

APPENDIX 2 – PROPOSED NORTH WEST DISTRICT GOVERNANCE AND HUB FUNCTIONS

1. Introduction

This sets out the suggested governance arrangements for the proposed new North West District, reflecting the following principles:

- a) A district's purpose is to provide a regional perspective for mission and to support the circuits, recognising their central importance (see Standing Order 400A). The district's role should therefore be contextual, light touch and supportive, with sufficient functions and resources to release, support and encourage mission in the circuits. Accordingly, the district's governance and resource functions and arrangements need to be proportionate, nimble and flexible, including to adapt and respond to changing contextual needs.
- b) The formal requirements – and flexibilities – of CPD have been considered (an additional document summarising and analysing these is available if required), and whilst most functions will follow the usual Standing Orders, a modified constitution under Section 48A of Standing Orders may need to be adopted to ensure balance between the lay and ordained membership in the composition of the Synod, and, if also required, to support particular arrangements for the District Policy Committee, proposed scrutiny group, and proposed district hubs. Decisions are still to be made about any district office arrangements, but with the expectation that most working will be dispersed.
- c) The foci and subfunctions of the three district hubs and their purposes are indicated below, together with the officers (being voluntary or, if justified, paid), committees or groups (involving different nuances according to function and purpose), and/or networks required to implement the subfunctions, in order best to support circuit needs (and limit non-priority activities or structures). Some subfunctions could be located in more than one hub, so some 'on-balance' recommendations have been made as to where a subfunction primarily sits and where responsibility for it mainly lies. However, the location of the subfunctions can be changed if suggested through experience, and, in any event, there should always be collaboration, interconnectedness and flexibility in the ways that those involved in the delivery of the various subfunctions relate to each other at district level.
- d) The subfunction structures and activities have also been designed to provide a crossover and linking between Mission Areas and circuits (a quality that might be described as offering 'weft' in the tapestry, or as contributing to a 'matrix approach'). Examples would be the proposed chaplaincy, education, pioneering, rural or urban networks, where those involved in specialist ministries or in mission to particular contexts will be connected together across and between the different Mission Areas.
- e) The Mission Areas will not in themselves be governance bodies: their role is to facilitate local relationships, not least to encourage mission, not to add another governance layer. However, they will provide convenient geographical units for the outworking of some of the hub subfunctions. For example, some district officers might be aligned to a particular Mission Area, and where helpful might also convene a Mission Area subgroup or network, for example to provide property, safeguarding or stationing support to the circuits within that Mission Area.
- f) This will allow for differentiated and nuanced delivery of district support. Again, this should not add a layer or involve individuals in more meetings (indeed, where there are economies of scale, overall the number of meetings will reduce). Thus the individuals in some Mission Area subgroups or networks might sometimes meet locally and relationally within their area, but at other times in the district as a whole. For example, probationers, circuit safeguarding officers or superintendents might sometimes meet locally in their Mission Area as a more focused group, but at other times in a whole district group, and overall meeting no more than their present frequency of meeting in their existing district structures. As part of these balanced and flexible ways of working, meetings

will variously be held in person, online, or at times in hybrid form, with attention to considerations such as travel and expense, IT connectedness, and the dynamics of particular types of meeting.

- g) The arrangements proposed below will be subject to comment, amendment and approval through the process of seeking agreement to a regional district, and, if approved, with scope for further refinement before implementation. A diagrammatic representation is being developed.

2. The Synod

- a) Pattern: Representative Synods will meet autumn and spring, meeting once in person and perhaps once in hybrid form (provided the ability fully to participate is ensured), and perhaps at least once a year in a more central venue. If only one synod is all day, it should be the one meeting in person to make use of the travel; but to enable a particular focus in one synod each year, which is also recommended, it might be necessary for both synods to be for a full rather than half a day. As for the annual Presbyteral Synod, presbyters in the active work might be expected to meet in person, but good hybrid provision might be provided for those supernumeraries who desire it, including through gathering local groups together to join online (more consideration and consultation is required).
- b) Constitution: overall membership might be limited to 150 so as not to become too unwieldy or expensive (of time and travel cost), with an appropriate balance to be determined between ordained ministers, officers and circuit representatives. In particular, because of the need to ensure that membership is balanced between lay and ordained, it might be appropriate to include in a modified constitution a provision equivalent to that applying under Standing Order 510(1)(ii) to membership of a circuit meeting regarding some categories of ministers; these categories would then not automatically be a member of the synod, but would be welcome to be if they so wished. This would probably reduce the likely number of members to more proportionate levels so as to maximise possible circuit lay representation.
- c) Administrative support and fulfilling wider CPD functions: the District Secretary of the Administration and Compliance hub might be designated the Synod Secretary in respect of the Representative Synod (with district administrative and possibly volunteer support regarding the synod arrangements and minute taking) and potentially some of the ancillary and representative functions; or, the role might be filled by a lay volunteer (with district administrative support). Either way, agreement as to the 'Synod Secretary' and delivery of the CPD ancillary responsibilities will need to be determined, and if involving a district secretary, that will need inclusion in their role description. Additionally, a 'volunteer' presbyter to be the Presbyteral Synod Secretary will be required, again supported by the district's administrative resource.

3. District level groups and functions between the Synod and the Hubs

Introduction:

- a) It is essential that principles such as trust, accountability, transparency, communication, collaboration and continuity apply and are embodied throughout the district structure, especially through the effective inter-working of the groups and leadership referred to below.
- b) Balanced skill sets to envisage, analyse and accomplish the necessary actions in the groups referred to will be important, to include aptitudes, experience and the necessary Equality, Diversity and Inclusion attributes to be attentive to, embrace and contribute to differing aspects of the work.

3.1 District Policy Committee

- a) Page 9 of the NW Spring 2022 Synod paper suggested the principles, size and constitution for the DPC, who would be the district trustees and be a maximum of 16 voting members, namely (as originally suggested: the final composition of the new district might affect the final format):
- One lay member nominated by the circuits in each Mission Area (4-5)
 - One ordained minister (or lay worker in a pastoral or outreach role) nominated by the circuits in each Mission Area (4-5)

- District Chair and Secretaries/the three hub leaders (3)
 - Up to three co-opted people to ensure good diversity (3)
 - A non-voting minutes secretary (an employee in the Administration & Compliance hub) [plus now a non-voting chair of the proposed District Scrutiny Group] and any non-voting participant observers attending from time to time if required by the business.
- b) If the DPC were to be expanded to enable greater representation, this would probably dilute the DPCs nimbleness, focus and effectiveness (and at worst there are examples of DPCs that are too large and become dysfunctional or dominated by a few), so the principle of a small balanced DPC is endorsed, albeit with its final constitution to be determined once the final constituent districts of the new regional district have been determined. Particular district officers or relevant parties may also need to attend at times, but not regularly and as participant observers, not voting members. The DPC should generally meet quarterly.
- c) The challenge of timescales means that sometimes matters have to await a decision of the DPC or even Synod (e.g. re a chapel ceasing to worship), but there is also experience of matters with good practice working generally in a timely fashion. If and where variations might be needed, work-arounds might need consideration (one possibility would be to provide for delegation of Synod decisions to the DPC for certain matters, through a modified district constitution provision, but only if occasionally justified and subject to the Synod's subsequent ratification).
- d) The DPC could potentially have a significant governance and trustee load and long agendas concerning often 'maintenance' matters, when its primary focus must be to focus on mission, with sufficient capacity for that. Accordingly, a District Scrutiny Group is proposed to assist the DPC.

3.2 District Scrutiny Group

- a) The purpose and function of a District Scrutiny Group will be to help the DPC to concentrate on mission, and therefore to ensure that governance matters are dealt with in an efficient and non-cumbersome way. The Scrutiny Group would not be a decision or policy making group, nor a restrictive gatekeeper: it should be supportive by ensuring that proper process and preparation is undertaken by those submitting applications. The Scrutiny Group would consider, sift and analyse initially a wide range of applications or requests required by CPD or for other regulatory reasons before their submission to the DPC, dealing with queries and ensuring matters are presented to the DPC in proper order and with a considered recommendation for decision, with the DPC then exercising its own informed judgement. ('Scrutiny' and assisting the DPC would be this group's purpose; as such, it might not map precisely onto some present examples of district executive sub-groups, not least because some of the functions of those groups are likely to be undertaken in the new regional district by some of the officers and groups in the proposed hubs.)
- b) The Scrutiny Group will consist of 5-6 people including a chair, with some ordained but predominantly lay representation, and will be supported administratively by the administrative support function within the Admin. & Compliance hub. The members and chair should be independent, and therefore not be members of the DPC; but, to ensure continuity with the DPC and to provide explanation where required, the Scrutiny Group chair should attend the DPC as an observer.
- c) Further consideration is required as to which types of items should come to the DPC through the Scrutiny Group, and its inter-relation with other application preparation processes and bodies. It would meet in between meetings of the DPC and in preparation for them, allowing time for analysis and any necessary consultation. The degree to which it focuses its work on meetings or communicates about matters between them by email etc. needs further consideration, or would be likely to evolve in practice as what is most effective becomes apparent.

3.3 District Leaders

- a) Recruitment processes for the District Secretaries will need to be finalised. For the District Chair, Standing Order 421A applies: a Chair's Nomination Committee is required to nominate or re-invite a District Chair. Recruitment processes for the Mission Area Leads/Deputy District Chairs will also

be required, noting that there is presently connexional work being undertaken on the roles and appointment provisions for district leaders.

- b) Arrangements to ensure teamwork, collaboration and support between the leaders of the three hubs (and with the administrative support staff), and with and between the Mission Area Leads/Deputy District Chairs, will suggest regular district staff meetings (in whatever might be the most helpful configuration(s)).
- c) Appropriate support mechanisms should be in place for these leaders (including formal wider processes such as reflective supervision and MDR for ordained personnel, but also for example through a reflective support group).
- d) Decisions need to be finalised as to how the District Leaders might best be used regarding the various subfunctions within the hubs or the cross-connecting strands between them.
 - i) The District Chair and the District Secretaries will have a general management or oversight function for their particular hubs, but additionally, how many and which subfunctions within their respective hubs should they be responsible for undertaking themselves?
 - Caution is needed regarding the District Chair and the Mission & Leadership hub, since the Chair will have wide responsibilities, including with regard to their connexional functions.
 - The Admin. & Compliance hub secretary might be expected to have a finance, HR or regulatory specialism and to undertake some of the relevant subfunctions themselves.
 - The Ministry & Vocations hub secretary might be expected to lead on and undertake a number of the subfunctions in their hub.
 - ii) The Mission Area Leads/Deputy District Chairs will need to balance their roles between encouraging and ensuring mission in their areas, and their representative role, including on behalf of the District Chair, in ensuring effective relationships with and between circuits and ministers in their areas. They might also be paired with particular responsibilities in the hubs where they have experience or enthusiasm, but this might affect their capacity and attention to their Mission Area (plus any circuit responsibilities they retain), so further discernment regarding overall balance will be required, generally and in each case.

4. The Hubs

Introduction:

- a) Below the subfunctions of the three proposed hubs are listed (in alphabetical order, and remember the general introductory comments about the interconnectivity between hubs and the matrix aspect with and between Mission Areas). With each subfunction, the purpose (in italics), and who and how the function might be fulfilled (so far as is presently envisaged), together with any necessary comment, is set out.
- b) A number of 'balances' have required consideration, between:
 - i) volunteer and paid staffing: the overall intention is not to increase costs, but increasing regulatory complexity and reducing numbers already means that more paid staff in place of volunteers have been required in our districts; yet overall the economy of scale of a regional district is still likely to require less overall administration, posts to be filled, or numbers of meetings and combined travel, than for the constituent districts. There is risk of losing volunteer knowledge, experience and commitment in the transition to new arrangements, but also recognition that many officers are not willing to continue indefinitely in the present arrangements without something changing;
 - ii) internal paid and external outsourced resources: tentatively, the suggestion is that key district paid staff will probably be internal rather than a bought in outside resource, whereas, if e.g. circuits or churches need additional resources, they might be directed to

recommended third parties, whose services they might need to pay for directly; this then introduces the question of balance between:

- iii) lower and greater levels of resource: if a greater level of district resource is required (whether 'in-house' or outsourced but retained by the district, e.g. regarding finance, property sales, etc.), then inevitably assessments might need to pay for this, or agreement to use some available capital resources (such as being generated from chapel sales); with a particular issue concerning
 - iv) district or circuit mission resource: the district will be seeking to headline and support mission in numerous ways (including through the Mission Area Leads ensuring that the circuits in their areas are encouraged in mission), but in the subfunctions below there is no additional proposal for engaging other paid mission or evangelism enablers (given different views as to the most effective scale and focus for such roles), with the assumption that if required they will be more locally engaged and based in a circuit or group of circuits.
- c) If outsourced functions are required by circuits, they might involve:
- i) Property
 - i. Sales and purchase of property management (i.e., in addition to solicitors)
 - ii. Property consents process advice (acknowledging that the managing trustees retain the responsibility).
 - iii. Completion of property schedules
 - iv. Other advice
 - ii) Finance
 - i. Bookkeeping
 - ii. Payroll
 - iii. Cashier functions
 - iv. Advice
 - iii) HR and employment matters
 - i. Contract preparation
 - ii. Advice to employer
 - iii. Legislative advice
 - iv. Dispute assistance
- d) Below is a summary of the possible paid district posts required (i.e. where salary or stipend is funded by the district, as opposed to by circuits or local churches), the details of which are set out in the subfunctions. The figures were devised for a five district amalgamation; if fewer districts are involved, the number of posts will need adjustment. Additionally, as needs develop over time, this will lead to some evolutions.
- i) 3 district leaders (District Chair and two District Secretaries)
 - ii) 4 or fewer (depending on number of districts involved) part-time (possibly half-time) Mission Area Leads/Deputy District Chairs (with roles combined with other functions in Mission Areas/circuits etc).
 - iii) 1, possibly 2 Administrative full time equivalent officers/PA(s).
 - iv) Part time Finance officer/bookkeeper (for administrative rather than financial management function: the arrangements are to be finalised but at present this is the most likely option).
 - v) 2.5 District Safeguarding Officers (NB Safeguarding has impressed on us that even with declining church numbers, safeguarding matters and complexity is increasing, so resource must be maintained). (Employment of DSOs might become a connexional responsibility, but then district assessments might be increased to cover this, so a financial commitment will still be involved.)
 - vi) 2.5 District Property Secretaries (to cover the district property functions rather than to undertake the property work for circuits).
 - vii) (An internal HR resource has not been named, since this might be a specialism of the Admin & Compliance District Secretary, or the District Lay Employment Secretary may

continue to be a volunteer, but if such possibilities do not materialise, a (part-time?) paid post or an outsourced resource might be needed.)

- viii) 1 Communications officer (media officer, website, communications joining up and cascading around the district – it might not be possible to have one individual covering all three areas, but a full-time paid role may be necessary or vital to fulfilling the district’s purposes)
- ix) (1 very PT Education/Schools officer, if required since connexional thinking and practice has been changing, possibly coupled with another role in this sector.)

4.1 ADMINISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE HUB – Led by a lay District Secretary

a) Administrative Support

To ensure the efficient running of the District including servicing the Synod and DPC, and the District’s servicing of the Mission Areas and Circuits.

Those involved will include: Synod secretary and DPC secretary (can the Admin & Compliance District Secretary fulfil these functions with administrative support?), Scrutiny Group Chair, General District Administrative Support (suggest 2 paid posts to support subfunctions administratively, including convening of networks and meetings, and acting as Chair’s & District Secretaries’ PA support (Mission Area Leads/Deputy District Chairs might also sensibly require admin/PA support: how might this be supplied and funded?).

b) Finance

To ensure good governance of the District financial resources & to work with the circuit treasurers & other officers in setting budgets and assessments.

Volunteer Treasurer (unless undertaken by District Secretary); (paid Finance manager as part of the District Secretary function if qualified for the role); part time paid Finance officer/bookkeeper (administrative function); Finance Committee (including circuit representation).

N.B.s:

- i. Funding should follow mission rather than the other way round.
- ii. Legacy arrangements from present districts will generally need to be honoured, so continue with existing work whilst taking on new work: combining resources can enable new opportunities for creative mission. The district will need to sift, relegate, streamline and determine what new pieces of work might be resourced, in connection with Grants Committee.
- iii. Where does chaplaincy funding come from? If it is a localised ministry money comes through the circuit possibly via a grant or ‘district project’.
- iv. Recognising that, in a growing number of districts, circuits and churches, the bookkeeping functions are being carried out by a third party, what employed or outsourced functions (the financial cost may not vary greatly) would be required within the regional district? With time, could a centralised finance system be developed which, whilst leaving the managing trustees in control of their funds and having to do some banking functions, could reduce the amount of financial administration or number of bank accounts required. There would be cost implications with this, with the expectation that circuits would buy in the service, but with recognition that the current way of working needs to change because of a growing lack of competent volunteers.
- v. How should accounts held with CFB and TMCP be dealt with?
- vi. These are radical ideas that require further work, and further discussions with the present District Treasurers and the Connexional Finance team.

c) Grants Committee

To oversee the dispersal of district grant money to enable the life and mission of the church.

Volunteer Grants Chair/Secretary & Panel/Committee (should have a good geographical spread of members since local knowledge can be important), with district administrative support. Volunteer Grants officers (appointed by the District Grants Committee and drawn from its membership) for each Mission Area to act as consultant and guide for circuit and local church applications within that Mission Area (again because local knowledge can be important).

(NB. when districts are combined, there will be ongoing funding commitments from the various District Advance Funds for several years, but these should diminish over time. Relationship with and awareness of NPNP arrangements also to be ensured.)

d) Lay Employment

To ensure the District is compliant with current employment legislation and provide support for lay worker appointments within the District.

Volunteer (unless part of the function of the District Secretary) Lay Employment Adviser & Committee; District lay employees support through Learning Network? (and a chaplain?).

NBs:

- i. The workload will determine how many lay posts (employed and volunteer) are needed.
- ii. District Lay Employment secretaries play an important role and are difficult to replace: this is another area where the district's circuits might agree to pay for HR services, either by employing people or by using a service provider.
- iii. There will be complexity regarding who employs particular lay staff (local church/circuit/district), and therefore who line manages them (with consideration needed especially here for those employed by the district or deployed in Mission Areas)
- iv. What more might be needed to support the circuits?

e) Property

To ensure the best stewardship of property across the District.

2.5 paid District Property Secretaries, aligned to work in particular Mission Areas; District Consents Panel; District Property Group or Network of Circuit Property Secretaries; District Manses Secretary (can there be a relation or overlap here with the DPSs, or with the District Secretary, or otherwise a voluntary role) & voluntary District Manse Visitors; voluntary District Chair's (and any Deputy District Chairs') Manse Steward(s))

NBs:

- i. How do we retain local knowledge and present skills and contributions, and where still offered, volunteer contributions?
- ii. Not all DPS personnel will work the same way or have the same responsibilities (therefore bring together DPSs for input).
- iii. There is the conventional DPS support role, but also an increasing emphasis on development and District development plans, and the missional aspect of the use of buildings in which DPS also have a significant contribution and role.
- iv. Manse visitors. These are likely to need to be organised according to Mission Areas.
- v. The suggestion that circuits and circuit stewards should be relieved of property sales and this transferred to a centralised function might be sensible (although at present the Conference's Notice of Motion to this effect has not been positively responded to at connexional level), so if picked up at district level, we would need to ensure sufficient district resource if this is desired, and provide a 'work around' for the governance and consents process so as to keep a separate scrutinising at District level if sales became a District resource.

f) Reconciliation and Complaints Support

To support resolution of complaints and reconciliation at local level wherever possible; this may also be connected with LN positive ways of working initiatives (and at present the Place for Hope pilot project).

Volunteer R&CS Convener & Group (how well, or not, this is currently working in our districts is unclear, partly because it is not advertised or reported upon. Are there good examples of arrangements in practice in our districts to promote these?)

g) **Safeguarding**

To ensure best practice in all areas of safeguarding across the District.

2.5 paid District Safeguarding officers (with related casework supervisor(s)), District Safeguarding Independent chair & group; wider forum + network support for circuit etc. safeguarding officers

NBs:

- i. Fewer chapels and members do not lead to less resourcing, for safeguarding is getting to be ever more complex, hence the number of DSOs envisaged.
- ii. A memorial to Conference suggests the line management of DSOs moves from Districts to the Connexion (funding would still need to come from the district); if carried through, this should not significantly affect the proposed district arrangements.
- iii. Likewise, the question of how DSOs align to independent casework supervisors within Safeguarding quadrants may have limited impact on safeguarding in the district itself, although a degree of contextual awareness on the caseworker's part adds value, and it would be sensible for DSOs only to be matched with caseworkers within one 'quadrant' (even if more than one region within a quadrant).
- iv. Envisaged new district structure would still imagine a core District Safeguarding Group, potentially a network involving the Circuit SOs (and more widely still to Church SOs), with relationships vital, especially between DSOs and their Mission Areas and their leads.
- v. How to ensure good safeguarding in every church remains as a driving factor for the necessary relationships, infrastructure and support. With SOs still required at circuit and church level, how can we ensure that circuits or churches who struggle to appoint a safeguarding officer are covered, without that cover being the minister?

h) **Other Governance & Compliance Matters**

To carry out the functions of any other committees or officers required by CPD that are not already listed elsewhere, and more generally to promote good and safe practice.

Volunteer officers/groups, supported by the District Secretary and the Administrative function, will be required to cover these areas in the most proportionate and pragmatic ways? –

- i. **Archives:** Review the role of a district archivist(s), what is required in a regional district to support Mission Areas and Circuits: a chief archivist, supporting Mission Area archivists?
- ii. **Disability Access advice:** Should this instead be connected to the property function, or to JDS/EDI, and what is the extent of the advice and oversight required at district level?
- iii. **Food safety:** The hospitality and mission of some projects and churches generates a genuine need for advice and compliance check (especially where grants are being applied for and it is understood that training and inspection are carried out by external bodies): what might be important at district level to provide centralised support for this?
- iv. **GDPR:** District Champion (is one enough, or a small advisory group and local Mission Area champions might be required to advise and help ensure compliance within circuits), who under the current structure will liaise also with TMCP. How to enable the simplest ways of complying; what good practice might be pooled; and structures and processes modified accordingly?

- v. **Health & Safety:** Does the district need to provide advice and check compliance (especially where grants are being applied for): should this be a centralised subfunction in this hub, or attached to property (but may be too much for the DPSs to have the capacity to provide the technical advice); i.e., to what degree might centralising this function be really helpful for circuits and churches (and who would undertake it?), or unrealistic because of the degree of local knowledge and communication required?

4.2 MISSION & LEADERSHIP – Led by District Chair (& therefore a presbyter)

a) City & Towns

To support and network mission in more urban areas, and to monitor/oversee/support any city centre or similar projects.

Network of relevant superintendents and other interested parties, convened by a volunteer from amongst them (with central administrative support initially to set up).

NBs:

- i. This umbrella might comprise City Centre, Urban, and Suburban: is this too big a blend, although focussed networks, initiatives and communications would be possible?
- ii. Some changes to the City centre list Standing Orders are being explored, but any such remaining provisions will need compliance.
- iii. Any particular projects might also have their own governance and employment infrastructure.
- iv. (Are there any **Heritage** sites or opportunities, to be placed here or elsewhere in the Hubs?)

b) Communications

To enable connectedness within and outside of the district, and to establish and support network of volunteer local communications officers (or equivalents).

Media officer, Website and Social Media (responsible officer(s)), Mailings (sent by central administrator) – serviced by a paid dedicated officer (especially re media and social media)?

c) Eco-church

To promote and support the development of Eco Churches throughout the district, and to move towards Carbon Neutral.

Volunteer Eco-church officer or champion, working with a network if helpful and with the District Property Officers.

d) Ecumenical

To liaise with the county ecumenical structures to promote ecumenical work across the district and to ensure proper governance of LEP's and any United Areas.

Volunteer Ecumenical Officer able to offer technical advice (such as regarding LEPs), and able more widely to support (and if desired convene a network of) any interested parties, such as local Mission Area Ecumenical officers if appointed (recognising that what is required might be variable within the district, including that some Mission Areas may have existing ecumenical arrangements).

- e) **Formal Education** – Further consultation with those involved in formal education is needed to identify what would be required and most helpful (including regarding which hub this might best be located in, since a case can be made for each).

To ensure liaison with Methodist and partnership schools within the district, and more broadly relationships with any education sectors, including where there is involvement in Further or Higher Education.

Volunteer, or if required a small part time paid role (possibly complementing another role in the education sector,) depending on what is required (which may be less, given growing connexional support in the context of increasing academisation), who may act as the Formal Education Secretary to convene a Panel or whatever might be required for the significant number of Methodist schools.

(A network of interested parties involved in Further and Higher Education – would this be chaplaincy focused, and if so should it be placed as one of the possible chaplaincy networks in the Ministry and Vocations hub, or would there be wider group of persons involved in FE or HE and wanting to connect? – convened by volunteer from amongst their number, with initial administrative support to set up.)

f) Global Relations

To encourage awareness of and relationships with the World Church.

A volunteer District Global Relations officer or small coordinating group; global relations partnership link groups where they exist or come into being (e.g. Cumbria has an existing group linking with and promoting a wider partnership with the Methodist Church in Argentina).

g) Inter/Multi-faith

To ensure appropriate advice, learning and representation for the district's members and ministers in their understanding and relationships with other faiths.

A volunteer district officer (who may also convene a group or network of interested parties if there is desire for this).

h) Mission Development

To develop and oversee the District Mission and Development Plan to advance mission in the region and to engage with society, encompassing the envisioning, development of strategy to implement the vision, and ensuring implementation of that strategy.

District Chair and Policy Committee, Mission Area Leads and any Mission &/or Evangelism Enablers will all have roles to play, together with input from superintendents, and will need to liaise and coordinate appropriately, and to be discerning in balancing what might be appropriate at district level with what might empower Mission Area subsidiarity and missionally outward facing circuits. If helpful, establish also a wider group or network of practitioners; this could be the proposed pioneering network, suitably adapted, unless any other bespoke groupings would be helpful.

Since ultimately everything is to do with mission, this subfunction is meant to serve that in a particular way, rather than to encompass all of mission, by ensuring mission strategy is developed. One important mission strand at present concerns pioneering more generally and NPNP in particular, and this is separately set out in the next sub-section.

i) New Places for New People and Pioneering (including Fresh Expressions & Church Planting)

To ensure that these aspects within Mission Areas and Circuits are supported (including as part of implementing Mission strategy).

Mission Area Leads and any identified continuing or new Mission &/or Evangelism Enablers will or may have a role (negating the need to appoint a specific officer or enabler, unless specific needs are additionally identified) to:

- promote and facilitate general accommodation and adoption of NPNP, pioneering and related activities;
- oversee, scrutinise, learn from and promote NPNP projects;
- support (and provide some shared oversight?) of those involved with these activities and initiatives (whether lay or ordained), including by providing – or ensuring connection to relevant Learning Network or Ecumenical – practitioner support networks/communities of practice.

(Again, discernment will be required to identify what is needed at the district and regional level in order best to support the work of circuits (as 'the primary units of mission') within the Mission Areas.)

j) Public Issues and Social Responsibility

To provide advice and support in response to Public Issues, including any projects, and more to encourage and promote Social Responsibility (including if required in connection with any projects within the district).

A volunteer district officer from and convening a network of interested parties, liaising with any district media officer and the district leadership (and more widely as necessary with the connexional team or JPIT), and promoting general awareness and engagement with social responsibility, to whatever degree at district level is helpful in support of circuits and their outward facing endeavours.

k) Rural

To support and network mission in rural areas, considering and promoting a district rural strategy and if required to monitor/oversee/support any rural projects.

A volunteer district officer from and convening a network of interested parties or connecting them to wider Methodist and ecumenical groups or networks, considering and promoting rural engagement and mission. (There could be cross-over/interconnection here e.g. with Agricultural chaplains, and any relevant network under the auspices of the Ministry and Vocations hub.)

l) Stationing

To ensure and prioritise, as far as is possible, the filling of stations & distribution of ministry across the District, supporting presbyters, deacons and circuits in the stationing process.

Chair, District Lay Station Representative(s – perhaps 2-4 to cover the Mission Areas?), Deputy Chairs/Mission Area Leads who will also have an important relational role with the ministers and circuits.

(NB this has been placed in this rather than the Ministry & Vocations hub since the District Chair will have responsibility for the oversight of stationing matters, and more widely for the fidelity of the ministers.)

m) Superintendents

To liaise regarding all relevant areas of mission and ministry (given the leadership and overall missional role of superintendents).

Superintendents meeting (sometimes in whole district, sometimes in Mission Area, groups), connection with District Chair and with Deputy Chairs/Mission Area Leads.

4.3 MINISTRY AND VOCATIONS – Led by a lay or ordained District Secretary

a) Authorisations – This could be placed in Administration & Compliance, but it is about appropriate persons and relationships on the ground, not simply an administrative matter.

To deal with applications for authorised or associate ministers; applications for lay presidency at communion.

Either the District Secretary or a voluntary officer liaising and overseeing, and subject to scrutiny of the District Scrutiny Group.

b) Candidates for Ministry – There will no longer be a District Candidates Committee under changes agreed by the Conference, but some continued district support and involvement is likely to be necessary.

To ensure that candidates for ministry are supported in accordance with connexional requirements.

Oversight via the District Secretary, supported if practice requires by a 'Committee' or Support Group.

- g) **Chaplaincy** – This could be in Mission, but on balance for connecting and support purposes, place here.

To provide a forum for all those, lay and ordained, involved in any form of chaplaincy across the district, to provide support from and a line of accountability to the district.

District Secretary or volunteer convener of a Chaplaincy Forum and/or various networks of different types of chaplains (agriculture, industry, hospital, schools (unless covered under Formal Education), FE/HE, etc. (or if numbers warrant, sub-networks within Mission Areas), or encouraging connection to wider or ecumenical networks where applicable. A chaplain to the chaplains if also desired, but this aspect may be sufficiently covered in Mission Areas or wider chaplaincy networks?

- h) **Children & Youth**

Working with children and young people and encouraging/supporting that work in the circuits within the district.

3Generate type structure within the district, led/supported by children and youth work team/enabler(s).

- i) **Continuing Development in Ministry and Ministerial Development Review for Presbyters and Deacons**

To facilitate and resource CDiM and MDR for ministers in the active work.

The District Secretary will convene a team of volunteers to facilitate MDR for the ministers in the active work, and liaise with others to support CDiM including through signposting appropriate resources.

- e) **Justice Dignity and Solidarity/Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

To ensure and support the implementation of the connexional Justice Dignity and Solidarity policy, and to promote culture change to encourage inclusion throughout the district.

A volunteer JDS/EDI officer and group or network to engage, guide and encourage Circuit officers and any Mission Area groups (with the need to assess what is proportionately, pragmatically but appropriately required at district level to provide support)

- g) **Learning & Development**

To ensure continuing lifelong learning across the district for both lay & ordained (including to liaise with circuits re learning opportunities, and to facilitate necessary compulsory training).

Link to Learning Network and LN Forum: the work of the LN will cover many of the subfunctions of the three hubs and the Mission Areas and Circuits, but the link with a hub (and its linking infrastructure: probably the District Secretary plus the LN Forum) might best placed in the Ministry & Vocations hub. Additionally, this subfunction would also cover any learning & development or training for which the LN is not responsible or directly engaged in.

- h) **Local Lay-Pastors and wider Lay Worker support**

To support (including as necessary monitoring) circuits in their deployment of LL-Ps or similar.

District Secretary to oversee process and ensure necessary support, including through support networks (possibly separately for circuit leadership, for LL-Ps, and for lay workers?), and working with LN where applicable.

- i) **Local Preaching and Worship Leading**

To encourage and oversee these activities and those involved in them.

The District Secretary (or a volunteer LP officer if one emerges), supported by district administration, convening and supporting a network of circuit LP secretaries and tutors (and liaising regarding LN involvement), or potentially ensuring such networks in Mission Areas with individual volunteer conveners, to encourage and ensure effective LP and WL support.

j) Probationers and Under 5(/10)s

To ensure that diaconal and presbyteral probationers, & those under five (or ten?) years in ministry, are supported through their development, studies & connexional processes.

Probationers Committee & Secretary, Under 5s Group (or will there need to be a couple given the geography, and some districts have Under 10s?).

NB. There is some connection but also an important distinction between these two aspects (both involved in formation, one more focused on oversight and the other more on support, etc.), and thus some connected but also distinct infrastructure and arrangements are required.

k) Reflective Supervision

To ensure maintenance and implementation of District Plan for Reflective Supervision according to Connexional requirements, liaising with ministers and Deputy District Chairs/Mission Area Leads as required, and with the connexional team regarding training and other arrangements.

The District Secretary, supported by the district administrative function and the Learning Network, to support supervision induction or refresher training where appropriate.

NBs:

- i. Although there is a compliance aspect to this function, it primarily relates to ministry undertaken by ministers or those with a significant pastoral element to their lay employee or local lay-pastor role, hence it being located in this hub.
- ii. Most supervisors will supervise as an aspect of their ministerial or other practice, so it is not generally about recruiting a cohort of supervisors (though some external resourcing may sometimes be required).

l) Relationships with significant partners, such as All We Can, Christian Aid, Methodist Homes and Methodist Women in Britain

To encourage connections between the district and its circuits and significant partners, in order to support the work and initiatives of such partners.

The District Secretary, with the assistance of volunteer district links where desired and the partners' own lead contacts, will ensure promotion of the work and initiatives of the partners, such as by utilising the district's communications arrangements.

m) Sabbaticals

To ensure that all ministers in the active work are enabled to take sabbaticals in line with current connexional policy, and to be supported and accountable through the process.

District Secretary (or a volunteer officer if emerging) to act as Sabbaticals Secretary, plus a Support Group (will this work as a single group, or is a panel required from which relevant persons can be drawn to support ministers?), and local sabbatical support groups (in geographical locations such as Mission Areas, or still focused on circuits?).