



CHARTER: Life & Witness Committee

Mandate

The Life and Witness Committee is a Committee of the Standing Committee

The Life and Witness Committee acts on behalf of the Presbytery within Regulation 3.1.4

Rationale

The Sydney Central Coast Presbytery seeks to create an environment where mission can flourish acknowledging that this happens primarily in the context of the congregations within its boundaries.

A core responsibility of the Presbytery is to oversight and strengthen the life and witness of the congregations within its bounds. Exercise of these responsibilities is critical to the ongoing health and vitality of congregations. When the Presbytery undertakes its role diligently and faithfully it also builds a strong working relationship between the whole Presbytery and the congregations in its care.

Responsibilities of the Life and Witness Committee

Processes

1. Ensuring that all congregations have high quality consultations as is timely, necessary and desirable to support the congregations' life and witness and considering the needs and mission of the wider church
2. Maintaining a 'master list' of past, current and prospective consultations and ensuring an agreed schedule of consultations is adhered to
3. Initiating additional or special consultations at the request of the Pastoral Relations Committee, the Presbytery Standing Committee and the Business Committee
4. Maintaining relationships and communication with other Presbytery Committees to effectively collaborate on the initiation and conduct of consultations for various reasons, and the implementation of recommendations
5. Reviewing the Consultations Manual no less than biennially
6. Regularly providing reporting to other Presbytery Committees on the planned scheduling and progress of consultations
7. Prioritising consultations according to the resources of the committee and the needs of congregations

For each consultation

1. Ensuring that membership of each Consultation team is tailored to the specific needs of the congregation
2. Liaising with Zones, and Presbytery Committees to appoint teams to conduct Consultations
3. Liaising with Zones, and Presbytery Committees to establish a Terms of Reference for each Consultation

4. Appointing a team leader (responsibilities of the team leader are set out in the Consultations Manual) and team members to conduct the consultation
5. Arranging a briefing of the team prior to the commencement of the consultation
6. Reviewing draft consultation reports to ensure that recommendations are consistent with Uniting Church Regulations and have been prepared according to the standards and expectations documented in the Consultations Manual, seeking revisions if required
7. Ensuring efficient and effective communication throughout the consultation process, including referring outcomes and action items to the relevant Presbytery Committees for action and/or follow up
8. Ensuring that throughout the process communication with the congregation is consistent and adequate, in accordance with the standards and expectations documented in the Consultations Manual
9. Ensuring that the congregations and relevant Committees/Staff receive the final consultation report and applicable recommendations
10. Requesting an update on progress from the congregation and Presbytery committees no more than 12 months from issuance of the Consultation report; evaluating responses and, if appropriate, initiate a re-visit to the congregation by the team

Delegations

1. To Initiate Life and Witness consultations according to the Regulations, Presbytery policy and as requested by Presbytery Standing Committee, Pastoral Relations Committee and Business Committee
2. To select a team leader and team members for each Consultation team
3. To declare a Life and Witness consultation is no longer a draft and that the report recommendations are consistent with Uniting Church Regulations and have been prepared according to the standards and expectations documented in the Consultations Manual

Appointment

1. Members are appointed for an 18 month term
2. Members are appointed by the Standing Committee
3. Committee is to comprise no less than five members
4. Membership of the Committee shall be drawn from Congregation members within the Presbytery and Ministers of the Presbytery according to their gift and skills
5. Committee Chair appointed by the members of the Committee
6. The Life and Witness Committee may invite additional members where appropriate but invited members are to always be fewer in number than appointed members
7. Presbytery Standing Committee has the right to remove a member of the Committee at any time

Meetings

1. To be held no less than quarterly

2. Additional meetings may be convened by the Chair according to need or if requested by two Committee members
3. Quorum shall be 50% of members plus one other member
4. Minutes and Action Log are to be prepared after every meeting
5. Report and Minutes are to be presented to the next Presbytery Standing Committee after the Committee meeting
6. A Report on the work of the Committee is to be circulated quarterly to Presbytery Standing Committee, Pastoral Relations Committee and Business Committee
7. Reports and Minutes are to be available, on request to all members of Presbytery – subject to observance of any privacy or commercial interests

Process for Review

1. Committee Charter and Delegations are to be reviewed annually by the Committee and then submitted to Presbytery Standing Committee for ratification
2. Presbytery Standing Committee has the right to amend the Charter and/or Delegations at any time
3. Presbytery to be advised of any changes to the Charter and Delegations.

Related Documents

1. The Sydney Central Coast Presbytery Life and Witness Consultation Manual (in development)
2. Uniting Church in Australia Regulations
https://assembly.uca.org.au/images/resources/Regulations_Policies/2015_Regulations-updatedSeptember2016.pdf