

# Paper A2

## Changes consequent upon moving to one Moderator of General Assembly

### Business Committee

#### Basic information

Contact name and email address	Michael Hopkins michael.hopkins@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	<p><b>Resolution 2</b></p> <p>1. General Assembly resolves to change paragraph 2(6)(i) of the Structure with effect from the close of General Assembly 2023, removing text struck through, and inserting new text in italics:</p> <p>The current text reads:</p> <p>i. <del>Two in total</del> <i>Such number as the General Assembly shall from time to time determine</i> from the following: former Moderators of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, past chairmen of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, past presidents of the Congregational Church in England and Wales, former Moderators of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, former chairmen or presidents of the Annual Conference of the Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, former presidents of the Annual Conference of the Re-formed Association of Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, provided that such former officers are members of the United Reformed Church and that they shall have been elected by a college consisting of all such past and former Moderators, presidents and chairmen as are members of the United Reformed Church;</p> <p><b>Resolution 3</b></p> <p>2. General Assembly determines the number of former Moderators to be members of General Assembly in that category shall be FOUR for the time being.</p>

## Summary of content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	Consequential changes to one Moderator.
<b>Main points</b>	The reduction to one Moderator for one year reduces the number of former Moderators available for chairing both parallel sessions and those sessions that the Moderator is unable or unwilling to chair.
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	Paper A1 of Assembly Executive, November 2022, and its subsequent referral to Synods.
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	N/A

## Summary of impact

<b>Financial</b>	N/A
<b>External (eg ecumenical)</b>	N/A

## Former Moderators at the General Assembly

1. For various reasons, it was appropriate that all former Moderators were no longer members of General Assembly in that capacity.
2. The General Assembly has previously determined that the two immediate past Moderators (who at that time would have both served simultaneously) be members of General Assembly, and two other former Moderators elected from the total pool of former Moderators by said pool. This meant that there were generally two serving and four former Moderators present, making a total of six inducted Moderators.
3. Former Moderators are needed to chair sessions that the serving Moderator is either unable or unwilling to chair. This may include parallel sessions, as well as business sessions that the Moderator cannot chair.
4. The Assembly needs a suitably sized pool of people to undertake this work. While recent Moderators have tended to chair most business, this is not always the case and in some years the serving Moderator has chaired relatively little business for various good reasons.
5. Although the two immediate past Moderators category was agreed at the time this was two people, there is no proposal to change this because it is still helpful to have the most recent two Moderators present as members of General Assembly.
6. The Business Committee is proposing the removal of an absolute setting of the number of former Moderators in the Structure. This is because changing the Structure can take up to two years to come into effect, which seems unnecessarily cumbersome to make a minor adjustment such as this. Therefore, the Business Committee is proposing to use the form of words used elsewhere which allows the Assembly to determine a number upon one decision that can be effected immediately.

7. As a change to the Structure, this was agreed unanimously by the Assembly Executive in November 2022, and then referred to Synods. No Synods have resolved that it be not proceeded with, so it is now presented for final agreement at the 2023 General Assembly.
8. Following the notice given in November 2022, the Business Committee proposes at the 2024 General Assembly and following that the number of former Moderators elected from the pool be four. This number can be changed by a single vote of Assembly Executive or General Assembly.
9. The Business Committee notes that former Moderators may be present in other capacities, welcomes the input of former Moderators as Conveners and Synod representatives, and encourages Synods to consider former Moderators as representatives on the same basis as other possible representatives. However, the Business Committee is aware that some Conveners may be limited in what they can chair, because of potential conflicts of interests or their Convener duties, over the Business Committee and the Business Committee is not comfortable relying on happenstance presence of former Moderators.
10. By way of information, the Business Committee is aware that there are no 'former Moderators' still living from some predecessor denominations, but there are from others. The Business Committee believes that gracious thing to do is to leave the list as it is until there are only former URC Moderators still living before tidying up that part of the list.