



The Church of Scotland

The Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale

REPORT ON THE INITIAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRESBYTERY OF FORTH VALLEY AND CLYDESDALE

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1 OBJECTIVE OF THE PRESBYTERY OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE

The Basis and Plan of union agreed by the Presbyteries of Hamilton and Lanark and enacted by the General Assembly of 2021 states that the provisional objective of the united Presbytery shall be:

Supporting congregations to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through working with each other, working for each other and being with each other.

- We work **with** each other by providing resources, knowledge and training, based on learning and receiving from each other and also being accountable to each other.
- We work **for** each other by doing the things Presbytery can do in order to free up congregations to do what they are energised to do.
- **Being with** each other means knowing each other, listening to each other, learning from each other and supporting each other collaboratively.

We encourage and support congregations to provide:

- Opportunities for worship, fellowship, the teaching of the Christian faith, the enriching of community life, ensuring that the views of the local Church are heard on matters of wider concern;
- Pastoral care, advice and support to people in each parish.

The principle of the Presbytery adopting a structure that commits to subsidiarity and/ or delegation which allows discussions to take place in the most effective forum was also enacted by the General Assembly.

To assist in the initial outworking of this objective and principle the Transition Group indicate the following as an initial structure for the new Presbytery and how it represents the complementary needs of local, regional, and national concerns. The initial structure will be presented to the first meeting of the new Presbytery for adoption.

2 FULL PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

The first branch of how Presbytery represents itself is in whole presbytery meetings. There is a need to meet as 'Presbytery' to fulfil certain legal functions mandated by the General Assembly. These meetings would be whole day events, based around worship, some business, and mostly inspiration for those attending.

As with the current Presbytery, attendance is expected of all members at each of the meetings. With a lesser number of meetings and a reducing number of members due to Mission Planning it would be incumbent on all members to prayerfully consider the vows of ordination and the need take seriously the need to attend.

It is likely that there will be four meetings in a year, with a central location chosen for convenience of all, with the possibility of choosing a variety of geographical locations if the need or possibility arose. With much of the day to day business being delegated to more appropriate forums or office bearers to fulfil

the agreed principle, the Presbytery can meet less often and provide high quality, relevant, inspirational and engaging meetings rather than a quantity of regular business meetings.

Membership of Presbytery would be as detailed within the Church Courts Act of the General Assembly. While this act is currently being rewritten and will come to a future General Assembly, there are unlikely to be any substantive changes to the membership of Presbytery in the short term.

3 TEAMS

Along with the full meetings, Presbytery will also represent itself through smaller teams who will be given a remit and delegated powers to make decisions within an agreed framework. It is anticipated that two teams, a Mission Care team and a Resourcing Mission team will be established. Until the Mission Plan is agreed by the Presbytery and the Faith Nurture Forum a third, short life Mission Planning team will also be in operation. To fulfil General Assembly obligations there will also be a small number of ad hoc teams that are established to deal with Vacancy Procedure (a different, small team for each Vacancy), Appeals and Complaints, drawing on an identified pool of people who agree to be on call for these tasks.

Membership of each standing team would be limited to 9 or 10 members of Presbytery and would meet on average every 6 to 8 weeks.

It is also vital that a well-functioning Presbytery has a staff team of sufficient number and skill to resource the Presbytery. Some staff may carry out delegated duties on behalf of the Presbytery and report into the relevant team. The detail of the proposed staff team is outlined later in the document at section 7.1.

3.1 MISSION CARE TEAM

The Mission Care Team will be given a remit to establish and support opportunities for mission and care within the Presbytery. The team would have responsibility for and oversee areas including Local Church Review, new Mission Networks based around commonality for mission rather than geography, being with congregations as they articulate their understanding of mission to their community, encouraging local mission for local areas including Ecumenical working, providing a focus on issues affecting the world and world church, training for congregations as well as training for recognised ministries, and the support of all ministries and congregations within the Presbytery.

It is anticipated that a Mission Enabler will lead the staff team which will also include a number of full time or part time support roles. The appropriate staffing is discussed later in the document at section 7.1.

3.2 RESOURCING MISSION TEAM

The Resourcing Mission Team will be given a remit to resource the Presbytery and congregations of its bounds. The team would have responsibility for and oversee areas including Finance, Property, Administration, Safeguarding, Congregational records, and seek to ensure a wide participation of people in the life of the Presbytery.

Other administrative tasks such as Registration of Ministries, operating the Vacancy Procedure processes, the smooth running of the business of the whole Presbytery meeting would be delegated to the Presbytery Clerk (or equivalent) without the requirement for the Team to discuss matters except where there is a matter of contention.

It is anticipated that a Presbytery Clerk or Chief Officer will lead the staff team which will also include a number of full time or part time support roles. The appropriate staffing is discussed later in the document at section 7.1.

3.3 MISSION PLANNING TEAM

The Mission Planning Team would continue to work with congregations to present the Mission Plan to Presbytery as instructed by the General Assembly. At the point of approval by both Presbytery and the Faith Nurture Forum, the responsibility for implementing and reviewing the Plan would transfer to the Mission and Care Team.

All members of the staff team would be involved in resourcing the Mission Planning Team whilst in operation.

3.4 AD HOC TEAMS

To fulfil General Assembly Legislation, it is necessary to have individuals forming Vacancy Procedure Committees and Advisory Groups, Appeals Committees, and Complaints Committees. It is anticipated that these teams would not be standing teams, but ad hoc, used only when the need arises. It is anticipated that these teams would be resourced by an identified pool of people to be on call for a set period.

4 MISSION NETWORKS

The Presbytery would also express itself through a variety of Mission Networks based on commonality. Commonality may be based around a specific geography, interest or particular context (e.g. town centres). Mission Networks would be centred on meeting people, sharing food or drink and talking about mission with no burden of administration or governance requirements from presbytery.

It would be anticipated that Presbytery strongly encourage each Minister, Deacon and Congregation to engage with the Mission Networks by playing an active role in at least one. Mission Groups would be free to determine their own membership, timing of meetings, activities etc whilst being resourced and enabled through the Mission and Care Team.

Mission Networks may be formed by both the Presbytery and by individuals or groups of congregations. No Mission Network would operate a 'closed' membership and all would be listed on the Presbytery website for those interested to join. There would be the possibility of a limited number of 'ministry only' networks for the support and care of those in recognised ministries. Mission Networks may also be considered across Presbyteries where areas of commonality might arise, for example, Prisons and

Hospitals. Membership of Mission Networks would not be restricted to members of Presbytery but may be open to other members of Kirk Sessions and Congregations.

It is anticipated that a small annual budget would be held by the Mission and Care Team to which Mission networks could apply for funding to enable new mission initiatives.

Further, the Mission and Care Team will be encouraged to ensure that, as part of the Local Church Review Process, conversations take place with Ministers, Deacons and Congregations about their involvement with Mission Networks and if there has been no engagement to understand why and bring it to the attention of Presbytery.

5 PARTICIPATION AND NOMINATION

There is an inherent danger in creating a new structure in a larger geographical region that those involved in ministries and some congregations may choose to 'sit back' and not play a part in the life of the Presbytery. Presbytery finds its life, energy and locus in its membership and the congregations of the bounds. Without participation Presbytery simply will grind to a halt.

Every year the Presbytery would seek nominations for membership of each team. Following the Mission Planning process, it is anticipated that the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale will have around 60 charges, represented by at least 2 members of presbytery (a minister and presbytery elder). To achieve as wide a representation as possible, the Participation and Nominations will be encouraged to look at bringing names from charges that have been under-represented, with the aim of every charge having at least one representative as a member of a Presbytery Team every four years.

6 DECISION MAKING

The Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale is committed to a principle of subsidiarity and/ or delegation. This means that not only will discussion take place in the right forum for the decision to be made, but also that decisions made under duly appointed delegated powers will not be opened for discussion by the full Presbytery.

To avoid members of Presbytery feeling that they do not know what decisions have been taken, especially given the reduction in frequency of meetings, the Presbytery Clerk will be bound in Standing Orders to issue a monthly digest of decisions made by those with delegated powers. Where Presbytery feel that delegated powers are not being used within the intended spirit it is the right of Presbytery to modify such arrangements from time to time.

Where a full meeting of Presbytery is held, papers will be sent in advance. A process of fast-tracking decisions will be used. A decision will be fast tracked where members of Presbytery do not indicate a desire to speak on a matter by an agreed deadline in advance of the meeting. This process is working in

other Presbyteries and allows for a shorter ‘business’ session and a longer ‘inspirational and engaging’ session.

7 PRESBYTERY STAFFING

7.1 APPROACH TO STAFFING

The Joint Presbytery Transition Group has sought to imagine what the necessary staffing for Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery structure might be. Advice has been taken from the Solicitor of the Church of Scotland who has informed the Transition Group that existing contracts and employment rights continue and roll over to the new Presbytery. That being said the vision of what is needed for the Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery may differ in roles and remits from what is currently contracted across the three Presbyteries. Transition arrangements for existing staff are continuing have yet to be fully discussed beyond the recognition that transitions need to be handled and negotiated with care. As a Presbytery of Christ’s Church how we treat people is really important as we enter into a new sphere of organisation and service and remind ourselves of the challenge of Jesus to treat our neighbour as we would want to be treated.

In March 2021, the Presbytery of Hamilton and Lanark have given the Transition Group the responsibility to determine the paid posts required for the operation of the new Presbytery on either a permanent or interim basis. The Transition Group are currently looking at two possible options for staffing structures however it is important to note that no final decisions on staffing have been taken and more options may present themselves in the weeks that lie ahead.

	Option 1	Option 2
Presbytery Leadership Position	FT (Executive Presbyter)	FT (Clerk)
Mission Enabler	FT	FT
Buildings Officer	FT	FT
Church Law Specialist	PT	-
Administrator to Presbytery	FT or PT	FT or PT
Support Team (Various Positions)	PT	PT

7.2 SENIORITY

Within a small staff team, the Transition Group consider there is no need for a hierarchy of seniority within employees, therefore one employee would have seniority and line management responsibilities to all other employees, this may be the Presbytery Leadership, or perhaps the Presbytery Administrator. This employee would themselves be line managed by the convenor of the Mission and Resource team.

7.3 FINANCE OF STAFFING

Currently the Presbytery of Falkirk, Presbytery of Hamilton and Presbytery of Lanark employ 6 people within contracted positions. There are also several people employed without contract and given honorariums. The groups wish to affirm the valuable nature of honorarium and voluntary staffing, while observing that pre-existing contracts gives the Presbytery formal legal responsibilities and liabilities. As well as this current contracted expenditure, the national offices will support the Forth Valley and Clydesdale presbytery with £120,000 per annum for the short term. A brief discussion of presbytery finance is in the document above at section 8.

7.4 AGREED POSITIONS

After discussion it was agreed there would a need for four full time (or equivalent) posts and possibly one part time deputy. At this time job titles are merely descriptive and not finalised.

7.4.1 MISSION ENABLER

The Mission Enabler is someone who enables mission by and with local congregations.

7.4.2 BUILDING OFFICER

The Buildings Officer is someone who oversees the Church of Scotland estate of buildings within the bounds of Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery.

7.4.3 ADMINISTRATOR TO PRESBYTERY

The Administrator to Presbytery is someone who provides administration support to the presbytery and its functions.

7.4.4 PRESBYTERY LEADERSHIP POSITION

The Presbytery leadership position is envisaged to be someone who leads the presbytery. The needs of a role may change from the initial starting need. As such a title such as Presbytery Clerk, Presbytery Chief Officer or Executive Presbyter may not apply now but may do in the future.

7.4.5 CHURCH LAW SPECIALIST

Dependant on the type of leadership position finally agreed upon, a church law specialist position may be necessary to provide comfort, advice, and guidance to the Presbytery as a Court of the Church.

7.4.6 SUPPORT TEAM

It is envisaged that the Presbytery will require a number of different supporting roles which both support the Presbytery, Congregations and those engaged in ministry. These might include positions such as

chaplains, youth and children's workers, treasurer (or finance officer) and other specialised roles. Discussion is taking place around the nature and scope of such positions, how they are financed and fit within the structure.

7.4.7 DEPUTIES

There was an affirmation that Deputies to the Presbytery provide an essential and key part to the presbytery staffing. The Transition Group feel that Deputies are not only vital to paid positions such as Clerks, but also voluntary positions such as Conveners.

Deputies add capacity to the staff team and provide a rich diversity from different parts of the Presbytery. They not only provide cover for key roles, but often are able to lead discreet areas of work due to their expertise and experience. The Transition Group believe that this is an important way to keep hard earned knowledge and understanding of current key staff to the existing three Presbyteries within the new Presbytery Structure.

Deputies for Conveners and other key volunteers can also expand the group of people actively involved in the leadership of the Presbytery. People who may not have considered a formal role may feel inspired to participate in such a way and view the new Presbytery differently.

The Transition Group will discuss the issues around specific remits and remuneration in due course.

7.5 CONTRACT LENGTH

The Transition Group is aware that with any new structure there will be changes and improvements made as experience dictates. The staff team in place will be no exception. To that end the Group are discussing whether initially offering shorter fixed terms contracts is appropriate in the life of a new Presbytery. This would allow the Presbytery a degree of flexibility in changing and moving, while providing a measure of security for employees.

8 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The activities of the Presbytery, including staffing, will be financed from a number of sources. These will be set out in the budget to be brought to the first meeting of the Presbytery.

A grant of £120,000 will be available from the Assembly Trustees against 'core' costs. While this will initially be recurring (sourced from the 'presbytery and shared activities' part of *Giving to Grow* from 1 January 2023), over time it expected that this will reduce. Presbytery dues will continue to be an important source of financing activities. There are differences in methods of calculation and levels between presbyteries; a proposed basis of determining dues will be brought to the first meeting of the Presbytery. Because of timing differences in the combination to form the new presbytery, dues for 2022 are likely to only apply to the former Hamilton and Lanark congregations.

The continuation of the ministries and mission contributions for 2022 means that the presbytery discretionary allowance (5%) will be available for missional projects and congregation support. This is estimated to be around £175,000 plus any unused allowance brought forward from earlier years. Any allowance unused at the end of 2022 will require to be used in the following year, with no further carry forward.

In addition to these sources of funding, there may be some unrestricted and restricted purpose reserves brought forward and the Presbytery will be able to seek partnership funding for its activities.