



Circuit Grants Committee – Terms of Reference

Role/Purpose

The purpose of the Grants Committee is to receive and review applications from individual churches in the Circuit for funding assistance, and to make recommendations regarding such applications to the Trustees (Circuit Meeting).

Background

These terms of reference set out the basis on which the Committee will operate and the criteria by which the eligibility of any applications will be considered.

Once formally constituted the Committee will supersede the former Grants Committee established by the Guildford Circuit in 2014 and authorised to operate in the Wey Valley Circuit from 2016. The remit of that Committee was focused on projects relating to property matters. The new Committee has a wider remit and is able to consider awarding grants for missional projects of any kind, including those where the money awarded is sought for revenue expenditure.

Responsibilities

The ability of the Committee to recommend grants is dependent on the availability of unrestricted capital funds however accrued. Subject to this, there are no restrictions on the amount of money that the Committee can consider recommending for any specific award but it will always take into account the availability of resources within the applicant church, the potential for alternative/additional sources of funding for the project in question, and other known demands across the Circuit.

Grants may be awarded for capital or revenue related expenditure but in respect of the latter the Committee is only able to make a one-off award (subject to release in instalments where appropriate) and will therefore have particular regard to the ability of the church in question to safeguard the longer-term viability of the project.

The work of the Committee is grounded in the missional focus of the Methodist Church as stated in Our Calling¹ and The Priorities for the Methodist Church². In considering the eligibility of applications and in prioritising between competing demands on available funds, the Committee will have regard to the following criteria (as relevant to each particular case):

- Is the project part of a clear strategy directed towards fulfilling God's mission through the local church/ Circuit and is it consistent with District policy
- Will the project make good use of resources by, where appropriate, working in an ecumenical context and in partnership with other Circuits and/or organisations

¹ Conference Report 2000

² Conference Report 2004

- Does the project respond to an identified need in the Church and the wider community and has it been designed to respond effectively to it
- Will the project encourage involvement with the gospel priority for the marginalised and poor and with those who are disadvantaged within the community
- Have the needs of various age groups been considered, especially taking into account young people and young adults
- Does the project incorporate the potential for providing new ways of being Church (eg. 'Fresh Expressions') or improving on existing practice.

Only in exceptional circumstances will grants be considered where the application relates to the costs of repair or maintenance to existing premises.

The Committee will provide a standard form for all applications³. Any application should be received at least 3 weeks prior to the relevant meeting and should include:

- a current budget of income and expenditure for the scheme or project;
- where appropriate the most recent audited accounts of the Church and if those accounts are more than six months old a copy of the latest management accounts for the Church;
- job descriptions and personal specifications for any staff to be employed as part of the scheme or project.

Membership

Membership of the committee is approved by the Trustees in Circuit Meeting and any changes will be subject to the same process. The Committee will comprise 5 persons:

- A Presbyter (Chair)
- The Circuit Treasurer
- The Circuit Property Secretary or a second Circuit Steward
- Two other Trustees appointed by the Circuit Meeting

Meetings

The Committee will meet at least three times each year, generally in the month prior to a Circuit Meeting so that its recommendations are available to be reported to that meeting. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair as necessary.

Written minutes will be prepared of every meeting and circulated as soon as practicable to the Circuit Leadership Team.

Review

These terms of reference will be kept under review by the Circuit Leadership Team and any changes sought by the CLT or the Committee itself will be subject to approval by the Trustees.

DATE ADOPTED BY CIRCUIT MEETING:

DATE TO BE REVIEWED (2 YEARS FROM ADOPTION):

March 2019

³ Suggested (2019) form attached