

Duty to Consider: extension of full-time stipendiary service beyond the 68th birthday

Procedure

General Assembly approves the adoption of the following procedure for the duty to consider extension of full time stipendiary service by a Minister of Word and Sacraments or a Church Related Community Worker beyond the retirement age set by the United Reformed Church.

- 1 In the month of a Minister's 67th birthday the payroll office shall confirm the expected date of retirement as the end of the month in which he/she is 68.
- 2 If a Minister does not wish to retire on that date he/she must apply for an extension of full time service for a maximum of three years.
- 3 He/she shall speak to the Synod Moderator and thereafter submit an application for an extension of full time service to the appropriate Council of the Church, which from July 2007 will be Synod.
- 4 On receipt of the application, the appropriate Synod Committee shall consult with the Minister, Moderator, Elders of the Church/es/post and the Church Meeting(s), where the Minister is in a pastorate, to see whether or not the individual circumstances warrant an extension of full time stipendiary service.

The circumstances to be considered shall include:

- a Minister drawing near to the end of a particular project or piece of work who might need to spend a year or two to bring it to a conclusion;
 - plans for a new grouping of churches in a particular area where it is felt desirable for the Minister to remain for a short while to see plans through to fruition;
 - a Minister, coming into ministry later in life, who might have just a short time to go before qualifying for retired ministers' housing;
 - a Minister whose spouse has a short period to go before retirement.
- 5 If the Council agrees with the request, the Minister's application, together with an account of the particular circumstances and a record of both the local church's/post's support and that of the Synod, will be sent to the Secretary for Ministries for a decision by the Accreditation Sub-Committee. In reaching this decision the Accreditation Sub-Committee shall consider the individual circumstances alongside the overall responsibility of the United Reformed Church to monitor Minister numbers so that:
 - (a) the financial responsibility to support the ministerial work force is not threatened; and
 - (b) the introduction of newly ordained and commissioned ministers is not curtailed.

- 6 The Secretary for Ministries shall inform the Synod and the Minister of the decision of the Accreditation Sub-Committee. If the decision is to accept an extension then a new date of retirement shall be agreed.
- 7 A year before the revised date of retirement, the payroll office shall once again write to the Minister and if a further extension of full time stipendiary service is requested the United Reformed Church must consider the request. The procedure set out above will therefore be repeated.

Amended to take account of the revised retirement age agreed by General Assembly 2012.

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