

Matters to report to the Methodist Council from the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee on 27 November 2014

1. Consolidated Accounts

The Committee was satisfied that these had been very carefully checked by the Finance Subcommittee, and that they could be recommended for acceptance by the Council. The SRC thanked Maureen Sebanakitta and her team for producing an excellent report and set of accounts.

2. Future budgets

The Committee had extensive discussions about the future level of assessment for the MCF and suggested that various alternatives should be presented to the Council. It noted that the Team was exploring ways of explaining the various elements of the assessment to local churches and how they were used at circuit, district and connexional level. The SRC agreed to recommend a 1% increase to the lay salary scales for the year 2015-16.

3. Methodist Church House

The Committee received a detailed report from the MCH Management Committee. It was content with the proposed improvements and would recommend to the Council how these might be funded. [See paper MC/15/4.]

4. Use of funds in the CPF

The Committee had extensive discussions about the use of £5m available above the required reserves in the CPF. [See paper MC/15/11.]

5. Lobbying Act

The SRC had extensive discussions about whether or not the Methodist Church should register with the Electoral Commission under *the Transparency of Lobbying, Non Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014*. Legal advice had been received and was being clarified. Since the meeting of the SRC in November, the legal advice has been clarified and the advice of the solicitors is not to register with the Electoral Commission.

6. Sale of 4 John Wesley Road, Peterborough [SRC/14/45]

The former Methodist Publishing House building was empty until it was leased under a five year agreement to Ecolutia Ltd. The lease began on 23 February 2010 and expires on 22 February 2015. A sub-group had been instructed to negotiate a long lease, however following the September meeting of the SRC, the tenant made an offer for the property.

The Committee passed the following resolutions:

45/1. The Committee resolved to negotiate the sale or lease for the longest terms possible of 4 John Wesley Road, Werrington, Peterborough to Ecolutia Ltd.

45/2. The Committee appointed Andrew Gibbs and Ted Awty to oversee negotiations in respect of the sale or new lease for the property with Ecolutia (until 26 February 2015) with any two voting members of the Committee empowered to sign transactions.

7. Guidelines for Connexional Manses

The SRC agreed the original guidelines, SRC/10/47, at their meeting in December 2010. Due to an increase in the geographical spread of connexional manses that have been required as a consequence of the establishment of the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network, and some other changes to various practices it was felt that the time was right to update the Guidelines. Two members of SRC were appointed to scrutinise the guidelines.

- 8. The Fruitful Field** report to the 2012 Conference contained a proposal that various Council assets, including the Southlands Methodist Trust and Methodist International and Guy Chester Centres be used primarily to generate income towards the cost of operating the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network [DMLN]. A target of £927k per annum was set and the Network Committee is now evaluating the progress towards this, which will enable a more accurate budget to be set.

9. Other matters noted by the Committee

The sale of Wing Grange had been completed with discussions taking place with the Langley House Trust about the freeholds of other leased properties.

The Committee noted that the Internal Audit had been useful in building staff relationships and increasing levels of awareness among staff.

The first draft of qualitative feedback from the staff satisfaction survey would be shared at the next meeting and revealed a broadly content Team.

The first issue of the connexional magazine "The Connexion" would be produced in the New Year.

- 10.** All matters referred for decision by the Council from the SRC are included in the Council's agenda.

*****RESOLUTION**

- 3/1. The Council receives the report.**