

Paper A3

Changes to the Committee Structure

Business Committee

Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd John Bradbury john.bradbury@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Resolution 5 General Assembly resolves that from the close of General Assembly 2025 the Equalities Committee will become the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging sub-committee of the Faith in Action Committee. Resolution 6 General Assembly resolves that from the close of General Assembly 2025 the Faith and Order Advisory Group will become a sub-committee of the Business Committee and be known as the Faith and Order Reference Group.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	This is to tidy up two bits of decision making related to Paper A2 of Assembly Executive 2025.
Main points	To rename two committees and make them sub-committees.
Previous relevant documents	Paper A2 – Assembly Executive 2025.
Consultation has taken place with...	Equalities Committee, Faith and Order Advisory Group, Mission Committee, Relevant staff of the Assembly Office.

Summary of impact

Financial	None.
External (eg ecumenical)	

It was pointed out from the floor at Assembly Executive in February that two recommendations as part of a wider committee restructure, were not subject to resolution. This was a simple mistake, and it was agreed we'd draft two resolutions during Assembly Executive to remedy this – and then forgot! We therefore bring these two resolutions to complete the restructure that was set out in A2 at Assembly Executive and debated there.

Overall, we are trying to reduce the number of direct committees of the General Assembly, and ensure that areas of work have coherent oversight of a wide-ranging nature, to make it easier to co-ordinate work, and ensure that dots are joined up. To that end, we are proposing that the Equalities Committee sit under the new Faith in Action Committee. This is because we see Equalities as central and foundational to our mission and our discipleship. It is not a question of ticking boxes, or of compliance or governance – but a fundamental witness to our faith. We also recognise that an expanded name is helpful, and thus propose that the sub-committee be known as the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging sub-committee.

The Law and Polity Advisory Group used to be an advisory group of Mission Council. Since the demise of Mission Council, it has been floating somewhat free! It is proposed it become a sub-committee of the Business Committee, as that is the place where governance issues primarily reside. It is also proposed that it become the Faith and Order Reference Group. Technically, as a group with a number of practicing lawyers on it, it cannot offer formal 'advice' in the legal sense, as individuals are not indemnified to do so. It is a forum for pooling expertise, and one to which matters primarily are referred, rather than initiating work (as set out in its terms of reference). Therefore, it is proposed that it become a reference group – so that the name cannot give rise to any misunderstanding that it offers formal legal advice.