

Paper J1

Report to General Assembly 2025

Nominations Committee

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Victoria Blunt victoria.blunt@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	<p>Resolution 33 General Assembly appoints members of committees and representatives of the Church, as set out in paragraph 5 of this report, subject to the adoptions and corrections contained in supplementary papers to Assembly.</p> <p>Resolution 34 General Assembly resolves to dissolve the Panel for General Assembly Appointments from the close of General Assembly November 2025.</p> <p>Resolution 35 General Assembly instructs the Nominations Committee to recruit a new Panel for General Assembly Appointments, in line with the constitution set out in the Ministries Paper H2 (General Assembly Book of Reports 2024).</p>

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	To appoint members of various committees and groups and external appointments, to note changes that have been implemented since General Assembly 2024 and to thank people standing down from service.
Main points	As above.
Previous relevant documents	Paper H10, General Assembly 2024 Paper J1, General Assembly 2024.
Consultation has taken place with...	Wide consultation with staff and officers of General Assembly, Convenors of Assembly Committees, Synod Moderators and Clerks and the committees and groups where appointments are required.

Summary of impact

Financial	None.
External (eg ecumenical)	Recruitment of members to ecumenical bodies.

Report to General Assembly 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The committee brings to General Assembly for appointment the names of people to serve as Assembly Officers, as convenors and secretaries of Assembly committees, or as members of those committees, for set periods. It also brings names of people to serve on various Panels and to represent the United Reformed Church on other bodies.

2. Work since General Assembly 2024

- 2.1 As mandated by General Assembly 2024, the new Nominations Committee has been developing the detailed framework for a new safer recruitment process for members of Assembly level committees.
- 2.2 In the new process, the responsibility for seeking names for vacancies lies with individual committees, who are required to advertise vacancies and use job descriptions and person specifications. Committees are also tasked with seeking references and conducting safer recruitment conversations as part of the discernment process.
- 2.3 To support the process, the Nominations Committee has produced a comprehensive recruitment pack. It includes step-by-step guidance on the process, along with template advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications, as well as guidance on undertaking safer recruitment conversations, reference request templates and template letters to volunteers. This pack was made available in February 2025 and can be accessed at: **www.urc.org.uk/general-assembly-assembly-executive-assembly-committees/nominations-committee/nominations-volunteer-recruitment-pack/**. A webinar was also held in January 2025 to share the process with Committee Convenors, secretaries and Synod Moderators.
- 2.4 The role of the Nominations Committee is to support committees to undertake this process and to ensure that the process is followed. Once completed, the Nominations Committee brings the proposed names forward for appointment by General Assembly or Assembly Executive.
- 2.5 The process has already been used by a number of committees, and there are good news stories to be shared. As a result of advertising, new volunteers have come forward, including individuals who have not previously served at Assembly level and who reflect some of the diversity within the United Reformed Church.
- 2.6 Whilst the impact of the new safer recruitment process so far appears positive, the Nominations Committee recognises that this represents a significant culture shift for the denomination and for individual committees, and so remains committed to offering support and guidance as committees navigate and implement this new approach.
- 2.7 The Nominations Committee is also aware that the process will evolve and be refined over time as experience is gained and feedback is received.
- 2.8 Work is currently underway to provide clear guidance for committees on data protection and the retention of documentation associated with the safer recruitment process, in line with GDPR requirements.

- 2.9 The Nominations Committee is also looking at ways to support committees to identify the levels of diversity within their membership and to consider how best to address under-representation, such as developing advertising strategies aimed at encouraging applications from different demographic groups.

3. **Thanks to all who serve on Assembly Committees**

- 3.1 The Church remains fortunate to have numerous dedicated members who generously contribute their time and talents to serve on its committees, panels, and working groups, as well as by representing the Church on outside bodies. The Nominations Committee wishes to express its sincere appreciation for all who offer their service in these roles and thanks those people who have either stood down or whose terms have come to an end.

4. **Those to be appointed or re-appointed**

- 4.1 Those agreeing to be appointed for the first time or for a further term:

<i>Committee/group</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Years</i>	
Pensions Trust	Mr Willie Duncan	Member	2025-2029	New appointment
Retired Ministers Pension Trust	Mrs Faith Paulding	Director	2025-2027	Extension of term of service due to buy-in/buy out
	Mr Vaughan Griffiths	Honorary Assistant Treasurer	2025-2027	Extension of term
Interfaith Enabling Group	The Revd Dr Mark Godin	Member	2024-2028	Extension of term that should have been recorded at GA 2024
Interfaith Enabling Group	The Revd Dr Graham Adams	Member	2024-2028	Extension of term that should have been recorded at GA 2024
Interfaith Enabling Group	Miss Victoria Turner	Member	2025-2029	Extension of term
Business Committee	Ms Hilda Darkwah	Member	2025-2029	New appointment

5. **Membership of committees, panels and working groups, and representatives to other bodies**

- 5.1 In the interests of clarity and brevity, this report includes only the changes to the membership of committees, panels, and working groups. A full list of current membership will be published in the Record of Assembly and is available on request from the Nominations Committee at nominations@urc.org.uk.

6. **Panel for General Assembly Appointments**

- 6.1 Ministries' Paper H10 from General Assembly 2024 recommended that the pool from which people are drawn to serve on nominating panels for General Assembly Appointments be significantly reduced, to a team of eight people who commit to undergoing training and making themselves available to serve on the majority of such panels for a five-year period. It also recommended that the pool

for nominating panels would continue to be recruited by the Nominations Committee using appropriate safer recruitment processes.

- 6.2 Whilst General Assembly 2024 resolved to adopt Annexes 2 and 3 of Paper H10 in Resolutions 30 and 31 – setting out the requirements for nominating panels and the process for appointing Synod Moderators and Assembly Appointed Posts – it did not pass a resolution specifically addressing the composition of the pool from which panel members are drawn.
- 6.3 The Nominations Committee expresses its sincere gratitude to all who have served on the Panel for General Assembly Appointments to date.
- 6.4 To implement the recommendations contained in the Ministries report to General Assembly 2024, the Nominations Committee recommends that the existing Panel for General Assembly Appointments be formally dissolved, and that a new panel be nominated in accordance with the revised structure and safer recruitment practices. Those currently serving on the panel will be invited to apply to continue their service within the new framework.
- 6.5 To ensure continuity, the Nominations Committee recommends that General Assembly dissolves the existing Panel effective from the November 2025 meeting of General Assembly. This gives the Nominations Committee time to recruit a new Panel and present names to the November 2025 meeting of General Assembly for appointment.