

**THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**  
**MINUTE OF ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE MEETING**  
**HELD ONLINE TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

Present

Moderator	Ms Catriona Wheeler
Moderator Elect	The Revd Neil Thorogood
Clerk	The Revd Sarah Moore
General Secretary	The Revd Dr John Bradbury
DGS Faith in Action	The Revd Jenny Mills
DGS Ministries	The Revd Nicola Furley-Smith
Chief Operating Officer	Mrs Victoria James
Treasurer	Mr Alan Yates
Deputy Treasurer	Mr Vaughan Griffiths

URC Youth

Moderator	Miss Maya Withall
Representative	Miss Lizzie Crossley

Assembly Standing Committee Convenors

Business	Mrs Irish Sirmons
Faith in Action	Ms Sara Lane Cawte
Ministries	The Revd Mary Thomas
Nominations	Ms Victoria Blunt
Resources	The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins
Worship, Faith and Order	The Revd Dr Robert Pope

Synod Representatives

Northern: The Revd Kim Money, Mr Matthew Hall, Ms Lis McAvoy

North Western: The Revd Clare Downing, Mr Tim Hopley,

Mersey: The Revds Geoff Felton and Ruth Wilson, Mrs Lorna Griffiths, Mrs Pat Cansfield

Yorkshire: The Revds Jamie Kissack and Simon Cross, Mr Tim Crossley, Mr John Eveleigh

East Midlands: The Revd Geoffrey Clarke, Dr Graham Jennings, Mr David Greatorex, Mrs Barbara Moses

West Midlands: The Revds Steven Faber and Elaine Huthchinson, Mrs Rachel Wakeman, Mr Steve Powell

Eastern: The Revds Lythan Nevard, David Coaker and Anne Sardeson, Mr Richard Lewney

South Western: The Revds David Downing and Richard Gray, Mrs Rachel Leach, Dr Ian Harrison

Wessex: Miss Karen Bell, Mr Clive Snaeshell, The Revds Dr Sarah Hall and Dr Romilly Micklem

Thames North: The Revds George Watt and Sujeeth Kumar, Ms Nneoma Chima, Mr Peter Knowles

Southern: The Revds Russell Furley-Smith and Dr Charisa Hunter-Crump, Miss Pamela Tolhurst

Wales : The Revd David Salisbury, Ms Megan Price

Scotland; The Revds Lindsey Sanderson and Susan Henderson, Mr Douglas Maxwell

Ecumenical Observer-Church of England The Revd Sarah Gower

In attendance

Chaplain The Revd Samantha Sheehan

Minutes Secretary Ms Morag McLintock

Law and Polity Ms Morag McLintock

Head of Legal Services Mr Andrew Middleton

Safeguarding Mrs Sharon Barr

Communications Officer Mrs Anne-Marie Nye

Communications Officer Mr Laurence Wearing

Public Issues Mr Roo Stewart

Finance Mrs Vasuki Sivakumar

Technical Support Mr Matt Collins

Children & Youth Work and Intergenerational Discipleship Dr Sam Richards

## **Welcome**

The Moderator, Ms Catriona Wheeler, constituted the meeting, and invited the

Revd Samantha Sheehan to lead opening worship

All were welcomed to the meeting and “housekeeping” matters were presented.

## **En Bloc**

The Moderator advised the meeting that no matters had been removed from en bloc.

Assembly Executive agreed the resolutions contained in the following papers

-Paper B1 **Terms of Reference for the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging** brought by Sub-Committee Faith in Action Committee

-Paper H1 **Reinstatement to the Roll Policy** submitted by the Ministries Committee

-Paper H2 **Removal from the Roll of Ministers following a disciplinary case** brought by the Ministries Committee

-Paper J1 **Nominations to Committees and groups** brought by the Nominations Committee

And voted unanimously in favour of

## **Resolution 1**

**Assembly Executive adopts the terms of reference for the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Sub Committee.**

## **Resources Committee**

The Revd Dr Michael Hopkins, Convenor of the Resources Committee, formally introduced Paper G1 and the 2 resolutions contained therein. Mr Alan Yates, the Honorary Treasurer, spoke to the proposals. He thanked Synods, Trusts, and the Senior Leadership Team for their generous contributions and management of resources. This has enabled the deficit to be significantly smaller than it would otherwise have been. It was, however, emphasised that the denomination is still in a state of financial flux and that the Budget deficit reduction plan has not worked as expected and will not eliminate the deficit. Ongoing generosity is still required. It was acknowledged that the Extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly held in November 2025 initiated a welcomed wide review and consultation to consider the future of the Ministry and Mission Fund in a strategic way.

## **Resolution 2**

### **Assembly Executive adopts the M&M budget for 2026.**

Following a question for clarification, the Treasurer advised that the projected deficit for 2025 is currently estimated to be around £900,000.

Concern was expressed that the deficit reduction appeared to rely on Synods and Trusts continuing with their generosity. It was also highlighted that in the secular world if income was insufficient costs required to be cut to balance the budget even when unpalatable. It was stressed that this should ultimately apply to the denomination. The meeting was advised that whilst some further costs savings had been identified and will be progressed these will not save enough to resolve the deficit.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

## **Resolution 3**

### **Assembly Executive notes the target figures for 2027 and 2028**

It was confirmed that any hypothetical financial return after the buy out of the Ministers Pension Fund had not been factored into the target figures. Concern was expressed that any “windfalls” should be used for specific purposes rather than plugging a deficit on day-to-day expenditure. This was noted.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

The convener of the Business Committee, Mrs Irish Sirmons, led the meeting in prayer.

The Moderator adjourned the meeting to meet again in February 2026 at The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire, or such other time and place as may be necessary,

MMM

25<sup>th</sup> November 2025