Paper H2

Ministries Committee

Education and Learning Priorities Review

United Reformed Church

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Ministries
Education & Learning Priorities Review

Basic Information

Contact name and email address	Gethin Rhys, convenor, Ministries gethin.rhys@ntlworld.com or c/o ministries@urc.org.uk
Action required	Change of Mission Council resolution.
Draft resolution(s)	1. **Mission Council rescinds Resolution 14/52 of November 2014.** 2. **Mission Council asks the deputy general secretary (discipleship), conferring with the Ministries, Education and Learning, and Finance Committees to bring forward recommendations about priorities for education and learning that will support the well-being and future vitality of the church's recognised ministries.**

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To propose a revised way of carrying forward Mission Council's intention regarding a review of priorities for Education and Learning.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	Mission Council Nov 2014 papers D2 and Y2 Mission Council minutes Nov 2014, items 14/39, 14/40, 14/52.
Consultation has taken place with...	Assembly Committee convenors' meeting, Nov 2014 MCAG, December 2014 Convenors and secretaries of E&L and Ministries General secretary Mission Committee, Feb 2015.

Summary of Impact

Financial	None from this resolution, although the review relates to budgetary matters for the future.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	None at this stage.

Education and Learning Priorities Review

1. At its November 2014 meeting, Mission Council discussed two papers relating to budget priorities within Education & Learning. Following the first discussion, a facilitation group was convened which proposed that Ministries, Education & Learning and Finance Committees should confer and produce proposals for revised priorities for the Education & Learning budget in the light of Mission Council's discussion.

    When this draft resolution came to the floor of Mission Council, it was proposed from the platform that Ministries should take the lead in this work, and at the time the convenor assented to that suggestion. The resolution as passed read as follows: **Mission Council asks the Ministries Committee, conferring with the Education and Learning, and Finance Committees to bring forward recommendations about priorities for education and learning that will support the well-being and future vitality of the church's recognised ministries.**

    During subsequent informal discussion, it became clear that this wording created three difficulties in terms of implementation:

    a) Placing one Assembly committee in charge of a review of another Assembly committee's budget appeared to set a worrying precedent, and perhaps suggest a hierarchy amongst committees which have previously worked as equal partners.

    b) The secretary of education and learning was at the time on sabbatical leave, and all concerned felt that it was most unfortunate for this resolution to have been passed without the opportunity for her to be consulted.

    c) By the time the review was completed, a new deputy general secretary (discipleship) would be in post, working to a job description which includes taking a strategic overview of the work of the Assembly committees within the Discipleship department.

4. The convenors of Ministries and Education and Learning raised these concerns at the committee convenors' meeting immediately following Mission Council, and permission was given there for all work on this review to be stayed until January 2015 when the secretary for education and learning would be back at work. MCAG confirmed this action in December 2014.

5. In January 2015, further consultation between the two convenors and two secretaries confirmed a desire for this review to be convened by the DGS(D) rather than by the Ministries Committee, and following consultation with the general secretary, it was agreed by Ministries in February 2015 to bring a resolution to this effect to Mission Council.

6. Ministries stands ready to take a full part in this review of priorities once the arrangements for convening it have been agreed.