

2. First Report of the Conference Business Committee

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1. Membership of the Conference Business Committee

The Conference Business Committee for 2017 comprises Deacon Julie Hudson, Dr Stephen Leah, the Revd Susan Levitt, Mrs Anna Malnutt, Ms Virtue Ryan, the Revd Thomas J Osborne and Mr David Walton (Chair). Deacon Julie Hudson and Ms Virtue Ryan have been appointed to serve the Business Committee for the 2017 Conference by the Methodist Council under the provisions of Standing Order 136(1C).

2. Meetings and reports

- The Business Committee will meet on Saturday 24 June at the close of business, following the Scrutineers' briefing.
- The Scrutineers are asked to meet for a briefing on Saturday 24 June immediately at the close of business.
- The Business Committee will report each day in the Order Paper. It will indicate any variations to the outline schedule printed in the Agenda.

3. Length of speeches

It is recommended that presenters of business have four minutes and speakers three minutes. In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the President and Vice-President, these allocations may be changed.

4. Use of time

4.1 Members of the Conference will want to ensure that their time is spent wisely and effectively. To this end, the Business Committee will endeavour to ensure that as far as possible, business follows the schedule published. As well as those who visit the Conference for particular debates, increasing numbers of people watch its proceedings on the internet, especially items on specific matters of interest, and rely on the published schedule being observed. Therefore, without wishing to deny opportunity to speak or to curtail debate unhelpfully, the Business Committee strongly urges members of the Conference to maintain the discipline of keeping to its schedule. It is unfair to have to foreshorten business scheduled for later in the week because earlier items have overrun.

4.2 With this in mind, the Business Committee asks that:

- speeches are not made unnecessarily when it is evident that the outcome is clear;
- representatives refrain from making speeches or comments that have already been made and from repeating what has been said and heard;
- the Conference focuses on reaching decisions with the minimum necessary debate that does the subject justice.

4.3 The Committee asks members of the Conference to bear in mind that web streaming enables a wider audience for Conference debates; representatives are therefore asked to consider their contributions to debates in the light of that. The Committee asks representatives not to

address directly those watching proceedings via the internet, in the same way that those watching in the public gallery would not be addressed. This helps to remind members of the Conference of the particular responsibilities that they carry as voting members.

5. Notices of Motion

Standing Order 132 reads as follows:

132 Notices of Motion. (1) Subject to Standing Order 131(4) any two members may upon notice of motion complying with this Standing Order bring before the Conference any lawful resolution within the competence of the Conference.

(1A) Every notice of motion shall be handed to the Secretary in written form and signed by the following persons:

- (i) where the proposal is to amend a resolution and those responsible for presenting that business to the Conference are prepared to accept it, the proposer and seconder of the motion;
- (ii) where such a proposal to amend is not accepted by those responsible, the proposer and seconder and four other persons;
- (iii) in all other cases, the proposer and seconder and eight other persons.

(2) Only on matters of urgency, so judged by the President after consultation with the Vice-President, shall notices of motion in the Representative Session be accepted after 4.30 pm on the third day of the session, except that a notice of motion proposing to amend a resolution circulated or materially altered on or after the first day of the session shall be accepted if lodged before the close of business on the day before the resolution is to be dealt with.

- 5.1 The 2013 Conference agreed that it should be mandatory for proposers of Notices of Motion to complete a 'Submission of a Notice of Motion' form, including information about budgetary implications. The form is available for download from the website, and from the Conference Office (email conferenceoffice@methodistchurch.org.uk) prior to the Conference or the Help Desk at the Conference.
- 5.2 In order that Notices of Motion which are unrelated to existing Agenda business can be dealt with effectively and efficiently by the Conference, proposers are requested to ensure that they include sufficient but succinct information to ensure that all Conference members may understand what is being proposed and why. This will enable members to reflect on the merit of these Notices of Motion beforehand and speakers to focus on key issues.
- 5.3 In enabling Conference members to submit Notices of Motion related to business scheduled for the afternoon and evening of Saturday 24 June, the Business Committee requests that these be submitted either (1) by post to Jane Bates at Methodist Church House to arrive not later than Thursday 22 June or (2) by email to batesj@methodistchurch.org.uk to arrive not later than Friday 23 June at 2.00pm. The Committee has determined that it will only require the names (which will be printed on the Order Paper) of a proposer and a seconder to be supplied at this stage: the four further signatories, should the Notice of Motion be resisted by the proposer of the resolution (as per SO 132(1A)(ii)), may therefore be acquired after arrival at the Conference on Saturday 24 June but must be handed to the Record Office by 1.00pm on that day.
- 5.4 Further, for the Business Committee to prepare the business to be conducted on Monday 26 June, members of the Conference who wish to submit Notices of Motion relating to the business to be taken on Monday, or amended replies to any Memorials to be taken with it, are requested to hand them to the Record Office by 12.30pm on Sunday 25 June.
- 5.5 Similarly, Notices of Motion relating to items of business to be taken on Tuesday 27 June should be submitted by 12.30pm on Monday. This, and the deadlines in the previous

paragraphs, will enable the Business Committee to prepare full and informed Order Papers for the smooth transaction of business.

5.6 Having set out in the preceding paragraphs the proposed timings for Notices of Motion in general, the Business Committee wishes to make provision for dealing with any which impact the connexional budget and proposes a specific timetable to that end. Its purpose is to ensure that the Conference is able to take decisions about the budget when all the relevant information is to hand and to avoid the pitfall of making choices or judgements based on partial information. It is therefore recommended that:

- The budget will be formally presented and debated on Monday morning.
- Any Notices of Motion proposing amendments to the budget shall be submitted by 12.30pm on Monday through the usual channels.
- The Conference Financial Committee will consider the implications of the proposed amendments at the close of Monday's session and present a report in Tuesday's Order Paper.
- The Conference will then consider Notices of Motion and memorials which impact the budget on Tuesday morning.
- The budget will then be formally confirmed and adopted on Thursday morning.

In summary, the deadlines for submitting Notices of Motion are as follows:

Relating to	Submit by
Saturday's business	Friday 2.00pm
Monday's business	Sunday 12.30pm
Tuesday's business	Monday 12.30pm
Wednesday/Thursday's business	Monday 4.30pm
Unrelated to business	Monday 4.30pm

5.7 Those proposing a Notice of Motion should consult with those presenting the business to ascertain whether the Notice of Motion will be accepted or resisted. Lists of those responsible for presenting each item of business are available from the Record Office or the Chair of the Business Committee.

5.8 The 2011 Conference approved the principle of enabling those Notices of Motion that do not relate to business already in the Agenda to be prioritised, by means of a ballot, should time not permit all such Notices of Motion to be considered. Should such a ballot be required, it will be held on Tuesday 27 June. Any such Notices of Motion which are not considered during the Conference will be dealt with as in the next paragraph.

5.9 The Business Committee may recommend that a particular Notice of Motion is not considered by the Conference but is referred to the Methodist Council in the coming year. The Council is required to report back to the following Conference its judgement on that Notice of Motion.

5.10 In order for the Business Committee to test, on the floor of the Conference, its own judgements about which Notices of Motion to refer to the Council without debate, on Wednesday 28 June the Chair of the Business Committee will move that the Conference adopts that section of the Committee's report (which will be printed on the day's Order Paper) which lists those Notices of Motion recommended to be referred to the Council. The Conference will be able to amend the list without the need of a written Notice of Motion.

6. Memorials

It is anticipated that all memorials will be dealt with during the Conference, ie taken with existing business to which they relate, debated separately or the replies adopted *en bloc*, based on the recommendations of the Memorials Committee.

7. Nominations

All nominees for President-Designate, Vice-President-Designate and Conference-elected representatives are to be photographed and their details displayed on a screen. The arrangements for this will be notified on Saturday's Order Paper at the Conference.

Nominations for designation of **President and Vice-President of the Conference** of 2018 must be placed in ballot boxes by **5.30pm on Monday 26 June**. They will be displayed on Tuesday; voting will close at 6.00pm on Tuesday; the results will be announced on Wednesday morning.

Nominations for **Conference-elected representatives**: you are asked to follow **strictly** the instructions on the nomination form. Please ensure that you seek the consent of persons nominated and complete the forms fully and clearly for display. Nomination forms must be placed in the ballot boxes by **2.00pm on Tuesday 27 June**; voting will close at 5.00pm on Wednesday; the results will be announced on Thursday morning.

This year, of the three Conference-elected representatives to serve from 2018 to 2020, two will be presbyteral and one will be lay, thus fulfilling SO 103(2A).

Nominations for **Conference Business Committee members**: you are asked to follow **strictly** the instructions on the nomination form. Please ensure that you seek the consent of persons nominated and complete the forms fully and clearly for display. The election timetable will be the same as for Conference-elected representatives, as above. It should be noted that election to the Business Committee does not carry a right to membership of succeeding Conferences.

This year, four Business Committee members, two lay persons and two ministers, are required to be elected and may serve for the three years 2018-2020.

In summary, the deadlines for nominations and elections are as follows:

Election	Nominations close	Voting closes
President of the Conference	Monday 5.30pm	Tuesday 6.00pm
Vice-President of the Conference	Monday 5.30pm	Tuesday 6.00pm
Conference-elected representatives	Tuesday 2.00pm	Wednesday 5.00pm
Conference Business Committee: Representative Session	Tuesday 2.00pm	Wednesday 5.00pm

8. Provisional legislation

Under Standing Order 122, any two members, by Notice of Motion, may propose that an item agreed by the Conference be referred to the Synods as a **provisional resolution** before being proposed for final adoption by the Conference next year.

9. Letter-writing

Any member of the Conference requesting that a letter be sent on behalf of the Conference should note the following criteria and procedure:

- a. The Conference writes automatically to those who have served in ordained ministry for 70 or more years, and those celebrating the fiftieth or sixtieth anniversaries of their ordinations; their names to be prepared in advance.
- b. The Conference will write, for a specific reason, to those who have a direct link with the Conference, or represent the World Church, or have an ecumenical relationship with the Methodist Church, or have a claim to achievements that are outstanding in the life of the Church or on its behalf.
- c. The letter-writer, with consultation as necessary, will be the appropriate person to give guidance to Conference members as to whether a proposed letter is within the criteria.
- d. Requests for letters to be sent must be submitted on a standard form, giving all the required details, to the letter-writer who shall advise of acceptance or otherwise. The letter-writer will have a seat at an outside end of the front row in the Conference hall and standard forms are available there.
- e. The recipients of letters will be listed in the Daily Record for the information of the Conference.

10. *En bloc* items

The Business Committee proposes that the items of business listed below be voted *en bloc*. Under the terms of SO 134A, if Notices of Motion are received about items in the *en bloc* list those items will automatically be removed from the list. In addition, by giving notice to the Assistant Secretary of the Conference, any six members of the Conference may, without proposing an amendment, require that an item be removed from the list and debated.

The preliminary list of proposed *en bloc* business is as follows:

The Trustees for the Bailiwick of Guernsey Methodist Church Purposes
The Trustees for Jersey Methodist Church Purposes
Methodist Ministers' Housing Society
All We Can: Methodist Relief and Development
Forces Board
Methodist Homes
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Westminster College Oxford Trust
Methodist Diaconal Order General Report
Managing Trustees of Central Hall Westminster
Wesley House
New Room Bristol
Relief and Extension Fund for Methodism in Scotland
Central Finance Board
Referred Memorials and Notices of Motion
Stationing Committee

*****RESOLUTION**

2/1. The Conference adopted the Report of the Business Committee.