

# Paper U1

Task Group on the future of General Assembly  
Report

United Church 2017  
Church 2017  
Reformed Church 2017  
Church



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## Task Group on the future of General Assembly Report

### Basic Information

<b>Contact name and email address</b>	Val Morrison <a href="mailto:Valmorrison7@btinternet.com">Valmorrison7@btinternet.com</a>
<b>Action required</b>	Note
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	None

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	Update
<b>Main points</b>	Work progressing.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	GA 2016 Reports and Record
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	Whole URC consultation underway

### Summary of Impact

<b>Financial</b>	Not yet
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	Not yet

# Report

1. The group consists of Val Morrison, Adrian Bulley, Margaret Marshall, Dick Gray, and Michael Hopkins, with John Proctor attending on behalf of the General Secretariat. Val Morrison was appointed Convener, and Michael Hopkins was appointed Secretary.
2. The group has met on 19 December 2016 and 20 February 2017. These meetings have considered a thorough exploration of all the issues involved, and sought initial feedback from committees.
3. All our work is set in the context of the ongoing sequence of reports and resolutions since 2011, which clearly indicate that the church wishes to reduce expenditure. We note that attempts to implement these decisions have not been popular, and our remit is to take a broader and longer view to try and find a way to provide an Assembly which the Church wishes, at a price it can afford.
3. A questionnaire has been devised, which has been widely circulated in the URC. At the time of writing this report that consultation is ongoing. It closes on 28 April, and the Task Group are meeting on 5 May to begin their analysis of the results.
4. Without prejudice to the results of the advisory consultation, it would be unfair to the Church not to highlight some key issues in the group's thinking at this stage:
  - a) The current pattern of geographical rotation has some important strengths. However, it does not always make for efficiency. We sometimes find ourselves using venues that are not entirely suitable or are too costly. Travel costs vary widely between one year and another. We have wondered whether Assembly can take better account of the various diversities in the Church without rotating its venue. At the moment it is too early to say what the Task Group might wish to say about venues for the period 2020-2030. However, the Group's remit means that it is not bound to recommend venues that fit the present rotational pattern.
  - b) Since the Mission Council meeting in November 2017 will be asked to make a decision about Assembly 2020, the Group asks if the Assembly Arrangements Committee can keep open until November more than one option for that Assembly. Specifically the Group may want to ask Mission Council in November whether it would prefer to continue with the rotational pattern and go to Scotland in 2020, or to seek a cheaper venue that year, possibly in a suitable place that we have been to before.
  - c) The Assembly of 2018 will be asked to take decisions about the venue of Assembly for the years 2022-2030. The Group has no particular recommendations in mind at the moment.

