Agenda and Timetable

G A ?

	10 2014		
11.00 – 12.00	Introduction session for new Mission Council members		
12.00 – 12.45pm	Registration		
1.00 2.00	*L*		
2.00			
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	Governors of Westminster College, there was uncertainty as to whether this should be an		

Agenda and Timetable

	12 2014		
8.15 9.15	*B*		
9.15 – 11.00 am	9 Cutting edges: Ministries Consensus decision making Additional and remaindered business Feedback and proposals arising from previous discussions Farewells		3
11.00 11.30	*C*		
11.30 – 12.45pm	10 Holy Communion		
1.00 2.00	*L* Departures		
2.00 3.00	Meeting of committee conveners		

2. Safer Sacred Space Purpose and Outcomes

This section sets out the intention of any Safer Sacred Space education and learning as that of encouraging best practice in order that the widest possible benefit. It clarifies that the learning is not only for the improved practice of the minister, but also for improved practice from those with whom ministers share ministry in every possible situation. This would include the local pastorate, schools where a minister works, places where a minister is regarded as chaplain, community groups with which a minister is engaged; wherever the minister exercises ministry, it is hoped that with Safer Sacred Space issues embedded in the ministers' practice, the minister will feel empowered to raise those issues as appropriate.

It may be helpful to explain and discuss this section with groups of people ordained, commissioned and lay. Safer Sacred Space learning is not designed to be a URC burden against people's will, but a trusted process to ensure that all those who share in any aspect of the life and work of the URC ministries may expect honourable and holy encounters.

This section includes information for timing of education and updating. It is important to understand that if an EM2 minister has not received Safer Sacred Space issue education in EM1, then the EM2 minister should engage this as soon as possible in EM2.

*** A potential outcome of Safer Sacred Space issue training may be that the EM3 minister encounters triggers within the training that raise personal 'boundary injury' issues. Any sensitive course will allow the learner to leave the learning environment to manage their response. However, if the absence amounts to more than 25% of the course content, the course may not have been effectively delivered for that learner. It will

3. The Nature of Safer Sacred Space Education

This section gives detailed information about the recommended education and learning content, delivery and provision. It will be for Synod EM3 Office to understand the nature of the recommended learning so that they will be able to assess whether a particular course fulfils the criteria. Course information should have details including those listed in this section with full information about academic authorisation of the course and content as well as information about the quality of the leadership/educators. It is anticipated that courses may be delivered by education authorities, hospital trusts, universities and colleges as well as by church denominations and faith groups.

This section also includes information about finance – the URC provides funding for EM3 and also sets criteria for what that funding will be spent. Claims will be made in the usual way, with expenses covered as is customary within each EM3 minister's Synod and pastorate.

Framework	Guidelines and Implementation
3.1 Learning Content areas	
3.1.1 Awareness of the importance of boundaries in pastoral care	These content areas are not the only content which may be delivered within a Safer Sacred Spaces issues training event, but are the core content expected for any course.
3.1.2 The practical and emotional effects of poor or good boundaries	
3.1.3 Boundaries in specific pastoral situations including an	

motivations which they bring to pastoral care.	
3.2.4 A basic understanding of the concepts of projection, transfere[redacted]d dual/multiple relationships in the pastoral context	
[redacted]	

3.3 Existing training available to EQ w 12 -0 0 12 54.12 54.1W-iEnainiT2y[redacted]

ƒ Recognised trainers with a background in boundary issue training of any kind	could deliver such courses. Synods may independently contract recognised trainers from the church or the secular world. Courses delivered by non Church providers need to demonstrate the quality of their trainers.
ƒ Recognised trainers with experience in boundary protection with churches	
ƒ Recognised trainers with a personal resilience and vocation boundary integrity	
3.6 Learning Structure areas and Alternative Providers	
3.6.1 Course length should be substantial enough to deliver content in a meaningful way to optimise EM3 engagements.	1. The preferred method of training is group work, rather than distance learning or one-to-one training. The dynamics of group work ensure that the learner fully engages with the content, often at a difficult level. 2. Ideally (but not absolutely), the first course (not the updates courses) should be four 1.5 hour sessions. These could be delivered in one day within a Synod, or delivered in separate sessions through a longer period of time. 3. If a training provider is not from a theological background, evidence of some theological reflection from the learner will be required. A small paper (a few sides of A4) should be presented with the selected course's learning

their relevant Synod EM3 Officer. Course payments may also be met through other sources (chaplaincy or other employer funds, for example). Individual EM3 allowances may be used if a Synod – run course is not available.

minister's EM3 funding.

GROUPS

A	Catherine BALL Leader Simon WALKLING Reporter Andrew BRADSTOCK Stephen BROWN Ruth GEE Rita GRIFFITHS Michael JAGESSAR Carol ROGERS Jill TURNER Elizabeth WELCH Andrew WESTON	B	Andrew PRASAD Leader Tracey LEWIS Reporter Joan COLWELL Dick GRAY Linda HARRISON Colin McBEAN Tim MEADOWS Andrew MIDDLETON Chris REED Roberta ROMINGER
C	Clare DOWNING Gethin RHYS Connie BONNER Derrick DZANDU-HEDIDOR John ELLIS Margaret MARSHALL Lawrence MOORE Howard SHARP Duncan SMITH Marie TRUBIC	D	Richard CHURCH Fiona THOMAS Andrew EVANS George FARIS David GROSCH-MILLER Peter MEEK Karen MORRISON Shelagh POLLARD Melanie SMITH David THOMPSON
E	Jacky EMBREY John DURELL Suzanne ADOFO Kath CROSS John GORDON John HUMPHREYS Gwen JENNINGS		

Agenda

Paper F1

Faith and Order Committee:

sacramental ministry and pastoral care; serving under the direction of an Ordained National Minister; normally in a non-stipendiary role, but able to be paid if circumstances dictate this is the best option. (5)

1.5 However, from the Synod of Scotland perspective, OLM was not necessarily the answer. It was felt that the transition from Churches of Christ presiding elders (see Appendix A1) to auxiliary ministers, with all the demands of training (now essentially identical to those for stipendiary ministry) on what are now “non-stipendiary ministers”, had discouraged many from o ering a local ministry of word and sacrament. The demands of extra training inherent in the Church of Scotland OLM model could equally jeopardise the relationship between lay preachers and the local congregations whom they have got to know well over the years, and put o others from developing such relationships, thus repeating the mistake originally made when presiding elders morphed into ministers. Age might also prove a bar for such transitions to be feasible.

1.6 Papers were exchanged between FORG and the Synod of Scotland. A meeting

5.3 However, a di erent point of view from either of these was raised in unanimity by six further synods: “We already have local ordained ministry. We have Elders.” While further questions can properly be raised about the distinction between the United Reformed Church’s ordination of ministers of word and sacrament and of Elders (see below 7.1.2), this groundswell of opinion was worth closer examination.

pragmatic response to felt need, or a discernment of the Spirit's gifting? How can we tell the di erence, and how can the church agree on this?

7.1.3 Practical-theological issues have also emerged from our discussions thus far, highlighting the lack of hard evidence, beyond the anecdotal, concerning conditions on the ground in our churches. The Basis of Union promises that the United Reformed Church shall "take steps to ensure that so far as possible ordained ministers of the Word and Sacraments are readily available to every local church" (17) [my italics]. But what

APPENDIX A

A1 “The Churches of Christ had both Deacons and Elders but only the Elders were ordained to Word and Sacrament. Under the Union [in 1981], Elders became Auxiliary Ministers gradually morphing into the present title of Non-stipendiary Minister. In the Churches of Christ, elders were elected by the congregation and formed part of a Team Ministry, leading worship including presiding at Communion and involved in the pastoral care of the congregation” (19).

A2 Moreover, in the Congregational tradition, lay presidency at the sacraments had been exercised and received as a gift to congregations for decades by the time the United Reformed Church was formed. There were di erent historic reasons for this: “In the nineteenth century – the period of most rapid growth – the celebration of the sacraments

Paper F2

United Reformed Church Ecumenical Future

Faith and Order Committee

Paper F2

Faith and Order Committee:
United Reformed Church Ecumenical Future

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Elizabeth Welch, convener of the Faith and Order Committee minister@theroundchapel.org.uk

United Reformed Church ecumenical future

“What is the Spirit saying to the churches?”

1

3 Issues:

3.1 Context and realism

The United Reformed Church is seeking its particular identity in a time of ecumenical struggle in which it is perceived that there is a limited desire from other Christian traditions to engage meaningfully with the United Reformed Church. In this context, we want to hold the signi cance of the ecumenical drive. Through our clarity about what we o er from our own identity to the ecumenical scene, we will be realistic. We will not be discouraged when our gifts are not received by others, nor will we complain about them. Rather, living with our own integrity, we will see where the Spirit is speaking to the Church and leading across 8-2.915(u)3.

5.3 How far and in what ways do we wish to a rm God's life-giving call to all God's people to be one?

5.4 Would it be helpful to open up a conversation, in co-operation with the range of ecumenical partners with whom we are surrounded, about the nature of visible unity and what it might look like, so that we can be renewed in the vision that God holds in front of us?

APPENDIX 1

Statement of the Nature of the United Reformed Church's Ecumenical Engagement

c) because of its symbolic value for work in healing and reconciliation;
d) because if God is One in Trinity, and there is one earth for which we all share responsibility, then for us to be divided in our response to one another, to our environment and to God is a denial of that oneness;
e) because when the Church is called to new ways it matters how we put things to rest. Drawing a line under our shared history of persecution and martyrdom may be a powerful response to sectarianism and encourage good community relations;
f) because we live in the transition between the modern world of the 18th to 20th centuries and the post modern 21st century world. It is too easy to say that everything which went before is irrelevant now;
g) because even if it was starry eyed to dream about a future with one church, we may be called to hold on to that vision while others lose it, even if we have to rede ne and revalidate our arguments in terms of the world we live in now.

12. The United Reformed Church is committed to recognising ecumenical partners as

e) To hold ourselves together, across our diversity, we will need to set aside reverent space for God in word, text and pixel, as well as in hospitality, community, church council meeting and shared discernment.
f) Space allows room to unfold and is therefore crucial to the concept of growth, which would seem to be one of God's central concerns. The rst things God places on this earth after creation are those that grow and bear fruit.

15. We see this statement deepening the theoretical basis of the Three Ecumenical Principles agreed at General Assembly 2001:
a) To expand the range and deepen the nature of the Christian common life and witness in each local community.
b) To proclaim more clearly, in word and deed, that in Christ we are one World Church family living in a world that needs to see and hear the Gospel of love and reconciliation.

16. We turn to God, the source of all life, and we pray:

O God of life,
lead us to justice and peace,
that su ering people may discover hope;
the scarred world nd healing;
and divided churches become visibly one,
through the one who prayed for us,
and in whom we are one Body,
your Son, Jesus Christ,
who with you and the Holy Spirit,
is worthy to be praised, one God,
now and forever. Amen.

Paper H

Resourcing our Elders

Ministries Committee

Paper H

Ministries Committee: Resourcing our Elders

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Revd Craig Bowman ministries@urc.org.uk
Action required	For discussion
Draft resolution(s)	None
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	Resourcing Our Elders
Main points	A brief introduction and an example of the revised Eldership Training materials
Previous relevant documents	A Course for Elders
Consultation has taken place with...	Education and Learning Committee, Ministries Committee, training and development o cers

Summary of Impact

Financial	
External (e.g. ecumenical)	A renewed attention to the role of elders within the United Reformed Church may challenge those ecumenical partnerships which do not have elders but will also provide resources for equipping local leadership regardless of the exact pattern found in each place

Resourcing Our Elders

Introduction

There is much to say about elders and eldership. This is an attempt to put together some resources to help elders or prospective elders to think about some of the important issues. The areas of learning can be taken in any order, used in whole or in part and be used with either a local church eldership or a synod or in a more localised training event. The idea is to provide a range of resources which people can dip into.

The areas are:

1. Exploring eldership: the role of elders in the URC, shadowing and mentoring, what it means to be called and ordained, how things might work in ecumenical contexts.
2. God calls elders: the historical and biblical examples of eldership, what we mean by spiritual leadership, the gifts and graces elders need.
3. A team of elders: working as a team, building a team of elders, diversity, con dence and humility.
4. The work of elders in mission: what is the local church? what are the vision2020 mission priorities?
5. Pastoral care: the elder as pastor, pastoral teams and oversight, Good Practice.
6. Prayer and spirituality: nurturing your faith, praying with others, supporting the church's worship. Praying as an eldership.
7. Next steps: becoming a supporting elder (this would be a replacement term for non serving elder), further learning, legal and other support from the synod (including trustee issues).

We would like to thank all those who have been part of putting this resource together, speci cally the synods and synod training o cers (or equivalents) and Westminster College

Ruth Whitehead, Peter Ball

Resourcing our elders

Area 6. Prayer and Spirituality

A Bible Study on 1 Timothy 3: 1-7
“It is true that anyone who desires to be a church o cial wants to be something worthwhile. That’s why o cials must have a good reputation and be faithful in marriage They must be self-controlled, sensible, well-behaved, friendly to strangers, and able to teach. They must not be heavy drinkers or troublemakers. Instead, they must be kind and gentle and not love money. Church o cials must be in control of their own families, and they must see that their children are obedient and always respectful. If they don’t know how to control their own families, how can they look after God’s people?

“They must not be new followers of the Lord. If they are, they might become proud and be doomed along with the devil. Finally, they must be well-resrodn35 fo. e2.4(l)2.3((a)-2t)-4.4(h)-6.1(e)4.3(y m)-0

Elders “share with ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the pastoral oversight and leadership of the local churches, taking counsel together in the elders’ meeting for the whole church and having severally groups of members particularly entrusted to their pastoral care. They are ‘associated with ministers in all the councils of the church’. Elders promise at their ordination to ‘accept the o ce of elder of the United Reformed Church’ and promise ‘to perform its duties faithfully”.

Elders and members receive ministers at their induction or CRCWs at their commissioning “as from God” to serve among them and with them in the world. They promise to pray for the minister/CRCW, to seek together the will of God and “give due honour, consideration and encouragement, building one another up in faith, hope and love.”

Members promise, “in dependence on God’s grace, to be faithful in private and public

- To respect the work of previous ministers/CRCWs and deal honourably with their record.
- To welcome retired ministers/CRCWs as members and worshippers in the pastorate.

3c Relationship with elders, members and others

- To regard all persons with equal love and concern.
- To uphold values of faithfulness, trust and respect.
- To share leadership and pastoral care with others called to these purposes.
- To work collaboratively and safeguard the contribution of the whole church in decision-making processes.
- To seek advice from others if in doubt about one's competence to deal with any issue or situation.
- To consider very carefully taking any position of responsibility and to support the direction of church life initiated through the ministers/CRCWs, elders and church meetings.
- Not to enter a sexual relationship with anyone in their care.
- Not to be alone with a child or children or young people in a place quite separate from others.

3d Relationship with Councils of the church

- To recognise that the pastorate is part of the wider United Reformed Church and that the ministers/CRCWs are committed to play their part in the wider councils of the Church and in ecumenical relationships.
- To engage positively with all the councils of the church.
- To participate in Synod's consultation and review of the pastorate as apprth a1b75minis.7(p)-3.4(a)1.(i)-1b25

Paper K

Mission Council March 2014

Report from the Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee

The Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee (PRWC) was given the responsibility by the 2012 General Assembly, through resolution 38, for seeking personal and collective reconciliation in the United Reformed Church, following the resignation of Lawrence Moore as moderator elect. The committee brought a report to the November 2013 meeting of Mission Council of a 24 hour meeting facilitated by members of a reconciliation agency. What follows is a statement following a second such meeting held at the end of February 2014.

Lawrence Moore, Roberta Rominger, Val Morrison and Howard Sharp (Lawrence's line manager and

Paper A

8 The role of Assembly moderators

The Church will need to consider how many moderators serve and for what term.

9 The “work cycle”

One criticism of annual Assemblies was that committees felt their work could only really

Paper G1

Draft management accounts 2013

Finance Committee

Paper G1

Finance Committee:
Draft management accounts 2013

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	John Ellis, Treasurer john.ellis@urc.org.uk
Action required	Information
Draft resolution(s)	None
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To report on 2013 budget out-turn
Main points	The summary table of unaudited numbers shows: • Total MandM Fund giving in 2013 was above budget but still 2% lower than in 2012 • Total stipend and related costs for local ministers were below budget by £147k as a result of fewer ministers than expected • With income above budget and expenditure below budget, the predicted de cit of £161k turned into a small surplus of £86k
Previous relevant documents	Budget papers presented to Mission Council Oct 2012 (Paper K) and Nov 2013 (Papers G1 and G2).
Consultation has taken place with...	

Summary of Impact

Financial	
External (e.g. ecumenical)	

Proposed Amendments to The Plan for Partnership

insertsshown in italics deletions shown in bold

10.3 Reasonable Removalcosts within the United Kingdom shall be paid on the rst removal of a minister/CRCW following nal retirement from a pastoral charge or from an appointment paid under the terms of the Plan (or to the spouse of a minister/CRCW who dies before retirement) provided that at least two estimates have been obtained. Normally The cost of the lowest estimate will be met up to the maximum shown in Appendix A.

APPENDIX C – REMOVAL COSTS
The receiving local church is responsible for paying the costs of removal (see para 6.3.3). Where the removal is within the United Kingdom reimbursement of up to 50% of the cost incurred (subject to a maximum reimbursement shown in Appendix A of £1,500) is available from the Ministry and Mission Fund and application should be made via the MoM O ce. Where a minister/CRCW is called from abroad, reimbursement from that Fund to the local church will be based on the removal costs from the port of entry.

These amendments are required to ensure that all grants paid under the terms of the Plan for Partnership will, in future, be calculated on the same basis.

If these changes are agreed, it is intended that the relevant gures in Appendix A for 2014 would be £3,317 with regard to 10.3 and £1,659 with regard to Appendix C

Paper I

Mission Committee:
The United Reformed Church and the centenary of the First World War 2014-18: How do we respond?

2.3 While there are no longer any soldiers who fought in the War still alive there will be, within many families, strong memories of those who fell or were injured or bereaved. We may therefore wish to underline, in any communications with local churches and ministers, the 'pastoral' dimension to this period of remembrance.

3 Speaking out as the United Reformed Church

3.1 We need to think carefully about how we respond 'institutionally' to the challenges and opportunities presented by this anniversary. As a rule churches should speak publicly only when they have something worthwhile and distinctive to say, not because it is expected that they will speak; and they will want to avoid merely repeating what others are saying, whether from a religious or non-religious perspective. This having been said, as followers of One called the 'Prince of Peace' who are ourselves called to be 'peacemakers', it would be odd, if not a denial of our calling, if as a Church we did not feel we had anything to contribute at this time. More positively, we might want to see this as a God-given opportunity to o er distinctively 'Christian' insights to the nation at a time when many are re ecting in a particular way upon matters of life, death, sacri ce, courage and solidarity.

3.3.2

5. Conclusion

5.1 Whether our images of the First World War come from half-forgotten history lessons, grainy newsreel footage in TV documentaries, the reminiscences of long-departed relatives

APPENDICES

A A paper David Tatem, October 2013 Commemorating World War 1

1 The concern I have developed regarding the forthcoming commemoration of the start of World War 1 was triggered by a letter from the government to faith communities inviting them to be involved. The letter speci cally referred to a proposed event on August 4th in Westminster Abbey but of course by extension invited faith communities to be involved with the whole period of commemoration. This was placed on the agenda of the Free Churches Group meeting in April 2013 just after the letter was received.

2 Government initiatives have developed since then but the focus remains on encouraging as many parts of society as possible to join in the commemoration, including making it possible for school children to visit the battle elds. There are places where a museum exists including part of a trench still kept as it would have been along with collections of equipment, photographs and so on. On one level it is clear that children will have the chance to discover what being involved in the war was like and will be given the statistics of loss of life just as the rest of us are reminded year by year on Remembrance Sunday but what values will be promoted alongside this? The focus of the commemoration is not simply on the educational aspect for children however and from a rigorous Christian point of view it is surely essential that we approach the forthcoming period with great caution and rigorous theology.

3 There will, as I have said, be an emphasis on the terrible loss of life that was experienced, no one could get away with not acknowledging that but there will be

4.4 I will be surprised in the commemorations if we hear the phrase ‘lives taken away’ used rather than ‘lives lost’ or ‘lives given’ so the challenge for the church and for other faith groups is to do what the Churches eventually succeeded in doing with the abolition of slavery, to de-legitimise the use of certain terms and certain concepts.

4.5 I cannot help but re ect on what happened when Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire with the resulting of the legitimisation of certain concepts and the de-legitimisation of others. We must discuss the theology of the Just War and whether it is still t for purpose as a legitimisation of the whole military culture of the present time. It is a question for deep and serious discussion with huge implications for the development of weapons technology among other things.

4.6 But I want to return to the question of language and the use of language. There is of course more to be said about it because there were many thousands of young men who enthusiastically signed up on a wave of patriotic fervour, spurred on by the language of the posters and politicians appealing to their patriotism. Perhaps the argument could be made that no one really grasped

6 It would be good to believe that the Church has got better at choosing what to bless and what not to bless but it can be patchy. At the end of the Falklands campaign, though, the service in St Paul's reputedly infuriated Margaret Thatcher because it had a tone of reconciliation rather than victory and regretted the loss of life on both sides. Once again that was a lot to do with the use of language and again I want to say that the most important role that the churches can play in this period of commemoration

B Jim Currin's paper Remembering World War One: a feature paper from www.cte.org.uk

This is a personal paper from Capt. Jim Currin, Church Army, the Secretary for Evangelisation, Churches Together in England. It is written to aid discussion, prayer and planning for local groups of churches.

1 2014-2018 is going to be a signi cant time for these islands as we remember and re ect on the First World War.

2

presence like a military base nearby. Are there Cadets / ATC etc.? If so, discuss with the Chaplains.

f Remember the paci st response to World War I. The Quaker movement have

2016

21 Feb	Anniversary of the Battle of Verdun
31 May	Anniversary of the Battle of Jutland
5 June	Anniversary of the death of Kitchener
1 July-13 Nov	Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme
13 Nov	Remembrance Sunday

2017

Anniversary of the c

Paper J

Nominations

Nominations Committee

Paper J

Nominations Committee: Nomination

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Carol Rogers, Secretary carannrog@aol.com
Action required	Decision
Draft resolution(s)	See end of paper
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	
Consultation has taken place with...	

Summary of Impact

Financial	
External (e.g. ecumenical)	

Nominations

The following appointments were con rmed by the Assembly o cers as requested by the November Mission Council meeting:

Revd David Skipp as a member of the Joint Property Strategy Group.

Paper L

Church House Feasibility Study

United Reformed Church Trust

Paper L

URC Trust:
Church House Feasibility Study

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Sandi Hallam-Jones s.hallam-jones@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council agrees a feasibility study should be undertaken to explore options for the possible development of Church House.
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	Feasibility study for the future use and con guration of Church House
Main points	• Mission Council has expressed concern about the infrastructural costs in the central budget • The URC Trust suggests a feasibility study for the options for possible development of Church House • Preliminary work on this idea is described • Cost of £15k-£20k can be found from existing budgets
Previous relevant documents	
Consultation has taken place with...	Church House Management Group; o cers of Finance Committee.

Summary of Impact

Financial	•

United Reformed Church Trust: Church House Feasibility Study

1 Introduction

1.1 At previous Mission Council meetings in 2012 and 2013, concern has been expressed at the failure to achieve signi cant savings in the infrastructure parts of the central budget to match those agreed elsewhere. One element of these costs relates to operating the existing Church House at 86 Tavistock Place in London. The URC Trust has reported on unsuccessful e orts to consider sharing o ce premises, and therefore costs, with partner Churches and given a commitment to Mission Council to explore ways of using Church House more e ciently.

1.2 At its meeting on 19th February 2014, the Trust considered presentations from two architectural practices (Theis & Khan and Hutson Associates) on how they would propose to approach the carrying out of a Feasibility Study, if one were to be commissioned, on the possible refurbishment and use of Church House.

1.3 The brief was to provide the URC with information which would enable decisions to be made in respect of the following:

- a reduction in running costs;
- the ability to utilise the building more e ectively by the use of more open plan o ce spaa

2.4

3.5 Theis & Khan have given an initial estimated cost for the feasibility study of between £7,500 to £21,000, depending on the level of information required, particularly with regards to the level of detail in which alternative schemes are worked out and costed. These sums can be found from within the existing budget of the church house management group. Once the details of the ampli ed brief have been settled, we would expect a more precise estimate of the fee level for the project.

3.6 They also recommend that a topographical survey of the existing building be carried out to provide accurate drawings to work from. Whether this survey is included in the early stage of the Feasibility Study will in uence the scope and overall cost of the study.

4 The outline brief

4.1 Once the feasibility study is completed it will then be necessary to produce an outline brief for the project if it is decided to go ahead.

4.2 Securing buy-in to the outline brief will help maintain support throughout the project's progress. A good outline brief acts as a map to help the project delivery team reach its destination. It should set out what we want to achieve from the project and how we want to go about it. It is about setting out our needs for the project, rather than setting out speci c built solutions.

4.3 The brief has a role to play at all stages of the project. It will help communication between all parties: sharing information about the goals of the project will help build the relationships essential for the success of any building project. It also forms the foundation for the design.

Resolution

Mission Council agrees a feasibility study should be undertaken to explore options for the possible development of Church House.

Paper M1

General Secretary:

Secretary for education and learning
Secretary for ministries
Secretary for mission
Secretary for racial justice and multicultural ministry
Editor, reform
National rural o cer
Secretary for world church relations

Synod moderators

Westminster College

Principal
Director of Old Testament studies
Director of New Testament studies
Director of pastoral studies
Nivison chair of church history

Director of the Windermere Centre

2a) Assembly con rms that the following posts are restricted to ministers of the URC:

General secretary
Secretary for ministries
Synod moderators

2b) Assembly con rms that the following post is restricted to members of the URC:

Secretary for ecumenical relations

2c) Assembly con rms that the following posts are restricted to members of the URC and to members of those Churches which belong to one or mos(e)-5. the WtualText<F5(me685(s)-5.6(e

Paper M2

Clerk:
Membership of the United Reformed Church, The General Assembly and Mission Council

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Margaret Carrick Smith clerk@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision on recommendations to General Assembly and on a proposed change to the Rules of Procedure.
Draft resolution(s)	See text of paper
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	Clarity and consistency concerning the membership of the United Reformed Church, the General Assembly and Mission Council.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	
Consultation has taken place with...	The o cers of the Assembly, the o cers of the Law and Polity Advisory Group and the o cers of the Synod of Scotland (concerning paragraph 5).

Summary of Impact

Membership of the United Reformed Church, The General Assembly and Mission Council

Membership Matters

1. During the meeting of Mission Council held in November 2013 an issue arose concerning whether those who were not members of the United Reformed Church (URC) could be members of the Assembly and Mission Council. The matter arose in connection with the three new Deputy General Secretary posts, but has wider relevance. Furthermore, there are some related issues and it now seems appropriate to gather them together for the sake of clarity and consistency.

The General Assembly

2. On the whole, the Structure is silent on the question of whether members of the Assembly must be members of the URC. When it was rst drafted it may well have been assumed that those representing (then) District Councils would be members. As new categories of membership were added to the list, in some cases it was speci ed that they must be drawn from the URC membership, but nothing is laid down about the matter in general.

3. At General Assembly in 2006 a resolution was passed (number 51) which stated that, with a few exceptions, members of Assembly should be members of the URC. However, this decision was not enshrined in the Structure, and so is not widely known. I now propose that the Structure be amended to clarify this point.

4. At the same time as proposing this amendment I suggest that another change be considered. The Structure currently states that: “Where the moderator of synod is an o cer of the Assembly, a committee convener or otherwise entitled to membership of the Assembly, the synod concerned shall appoint a substitute as its representative”. Whilst it is clearly appropriate that if the moderator of a synod is an o cer of the Assembly an alternative synod representative should be appointed, the view has been expressed that since being a convener of a standing committee does not impede the synod moderator from representing the synod appointment of a substitute in that case is unnecessary. I therefore suggest that the Structure be amended to restrict this provision.

5. I am suggesting one other change which, if accepted, will result in the need for an amendment to the Structure. Currently the Synod of Scotland has six additional representatives to the Assembly, under category 2.(6)(h). At the time of union these additional places were put in place in lieu of all former chairmen of the Congregational Union of Scotland being entitled to membership as were all former chairmen, presidents and moderators of the other constituent parts of the URC. Since that time, of course, that provision has been altered so that now only 2 of the former leaders in England and Wales are members (see category 2.(6)(j)). It is therefore now proposed that the Synod

of Scotland should no longer be entitled to an additional six representatives. The o cers of the Synod of Scotland have indicated that they would be willing to accept this change. The removal of these additional representatives does not itself require a change to the Structure, and I therefore propose the following resolution which, if passed by the Assembly, would take e ect for the 2016 Assembly:

Resolution 1

Mission Council agrees to propose the following resolution to General Assembly:

General Assembly agrees that with e ect from the General Assembly of 2016 there shall no longer be six additional representatives of the Synod of Scotland under category 2.(6)(h).

6. The resolution which follows contains, in addition to those outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4 above, a proposed amendment to the Structure to add the former chairmen of the Congregational Union of Scotland to the list in category 2.(6)(j). If Resolution 1 is not passed, that amendment will be removed from the resolution. I propose the following resolution:

Resolution 2

Mission Council agrees to present the following resolution to General Assembly:

General Assembly agrees to make the following changes to the Structure of the United Reformed Church:

Paragraph 2.(6)
Amend the rst sentence to read: “The General Assembly which shall embody the unity of the United Reformed Church and act as the central organ of its life and the nal authority, under the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all matters of doctrine and order and in all other concerns of its common life shall consist of members of the United Reformed Church (save for those in categories (g), (l), (m) and (n)) as follows:”

Amend category (d) by the deletion of the words: “, a committee convener or otherwise entitled to membership of the Assembly,” so that it reads: “Where the moderator of synod is an o cer of the Assembly the synod concerned shall appoint a substitute as its representative”.

Amend category (f) by the deletion of the words: “being members of the United Reformed Church,” (twice).

Amend category (j) by the addition of the words: “former chairmen of the

MISSION COUNCIL

10. When the membership of Mission Council was determined in 1992 the legal adviser was included as a full member. S/he is not, however, a member of Assembly, but "in attendance". The Law and Polity advisory group (LPAG) has considered this as part of its work following the report of the Resolution 38 Commission, and Mission Council has before it a paper from the LPAG which recommends that in future the legal adviser be in attendance at Mission Council rather than a member.

11. At its meeting in November 2013 Mission Council agreed to recommend to the Assembly that the convener of the Pastoral Reference and Welfare Committee should be a member of Mission Council. (13/42(5))

12. Also in November 2013 the o cers proposed that the three deputy general secretaries should be members of Mission Council. This was deferred for further consideration. The o cers now present the proposal again in the light of this clari cation of the position of those who are not members of the URC.

13. Mission Council, contrary to the implication of its name, is not a council of the church. It does not have a separate section in the Structure. Originally, this body was the Executive Committee. Of course the nature and functions of Mission Council di er from those of the old Executive Committee, but for most of its work it functions as a Committee of the Assembly. At other times, however, it acts on behalf of the Assembly. The Structure makes it clear that members of standing committees must be members of the URC. Therefore in line with both the General Assembly and the standing committees it is proposed that it be stated explicitly that (with a few exceptions) members of Mission

With the exception of those in category 5 (the deputy general secretaries) all the above shall be members of the United Reformed Church. The legal adviser and the convener of the Law and Polity advisory group shall be in attendance with the right to speak at all times, but not to use consensus cards or to vote.

Sta secretaries shall be in attendance with the right to speak (except during the decision stage of the consensus process) but not to use consensus cards or to vote.

Up to two ecumenical representatives may attend with the right to speak at all times, but not to use consensus cards or to vote.

Also present shall be the moderators' chaplains, the minute secretary, the consensus adviser (pending separate decision) and other sta members as agreed by committee conveners and the general secretary. These may participate in group sessions, and may speak during plenary sessions with the consent of the Moderator.

From time to time there may be visitors and/or observers present by prior arrangement with the general secretary. They shall not have the right to speak or participate in any way during plenary or group sessions, unless with the explicit consent of the Moderator.

APPENDIX 1

Extract from the Structure as at December 2013

2.(6) The General Assembly which shall embody the unity of the United Reformed Church and act as the central organ of its life and the nal authority, under the Word of God and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all matters of doctrine and order and in all other concerns of its common life shall consist of:

(a) Such number of representatives of synods (ministerial and lay in equal numbers) as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine. These numbers shall be calculated

(d) Where the moderator of synod is an o cer of the Assembly, a committee convener

Paper M3

Consensus Decision Making

Mission Council Advisory Group

Paper M3

Mission Council Advisory Group: Consensus Decision Making

Consensus Decision Making: the way forward

There was warm a rmation following the November 2013 Mission Council meeting for how well consensus decision-making had operated and what it had contributed to the spirit and

Alternatively, are there other mechanisms that could be put in place to enable the URC to continue to develop in its use of consensus? The best learning happens through re ection following each council meeting. Is it su cient to leave it to the Assembly o cers to ensure that this happens, encouraging them to include other people in their re ection sessions as appropriate to o er insight and challenge? Or should this responsibility be given explicitly to some group (e.g. Mission Council Advisory Group, Assembly Arrangements Committee)? Might we have designated process observers at each meeting?

If “re ection” is one crucial component in the ongoing development of consensus, “facilitation” is another. How might all Mission Council and Assembly members be encouraged to engage con dently in the decision making of the councils, putting energy, creativity and commitment into process as well as outcomes?

Paper M4

Mission Council Advisory Group election

General Secretary

Paper M4

General Secretary:
Mission Council Advisory Group election

Basic Information

Contact name and	

Mission Council Advisory Group election

The Mission Council Advisory Group is a body of twelve people, four of whom are appointed directly by Mission Council. The appointed members serve for four years,

Paper O

Human Resources Advisory Group (HRAG)

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Keith G. Webster kwebsterwms@btinternet.com
Action required	For information
Draft resolution(s)	None
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

2. General Secretariat Review

Following the Mission Council meeting in November 2013 and the submission of the revised Paper O2 (the amended job description for the DGS Administration and Resources), the job descriptions for both the DGS Discipleship and DGS Mission were similarly amended and were then to be made available on the URC website prior to the commencement of the recruitment and appointment processes.

3. Review of the role of HRAG

In November 2013 HRAG had been in existence for one year and hence it seemed appropriate for HRAG to step back and assess progress to date on the nature of the work that had been undertaken, interfaces with operational HR and line management, and the extent to which the 2013 remit to provide a uni ed reference point on HR matters had been met. This work is currently underway with the aim of ensuring that HRAG is able to give appropriate support to both HR and line management.

Paper P

Powers in pre-Union trusts

Powers in pre-Union trusts

1. Most property held for the United Reformed Church serves the church at the local level. Church buildings (here called chapels) and manses are the best-known examples. But from time to time land has been given or acquired to serve the denomination as a whole. This was true also of our predecessor denominations before the United Reformed Church came into being.

2. When the United Reformed Church Act 1972 varied the trusts of former Presbyterian and Congregational assets to make them available to serve the United Reformed Church, it dealt with such assets under ve main categories. In the United Reformed Church Act 1981 a similar approach was taken to former local Churches of Christ assets.

Category	Type of asset	Act of 1972	Act of 1981
A	Chapels, church halls, mission halls and manses of local churches	ss.8(1) and (2), and Sch 2	ss.6(1) and (2), and Sch 2
B	Other local church land	ss.8(1) and (3)	

12. The choice of the church meeting to make local decisions, rather than the elders' meeting, mirrors the choice made in the Second Schedules to the Acts regarding chapels, halls and manses. There too, the powers of direction, consent and appointment are bestowed on the church meeting, but church meetings are called upon to have regard to the recommendations of other councils including the elders' meeting. That exhortation is repeated in the reso5(t)t aho.1(e c)2.9(hu)1.1(r)-1(c)2.9(h m)-6.6(e) /T1_1 1 Tf 0 Tc 0 Tw 11 0 1 9.9 68.0315

(4) In exercise of the power conferred by s.18(2) of the Act of 1972 and s.10(2) of the Act of 1981, the Assembly delegates any further exercise that may be necessary of its powers under s.18(1) and s.10(1) respectively (including any amendment of the provision now made) to Mission Council. This is in substitution for the delegation made to the Executive Committee by the Uniting Assembly of 1972.

Power vested before the date of formation/uni cation in:	To vest in:
The Session, Diaconate, Deacons' Court or Board of Managers of a uniting congregation The members or deacons of a uniting church	The church meeting of the corresponding local church, or of any local church formed by its union with other local churches since the date of formation; or, if the local church has ceased to exist since the date of formation, the synod on which it was last represented
A presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of England, de ned in the releeleeleen6e by its	u(l)-1.1(a(l).9(n)-6.1(.7(t)11.n)-6..1(e d)-3(e)-3DC 83.4(n8(n)(

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Paper S1

Update

Medium Term Strategy Group

Medium Term Planning in the United Reformed Church

An update on the work arising from Paper B, Mission Council October 2012

1 Introduction

This paper is o ered to provide Mission Council with an overview of the work of medium term planning which has taken place since General Assembly 2012 and to propose next steps for Mission Council comment.

2 Background

2.1 In October 2012 Mission Council agreed to appoint a Medium Term Strategy Group to oversee a project of re ection and decision-making across the full range of issues which had emerged from various review groups and task groups which had presented their work since the previous Assembly.

2.2 This paper o ers a general update on that project, noting that the speci cs will be reported to General Assembly 2014 by the committees and groups responsible for them. Some urgent questions have now been addressed and decisions have been made. Other work

3.3 In some cases an issue has been transferred from one group's agenda to another's. In others, a conscious decision has been taken to defer an issue. Some of the work, such as consideration of the e ectiveness of governance by committees, will need to be carried forward.

However, in the course of these many discussions and in the ongoing life of the Church some new questions have emerged. It has been helpful to have a group responsible for tracking progress on various pieces of work and endeavouring to co-ordinate the thinking of the Church across its many task groups and committees.

4 Progress to note

4.1 The Medium Term Strategy Group has kept a strong link with the Faith and Order

4.4.2 Through exploration of a series of scenarios, Mission Council established that there was no appetite for structural change, either to reduce the number of synods into larger regional bodies or to increase their number so that they would encompass fewer churches. Further thought was needed about their administrative functions, and this took place at the November 2013 Mission Council meeting, where the idea of a centrally funded manager for each synod was explored. It was decided that each synod should continue to address its administrative needs in its own way.

4.4.3

APPENDIX

From Paper B, “Medium Term Planning in the United Reformed Church”,
Mission Council October 2012

The Medium Term Strategy Group was appointed to oversee the process by which these questions, delegated to the appropriate committees, were considered.

Faith and Order Committee

a.

f. Should service/administrative functions be moved from the synods to Church House? If so, how would this be funded?
g. Should synod moderators have a formal role in the ministerial disciplinary process?
h. How many synods should there be? Does each require a full-time synod moderator?
i. The Assembly is essential to the health and faithfulness of the United Reformed Church. Does the current pattern of biennial Assemblies deliver what we need?
j. Do we have the membership of Assembly right? Should it be larger? Smaller?
k. When is it appropriate to use consensus decision making? When should other modes of decision making be employed?
l. Where resources and support are needed for mission and programme work, how do we determine whether these should be provided by the synod or the Assembly (or both or neither)?

Paper S2

The role of the synod moderator

Purpose

1. The Medium Term Strategy Group (MTSG) inherited as unfinished business the proposals of the task group to review the role of the synod moderator, chaired by Stephen Orchard, that were presented to the 2012 General Assembly. MTSG has moved forward some of the group's proposals. This paper o□ers a draft model job description for a synod moderator in the light of the Orchard Group's own work and developments since.

Building Blocks

2. The Orchard Group prepared a draft job description consistent with their other proposals. Much of what appears in this paper is based on that document.

3. MTSG also looked at the job description used by the most recent synod moderator appointment group, i.e. that for Mersey. MTSG took account of discussions at Mission Council since the Orchard Group reported, especially the discussions around the concept of a synod manager, and sought to put the job description in the format now preferred by the Human Resources Advisory Group (HRAG).

4. MTSG supports the Orchard Group's preference for a common core to the synod moderators' job descriptions but feels that individual synods need encouragement to reflect deliberately on what specific local demands need to be added. In some synods, for example, the moderator has a eRd by ty te me synod

People

14. To ensure active encouragement and support for the spiritual growth, renewal and Christian service of church members of all ages.
15. To meet with ministerial candidates and provide them with procedural guidance.
16. To provide supportive oversight and pastoral care to serving ministers, CRCWs and their families both personally and through the establishment of collegial teams.
17. To act as an adviser in the URC's provision of support services to ministers and CRCWs (e.g. long term sickness arrangements, welfare, retirement processes).
18. To encourage ministers and CRCWs in spiritual growth and development at all stages in their ministry, in partnership with those responsible for their self-appraisal and ongoing development.
19. To fulfil the responsibilities ascribed te8-4.(n a)n4(h t)-4-16-11m4.5(-4-16-1-4.8(l)2.-2(s)-2.5(u)1.9(

Paper U

Mission Council Advisory Group

Paper U

Mission Council Advisory Group

Mission Council Advisory Group

1. Five northern synods conversations

Conversations between the ve northern synods continue as to ways that they might share the resources of people, programmes and administrative functions across their borders. In May 2013 Mission Council noted that these discussions would take place. Mission Council gave its support and agreed that an interim synod moderator should be appointed to Northern Synod so that various future options could be explored. The Revd Lis Mullen was appointed to serve until July 2014. As these explorations are incomplete, it is recommended that this arrangement should continue for a further year. Lis Mullen is willing to serve.

Resolution 1

Mission Council, acting on behalf of General Assembly, agrees to extend the appointment of the Revd Lis Mullen as interim synod moderator of the Northern Synod until 31st July 2015.

2. O cer action

Mission Council authorised its o cers to con rm various appointments following the last meeting. These are listed in the Nominations Committee report, Paper J.

3. Review of decision making under the new standing order

In May 2013 Mission Council agreed a new standing order by which business would be divided into three categories: en bloc voting, majority voting and consensus decision making. MCAG undertook to review the new system after it had been tried in the November meeting. There had been many positive comments concerning en bloc voting. MCAG noted the two technical provisions which had been made, both with reference to the process for removing an item from en bloc. The rst was the Moderators' ruling that three signatures would be su cient to call for the removal of an item at Mission Council, rather than the six indicated for Assembly purposes in the standing order. The second was the creation of a single sign-up sheet to enable those wishing to see an item removed simply to add their names rather than having to nd two colleagues to sign a special request form with them. Both of these changes had helped to make Mission Council's experience of en bloc satisfactory and MCAG has encouraged that they continue.

4.

6. Task group on the Church's engagement with 20 to 40 year olds

Terms of reference were agreed by MCAG for Mission Council's consideration. They are appended to this paper.

Task Group for the Church's engagement with 20 to 40 year olds

Terms of reference

General Assembly 2012 expressed concern at the reducing number of young adults in the Church and asked that energy should be devoted to including and integrating them at every level of Church life. In November 2013 Mission Council agreed that a task group should be appointed to consider how the Assembly resolution should be implemented. The Mission Council Advisory Group o ers the following terms of reference for the task group.

The Task Group for the Church's engagement with 20 to 40 year olds will:

1. speak with people in this age group to ascertain
    a. their perception of their faith needs and how these are being met,
    b. their current experience of the United Reformed Church at every level, identifying good news stories where these exist, and
    c. their ideas about the sort of Church they would want to be part of;

2. survey the work of partner Churches concerning this age group, signi cantly the Methodist Church's "Missing Generation" report and its follow-up;

3. explore the Fresh Expressions movement, including participation in the Young Adults Round Table, with a view to identifying experience, insights and methodologies Fresh Expressions can o er for engagement with 20 to 40 year olds;

4. consult with Assembly committees and groups as appropriate, including the Mission, Ministries, Equalities, Education and Learning, Children's and Youth Work, Communications Committees, Racial Justice Advocates, Resource Centres for Learning, TLS Management Group, and the FURY Advisory Board;

5. report to Mission Council in 2015;

6. bring a nal report to Assembly 2016, including fully costed proposals for the future.

Resolution 2

Mission Council agrees the terms of reference for the Task Group on the Church's engagement with 20 to 40 year olds.

Paper Y1

Frequency of General Assembly

Wessex Synod

Paper Y1

Wessex Synod: Frequency of General Assembly

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Clare Downing moderator@urcwessex.org.uk
Action required	Decision
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council agrees to explore ways by which the United Reformed Church can return to the pattern of General Assembly being held every year.
Alternative options to consider, if any	

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To enable exploration of how the United Reformed Church can return to a pattern of annual General Assemblies.
Main points	The change from annual to biennial General Assembly, taken at the same time as the loss of District Councils, needs to be reviewed. Mission Council needs to be enabled to take an informed decision on whether a return to annual General Assemblies is the right way forward, and if so, what e ects this would have for organisational and budgetary purposes.
Previous relevant documents	General Assembly 2005: resolution 43
Consultation has taken place with...	Wessex Synod (decision by agreement at November 2013 meeting). Synod Clerks have been made aware of this resolution.

Summary of Impact

Financial	

Frequency of General Assembly

1. Whilst the resolutions passed at the 2005 General Assembly – to remove a decision

secretary being the prime minister is not altogether apt, there does seem to be a risk of the power base of two moderators for two years being quadrupled from one moderator for a year.

9. It is with these various matters in mind that Wessex Synod has asked Mission Council to explore a return to an annual General Assembly within a timescale such that, if the principle of an annual assembly were agreed, it would be possible to hold a General Assembly in 2017.

Resolution

Mission Council agrees to explore ways by which the United Reformed Church can return to the pattern of General Assembly being held every year.

Paper Y2

Children's Assembly

National Synod of Wales

Children's Assembly

1 The United Reformed Church believes in the ministry of the whole people of God: women and men, young and old, ordained and lay, and has acknowledged this over many years in many documents including "Charter for Children" (General Assembly 1990) and "A vision for youth and children's work" (General Assembly 2008).

2 The United Reformed Church is committed to enabling children and young people to play a full and creative part in the denomination's life. This was fundamental to the children's and youth development o cers programme.

3 Part of the remit of the children's and youth work committee is to facilitate the involvement of young people in all councils of the Church

4 The commitment of the United Reformed Church to the development of children and young people, to a clear recognition that they have a ministry to o er as well as to receive, and to their participation in the life and ministry of the whole Church is beyond doubt.

5 In a separate but parallel programme covering some of the issues being addressed in General Assembly, members of Children's Assembly have contributed to the discussion and debate of the General Assembly to the great bene t of all.

6 After budget cuts, including a substantial cut to the budget of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, were agreed by General Assembly in 2012, Mission Council agreed that the cost of a Children's Assembly could not be covered by the budget for General Assembly 2014, though for some this decision was taken with a heavy heart. Yet, to exclude children from participation in General Assembly by cutting Children's Assembly seems inconsistent with the Church's fundamental belief in the worth of children and the contribution they can make to the Church as a whole.

7 Both adults and children have bene ted from the participation of children in Children's Assembly and in General Assembly as a whole. Children's Assembly is an important aspect of our life together and should be reinstated.

Resolution

a) Recognising that children and young people are equal partners in the life of the United Reformed Church, Mission Council deeply regrets that there will not be a Children's Assembly alongside General Assembly in Wales in 2014.

b) While recognising the pressures of budgetary constraints Mission Council urges General Assembly to restore the invaluable Children's Assembly in future years as part of our common life.

c) Mission Council requests the Assembly Arrangements Committee, in consultation with the Finance Committee, to present options as to whether the reinstatement of Children's Assembly should be achieved by increasing the overall budget for General Assembly or by cutting other aspects of General Assembly to keep within the agreed budget.