

Ministers Support and Wellbeing Committee Member

Purpose of the Role

The Ministers Support and Wellbeing Committee exists to support the flourishing, wellbeing and sustainability of ministers within the United Reformed Church.

Acting on behalf of the denomination, the Committee advises on ministerial wellbeing, conditions of service, stipend and allowance recommendations, welfare provision and support for ministers facing exceptional circumstances. It seeks to ensure that ministers receive appropriate care, support and encouragement throughout their ministry and that denominational policies and practices promote healthy and sustainable ministry.

The Committee combines pastoral concern with responsible governance, recognising both the needs of individual ministers and the wider stewardship responsibilities of the Church.

Accountability

The Committee reports to the Ministries Committee and works closely with:

- the Deputy General Secretary (Ministries);
- Synod Moderators;
- Resources Committee;
- Assembly Executive;
- the Officers of General Assembly;
- the Pensions Committee.

Main Responsibilities

Members share collective responsibility for the Committee's work in the following areas:

a) Ministerial Wellbeing and Ill Health

- Considering matters relating to the wellbeing and welfare of ministers.
- Making decisions regarding stipend arrangements for ministers who are unable to work due to prolonged ill health.
- Receiving reports relating to pension matters and ill-health retirement.
- Advising on best practice in relation to ministerial wellbeing and support.

b) Conditions of Service

- Recommending annual stipend revisions and associated allowances to the Resources Committee.
- Reviewing and advising on ministerial conditions of service and related policies.
- Considering circumstances where exceptions to established policies or procedures may be appropriate.
- Advising on emerging issues affecting ministers and ministry.

c) Special Cases and Welfare Support

- Considering referrals concerning ministers who may require exceptional support.
- Exploring ways in which ministers may be enabled to continue serving where appropriate.

- Considering requests for financial support, retraining, counselling, therapy or other assistance.
- Overseeing the administration of welfare grants and related support funds.
- Making recommendations concerning the use of welfare resources entrusted to the Committee.

d) Retired Ministers' Benevolent Fund

- Considering applications from retired ministers experiencing hardship.
- Assessing applications against agreed eligibility criteria.
- Making discretionary awards and reviewing awards annually.
- Ensuring that the Fund is administered fairly, consistently and compassionately.
- Governance and Risk
- Ensuring that decisions are consistent with denominational policy and good governance.
- Reviewing risks associated with the Committee's responsibilities.
- Contributing to the development and review of policies relating to ministerial wellbeing and support.

e) **Nature of the Role**

The Committee frequently deals with highly personal and sensitive matters relating to health, finances, family circumstances, vocation and wellbeing.

Members are therefore expected to:

- exercise sound judgement and careful discernment;
- maintain absolute confidentiality;
- balance compassion with fairness and accountability;
- consider both individual circumstances and wider denominational responsibilities;
- make decisions based on evidence, policy and pastoral wisdom;
- respect the dignity and privacy of those whose situations are being considered;
- support collective decisions once they have been reached.

Members should recognise that the Committee's role is not simply administrative. It is a ministry of care exercised on behalf of the whole Church, seeking to embody Christ's compassion while ensuring that resources and policies are administered responsibly and consistently.

Person Specification

a) **Essential**

- Commitment to the Christian faith and the mission of the United Reformed Church.
- Ability to exercise sound judgement in complex situations.
- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality.
- Strong listening and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to approach sensitive matters with compassion and empathy.
- Commitment to fairness, integrity and accountability.

- Ability to work collaboratively within a conciliar church structure.
- Willingness to engage with policy, governance and financial considerations.

b) Desirable

- Experience of pastoral ministry or pastoral care.
- Experience in human resources, healthcare, occupational health or wellbeing.
- Experience in counselling, social work or welfare support.
- Experience in finance, pensions, governance or charity trusteeship.
- Understanding of ministerial life and the challenges associated with ministry.
- Knowledge of the structures and polity of the United Reformed Church.

c) Time Commitment

Members are expected to:

- attend four scheduled meetings each year;
- participate in additional meetings where required;
- read and prepare papers in advance of meetings;
- engage in occasional consultation between meetings where urgent matters arise.

d) Confidentiality

Because the Committee regularly considers personal, financial and health-related information, all members are required to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality. Information received through the Committee must not be shared beyond those who have a legitimate need to know.

e) Values

Members are expected to embody the values of the United Reformed Church by demonstrating compassion, wisdom, integrity, justice, discretion and a commitment to the flourishing of those called to serve God's Church.