

GENERAL COUNCIL

SECTION 3

Thursday Evening – 8pm

SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. The Support Services Committee met and considered report from its respective Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Property and Creative Production Panels. The panel with the most business is the Finance Panel, but this report summarises the key issues considered by each them.

FINANCE PANEL

2. At its October meeting, the committee agreed the recommendations from the Finance Panel relating to assessments for 2019. In determining the appropriate assessment rates, consideration was given to the budgets for the respective funds, the balances in those funds and the impact on congregations of any changes. It was agreed that the assessment rates should continue at the same aggregate level as 2018, although there were some variations in individual funds, as shown in Appendix 1.
3. The committee considered the preliminary results of the actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 31 December 2017, which showed that the scheme was in a small surplus, but that the ongoing funding rate had increased. It was noted that the preliminary results had not made provision for an annual pension increase in respect of pre-1997 service for ministers which is at the discretion of the scheme trustees. The scheme trustees had subsequently asked the actuary to make provision for an ongoing annual increase of 1% at a cost of £2.9m. The impact of the increase in the scheme's normal retirement age from 65 to 66 for service accrued after October 2020 will be to reduce the employer contribution from 26.5% to 25.3% at that time.
4. The scheme actuary has advised the scheme trustees that approximately £1m of surplus would be used up if the employer contribution rate remained at the current rate of 24% rather than increasing to the required rate of 26.5%. Following discussion, the committee agreed that the scheme trustees should be informed that the committee, in their capacity as scheme employer, would be prepared to agree an employer funding rate of 24% with members continuing to contribute

7% and that this be funded by the using part of the valuation surplus. The scheme trustees agreed to this request. The committee therefore agreed that the assessment rate for 2019 for the PCI Pension Fund should remain at 24.0%.

5. It was noted that only two responses had been received to the consultation on the increase in the pension scheme retirement age. The committee agreed that the proposed change to increase the scheme retirement age to 66 in respect of service accrued from October 2020 be implemented.
6. The committee reviewed the levels of the sterling and euro basic ministerial minimum stipend having received recommendations from its Finance Panel. As the HR panel had not met, there was no recommendation relating to the annual salary review from that panel, and the rates were therefore considered by the committee. The committee agreed that the sterling and euro basic ministerial minimum stipends be increased by 2.0% and 1.0% respectively, as shown in Appendix 2. It was also agreed that the staff salaries scales be increased on the same basis (2% in NI and 1% in RoI) (Appendix 4)
7. A tender competition for the provision of insurance brokerage and placement services from 31 December 2018 was held in the autumn of 2018. After assessing a number of applications, A.J. Gallagher were re-appointed as insurance brokers to PCI for a further three years.
8. The panel has been considering, in the context of GDPR, the requirement in the Code that a list of contributors to FWO be prepared. The committee supported the view of the panel reached at its meeting last October that “disclosure should be by number , but that members can give consent to have their contributions disclosed by name.”
9. The committee noted that the Charity Commission NI web site indicates that there were 12 congregations in Northern Ireland in default and that 21 had submitted their returns late. Whilst noting these, the committee was pleased with the overall responses by congregations and recognised the considerable work required by them, with the majority having met the legislative requirements. However, a limited review of returns made indicates that some congregations may not be completing accounts and returns in line with the guidance issued. In particular, there appears to be confusion as to the preparation of aspects of receipts and payments accounts and the associated bank balances. Further guidance on this matter was issued to congregations at the start of 2019. The committee also confirmed the position that, for accounts prepared on a receipts and payments basis, the bank balance should continue to be adjusted for outstanding cheques and lodgements.
10. At its meeting in February 2019, The committee approved the accounts for the assessment funds (other than the Students’ Bursary Fund, which falls to the Council for Training in Ministry) for the year ended 31 December 2018, and also the accounts for the Finance, IT, HR, and Payroll Departments and also the General Secretary’s Department. The financial position for each of the funds was considered to be satisfactory

and there were no significant issues to highlight. The committee also agreed the budgets for Support Services and the Incidental Fund for 2019 (Appendix 3).

11. The committee discussed the mileage rates for the General Assembly. It was agreed that the rate for Northern Ireland would continue at 15p per mile for 2019. However, the committee decided that a kilometre rate be introduced, from 1 July 2019, for members travelling from the Republic, and attending councils and committees, at 14 cent per kilometre (equivalent to previous rate of 22 cent per mile).
12. The panel reviewed the annual financial report (including the Trustee's report) in detail and discussed specific items, including major variances from 2017. The panel noted that there was again a deficit arising from normal charitable activities of £515,817 (2018 – deficit of £965,771). After making a number of reporting adjustments, mainly to reflect pensions but also losses on investment assets, the accounts show a deficit for the year of £10,649,819. Therefore during 2018, the overall fund balances of the church decreased from £59,504,860 to £48,855,041. The report and accounts were approved by the General Council at its meeting in April.
13. Since the last Assembly, the following were granted leave to retire at or over the age of 65; the Rev D. McIlwaine (Newington); Rev D.W. Brice (Glengormley); Rev R.L. Craig (Kilfennan); Rev B. McMillan (Ballymartin); Rev R.J. Stevenson (Carrowdore & Ballyfrenis); Rev A.C. Wilson (Ballykelly); Rev K. Nelson (St Andrew's, Belfast) ; Rev R.D. Maxwell (Castlewellan and Leitrim); Rev J. McCaughan (First Dunboe) and Rev I. McDonald (New Mossley).
14. In accordance with the requirements of the Code, the committee agreed that Revs D.A. Murphy (Cunningham Memorial), T.J. Laverty (Portstewart), TDW Johnston (Hamilton Road, Bangor) and J.G. Johnston (Carnlough, Cushendall and Newtowncrommelin) be granted permission to retire before their 65th birthdays on the basis that their benefits from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Pension Scheme (2009) are actuarially reduced to reflect early retirement.

HR PANEL

15. The panel has not had a convener throughout 2018. The panel was not able to meet in September and the committee considered the annual salary review, as noted above. The panel met in February and the committee agreed to a recommendation from the panel to introduce a scheme offering loans to staff for the payment of annual travel costs. Two new policies – a social media policy and a public transport loans policy – were approved.
16. A procurement process has commenced for the provision, to congregations, of both human resources and health and safety advice (currently provided by Peninsula). Advertisements seeking tenders have

been placed and it is expected that the provider will be in position in early autumn.

PROPERTY PANEL

17. The committee was pleased to receive a report from the panel advising that the recent phase of refurbishment work on the ground floor of Assembly Buildings was complete. It offers much needed additional conference AND exhibition space and bespoke accommodation for the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland. The projected final account for both Assembly Buildings and PHSI will be £1,584,661 (inclusive of VAT AND fees) and this was within the set budget for the project. A new logo, along with branding, has been designed for the Conference Centre and additional signage put in place. The committee was pleased to hear that conference bookings in 2018 provided income of some £135,000 and there is considerable forward interest.
18. The visitor exhibition in the reception area of Assembly Buildings has been completed and was formally opened on Wednesday 27 March 2019 by the Deputy Lord Mayor

IT PANEL

19. The committee approved an updated ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which now covers new matters such as cloud technologies and GDPR. The committee recognises the concerns of the panel about the capacity of the IT department to undertake everything required and the consequent significant risks to the operation of PCI.
20. The General Council agreed to a recommendation from the committee that a task group be set up to consider the structure and resources of the IT Department and bring forward definitive proposals.

CREATIVE PRODUCTION PANEL

21. The Rev Alistair Bill was appointed as convener of the panel. The committee had a discussion about the role of CPD and, in particular, how it can best support the work of the various PCI Councils. General Council agreed that a task group be set up to consider how CPD can provide as efficient and effective service as possible to the other Councils.

DAVID THOMSON, Convener

NOTE: The customary Schedules of the Support Services Committee Report dealing with a summary of the presbyteries financial returns and the General Assembly's statistics and graphs, will be included with the 2019 Minutes of the General Assembly. This change is due to the new later submission date for part B of the annual statistical returns.

SUPPORT SERVICES

APPENDIX 1

2019 ASSESSMENT RATES AND ALLOCATIONS

The proposed rates of assessment for 2019 are ;

Assessment Band	Assessable Income (£/€)		Assessment Rate
	From	To	
1	0	10,999	0.00%
2	11,000	64,999	14.50%
3	65,000	129,999	10.75%
4	130,000	194,999	7.25%
5	195,000	259,999	3.50%
6	260,000	and above	0.00%

(Note: the above is unchanged from 2018)

It is proposed that amounts collected through the assessment system are allocated on the following percentages

Assessment Fund	Projected Allocation for 2019 £	Projected Allocation for 2019 %	Projected Allocation for 2018	Actual Allocation for 2018 %
Central Ministry Fund	£1,800,000	41.20%	£1,810,700	41.29%
Retired Ministers Fund	£425,000	9.73%	£427,600	9.75%
Widows of Ministers Fund	£400,000	9.15%	402,100	9.17%
Prolonged Disability Fund	£100,000	2.29%	77,200	1.72%
Incidental Fund	£825,000	18.88%	754,200	17.20%
Church House Repairs Fund	£525,000	12.01%	528,000	12.04%
Special Assembly	–	–	–	–
Ministerial Development Fund	£130,000	2.97%	127,400	2.87%
Sick Supply Fund	£15,000	0.34%	10,100	0.23%
Students Bursary Fund	£150,000	3.43%	251,300	5.73%
TOTAL	£4,370,000	100.00%	4,388,600	100.00%

It is also proposed that the assessment rate for 2019 for the PCI Pension Fund should remain at 24.0%.

SUPPORT SERVICES

APPENDIX 2

2019 RATES AND ALLOWANCES

1. Basic Ministerial and Appropriate Ministerial Minimum

	Northern Ireland		Republic of Ireland	
	2019 £	2018 £	2019 €	2018 €
Basic Ministerial Minimum	26,695	26,172	39,953	39,557
After 1 year's service	26,962	26,434	40,353	39,953
After 2 years' service	27,229	26,696	40,753	40,349
After 3 years' service	27,496	26,958	41,153	40,745
After 4 years' service	27,763	27,220	41,553	41,141
After 5 years' service	28,030	27,482	41,953	41,537
After 6 years' service	28,297	27,744	42,353	41,933
After 7 years' service	28,564	28,006	42,753	42,329
After 8 years' service	28,831	28,268	43,153	42,725
After 9 years' service	29,098	28,530	43,553	43,121
After 10 years' service	29,365	28,792	43,953	43,517
After 11 years' service	29,632	29,054	44,353	43,913
After 12 years' service	29,899	29,316	44,753	44,309
After 13 years' service	30,166	29,578	45,153	44,705
After 14 years' service	30,433	29,840	45,553	45,101
After 15 years' service	30,700	30,102	45,953	45,497
After 16 years' service	30,967	30,364	46,353	45,893
After 17 years' service	31,234	30,626	46,753	46,289
After 18 years' service	31,501	30,888	47,153	46,685
After 19 years' service	31,768	31,150	47,553	47,081
After 20 years' service	32,035	31,412	47,953	47,477

2. Retired Ministers, Widows of Ministers, and Prolonged Disability Funds

Retired Ministers Fund: maximum retirement pension for 2019 is £12,737.

Widows of Ministers Fund: maximum retirement pension for 2019 is £7,005.

Prolonged Disability Fund: maximum grants for 2019 is £12,809.

3. Regium Donum

Regium Donum: £30 per month

4. Family Grants

The following grants are payable for the academic year 2018/19.

Grant Category	Northern Ireland	Republic of Ireland
1. Birth to final year Primary School	Child Allowance £375 PLUS Tuition Grant £Nil	Child Allowance €575 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €475
2. Secondary School	Child Allowance £550 PLUS Tuition Grant £Nil	Child Allowance €850 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €800
3. Further and Higher Education (claimable up to and including the academic year in which the student becomes 24)	Child Allowance £825 PLUS Tuition Grant up to £2,000	Child Allowance €1,250 PLUS Tuition Grant up to €4,000

SUPPORT SERVICES**APPENDIX 3****2019 INCIDENTAL FUND BUDGET**

	£	£
(i) General Council		
General Work	3,500	
Ad Hoc Task Groups	1,000	
GDPR Compliance	5,000	
Assembly Arrangements	20,000	
Church Relations Committee		
– Irish Council of Churches	22,167	
– Irish Inter-Church Meeting	10,918	
– Conference of European Churches	6,000	
– Comm Protestant Churches Europe	1,300	
– World Comm Reformed Churches	13,000	
– General Church Relations (expenses)	<u>5,000</u>	87,885
(iii) Council for Public Affairs		
General Work incl conferences	1,500	
Education Grants	<u>11,000</u>	12,500
(vi) Linkage Commission		
General Work	6,500	
Church Architecture Committee	<u>8,500</u>	15,000
Moderator expenses allowance		30,000
Printing for General Assembly		11,000
Postage, admin and other		12,500
Insurance		8,000
Travel General Assembly and Councils etc.		9,500
Allowance to Congregations re Conveners		9,500
Legal fees		40,000
Costs of General Secretary's Department		415,931
Support Services Charges		109,000
UK Borders Agency		500
Presbyterian Historical Society		23,000
Youth Link		10,750
Churches Legislation Advisory		2,575
Peninsula Employment Law and Health and Safety		<u>17,300</u>
Total		<u><u>814,941</u></u>

SUPPORT SERVICES

APPENDIX 4

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STAFFING

Sterling Salary Scales of posts in Assembly Buildings on 11 April 2019

EXECUTIVE POSTS

Scale 1 (£25,240–£29,987)

- IT Support Manager, (ITD)
- Presbyterian Women Support Officer (CCLW)
- Operations and Maintenance Officer (PSD)

Scale 2 (£28,504–£34,288)

- Property Support Officer (FSD)
- Children's Development Officer (CCLW)
- Creative Production Support Officer (including Editorial Responsibilities) (CPD)
- Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer (CLW)
- Finance Manager (FSD/MD)
- Press Officer (GSD)
- Payroll and Assessment Manager (FSD)
- Personnel Support Officer (PD)
- Youth Development Officer (CCLW)
- Discipleship Development Officer (CCLW)
- Mission Support Officer (Partnership) (MD)

Scale 3 (£31,892–£38,870)

- Finance Manager (FSD/CSW)
- Mission Support Officer (Member Care) (MD)
- Head of Creative Production (CPD)
- Programme Development Officer (CCLW)
- Public Affairs Officer (GSD)
- Training Development Officer (CCLW)
- Mission Development Officer (CCLW)
- Facilities and Conference Manager (PSD)

Scale 4 (£35,151–£43,915)

Senior Finance Manager (FSD)
 Head of Personnel (PD)
 IT Development and Support Manager (ITD)
 Head of Safeguarding (CSW)
 Head of Disability Services (CSW)
 Head of Older People Services (CSW)

Scale 6 (£41,747–£50,859)

Deputy Clerk of Assembly and Deputy General Secretary
 Secretary of the Council for Mission in Ireland
 Secretary of the Council for Social Witness
 Secretary of the Council for Global Mission
 Secretary of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness

Scale 7 (£47,367 – £60,928)

Clerk of Assembly and General Secretary
 Financial Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS**Scale 2 (£15,457–£17,877)**

Administrative Assistant (CCLW)
 Personnel Assistant (1.14 post) (PD)
 Administrative Assistant, PW (CLW)
 Administrative Assistant (Job Share) (MD)
 ‘Taking Care’ Administrator (CSW)
 Administrative Assistant (0.68 post) (Purchase Ledger) (FSD)
 Handyperson (PSD)
 Assistant Receptionist and Telephonist (PSD) (higher salary protected)

Scale 3 (£17,345 – £20,056)

Administrative Assistant (GSD)
 Administrative Assistant (Sales Ledger) (job share 0.4 post)
 Senior Personnel Assistant (Job Share) (PD)
 Senior Administrative Assistant (job share 2 x 0.6 post) (CSW)
 Senior Administrative Assistant (0.5 post) (MD)
 Senior Administrative Assistant, PW (CCLW)
 Reception and Information Officer (PSD)

Scale 4 (£19,653–£22,633)

Senior Administrative Assistant (Partnerships) (MD)
 Senior Administrative Assistant (Member Care) (MD)
 Payroll and Administrative Assistant (1.77 posts) (FSD)
 Senior Administrative Assistants (x 2 job share) (CCLW)
 Senior Communications Assistant (0.8 post) (CPD)
 Senior Administrative Assistant (0.6 post) (FSD)
 Senior Communications Assistant (Pub) (job share 2 x 0.6 post) (CPD)
 Senior Administrative Assistant (CCLW)

Scale 5 (£21,503–£24,825)

Senior Creative Production Technician (CPD)
 Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (MD)
 Assistant Accountant (FSD)
 Senior Personnel Administrator (PD)
 Personal Assistant and Senior Administrative Assistant (job share) (GSD)
 IT Support Officer x 2 (ITD)
 Financial and Administrative Assistant (0.74 post) (FSD)
 IT Support and Development Officer (0.8 post) (ITD)

Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,748–£27,147)

Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CCLW)
 Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (MD)
 Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (CSW)

Scale 5 (Enhanced pt 25-34) (£23,748 – £29,268)

Senior Personal Assistant and Office Supervisor (GSD)

Sterling Salary Scales of posts in other locations on 1 January 2019**EXECUTIVE POSTS****Scale 2 (£28,504–£34,288)**

College Registrar/Bursar, Union College
 College Librarian, Union College
 Minister/Ministry Co-ordinator, Kinghan Church (CSW)
 Chaplain in Residence (MD)
 University Chaplain UUJ, (MD)
 Lecturer in Historical Theology, Union College
 Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Union College
 Chaplain NI Prison Service and Coordinating Chaplain (Maghaberry)

Scale 4 (£35,151–£43,915)

Dean of Ministerial Studies & Development (Union College)

Scale 5 (£38,870–£47,367)

Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Director of Post-Graduate Studies (Union College)

Scale 6 (£41,747–£50,859)

Professor of New Testament Studies, Union College (higher salary protected)

Professor of Practical Theology, Union College (higher salary protected)

Professor of Systematic Theology, Union College

Scale 7 (£47,367–£60,928)

Principal of Union Theological College

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED POSTS**Scale 1 (£14,366 – £16,591)**

Clerical Officer (3 p/t) OPS (CSW)

Scale 2 (£15,457 – £17,877)

Clerical Officer – Carlisle House (part time) (CSW)

Clerical Officer, (4 FT & 1 PT) OPS (CSW)

Clerical Officer, Kinghan Church (part time) (CSW)

Custodian, Union College

Library Assistant (part time), Union College

Scale 3 (£17,345 – £20,056)

Marriage and Guidance Co-ordinator (CL&W)

Administrative Assistant (part time), Union College

Senior Clerical Officer (part time), Carlisle House (CSW)

Senior Secretary, Union College (0.6 post)

Senior Secretary, Union College

Scale 4 (£19,653 – £22,633)

Administrator, Derryvolgie (MD)

Senior Secretary, Union College

Deputy Librarian, Union College

Scale 5 (Enhanced) (£23,748 – £27,147)

Assistant Chaplain, QUB (MD)

Resident Manager, Tritonville Close (Euro Scale) (CSW)

UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

1. The committee met on the following dates:
 - (a) Thursday 7 February 2019 – to review the 2018 accounts, the response to the 2018 Appeal and to confirm grants to councils for that year.
 - (b) Friday, 29 March 2019 – to prepare for meetings with councils in relation to their 2020 grants requests.
 - (c) Monday, 1 April 2019 – to meet with councils and discuss their budget submissions and then to consider recommendations to the General Council for the 2020 Appeal.

The 2018 Appeal

2. The committee wishes to express its thanks to the congregations who supported the United Appeal in 2018. When contributions for the 2018 Appeal were closed at the end of January 2019, £3,291,684 (2018: £3,301,553) had been received from congregations towards the Appeal Target of £3,500,000, a shortfall of some £208,316. Once late contributions for the 2017 Appeal, trust fund income and donations were taken into account there remained an income shortfall of £14,896. This shortfall, and an excess expenditure over budget for promotion, was further mitigated by the return of £90,000 from the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. The committee notes that by the closing date of the Appeal 38 congregations had not contributed to it and that approx. 60% of the income for the 2018 appeal was received in December 2018 and January 2019. Since the closing date for the Appeal a further £173,220 (at the date of this report) has been received and this will be reflected in the 2019 accounts.
3. The committee was pleased to be able to pay in full the proposed allocation of grants of £3,665,000 to councils for 2018.
4. A number of years ago the United Appeal Board took the decision to introduce a phased reduction in the use of reserves but this was deferred pending the restructuring of boards to councils. Reserves have reduced by around £1.3m in the last 10 years. In 2018 reserves were reduced by £106,770, which was slightly less than the budgeted release of £127,000.
5. The committee conveys its position that it will not be possible to continue to use reserves at this rate or to depend on councils returning grants previously allocated and therefore remains of the view that the level of the Appeal and grants to councils needs to be brought into line over the next few years.

The 2019 Appeal

6. The General Assembly has already agreed to an Appeal of £3,550,000 for 2019 with agreed grants to councils of £3,700,000. Details of these 2019 agreed grants are included in the second column of

Schedule 1 of this report and details of the agreed allocation of the appeal to Presbyteries is included in Schedule 2.

The 2020 Appeal

7. The United Appeal Committee met on 29 March to complete some preparatory work and again on 1 April to meet with the councils and consider the 2020 budget requests submitted. Having given careful consideration to the budget requests and each Council's presentation, the United Appeal Committee drew up the allocations outlined in Schedule 1 of this report.
8. The United Appeal Committee is grateful for the hard work and dedication of every council, not least from their secretaries and conveners. The support from finance personnel to each Council is a crucial link in ensuring monitoring of budgets and spending along with forecasting projections so far in advance.

Interviews with Councils

9. **Council for Global Mission – Requested Grant £1,065,000. Proposed Grant £1,065,000:** Members of the United Appeal Committee were encouraged by the presentations of our two mission councils. The focus of Global Mission continues to be the sending of global mission workers across the world to share God's heart. In supporting the requested budget of £1,065,000 the United Appeal Committee was encouraged by the Council's desire to streamline its structure to ensure core activities had priority. The United Appeal Committee recommended a further review of the Council's investments and their approach to pension contributions for missionaries.
10. **Council for Mission in Ireland – Requested Grant £1,065,000. Proposed Grant £1,065,000:** The United Appeal Committee reviewed the request of the Council for Mission in Ireland and were reassured by the Council's identification of the many challenges which face our Church throughout Ireland. Members were encouraged by the 'minor miracles' emerging from the Council's work within the Belfast Conference. Although the proposed budget of the Council in 2020 has a greater expenditure than income, the United Appeal Committee is confident in the Council's long term strategy with regard to funding this through the realisation of existing assets.
11. **Council for Training in Ministry – Requested Grant £375,000. Proposed Grant £375,000:** The United Appeal Committee met with representatives from the Council for Training in Ministry and from Union College. The budget presented by the council reflects a clear level of diligence in offsetting a predicted reduction in income pending a decision of QUB for undergraduate study. While the teaching of ministerial students remains our priority as a church, it is disappointing to potentially lose the partnership of QUB in teaching theology to our student community. Steps to replace the teaching of undergraduate degrees through Queen's with PTFI degrees and the use of BibleMesh

for online students brought some encouragement to the United Appeal Committee. While affirming the budget for 2020 the United Appeal Committee wish to highlight that potential changes to the role of the college in undergraduate studies could place a greater demand upon the United Appeal for future funding.

12. **Council for Congregational Life and Witness – Requested Grant £720,000. Proposed Grant £720,000:** The United Appeal Committee received the presentation of the Council for Congregational Life and Witness budget. The committee recognised the value and benefit of this Council’s reliance on its staff members to resource the work of our congregations. Recognising this asset, members of the United Appeal Committee would encourage a review of the Church Hymnary Fund and Family Book Fund to assist in future funding of critical areas of the Council’s work among congregations. It was felt that the ability of the Council to keep the cost of its courses and conferences as low as possible without incurring cost on the United Appeal was admirable.
13. **Council for Social Witness – Requested Grant £264,271. Proposed Grant £245,000:** The United Appeal Committee heard of the hard work undertaken throughout Ireland by the Council for Social Witness. As many of their projects are funded from various outside income streams they do not require any funding from United Appeal. This is mainly due to the high level of occupancy achieved at all facilities while also avoiding the need to require top-up payments from resident’s families. The care of the Council’s staff in each setting is remarkable as is the diligence of its staff and leadership. This is reflected in the efficient managing of its budget, assets and investments. The United Appeal Committee realises, however, the forthcoming impact on the Council’s work through the shortage of skilled care and nursing staff.
14. **General Council Creative Production Department – Requested Grant £230,000. Proposed Grant £230,000:** The United Appeal Committee consulted with the Creative Production Department and reflected on its budget for United Appeal funding. It was encouraging to discover how recent staffing changes had been managed through the use of third party professional services. Training for staff members was also high on the priority list, enabling our communication to be relevant and effective. The management of computer hardware, software and website systems allows CPD to operate with a small potential surplus. The United Appeal Committee, however, is aware that this will not always be the case and an increase in budget for creative production will be likely within the next five years.

Proposed Grants for 2020

15. Having met with the various councils and departments it was agreed that the budgets for each be affirmed and that a call on United Appeal for 2020 be made as highlighted in Schedule 1. This is with the exception of the Council for Social Witness which has some reserves

and an ongoing disposal of assets and therefore its budget should remain at the same level as 2019 i.e. £245,000.

16. This will maintain the overall level of grant expenditure for 2020 at the same level as 2019, i.e. £3,700,000 with all councils receiving the same level of grant.

Proposed Appeal for 2020

17. The United Appeal Committee, therefore, recommends an increase in the Appeal for 2020 to £3,600,000 from £3,550,000 in 2019 (i.e. a 1.4% increase).
18. As some congregations do not contribute to the Appeal before the closing date it is projected that the accounts for 2020 will show a deficit of £162,000. Without any anticipated returns from councils this deficit would bring the balance of reserves to £ 1,705,408 at the end of 2020. This is necessary to fund the monthly grants to councils of 7.5% of their projected grants.
19. The United Appeal Committee is concerned as to the continuing use on reserves and anticipate future increases in funding requests from the councils to maintain their current level of work and fulfilment of remits. It is anticipated that the United Appeal in the next few years would need to increase to meet these requests placing a greater demand on our congregations and members. The United Appeal Committee recognises the hard work undertaken by the Financial Secretary, his staff and the individual secretaries and conveners. This hard work has avoided a greater call on United Appeal in recent years but many of their tactics cannot be maintained thus leading to the potential increase in the United Appeal from 2021 onwards.

MARK CATNEY, Convener

UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

SCHEDULE 1 – PROPOSED 2020 APPEAL AND COMPARATIVE FIGURES FOR PREVIOUS YEARS

	Proposed 2020 £	Budget 2019 £	Actual 2018 £
APPEAL	3,600,000	3,550,000	3,500,000
PROJECTED ACCOUNTS INCOME			
Congregations (current year)	3,350,000	3,300,000	3,291,684
Congregations (prior years)	150,000	150,000	118,943
Income from Trust Funds	28,000	28,000	28,698
Donations and Bequests	10,000	10,000	39,292
Bank Interest	10,000	10,000	6,487
TOTAL INCOME	3,548,000	3,498,000	3,485,104
EXPENDITURE			
Promotional Costs	10,000	10,000	16,874
GRANTS			
Mission in Ireland	1,065,000	1,065,000	1,050,000
Global Mission	1,065,000	1,065,000	1,050,000
Training in Ministry	375,000	375,000	370,000
Congregational Life and Witness	720,000	720,000	720,000
Social Witness	245,000	245,000	245,000
General – Creative Production	230,000	230,000	230,000
TOTAL GRANTS	3,700,000	3,700,000	3,665,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,710,000	3,710,000	3,681,874
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	-162,000	-212,000	-196,770
Grants Returned – CCLW	0		90,000
Added /(Deducted) to/(from) reserves	-162,000	-212,000	-106,770
Reserves at start of year	1,867,408	2,079,408	2,186,178
Reserves at end of year	1,705,408	1,867,408	2,079,408

UNITED APPEAL COMMITTEE

SCHEDULE 2 – ALLOCATION OF THE 2019 UNITED APPEAL TO PRESBYTERIES

(As agreed by the 2018 General Assembly)

Presbytery	Contributing Families 2017	Assessable Income 2017 £	United Appeal 2019 £
Ards	6,720	3,723,121	329,554
Armagh	3,511	2,201,318	183,432
Ballymena	6,550	3,638,544	321,639
Belfast North	3,919	2,166,338	191,975
Belfast South	2,546	1,859,801	144,591
Belfast East	4,807	3,346,276	265,741
Carrickfergus	4,279	2,046,113	195,588
Coleraine and Limavady	4,958	2,733,297	242,546
Derry and Donegal	4,654	2,214,626	212,253
Down	4,077	1,924,649	185,262
Dromore	4,345	2,297,298	208,251
Dublin and Munster	1,160	1,804,701	107,930
Iveagh	3,265	1,721,101	156,261
Monaghan	1,082	813,503	62,464
Newry	2,715	1,325,342	125,290
Omagh	3,248	1,615,176	151,188
Route	3,210	1,557,070	147,697
Templepatrick	3,457	1,704,031	160,255
Tyrone	3,346	1,717,022	158,083
	71,849	40,409,327	3,550,000

50% of the allocation for 2019 has been based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. Assessable Income for congregations in the Republic of Ireland has been converted to sterling at GBP£1 = €1.1413

NOTE: Schedule 3 of the United Appeal Committee Report, outlining the allocation of the 2020 United Appeal to Presbyteries, will be included with the 2019 Minutes of the General Assembly. The allocation will be based on the agreed formula of 50% of the allocation based on contributing families and 50% on Assessable Income. This change is due to the later submission date for part B of the annual statistical returns.

HOLDING TRUSTEE TASK GROUP

1. The 2018 General Assembly instructed all presbyteries to consider the following proposal:

to merge the 19 Presbytery Education Boards and form one, or if necessary two, holding trustee bodies for those congregations in the General Assembly not wishing to appoint three or more individual voting members as named trustees to receive and hold their property, and report to the Convener of the Holding Trustee Task Group by 30 November 2018.
2. Replies were received from all 19 Presbyteries and the outcome was:
 - 13 Presbyteries were in favour of continuing with the process;
 - 3 Presbyteries were opposed to continuing with the process;
 - 3 Presbyteries did not express an opinion for or against but submitted comments.

The responses indicate that the proposal to merge the Presbytery Education Boards should be considered in more detail.

3. Some presbyteries made written submissions and in others the Clerk of Presbytery spoke to the convener. The following is a summary of concerns and questions raised during the consultation:
 - Merging 19 into 1 or 2 may be seen by some as the centralisation of power.
 - Any move towards one body could mean a loss of local knowledge.
 - Will the removal of the local trustee body result in an increase in time to process business?
 - Is it not likely that this process will lead to an increase in the number of congregations appointing named trustees?
 - This could be a long drawn out and complex process.
 - What level of costs will be involved?
 - Would it not be better to put energy and resources into training members of Education Boards?
 - Some Education Boards have investments in the name of the Education Board – how will these be managed?
 - Some Education Boards have investment funds and the income is used by the presbytery to support local projects – how can the future use of such funds be maintained?
 - At least one Education Board was appointed by the High Court as the executive trustee body of a fund and is responsible for the distribution of funds – how can this be managed by a holding trustee body?
 - Several Education Boards are registered as landlords under the Landlord Registration Scheme – is this a matter that needs to be resolved if there is to be one body?

The comments received suggest that further information would be helpful in reaching a final decision. Presbyteries are interested in the detailed outworking of any proposals before committing to make changes.

4. Discussions with clerks suggest that the process of appointing charity trustees has raised questions throughout the Church about the position of holding trustee. Possibly this is something that needs to be clarified during the process and may be the starting point for the report that needs to be prepared to help the Church decide on this matter.
5. The General Council received the report of the task group and agreed that an appropriate resolution be presented to the General Assembly to progress the issues outlined.

ROBERT HERRON, Convener

CHARITY REGISTRATION TASK GROUP

Registration with the Charities Regulatory Authority

1. Representatives of PCI have met with officials of the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) in the Republic of Ireland on two occasions over the last few years and while those meetings were useful the CRA have not been in a position to complete the registration of all parts of the denomination.
2. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (or maybe more accurately the activities falling under the General Assembly) is already registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and the annual returns to the CRA are up to date.
3. A small number of PCI congregations were classified as what are referred to as Section 40 registrations (or existing charities) because they had their own Revenue Commissioners Charity Number (i.e. a CHY number). These congregation are now registered and it appears that everything is up to date with regard to filing and reporting requirements. These congregations are Abbey, Christ Church Rathgar, Cavan, Corboy, Donegal, Dundalk, Dunfanaghy, Newbliss, Sligo, St Andrew's, Blackrock, and Ray.
4. The majority of PCI congregations (and indeed the three presbyteries in, or with a substantial number of congregations in, the Republic of Ireland) are what are referred to as Section 39 registrations (or new charities) because they do not have their own Revenue Commissioners Charity Number. It is hoped that eventually these can be registered as individual charities but under a group registration process.
5. The last email correspondence from the CRA was on 21 June 2018 when the CRA advised that they were putting in a new IT system and that PCI's Section 39 congregations would not be invited forward for registration in a few months. It was anticipated this would be around

August/September 2018 and that CRA would arrange a further meeting to discuss the registration process. PCI has not heard anything since then. The Financial Secretary has contacted the CRA on several occasions by telephone over recent months enquiring when registration might take place. Despite being advised that someone would be in touch no one from the CRA has returned these calls.

6. A letter has recently been sent to the Registration Team at CRA seeking a definitive timescale for the registration of PCI's section 39 congregations.

TREVOR D. GRIBBEN, Acting Convener

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION TASK GROUP

1. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Task Group was appointed by the Council on 10 October 2017, with the following remit:

To produce advice and guidelines for:

- (a) The Councils and Departments of the General Assembly
- (b) Presbyteries and Congregations

which will enable ongoing compliance with GDPR by 25 May 2018; and which will enable information/data which has previously been gathered or processed to become compliant.

2. The GDPR Task Group has met on two occasions since the last meeting of General Assembly.

Temporary Data Protection Officer

3. Mr Kirk Shilliday's term as Project Manager has come to an end – the task group is extremely grateful to him for the work he has done, and the manner in which he has carried it out. The meeting of General Council on 11 October 2018 had accepted a recommendation from the GDPR Task Group to appoint a time-limited dedicated Data Protection Coordinator and that the Financial Secretary and Project Manager prepare a job description and personnel specification for the post for approval by the Priorities Reference Panel. The task group reviewed the documents and agreed that the post would require two days per week for a minimum of six months, with a possibility of extension and that the position would be filled on a contract for services basis. The post was advertised through the church and Mr Robert Dowey, a member of the kirk session of First Portadown Presbyterian Church, was appointed in January as Temporary Data Protection Officer. Mr Dowey's priorities will be:
 - (a) data retention policies;
 - (b) the General Assembly Data Register; and
 - (c) staff training.

Policy Development

4. The task group considered a draft ‘Top Ten Tips’ for ensuring presbyteries and congregations are GDPR compliant. The document, which had been drawn up by the Project Manager was discussed and amendments proposed. An amended ‘Top Ten Tips’ document has been drawn up by the Deputy Clerk and Financial Secretary and included in the GDPR Downloads section of the PCI website at www.presbyterianireland.org/gdpr. In addition, the Convener will contribute an article to the May edition of the *Presbyterian Herald* on ‘GDPR one year on’ which will include a copy of the ‘Top Ten Tips’.

Office 365

5. The Deputy Clerk and Head of IT will issue a letter to congregations informing them of the existence of Office 365 as a GDPR compliant platform. Congregations will be advised that PCI is not resourced to support the implementation of Office 365 and that they should source local support should they decide to use the platform.

Retention of emails

6. The time for which emails need to be retained poses a number of issues for General Assembly Departments. The task group asked the Temporary Data Protection Officer to consult with departments on retention periods for emails and to identify options.

Future of Task Group

7. The task group reviewed its work and concluded that its remit has been largely fulfilled. The task group was thanked for its services and discharged at the March meeting of the General Council, with future responsibility for GDPR matters given to the Support Services Committee.

EDGAR JARDINE CB, Convener

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATIONS TASK GROUP (ECTG)

1. The ECTG continued in existence for a further period to consider the responses given at a meeting with clerks of presbytery in January 2019 reviewing the new consultations process. In summary, comments were favourable and there are no major changes to be made to the process.
2. It is understood that some presbyteries operate a hybrid model of consulting with congregations. While adopting most of the new process they may, for example, use a larger panel to undertake a consultation or may still ask a congregation give a presentation. The new system allows for some of this kind of flexibility, but in general the new template was

felt by clerks to be an improvement on the previous process and not as unwieldy.

3. Clarification was sought by the convener of the task group from the Church Architecture and Manses Panel on the standard and costing of the ten-year building surveys required during a consultation as there seems to be a wide range of practice throughout the church. The advice is that such surveys should not be intrusive in nature and should not be too costly to undertake. It is the responsibility of the congregation being consulted to pay for the survey, although the task group is aware of at least one presbytery which levies each congregation through the year and it then pays for the surveys.
4. It is hoped that recommendations from the task group passed previously at the General Assembly in terms of better engagement between councils and presbyteries and between presbyteries and congregations will be put into practice. Some early indications of changes and improvements being made are encouraging.
5. The task group was thanked and discharged at the March General Council. The Council agreed that the responsibility for updating the consultations process from time to time to allow for changes in legislation and church policy (e.g. relating to GDPR, Taking Care etc.) be given to the General Secretary's Department.

NORMAN CAMERON, Convener