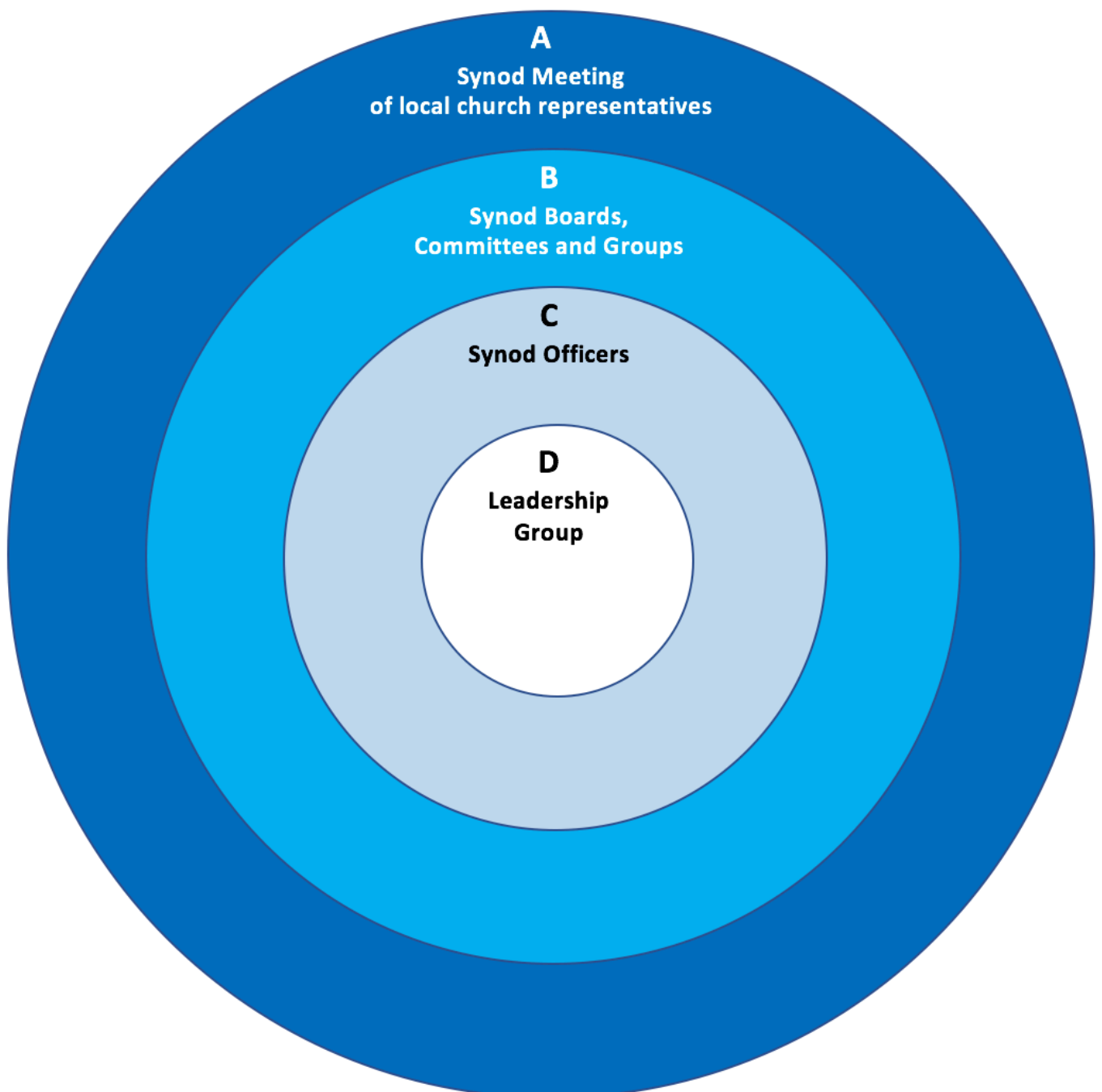


TOWARDS A REVISED SYNOD STRUCTURE

1. Preamble

- 1.1. This document is to be read in conjunction with the [Structure of the United Reformed Church](#) and the [Basis of Union](#).
- 1.2. This Structure is intended to be permissive and flexible, rather than restrictive. Hopefully, this will serve to reduce the amount of time that future Synod Meetings will need to spend on this matter.

2. Graphic Representation



3. Expansion

A Synod Meeting

Membership:

All serving Ministers/CRCWs alongside representatives of each local church, ecumenical guests, Synod Officers, etc. (as set down in the Basis of Union and Structure). Others may attend, but not vote.

Meeting:

At least twice each year

Responsible for:

- Setting mission strategy
- Setting priorities
- Approving policy
- Responding to decisions of General Assembly
- Receiving reports from Boards and Committees
- Receiving accounts and approving budgets
- Discussion and decisions relevant to the mission of the Synod and its churches
- Responding to matters raised by local churches

B Synod Boards, Committees and Groups

Expanded at 4 below.

C Synod Officers

Includes:

Synod Moderator (convener), Synod Clerk (Secretary), Trust Company Secretary, Synod Treasurer, Training and Development Officer (North), Transition and Training Officer, Ecumenical Officer, Children and Youth Development Officer, Office Manager and Trust and Property Officer.

Meeting:

At least quarterly

Responsible for:

- Oversight of matters related to priorities
- Developing communications strategy
- Listening and sharing local church news and issues
- To act on behalf of Synod Meeting as necessary
- Candidacy and vocations
- Safeguarding
- General Assembly representation
- Ecumenical relations and development (including link with Cytûn, etc.)
- Oversight of Transitional Ministry
- Decisions regarding use of Osborne Resource Fund

- Mutual accountability
- Reporting to each Synod Meeting

D Leadership Group

Meeting:

At least bi-monthly

Membership:

Synod Moderator, Synod Clerk, Synod Treasurer and Trust Company Secretary

Responsible for:

- Nominations
- Strategic oversight and development
- Maintaining an overview of the Synod and the URC generally
- Link with General Assembly

4. Synod Boards, Committees and Groups

4.1. Synod Pastoral Committee

Membership:

Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (Convener) (*ex officio*), Training and Development Officer (North) (*ex officio*), Transition and Training Officer (*ex officio*), Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Lay Preaching Officer (*ex officio*), one representative of each Regional Pastoral Committee (Convener or deputy), one representative from each United Area.

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Co-ordinating, overseeing and supporting Regional Pastoral Committees
- Oversight of lay training and development
- Oversight of ministerial training and development
- Maintain a link with Northern College
- Lay preaching
- Lay presidency (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Development of deployment strategy
- Vacancy declaration and concurrence to calls (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Appointment of Interim Moderators (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Appointment of NSMs (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)

- Approval of the continuing ministry of ministers beyond retirement age (on recommendation from Regional Pastoral Committees)
- Formulation of policies for consideration by Synod Meeting
- Supporting Regional Pastoral Committees in the implementation of the Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.2. **Regional Pastoral Committees**

Membership:

Flexible, to take account of local circumstances, with an identified convener.

Meeting:

As necessary

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Implementation of deployment strategy
- Implementation of Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Overseeing and supporting local congregations and their leaders
- Supporting retired ministers and their spouses, widows/widowers
- Vacancy declaration and concurrence to calls (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Appointment and review of NSMs (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Appointment of Interim Moderators (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Lay presidency (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Review of continuing ministry of ministers beyond retirement age (recommending to Synod Pastoral Committee)
- Identifying and supporting Lay Preachers (in consultation with the Synod's Lay Preaching Officer), Local Church Leaders and Worship Leaders
- Pastoral care and support
- Responding to matters raised by local churches
- Written report to each meeting of the Synod Pastoral Committee

4.3. **Finance and Property Board**

Membership:

Convener (*appointed by Synod*), Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (*ex officio*), Synod Treasurer (*ex officio*), Synod Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Office Manager and Cashier (without voting rights) (*ex officio*), Property Officer (without voting rights) (*ex officio*), Trust Company Secretary (*ex officio*), four representatives from across the Synod (from nominations; chosen to ensure balance).

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Formulation of policies for consideration by Synod Meeting
- Property matters (approval, oversight, support and guidance)
- Manse policy (oversight and guidance)
- Ministry and Mission Fund contributions (direction, development and advocacy)
- Mission Development Fund grants (approval and monitoring)
- Financial matters (oversight, support and guidance) and reporting accounts to Synod Meeting
- Formulating budgets for approval by Synod Meeting
- Indicate need for a District Council meeting where required
- Close working with URC (Wales) Trust Company Limited
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.4. **Mission and Discipleship Board**

Membership:

Convener (*appointed by Synod*), Synod Moderator (*ex officio*), Synod Clerk (*ex officio*), Training and Development Officer (North) (*ex officio*), Transition and Training Officer (*ex officio*), Ecumenical Officer (*ex officio*), Children and Youth Development Officer (*ex officio*), representative to URC Mission Committee (*ex officio*), TLS (or successor) Co-ordinator (*ex officio*), four representatives from across the Synod (from nominations; chosen to ensure balance).

Meeting:

Quarterly

Responsible for:

- Implementation of Synod priorities
- Implementation of mission strategy
- Development of missional discipleship
- Development of Local Ministry and Mission Review programme
- Mission enabling
- Encouraging local churches to be missional communities
- Oversight of the Vision 2020 strategic framework
- Oversight of church and society issues and to encourage engagement
- Oversight of global links and partnerships
- Oversight of children, young people and families work
- Rural matters
- Written report to each Synod Meeting

4.5. **Task Groups**

Small, limited-term task groups will be convened for specific pieces of work as necessary (e.g. Big Day Out Planning Group, A More Able Church Steering Group, Ecumenical Officer Review Group, etc.).

4.6. **Synod Office Management Group**

Membership:

Synod Clerk (Convener), Office Manager (Secretary), Synod Treasurer, Trust Company Secretary.

Meeting:

As necessary

Responsible for:

- Smooth running of Synod Office
- Fabric, including health and safety
- Staffing
- Respond to matters raised by staff

4.7. **Line Managers' Meeting**

Includes:

Those in the Synod with line management responsibilities for officers and staff.

Meeting:

Half yearly

Responsible for:

- Ensuring coherence across the Synod operation in line management and employment
- Individual line managers are responsible for developing work plans, for approval by Synod Officers

11th July 2017