to the Council that there is a number of complex issues to be considered in relation to this work which need to be considered alongside the Conference's decisions in relation to *Changing Patterns of Ministry*.

DISTRICT PROBATIONERS COMMITTEE

27. The Council approved a recommendation that Districts be permitted to work together and form one Probationers Committee to serve more than one District, and accordingly requested the Law and Polity Committee to prepare the necessary amendments to Standing Orders, for presentation to the Conference. The Law and Polity Committee has drafted the following changes to Standing Order 484 making it possible for two or more Districts jointly to have a Probationers Committee:

484 Probationers Committee. (1) Subject to clause (4) below, tThe Synod shall appoint a district Probationers Committee consisting of the Chair of the District, the secretary and (if appointed) the presbyteral secretary of the Synod, a district

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probationers secretary and eleven other persons of whom one shall be a deacon, four shall be presbyters and the remainder lay.

...

(4) Two or more Synods may together appoint a Probationers Committee which shall fulfil the functions of and shall be the district Probationers Committee for both or all participating Districts, and shall consist of the Chairs of each of the Districts, the secretaries and (if appointed) the presbyteral secretaries of the Synods, a district probationers secretary from each District plus eleven other persons in the categories prescribed by clause (1) drawn from the participating Districts.

OTHER MATTERS

28. Fellowship Groups

The Committee received a report from the Fellowships Group sub-committee, noting that work has been done with the Evangelism and Growth (E&G) team. The sub-committee is considering possible financial strategies for the support of the Fellowship Groups where connexional grants are no longer available.

A representative from a new Fellowship (Swahili Speaking) has joined the Sub-committee. Contact has been made with the Filipino Fellowship Group. The Fellowship groups have provided translations of the *A Methodist Way of Life* Card into several different languages: simplified and traditional Chinese, Igbo, Yoruba, Twi, Portuguese, Tongan, Farsi, Ndebele, Shona, Tamil and Sinhala. These are to be found on the website of the Methodist Church in Britain. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/life-and-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/a-methodist-way-of-life-commitment-cards>

The committee noted that there is an expectation that significant numbers of people from Hong Kong may apply to enter or stay in the UK under the British National Overseas visa scheme which opened from 31 January 2021. A programme has been developed to welcome and support some of those who might come to the UK on this visa. This has been supported by two Districts in the North East Region and funding for this work is being explored.

***RESOLUTIONS

25/4. The Conference receives the Report.

25/5. The Conference adopts the proposed alternate wordings of the phrase which appears at the end of obituaries, where a minister has served in both orders.

- 25/6. The Conference notes that the review of Section 73 of Standing Orders will now be brought to the 2022 Conference.**
- 25/7. The Conference adopts the amendments to Standing Order 730 as set out in paragraphs 19 and 22 above.**
- 25/8. The Conference adopts the amendments to Standing Order 484 as set out in paragraph 27 above**

SECTION H REPLACEMENT PROJECT CRITERIA

The Council has adopted revised criteria (shown below at Appendix 1) under SO 973 for the classification of a project as a replacement project, to take effect from 1 September 2021.

The following Standing Order amendments are brought to take account of the revised policy. The amendments also implement the Council's recommendation (by Resolution 34/3) that Standing Order 970(2)(ii) regarding the scope of the Connexional Priority Fund levy be revoked.

916 Application of Capital Money. (1) Subject to clauses (2) and (3) below, capital money shall be applied to or for the following purposes and in the following order:

- (i) in payment of the expenses, if any, of or connected with the sale or other transaction giving rise to the receipt of the money, **including the cost of a qualified surveyor's report as to the value of the property in question;**
- (ii) [and following] *Unchanged.*

970 Scope

(2) The levy shall not apply:

- (i) *[deleted]*
- (ii) ~~to properties held or used for the purposes of a church, project or Circuit on the official city centre list kept under Standing Order 440(1);~~
- (iii) *[deleted]*
- (iv) *[deleted]*
- (v) to property compulsorily purchased where compensation by the acquiring authority is on the basis of equivalent reinstatement;
- (vi) *[deleted]*
- (vii) to dispositions of property received within the last five years by way of devise or bequest and not required or no longer required for Methodist trust purposes.

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972 Contributions. (1) When trustees dispose of property on which a levy is chargeable under Standing Order 970 they shall, subject to Standing Order 973, contribute part of the proceeds to the fund as follows:

(IA) up to £20,000 or the first £20,000 Nil

(i) on any excess over £20,000 up to £100,000 or the first £100,000 20%

(ii) on any excess over £100,000 40%

(2) The sum upon which the levy is calculated shall be the balance remaining after making the payments required under heads (i), (ii) and (iii) of Standing Order 916(1) **or made for work to the property disposed of which has been undertaken on the advice of a qualified surveyor for the purpose of increasing the proceeds of the disposal.**

973 Replacement Projects

(4) If the replacement project is not implemented forthwith then the levy shall initially be paid as if there were no such project, but if the project is implemented within five years of the disposition or if the appropriate connexional authority has granted an exception to the five year requirement in this Standing Order, the levy shall be cancelled or recalculated in accordance with clause (2) or clause (3) above, as appropriate, and the overpayment refunded with interest at the rate earned by the Central Finance Board's Trustees Interest Fund.

(5) The Methodist Council shall adopt criteria for **the grant of** any application for an exception under clause (4) **above and as to the date on which a project is to be treated as implemented for the purposes of that clause.**

25/9. The Conference receives the Report.

25/10. The Conference amends the Standing Orders as set out above and directs that the amendments shall take effect on 1 September 2021.

SECTION I REVIEW OF PART 11

The 2019 Conference directed the Council to set the terms of reference for, and facilitate the work of a thorough review of Part 11 of Standing Orders:

Notice of Motion 2019/202: Reviewing Part 11 of Standing Orders: In the light of the significant changes, both in UK society and for the Methodist Church of Great Britain since our Standing Orders regarding complaints and discipline were drawn up, the Conference directs the Methodist Council to set the terms of reference for, and facilitate the work of a thorough review of Part 11 of our Standing Orders. This review should include and address how processes of Safeguarding, Complaints and Discipline, and Connexional Team Grievances, can best relate to each other.

The Conference seeks a set of processes that are able to be enacted in timescales that are fair for all concerned and that are appropriate to the capacity, resources and size of the Methodist Church of Great Britain as it is today.

The Council agreed the terms of reference for the review in October 2019, and work is underway on a full review. A forum of key stakeholders was held on 14 January 2021 enabling a discussion to be held exploring the issues and clarifying what is to be delivered. The stakeholders were carefully selected to ensure that there was good representation of diverse viewpoints. A fuller consultation took place in December and January with a much wider group of people, who would come into contact with the Part 11 process, including feedback from over 120 District Chairs/Superintendents.

Having undertaken these initial steps, the project is now progressing through work-streams with groups embarking on work that contributes towards the overall project, considering issues within the remit of their groups and bringing proposals and recommendations. Using work-streams has the dual advantage of dividing the project into manageable portions that can be progressed in parallel to other tasks and, secondly, of involving and engaging with a wide group of people who will feel ownership of this work. This mirrors the approach used on other projects, including the recent review of EDI within the Church. In addition, consideration is being given to diversity and the impact of cultural difference during the complaints process (including ensuring diverse representation on panels) and to the viewpoint of victims/ survivors and protecting them adequately during the process.

These work-stream groups are currently meeting and are due to conclude their work by August this year. This will then enable their findings to be considered all together allowing for further analysis and discernment in the autumn and for the Law and Polity Committee to then be fully engaged with the outcomes.

*****RESOLUTION**

25/11. The Conference receives the Report.

SECTION J SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Council was advised by the Law and Polity Committee that by considering medical reports in respect of candidates' physical and mental health during the selection and appeals process, the Conference may be in breach of the Equality Act. The Committee therefore advised the Council to suspend a number of Standing Orders for the remainder of this connexional year, until 31 August 2021.

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The effect of the suspension is that the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee (MCSC), having discerned that a candidate is suitable for ministry, has not considered a candidate's medical report before making the recommendation to the Conference that the candidate be accepted.

For this connexional year only, it has been agreed that medical questionnaires can still be issued to candidates under Standing Orders 711(4) and 730(5)), so an occupational health assessment may be undertaken if necessary once the decision to recommend a candidate for acceptance has been made.

In view of the Equality Act restrictions, a full review of the medical reporting procedure is now in progress and the Ministries Committee will bring proposals to the Council in due course. It is envisaged that permanent amendments to Standing Orders will be necessary as a result.

Under the terms of SO 211(1)(b), the Council suspended Standing Orders as follows:

Standing Order 713: Connexional Committees

(5) The committee or section shall receive the recommendation of its panels, the reports of all interviews, the advice of the connexional psychologist ~~and the medical reports of the specified doctors~~, and shall consider all records of the candidates. The committee or section shall at all times give careful attention to the judgments of the district Candidates Committee, especially in those cases where their own assessment differs.

Standing Order 713(7) in its entirety:

(7) (a) If the report by the specified doctor states there is no medical objection to the acceptance of the candidate the committee may recommend the candidate without further medical investigation.

(b) Where there is such an objection and the committee resolves nevertheless to recommend acceptance or conditional acceptance its recommendation shall be subject to the endorsement of the medical committee of the Methodist Council, which shall investigate all such cases and report to the Presbyteral Session of the Conference or the Conference Diaconal Committee, as the case may be.

Standing Order 715: Appeals

Standing Order 715(9) in its entirety:

(9) The medical committee appointed by the Methodist Council shall also investigate every case in which medical questions have been raised and concerning which an appeal is made under this Standing Order, shall judge whether there is any medical objection to the acceptance of the candidate and shall advise the Appeals Committee. In all cases a report shall be made to the Presbyteral Session or the Conference Diaconal Committee, as the case may be.

Standing Order 716: The Conference – Presbyteral Session.

Standing Orders 716(2) and 716(6) in their entirety:

(2) The Team members responsible for candidates shall next report the judgment of the medical committee of the Methodist Council on those cases concerning which the appointed doctor reported a medical objection in accordance with Standing Order 713(7) or 715(9), and if the recommendation of the Selection Committee is at variance with that of the medical committee the case shall be considered individually by the Conference.

(6) If the Conference in its Presbyteral Session recommends or conditionally recommends a candidate as to whom the medical committee of the Methodist Council has reported that there is a medical objection any such recommendation shall be subject to the adoption by the Conference in its Representative Session of a scheme quantifying the additional actuarial and other liabilities on the funds of the Church or of the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme thereby entailed and making full provision to meet any such liabilities, and no such candidate shall be accepted by the Representative Session unless such a scheme has been so adopted.

Standing Order 730: Ministerial Transfer between Churches

Standing Order 730(5A) in its entirety:

(5A) The results of this assessment shall be disclosed to the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee only after it has made its recommendation. The medical committee of the Methodist Council shall be consulted if the recommendation of the 'fitness' assessor contradicts a 'recommended' or 'conditionally recommended' report from the committee.

*****RESOLUTION**

25/12. The Conference receives the Report.

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Appendix 1

Criteria for Replacement Projects under SO 973

The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church defines replacement projects at Standing Order 973 as:

973 Replacement Projects. (1) This Standing Order applies when the proceeds of one or more dispositions are to be employed in or towards a replacement project and consent to the disposition or dispositions has been granted under Section 93 on that basis.

Classification of a project as a replacement project requires the consent of the appropriate connexional authority (SO 931(1)(ix)).

(1A) The Methodist Council shall adopt criteria for the classification of a project as a replacement project.

(2) If the replacement project costs not less than the net proceeds, arrived at in accordance with Standing Order 972(2), and is implemented forthwith then no levy shall be required.

(3) If the replacement project costs less than such net proceeds and is implemented forthwith then the levy shall be calculated on the unused balance or balances, as if they were the net proceeds.

(4) If the replacement project is not implemented forthwith then the levy shall initially be paid as if there were no such project, but if the project is implemented within five years of the disposition or if the appropriate connexional authority has granted an exception to the five year requirement in this Standing Order, the levy shall be cancelled or recalculated in accordance with clause (2) or clause (3) above, as appropriate, and the overpayment refunded with interest at the rate earned by the Central Finance Board's Trustees Interest Fund.

(5) The Methodist Council shall adopt criteria for any application for an exception under clause (4).

Classifying a Project as a Replacement Project

The Methodist Council has appointed the Director of Property Support or the Assistant Secretary of the Conference to be the appropriate connexional authority. It is only these persons who can classify a project as a replacement project. All applications must meet the criteria outlined below as there is no appeals process.

Criteria for Classification of Replacement Projects

In order for a project to be classified by the appropriate connexional authority as a replacement project it must fall within one of the two categories below and meet the relevant criteria.

1) **Direct Replacement Projects – like-for-like basis**

- A manse is sold and another one purchased by the same Circuit;
- A chapel is sold and a new chapel is purchased or built for the continuing Church;
- A church hall is sold and a new church hall is purchased or built for the continuing church;
- A caretaker's house is sold and a new caretaker's house is purchased or built for the same Church;
- Ancillary premises are sold and similar premises are purchased or built on a new site (ancillary premises are premises falling within the curtilage of the church site).

What will not be a direct replacement project?

- The sale of a manse and the redevelopment of a church building;
- Sale of agricultural land to purchase a manse;
- Sale of a manse and use of the proceeds of sale to improve an existing manse;
- A church closes and the premises are sold and the Circuit Meeting want to use the proceeds of sale to redevelop another church in the Circuit.
- Sale of church premises and using the proceeds of sale to fund revenue costs for mission work.

2) **Review of Mission — one or more dispositions**

Where a disposition is undertaken following a strategic review of property as part of Circuit or District Mission and Property Plans to deliver mission more effectively and witness in the local community, a replacement project can be classified where there is no direct replacement of the premises disposed of. However there is a number of criteria that must be fulfilled for such a project to be classified as a "replacement project".

Criteria where a Local Church is selling the whole or any part of its premises (including a former caretaker's dwelling) or where two or more churches have amalgamated but there is no direct replacement project

- (i) Local Church Context: The Church Council has resolved that following a strategic review of property and mission within Circuit or District Mission and Property Plans, the local Church needs to rationalise its premises more effectively to deliver mission and witness in the local community;
- (ii) Circuit Context: The Circuit Meeting must have agreed to the rationalisation

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- of the local Church premises as part of its Circuit Mission and Property Plans;
- (iii) District Context: The District Policy Committee or body to whom it delegates such decisions must have agreed to the rationalisation of the local Church premises in the context of its District Mission and Property Plan;
 - (iv) Strategic Context: It must be illustrated that the disposition has also been considered in the context of the Strategic Guidance for the Use of Property in Mission;
 - (v) Mission Impact and Effectiveness: The project must be making a positive and sustainable contribution to the life and growth of the church in the community and the wider, shared work of the Circuit and District;
 - (vi) Supporting Evidence (Mission): The project must illustrate that it has been through a rigorous process of planning, reflection and strategic missional thinking linked to growth and community needs;
 - (vii) Supporting Evidence (Financial and Business): The project must illustrate that it has been through a rigorous business planning process to indicate project capital costs and expenditure and long term financial planning to ensure sustainability of at least 10 years;
 - (viii) Incentivising Creativity: The project must involve redeveloping or re-modelling existing church premises, purchasing new church premises or purchasing land and building new church premises, or some other type of partnership or joint venture working to create new church accommodation for mission. Disposing of a property simply to fund the repair and maintenance of an existing church building will not be classified as a replacement project.

Criteria where more than one manse is being sold but only one purchased

- (i) The Circuit that is purchasing the manse must also be the Circuit selling one or more manses;
- (ii) The decision to sell more than one manse but to purchase only one replacement manse must have followed a review of mission by the Circuit Meeting which has led to the decision to rationalise the manses in the Circuit;
- (iii) The Circuit Meeting must provide a written justification for why they only need to purchase one manse e.g. the number of ministerial appointments to the Circuit has been reduced and/or one larger manse is required for mission purposes in a location that is more expensive;
- (iv) All the manses being sold must have been used for the purpose of accommodating a minister appointed to the Circuit within the past five years.

NB The cost of refurbishing or redeveloping the manse being purchased is not included within the cost of the replacement project.

5 Year Rule

Under SO 973(4) any replacement project must be implemented within five years of the disposition. The replacement project must either have started eg the building project begun, or the property/land purchased, within 5 years of the completion date. "Implementation" in SO 973(4) will be interpreted to mean:

- (i) Where the cost of the replacement project includes the purchase of land or property and the redevelopment of that land or property:-

That the transfer of the land or property being the replacement project in terms of the legal process has completed

And

That the structural/building work for the replacement project has actually begun eg bricks being laid, as opposed to professional advisers just having been instructed.

OR

Where the cost of the replacement project only includes the purchase of land or property:-

That the transfer of the land or property being the replacement project in terms of the legal process has completed.

Exceptions to the 5 Year Rule

Where a project is classified as a replacement in accordance with the replacement project criteria above adopted by the Methodist Council but the replacement project has not been implemented as defined above, within five years of the relevant disposition(s), the Methodist Council (or those to whom it has delegated) may agree an exception to the application of the five year rule if all of the following criteria are met:

- (i) The replacement project was originally classified as a replacement under SO 973 with the intention that implementation would occur within the five year period;
- (ii) The request for designation as a replacement project should have been made in a timely and planned manner prior to the disposition or within two years of such disposition;
- (iii) The replacement project is supported by the Circuit and District with relevant consents under SO 930;
- (iv) The relevant managing trustee body instructed professionals to begin negotiations or plans for the replacement project in terms of building works or legal transactions, within the five year period;
- (v) Unforeseen events or circumstances have arisen that have been beyond

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the control of the managing trustees and these have led to a delay in implementation of the replacement project.

- (vi) Managing trustees are able to provide an explanation outlining in detail what has been achieved in the five year period in relation to the replacement project, what the circumstances were for any delays, what work is still required to class the project as complete, along with approximate timescales for completion.

Deductions from the Proceeds of Sale prior to the CPF levy being calculated

The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church defines Contributions to the CPF and Application of Capital Money at Standing Orders 972 and 916 respectively:

972 Contributions.

- (1) When trustees dispose of property on which a levy is chargeable under Standing Order 970 they shall, subject to Standing Order 973, contribute part of the proceeds to the fund as follows:
 - (i) up to **£20,000 or the first £20,000** 0%
 - (ii) **£20,001 up to £100,000** 20%
 - (iii) on any excess over £100,000 40%
- (2) The sum upon which the levy is calculated shall be the balance remaining after making the payments required under heads (i), (ii) and (iii) of Standing Order 916(1).

916 Application of Capital Money. (1) Subject to clauses (2) and (3) below, capital money shall be applied to or for the following purposes and in the following order:

- (i) in payment of the expenses, if any, of or connected with the sale or other transaction giving rise to the receipt of the money;
- (ii) unless the parent body (in the case of connexional property) or the appropriate connexional authority (in any other case) otherwise permits, in the discharge of all or any encumbrances or liabilities on the trust property or on the trustees, whether personal or otherwise, lawfully incurred or assumed in the execution of the Model Trusts or by virtue of section 11 of the 1976 Act;
- (iii) unless the treasurer or treasurers of the fund in question otherwise [...] direct, in repayment in whole or in part of any grant at any time received in connection with the trust property from any connexional fund; according to the date of the disposal, as follows, and so that any such direction may be for repayment of more or less than the amount shown, or of none:

- up to and including the 5th anniversary of the date of the grant: 100%
- thereafter up to and including the 6th anniversary: 80%

- thereafter up to and including the 7th anniversary: 60%
 - thereafter up to and including the 8th anniversary: 40%
 - thereafter up to and including the 9th anniversary: 20%
 - thereafter: nil;
- (iv) in making such payment, if any, to the Connexional Priority Fund as may be required by the provisions of Standing Order 972;
- (v) where the money arises from any sale, letting or other disposition of model trust property which has received consent under Standing Order 930 as part of a project involving the application of the proceeds to particular purposes, in applying the proceeds accordingly;
- (vi) where Standing Order 945 applies, in paying the balance to the custodian trustees in accordance with the provisions of that Standing Order;
- (vii) subject to the above, for the purposes specified in Standing Order 917.

Criteria for expenses that fall within SO 916(1)(i)

- Legal fees connected to the sale;
- Surveyors fees connected to the sale eg qualified surveyors report;
- Work undertaken to the property being sold which has been recommended by the surveyor in order to increase the sale price;
- Other professional fees connected with the sale eg estate agents.

Criteria for expenses not falling within SO 916(1)(i)

- Legal fees associated with the purchase of the replacement project;
- Legal fees associated with the replacement project or another project e.g. purchase of the replacement manse or the redevelopment of another property/site;
- Professional fees connected with the replacement project or another project e.g. surveyors fees for negotiating with a developer, home buyers survey fees, architect fees for redevelopment project;
- Gardening/plumbing/electric services undertaken at the property being sold or at the property being purchased;
- Insurance costs for the property being sold or purchased;
- Utility bills for the property being sold or purchased;
- Work undertaken on the property being purchased eg repair, improvements or extensions to the property;
- Work undertaken to the property being sold which has not been recommended by a surveyor to increase the sale price.

25. Methodist Council, part 2

Application

The above guidelines will apply from 1 September 2021. Any property project that has already gained district (or connexional if applicable under SO 931) consent prior to that date that is subsequently designated a replacement project under SO 973 will be dealt with using the guidelines that were in force at the time; ie the guidelines effective prior to 1 September 2021. Furthermore, projects that have been designated as replacement projects prior to 1 September 2021 will only benefit from a CPF levy refund on the sale property that has already been identified.