

# Paper H1

## General report

### Ministries Committee

#### Basic information

Contact name and email address	Paul Whittle <a href="mailto:moderator@urcscotland.org.uk">moderator@urcscotland.org.uk</a>
Action required	For information.
Draft resolution(s)	None.

#### Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Main area of focus since General Assembly 2020 and sub-committee reports.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	Ministries Report to General Assembly 2020.
Consultation has taken place with...	None.

#### Summary of impact

Financial	None.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None.

#### Ministries Committee

The committee is responsible for the ministry of Word and Sacraments, Church-Related Community Work, Lay Preaching and Eldership. It is concerned with central care and conditions of service, chaplaincies in industry, higher and further education, prisons, and in the armed forces and 'special category' ministry. It has concern for the pastoral support of ministers, Church-Related Community Workers and Lay Preachers, including pastoral supervision, self-



(Assembly Executive November 2021), the committee has been looking at Marks of Ministry for an Elder and an Elders Meeting. A paper will come to Assembly Executive in November.

#### 4. Deployment

- 4.1 In recent years, complex debates about ministerial deployment have become even more complicated by there being different sets of data in use in different contexts and words like 'predicted numbers' and 'target numbers' being used to mean different things in different documents. Ministries has been working on a single set of key data that is as accurate and easy to understand as possible, and can be kept up to date by Ministries for the benefit of the work of the Ministries Committee, the Moderators Meeting and the individual Synods.
- 4.2 One of the sets of data previously produced by Ministries, mainly for the Moderators, was based on data supporting the GA 2016 deployment resolution and showed 'target' figures plus 10% (being a notional vacancy rate), but with target figures being what the URC could afford (rather than the predicted figures of the available ministers to deploy). The basic data rested on a formula about 'affordability'.
- 4.3 However, GA 2021 recognised that the Church should no longer use this affordability formula to determine ministry figures because its original assumptions (from 2012) no longer apply. It therefore generates misleading data. In addition, some other Ministries numbers have continued to rely indirectly on estimates made in 2016, which are now not the best estimates we can produce. As a result, Ministries will, in future, base all its calculations on the latest predicted figures of available ministers, which can be updated annually. These predicted figures of available ministers will now drive the target figures for deployment use.
- 4.4 Once there is a single, clear basis for calculations of minister numbers, the

our control. Therefore, upon taking advice from Finance, Ministries target figures produced from 2022 onwards will have a rolling four-year planning horizon. To avoid decisions being based on unreliable data, the Ministries Office will no longer attempt to suggest numbers more than four years ahead.

4.6 The Ministries Office will monitor the new figures closely.

5. Ministry in post -pandemic times

5.1 Post-pandemic, churches have emerged to find themselves with an even bigger role in helping people to move forward to 'normal'. Community hubs have always been, and will always be, key places of comfort and refuge in times of crisis. In the midst of change are our dedicated ministers of Word and Sacraments, Church-Related Community Workers, Locally Recognised Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers, Elders and lay folk, who have risen to the challenge and embraced new ways of being church as we tackle the current crisis.

5.2 Ministries does not underestimate the toll this has taken on many in our churches, acknowledging they will need to find further support and resources to maximise what they can offer communities at this critical time of recovery. Ministries Committee therefore urges those involved in ministry to take advantage of the resources available to them through the denomination.

5.3 Pastoral Supervision has been a lifeline for many ministers who have engaged in it. A light touch review has taken place, with a new and updated policy coming for information to General Assembly.

5.4 Inflation has been at an unprecedented level in 2022, with food and heating costs rising at an alarming rate. Ministries, through the MOM Committee, has been working with Finance and the General Secretariat to find ways of alleviating any hardship.

5.5 Ministries commends the Churches Ministerial Counselling Service support to ministers and their families: [www.cmincs.net](http://www.cmincs.net)

6. Thank you

The work of Ministries could not be achieved without the expertise and commitment of the volunteers who make up the Ministries Committee and its sub-committees. Our thanks go to those who will have retired from our committee since General Assembly last met: Martin Camroux, Sam Elliot and Jenny Sheehan. This is the last General Assembly with Paul Whittle as Convenor. Paul's commitment to the Ministries Committee over the past six years, in shaping and supporting the variety of ministries within the United Reformed Church and all the policies and processes that entails, has been unstinting, and we are indebted to him for his care and wisdom in guiding the Ministries Committee in its valuable work.

**Accreditations sub-committee**

Maintaining the roll of ministers, this sub-committee accredits those applying for inclusion after training, and those coming from other denominations. It is concerned with numbers and recruitment. It also deals with applications for special category ministries. It is responsible for supporting the Church-Related Community Work ministry and programme

under the terms agreed in the Church-Related Community Work covenant. This includes the accreditation of churches-in-community.

Convenor: Paul Dean

Joint Secretaries: Nicola Furley-Smith, Steve Summers

Members: Tim Clarke, Ann Honey, Marie Trubic, Bill Gould (convenor of the





Date of Conference		No. of Candidates	Number accepted
November 2021	CRCW	0	0
	Stipendiary Ministry	2	2
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry	0	0
	Non-Stipendiary Ministry 4	2	2
	Transfer from NSM 1-3 to NSM 4		



## Maintenance of the Ministry sub-committee report

Advises on the level of stipend and ministers' conditions of service through the Plan for Partnership. It is also concerned for pensions through its associated Pensions Committee.

Convenor: David Coote

Members: David Gartside, Jean Wyber, Richard Nunn (convenor of pensions committee), Paul Whittle (convenor of ministries committee), Vaughan Griffiths (assistant treasurer)

1. The MoM subcommittee meets twice a year, but conducts much of its business by email as and when a decision is called for concerning stipends or allowances for individual ministers.

2. Plan for Partnership

Our main role is to interpret the Plan for Partnership, and to agree such changes as we consider necessary. When situations are referred to us that do not exactly fit the terms of the Plan, we try to apply the Plan fairly and reasonably. The situation is considered carefully, and can lead to amendmentst004 Tcdere carfnersnw T\* [(by

the light of that review, proposed changes to the Committee's make-up .  
The resolution from Ministries Committee covering those changes can be found in  
the main Ministries Report.

## The Retired Ministers' Housing sub-committee report

Convenor: Paul Whittle

Secretary: Secretary for Ministries

1. The new committee continues to be the point of liaison between Ministries and RMHS on behalf of the URC and tenants, ensuring that all eligible members are adequately housed and supported in retirement.
2. To assist with a business plan for the next ten or so years, a survey was sent to 226 ministers aged 54 and over. Of these, 151 responded, and the results will help determine the likely need for RMHS properties.
3. The committee is also considering the formula for assessing contributions