

## The 2016 Conference Resolutions 34/2 and 34/3

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<b>Resolutions</b>	13/1. The Council receives the Report.  13/2. The Council: (a) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 1 of the report (b) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 2 of the report (c) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 4.2.2 of the report and commends them to the Conference as its response to resolutions 34/2 and 34/3 (2016).

### Summary of Content and Impact

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	Response to the 2016 Conference resolutions 34/2 and 34/3 which required the Council to review the required attendance for the Leadership module of <i>Creating Safer Space</i> and to ensure that the application is clearly defined.
<b>Main Points</b>	The report provides some background information and recommendations to enable the Council to respond to resolutions 34/2 and 34/3 (2016).
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents</b>	The 2016 Conference received a report relating to the safeguarding work of the Church and an updated report on the Past Cases Review (PCR) from the PCR Implementation Group.
<b>Consultations</b>	Discussion with District Chairs, DSOs, Safeguarding Committee and PCR Implementation Group
<b>Impact</b>	Standing Orders Cross reference to the work of the Law and Polity Committee

## The 2016 Conference Resolutions 34/2 and 34/3

### Resolution 34/2

*The Conference directs the Methodist Council to review the required attendance for the Leadership Module of Creating Safer Space with a view to amending the list to:*

- a) include those lay persons who are appointed to exercise pastoral leadership within a local church;*
- b) remove the local preachers and worship leaders;*
- c) remove safeguarding officers church and include in the warmly invited but not mandatory list for the Leadership Module.*

### Response

1. In respect of point a) in the resolution, it is recommended that the required attendance for the Leadership Module is amended to include those lay persons who are appointed to exercise pastoral leadership within a local church.
2. In respect of point b) it is not recommended that local preachers and worship leaders are removed from the list of those who are required to attend the Leadership Module.
  - 2.1.1. The Past Cases Review Implementation Group considered this request within the context of being able to demonstrate how the learning from the PCR and the Church's ongoing commitment to good safeguarding practice across all of our activities and witness can be clearly demonstrated and audited. It has been widely accepted by the Church that safeguarding is no longer an optional stance and within the world at large the Church has to be able to show that our policies and procedures are being implemented. Attendance on training courses is a key component of this.
  - 2.1.2. In this regard we now have two training programmes to enable the Methodist people to be fit for the tasks we ask of them in relation to safeguarding. **The Foundation Module** is designed as a basic workshop that introduces the core understanding of what is meant by safeguarding in the life of the Church and what those who are engaged with vulnerable adults or children should be aware of and committed to.
  - 2.1.3. **The Leadership Module** is designed to build on the Foundation Module content and covers a wider scope of subjects. However, this module is not designed to produce safeguarding 'experts' or provide a substitute for using church, circuit and district structures where there is a designated District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and District Safeguarding Group (DSG) charged with taking the lead in any cases of concern. This is important as by nature of the term 'leadership' it has been assumed in some quarters that this one-day course creates experts in safeguarding who can be used as a substitute for normal procedures to alert the District Safeguarding Officer. The one-day course is designed to increase core knowledge and understanding for key people within the church who may, by definition of their title/role, be assumed by others to have an understanding of the Church's safeguarding practices and principles.

- 2.1.4. The Leadership Module is intended for those post holders who exercise leadership within the Church. During the Conference debate this seemed to lead to some confusion about the aims of the course. Indeed, it may be helpful if a different name is used to describe this course (eg Advanced Module or Further Considerations Module) and avoid this confusion when the Leadership Module is revised next year (it will be five years old and due for renewal). Leadership within the Methodist Church can mean different things to different people and some Local Preachers and Worship Leaders do not see themselves as 'leaders' in relation to safeguarding as they are not actively engaged with children or vulnerable adults. However, the reason for including these categories in the mandatory list is to recognise that in many cases Local Preachers and Worship Leaders play other roles in churches beyond worship leading and their very designation means that many people will assume that they are leaders by nature of their prominence in worship and organisational positions. The listing of their names on the Circuit Plan or in the Directory can suggest they are significant persons in organisational terms and that they have role power. Local Preachers are part of an authorised permanent lay ministry which is connexionally recognised, accredited and recorded. Local Preachers can have a preaching, leading and pastoral ministry in the life of the local church and circuit. This means that in order to fulfil these responsibilities they need resourcing, supporting and encouraging. Further training in safeguarding beyond initial foundation module gives expression to the promise made at accreditation to continue to study and learn.
- 2.1.5. A further concern has been the resource implications of increasing the number of church office holders who would be required to undertake Leadership Module training when in some areas the number of available trainers is limited. The Council is asked to separate out these two different considerations – the first relates to the principle of who should be required to undertake training because the Church has deemed this to be necessary and the second relates to resourcing it. Consideration of the second point should not affect a decision of principle on the first. If there are challenges in delivering a decision on increasing the number of church officers required to undertake the Leadership Module, then the Learning Network and District Safeguarding Officers can work with the connexional Safeguarding Team to address how resources and training opportunities can be better shared and supported. Indeed, there are now regular meetings between the Safeguarding Adviser and Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network (DMLN) Director of Learning and Development (Regions) in order to ensure that both Safeguarding and Learning Network colleagues are working closely together in the delivery of safeguarding training.
3. In respect of point c) it is not recommended that church safeguarding officers are removed from the mandatory list and included only in the warmly invited list.
- 3.1.1. Much of what is written above in relation to Local Preachers and Worship Leaders is also relevant here. Anyone in the Church who has a role in relation to safeguarding will be expected to have a good understanding of the key considerations that the church needs to take account of in its role as a responsible organisation. The Foundation and Leadership Modules are designed to do this and it is not considered that together they offer anything more than the basic level of knowledge and competence required for those holding designated safeguarding posts throughout the church.

### **Resolution 34/3**

*The Conference directs the Methodist Council to review the current 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point of the Required Attendance for the Leadership Module and to ensure its application is clearly defined*

4. The 6<sup>th</sup> bullet reads as follows:
- *Those who are in paid employment or a voluntary role which includes leadership within the Methodist Church, which involves direct work with children, youth or adults*

Clarification of terms:

- 4.1. The term 'Methodist Church'. This refers to all levels of connexional life.
- 4.2. 'a voluntary role which includes leadership within the Methodist Church, which involves direct work with children, youth or adults'
- 4.2.1. This refers to those who are working with children or *vulnerable* adults. At the time of writing we had begun to use the term adults in place of the term vulnerable adults in keeping with how terminology had been shifting. Since this time we have reverted back to the use of the term *vulnerable adults* in our revised Safeguarding Procedures (which the Council is asked to adopt) as this is more descriptive and easier to understand.
- 4.2.2. Thus the bullet point should now read:
- *Those who are in paid employment or a voluntary role which includes leadership within the Methodist Church, which involves direct work with children, youth or **vulnerable** adults.*

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**13/1. The Council receives the report.**

**13/2. The Council:**

- (a) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 1 of the report**
  - (b) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 2 of the report**
  - (c) adopts the recommendation in paragraph 4.2.2 of the report**
- and commends them to the Conference as its response to resolutions 34/2 and 34/3 (2016).**