

## Supervision Policy

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<b>Resolutions</b>	<p>46/1. The Council receives the report.</p> <p>46/2. The Council commends the interim policy on supervision to the Conference.</p> <p>46/3. The Council directs the Connexional Team to proceed with the implementation of the recommendations in the report.</p>

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purposes of this report are:
- to share with the Council the proposed attached Interim Supervision Policy that has emerged from the supervision pilot and the training of District Chairs and conversation with the Ministries Committee;
  - to explain the recommendations of the Supervision Working Group (SWG) as reflected in the Interim Supervision Policy in the light of feedback from the supervision pilot and the training and supervision of District Chairs.
- 1.2 The Ministries Committee has been consulted on the policy issues and on the model of training and the SWG is grateful for its feedback which has been incorporated into the Interim Supervision Policy attached and into this Report.
- 1.3 This report has been shared with the Past Cases Review Implementation Group which has commended the Interim Policy.

### 2 The pilot phase 2015-17

- 2.1 In the Report of the Past Cases Review (2015) a case was made for supervision as being an important tool for addressing the weakness identified in the Methodist Church in relation to support and accountability for safe practice, with reference to a study of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP):

“Studies have demonstrated that one of the most effective safeguards within organisations or professional settings is to provide frequent, open and supportive supervision of staff.”<sup>i</sup>

The report went on to say that whilst ‘the Church is not the same as secular organisations in many respects, particularly as ministers are not employees, [but] it is difficult to see reasons why the evidence from studies such as the one referred to above do not apply. In fact the CEOP study specifically included religious organisations.’ (Past Cases Review H.1.9)

It was not argued in the 2015 Report that supervision would be a panacea that would on its own eliminate abuse from church life, but that it would be a key tool, alongside others such as a new Code of Conduct for ministers, that would help to change a culture from one which is often one of

isolated and vulnerable practice, to one of *accountability, support* and more *safety* both for ministers and for those amongst whom they work.

2.2 The SWG has worked with this imperative in mind, but also in the knowledge that whilst the PCR has brought issues of accountability, support and safe practice into sharp relief there has been a growing sense over many years of the need for structured supervision for all those engaged in pastoral work and particularly for ordained ministers – not only for the purposes of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults - but for the sake of ministerial wellbeing at a time of diminishing resources and great challenges in mission and thus for the overall good of the Church. Structured supervision is also for the sake of supported, reflective practice that is able to identify emerging challenges and discern strategies to address them within the horizon of God’s justice and love and within the purposes of the Methodist Church. The suggestion that supervision might be a key tool by which the Methodist Church might become a more effective agent of God’s mission can be traced through recent Conference reports. Of particular relevance are the following:

- What is a presbyter? (2002)
- The nature of oversight (2005)
- What is a Circuit Superintendent? (2005)
- With integrity and skill (2008)
- Pastoral Care (2011)

2.3 The approach to supervision (known as the *process of supervision*) chosen during the pilot phase was outlined in the Draft Supervision Policy as an exploratory and reflective process. Its aims were described as being:

Normative:

- To explore the practices and habitus of ministry within the horizon of God’s mission
- To ensure good practice in ministry which enables the flourishing of all and to challenge and manage any poor practice
- To safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Formative:

- To explore creative approaches to demanding issues of ministry and relationships as they arise.
- To contribute to the continuing vocational and professional development (CPD) of ministers.

Restorative:

- To ensure that the vocation and work of the minister is valued and nurtured;
- To ensure that health and well-being issues for ministers are addressed.

2.4 During the pilot phase this exploratory process of supervision was taught to those taking part in the pilot and to the District Chairs. The draft supervision policy was implemented as follows:

1. The District Chairs were supervised by externally appointed supervisors who sent the Agreed Record of the supervisions to the Secretary of the Conference.
2. The District Chairs of the Liverpool and South East Districts and the Assistant Chairs of the South East District supervised the superintendents of those districts.
3. In the circuits of the Liverpool and South East Districts some ministers were supervised by their own superintendent and some by a supernumerary minister or the superintendent of another circuit in the district with an Agreed Record being sent to their superintendent.

### 3 Learning from the pilot phase

Feedback was received from the following groups:

- Circuit ministers receiving supervision as part of the pilot (questionnaire and feedback day)
- Superintendents receiving and offering supervision as part of the pilot (questionnaire and feedback day)
- District Chairs and Assistant Chairs receiving and offering supervision as part of the pilot (regular group supervision with a member of the SWG)
- District Chairs (course evaluation of the training they received) and consultation about the Interim Supervision Policy through three separate chairs' meetings during 2016-17
- Consultation with those supervising District Chairs at two 'faculty days'.
- Consultation with a range of potential trainers during one 'train the trainers' residential

#### 3.1 The impact of the pilot on the Methodist Church as a Learning Organisation

3.1.1 The learning experience of the pilot has persuaded the SWG that it is important that the next steps of the implementation of Recommendation 7 of the Report of the PCR should be under an Interim Supervision Policy to cover the period 2017-2020 rather than under a Final Policy. This is to allow the Methodist Church to proceed by stages; to allow for consultation, feedback and learning; and to separate the period of initial implementation from the processes needed to embed supervision into the life of the Methodist Church for the long term. It is hoped that such an approach will build on the learning that has happened during the last eighteen months.

3.1.2 The proposed Interim Supervision Policy is attached to this Report and is intended to succeed the Draft Supervision Policy MC/15/86 approved by the Methodist Council in October 2015. At present it is a policy that covers initially only the implementation of supervision in the circuits and districts because those are the recommendations that can be supported by direct learning from the pilot. Further consultation is recommended before specific proposals are made about ministers in other kinds of appointments and authorised ministers, each with a suggested reporting timeline.

#### 3.2 The impact of supervision upon support and accountability for safety in ministry

3.2.1 Evidence from the pilot phase of the implementation of supervision has demonstrated that regular structured supervision has benefited those receiving supervision as circuit ministers (including superintendents) as they have described it, in the following ways:

- *A safe space to reflect; a critical appraisal of ministry*
- *It gives me a safe place to share concerns, to discuss how to handle situations and receive support and prayer.*
- *It is just good to know that after 10 years of travel, I now have someone I can share highs and low with and unpack stuff. Enabling me to work out a way forward.*
- *Helped me to understand better when I am trying to 'please' people rather than God. Good for reflecting on things with another person*
- *In personal reflection, and reflection with my supervisor, in deepening awareness of what I need to do to enable my ministry (for example to take time to be still, time out for prayer etc) and not feel guilty about that. In the realisation of what gives me energy and what does not in ministry and to have a safe space to say what does not and then able to reflect on that.*
- *It is a safe place, to share some painful experiences of ministry. This has reduced the 'chattering' conversations between staff, that may have led to misunderstanding.*

- *Enabling issues to be discussed which I would have previously kept to myself or grumbled about*
- *It allows me a safe space to reflect on where the ministry is going; talk about the impact that things are having on myself as an individual and as a minister; potentially be challenged in the ways that I am working; to be accountable to someone set apart from the situation.*
- *Confidential sharing lifts a heaviness that normally is carried on your daily routine*
- *It helps me think through the issues I face and not to feel so overwhelmed by them or think I'm useless if things are challenging.*
- *Knowing I am being listened to by my assistant chair in a safe space and regularly.*
- *I get time to reflect with another practitioner about what I do and what impulses operate as I minister in the circuit context*
- *I feel more confident in my role*
- *Better relationship with my chair who has a better understanding of my work*
- *Good to have a regularly scheduled place to unload 'stuff' from ministry; group sessions are also helpful to hear from others*
- *Allows me to focus on aspects that I may not have given thought to otherwise*
- *An opportunity to reflect with someone I trust and whose opinion I value. Group supervision enables reflection with others who face similar situations.*
- *Given space to reflect as a reflective practitioner*
- *It has helped me reflect on very practical issues, with a skilled practitioner, which meant that the time I would have spent reflecting (on my own) was used in a way that bore far more fruit*
- *It provides a place to discuss issues*

Only 4/35 respondents made comments reflecting supervisory relationships that had not been as positive for reasons that related variously to the skill level of the supervisor, the availability of the supervisor and the general disposition towards this use of time in the case of one supervisee.

- *(I haven't had any.)*
- *We are still at the early stage, I hope as we progress things will become clear*
- *Not much*
- *Not much*

In summary, evaluative feedback from the pilot indicates that the majority of participants felt that the supervision they received reflected the definition of supervision outlined in the Draft Policy. More than 4/5 circuit ministers responding felt, in the light of the pilot, that supervision was highly important to them.

- 3.2.2 Analysing the responses above it seems that in terms of helping to change a culture from one which is often one of isolated and vulnerable practice, isolated practice is certainly being tackled for many people through supervision and we believe that this is already reducing the instances of vulnerable practice as difficult issues are explored, as stress is relieved and as shared strategies are rehearsed within an environment of trust and collegiality. There is also evidence that anxieties are being more constructively addressed through supervision than through the mechanisms previously used and that this is both releasing energy for ministry and improving team relationships.
- 3.2.3 In the judgement of the SWG the evidence of the pilot phase suggests that the supervision offered has been effective in meeting the *Restorative* and *Formative* functions outlined in the Draft Policy and as such is helping the Conference to express its duty of care to ordained ministers as part of the Covenant that exists between them and the Conference.
- 3.2.4 In terms of the *Normative* functions whereby supervision demonstrably contributes to accountability as well as to support and learning there is evidence that supervisors are using their

new skills to help ministers to give an account of their work in some detail in supervision and some evidence of practice being examined in the light of appropriate theological and ethical norms. There is not very much evidence that explicit questions that help ministers to identify and manage risks in their work and in their ministry contexts are being asked. However, the careful attention to boundaries and roles that is needed for supervision to be effective in offering an exploratory and reflective space, even within a context of oversight, itself reinforces the attitudes and skills needed for the safe practice of ministry in which confidentiality is not confused with secrecy and in which power is transparently and responsibly exercised by all concerned.

3.2.5 The Supervision Working Group believes that the *process of supervision* introduced is robust enough to allow for sufficient focus on accountability and safety through its *Normative* dimension. Some steps have already been taken to strengthen this aspect of the work through changes to the training offered to District Chairs and planned for the future to ensure that in the work going forward we monitor the ways in which we are changing the culture to be more attentive to vulnerable and risky practice and to identifying bullying and potentially abusive behaviour at an early stage in our churches and the communities we serve:

- Attention to risk identification and its management through supervision in the training of the District Chairs and the materials for future training
- Explicit attention to risk in the process of supervision being taught and to the right of both the supervisor and the supervisee to raise issues for discussion in supervision in order ensure that the whole of the ministry of the supervisee receives attention during the course of a year.
- The integration of the proposed Code of Conduct for ministers into supervision as part of the horizon within which past practice is reviewed and future practice shaped
- Taking on board feedback from the pilot material on bullying and harassment called, 'Dignity and Respect'
- Attention to the *model of implementation* of supervision to be adopted by the Interim Supervision Policy, particularly with reference to the question of how supervision contributes to oversight, as focused in the questions 'Who supervises?' and 'Why should my minister in oversight or anyone else receive a record of my supervision?'

### **3.3 The impact of the pilot upon the perceived relationship between supervision and oversight**

3.3.1 The Draft Supervision Policy argues that that supervision is properly understood as a feature of oversight and is a way of ensuring that ministry is accountable. One of the findings of the pilot is that what has been appreciated about the provision of supervision for ordained ministers is the way in which it has been an expression of the Conference's duty of care as part of its covenant relationship with those in full connexion such that ministers feel more supported and valued and equipped by being offered time for reflection on their work and vocation through formal supervision.

**The new interim supervision policy therefore places emphasis on the duty of care of the Conference expressed in supervision as well as on the accountability of ministers expressed in supervision.**

3.3.2 A significant question has arisen from a variety of quarters about the effect of ministers in oversight supervising their own colleagues. There are important questions to tease out here that are both ecclesiological and practical.

3.3.3 Those who supervised colleagues as well as receiving supervision themselves (superintendent ministers) made the following observations about the value of supervising their own colleagues:

- *They know they have a space and time to talk*
- *I feel we have grown closer together*
- *Better understanding of their issues and them as people.*
- *Relationships are easier and there seems to be a deeper level of trust*
- *I know the issues better*
- *Those being supervised seem genuinely grateful for the opportunity to be listened to intently and with purpose*
- *Better understanding*
- *Have got to know each other better*

3.3.4 However, some superintendents raised the issue that formal supervision amongst their colleagues introduced a sense of hierarchy/line management that felt alien to the role of superintendent:

- *It creates a line management structure and a more hierarchical status of the superintendent.*
- *It does put me in a 'different' category -- harder to 'just be friends'*
- *It implies a hierarchy*
- *I think it is setting me apart from colleagues so I am seen as different and hierarchical figure when I just want to be one among equals but with particular duties.*

A significant minority of superintendents thus felt that supervision is changing the relationship between them and their colleagues. The features of supervision that gave rise to this feeling were:

- the use of Agreed Records, particularly where these were being passed to a superintendent when the supervision had taken place with an alternate supervisor;
- the 'one way' use of the time, meaning that the Superintendent did not share with colleagues in the same way that they were being asked to share;
- the heightened sense of accountability in noting issues for referral and being alert to fitness to practice issues as well as safeguarding issues.

Other superintendents expressed different views where the formal practice of supervision was building on existing patterns of relationship: *There have been no negative effects. We were doing this less formally in staff meeting and one to one meetings anyway.*

3.3.5 The response of the Supervision Working Group to this feedback has been:

- In consultation with the Ministries Committee, to revisit the Standing Orders<sup>ii</sup> that relate to the oversight of circuit ministers and their ministry to see whether any change in our ecclesiology is implied by any expectation that superintendents supervise their own colleagues or receive Agreed Records of their supervision. Our conclusion has been that it is not the case that any change in understanding is implied though we accept that a change in practice draws this understanding into sharp relief in ways that some ministers may find uncomfortable or new. In this sense supervision is working to highlight the need for greater accountability in ministry that the PCR identified.
- To note that it is in fact because superintendents and District Chairs/The Warden of the Diaconal Order do already have responsibilities for the practice, fidelity and character of their colleagues that some ministers feel reluctant to share difficulties in supervision with them
- To identify a training need in relation to the roles of superintendents and to the way in which their responsibilities differ from those of their circuit colleagues.

3.3.6 Two further pieces of feedback from superintendents raise another important issue about the relationship between the oversight authority of the superintendent/Chair of District/Warden of the MDO and the exploratory space of supervision.

- *Trying to keep information shared in supervision separate in my mind from other things to make sure I hold confidentiality properly*
- *I find it hard to have to look for solutions myself rather than receiving advice - especially as I am supervised by people who I would in other circumstances go to for advice*

It is clearly the case that where superintendents are supervising their own colleagues a set of boundary issues need careful attention if supervision is not to end up as simply a compliance exercise or an opportunity to instruct colleagues on procedures. Oversight responsibilities include responsibilities for compliance (ensuring a range of things); and responsibilities for advising colleagues about how to achieve things. However, the supervisory space is not primarily for these (proper) things, but primarily for the purpose of reflection on practice.

3.3.7 The view of the Supervision Working Group is that the most robust form of safety in ministry will arise from the best quality reflection on practice that can be facilitated in supervision; this will involve ministers giving an account of their work in detail and, over time, in rounded enough way to give confidence to the supervisor/minister in oversight that they are working safely and effectively. In our view this kind of reflection is the primary supervising activity. The oversight responsibility is to ensure that good enough supervision is happening and that the issues identified in supervision that need formal action outside the supervision context are appropriately referred. We suggest therefore that it is more important that good enough supervision happens than that it is carried out by the minister in oversight. Where supervision is given by someone who is not the minister in oversight (as currently in the case of District Chairs) it is important that their ministers in oversight receive the Agreed Record of the supervisions in order to be able to oversee that work and so be accountable for their oversight role.

**The Interim Supervision Policy therefore does not describe supervision *as* oversight, but as making a contribution to oversight.**

**The Interim Supervision Policy requires ministers in oversight to ensure that supervision happens but does not require them, by virtue of their office, to supervise their own colleagues – though many in practise may do so.**

**The Interim Supervision Policy suggests that supervision is a means by which ordained ministers express their duty of accountability to the Conference (just as it is a means by which the Conference expresses its duty of care to ordained ministers).**

3.3.8 Given the comments made in the pilot feedback about the ways in which some ministers might be reluctant to bring some issues to their minister in oversight for fear of being thought inadequate in the role or for fear of consequences in terms of stationing; and given the reservations expressed in various quarters about whether all ministers in oversight would necessarily be naturally gifted supervisors, the SWG did consider proposing a model of supervision whereby no-one would be supervised by their own minister in oversight. This course has not been taken because:

- Pilot feedback has identified some benefits of supervision happening within the team
- Some chairs/superintendents have expressly asked to be able to continue in this pattern
- Some feedback suggests that there are time savings in supervising one's own team whereas supervising ministers from other circuits would be all in addition to circuit oversight responsibilities.

3.3.9 Where ministers in oversight do supervise their own colleagues it is important that issues of dual role and the handling of power are carefully attended to as highlighted in the comment about confidentiality at 3.3.6 above. It will also be important to ensure that a nominated third party has sight of the Agreed Records of supervision in order to ensure that there is not collusion or inappropriate use of power happening through supervision. To help add safety to the supervision where the details of what happens in it need not be passed on to any third party the Agreed Records of supervision be slim-lined; those issues to be recorded should only be those that need to leave the supervision room for action to be taken. An amended Agreed Record is appended.

**The Interim Supervision Policy therefore permits three variant models of supervision implementation so that districts can determine the best model(s) to use, taking into account local factors.**

**The Interim Supervision Policy includes a slimmed down Agreed Record that records information necessary only for the purposes of oversight.**

**The Interim Supervision Policy requires Agreed Records always to be seen by a third party for the sake of the monitoring of good practice in supervision.**

### **3.4 The impact of the pilot on the use of ordained ministers' time**

3.4.1 A key concern raised by many has been the impact upon the time supervision takes, especially for those supervising colleagues. Superintendent ministers from the pilot districts expressed their concerns in the following ways:

- *Reduced number of staff meeting so had big impact on team*
- *Time constraints*
- *TIME!! My sessions are with my District Chair and the office is in Horley. Each journey takes out a significant chunk of each day as the M20/M25 links aren't good. We are going to try Skype but I'm not sure I will benefit quite so much from that mechanism.*
- *Only finding time and working out what I cannot do.*
- *Travelling distance means an least an extra hour or two is taken from my diary for each one-on-one session*
- *Time constraints!*
- *Time demands - especially when travelling is factored in - though I would not want to do it by skype*
- *As you might expect finding time is the most difficult part of the process*

In order to deal with this some superintendents felt that fewer longer sessions would make better use of time; some felt that some use of skype could be made; some felt that it was more a question of addressing the overall workload of the superintendent; some felt that the real issue was adjusting to new routines.

**In responding to the time concern the Interim Supervision Policy recommends that:**

- **That no minister should supervise more than 8 people including lay employees**
- **That 6 x 1.5 hr sessions be the minimum requirement rather than 10 x 1 hour**
- **That skype might be allowed for some sessions by mutual consent**
- **That Districts have the freedom to choose a model of implementation that makes use of the gifts of others including lay people and supernumerary ministers**

3.4.2 It is also recognised that the shape of superintendency might need some consideration after further experience of formal supervision as part of the role though it is noted that the Conference Report,

What is a Circuit Superintendent? already gives superintendents the responsibility for ensuring that all their colleagues are appropriately and adequately supervised.

- 3.4.3 A common observation about the implementation of supervision has been that allowing group supervision to be the predominant model would save time on individual supervision. Concerns about the effectiveness of group supervision amongst many who have participated in it during the pilot have led the SWG to propose that group supervision not be used as a prime means of supervision during the interim period although staff meetings and peer groups are encouraged to transfer the skills they are learning from one to one supervision into those settings.

**The Interim Supervision Policy does not permit the use of group supervision instead of 1:1 supervisions.**

### **3.5 The impact of the pilot upon future supervision training**

- 3.5.1 The first impact of the pilot was the feedback from Superintendents in the pilot districts that they would have preferred to learn supervision by being in supervision before needing to supervise in addition to their initial training. For this reason budget was sought for chairs' training and supervision to be implemented during this pilot phase. For this reason also the timeline below suggests a similar pattern.
- 3.5.2 It has been noted above that the need for training specifically in relation to the handling of risk led to modifications to the training between the pilot training and that for District Chairs.
- 3.5.3 The training of District Chairs has increasingly paid attention to issues of dual role and the handling of power in supervision and outside it as the implications of the model of implementation have been grasped. This will need to continue into future training.
- 3.5.4 Feedback from the District Chairs has expressed relief at the quality and professionalism of the training offered to them and an anxiety that this quality of training should be maintained for others in order to ensure that the aims of supervision are met and the considerable investment of staff time justified. This will imply the use of professional supervision trainers; the maintenance of a high staff ratio to allow for accelerated learning in supervised triads; 2 x 2 day training events. The various measures needed to achieve quality assurance going forward is a large topic that is treated separately below

## **4 Why invest in supervision?**

- 4.1 It is clear that resourcing its ordained ministers and others to engage skilfully in exploratory and reflective supervision will be a major investment for the Methodist Church. It seems important therefore, before itemising the resources needed, to summarise the outcomes intended for such investment in order that the reasons for proceeding are transparent and in order to provide criteria whereby the effectiveness of the implementation of the Interim Supervision Policy can be measured in 2020.
- 4.2 On the basis of the pilot feedback we expect that a Methodist Church in which the Interim Supervision Policy has been implemented will demonstrate:
- 4.2.1 reduced symptoms of isolation and stress amongst its ordained ministers (such as sickness and vulnerable practice) through a realistic and regular structure of collegiality and accountability in which ministers are regularly sharing the detail of their practice and being listened to

- 4.2.2 a more intentional use of ordained ministers' time through the opportunity that supervision provides for ministers to think theologically and practically about priorities
- 4.2.3 a more robust handling of risks in church life including those relating to safeguarding through explicit attention to risk identification and risk management in supervision
- 4.2.4 more safety for everyone in church life through heightened awareness in supervision of boundaries, expected conduct, role clarity and the use of power
- 4.2.5 more safety for everyone in church life through the opportunity in supervision to explore the unconscious factors that sometimes undermine best intentions
- 4.2.6 better communication as those in oversight become more aware, through supervising others, of the challenges being faced on the ground
- 4.2.7 less anxiety in the face of change as ministers share responsibility for risks, priorities and hard decisions with their supervisors
- 4.2.8 clearer lines of accountability in which the responsibilities and roles of ministers in oversight are better understood and are routinely operated in practice

## **5 Risk Assessment and Quality Assurance**

### 5.1 Risks

- 5.1.1 One consequence of failing to implement Recommendation 7 of the PCR in a timely and robust way is that opportunities to address the issues identified above will be missed.
- 5.1.2 In addition there is the risk that the Methodist Church will be seen as renegeing on public promises made at the 2015 Conference to learn the lessons of the Past Cases Review.
- 5.1.3 There are a number of factors that could put the implementation of Recommendation 7 at risk:
  - Failing to identify, appoint or release appropriately qualified and briefed training teams who can inspire confidence and assure the quality of those being trained in the circuits and districts
  - Failing to assess the level at which trained supervisors are operating and allowing people to practise who are not appropriately skilled
  - Failing to appoint an appropriately qualified and briefed person/organisation to oversee the implementation
  - Failing to continue to learn from the experience of the implementation so that any final policy is not properly responsive to the context of the MCB
  - Failing to fund the work at a realistic level
  - Failures in communication between different bodies and individuals whose work is vital to the implementation

### 5.2 Quality Assurance

It is clear that the outcomes of supervision can only be attained if the quality of the supervision offered is of a high standard. The SWG is proposing a number of ways in which quality can be assured:

- 5.2.1 High quality bespoke training is offered on the model of that offered to district chairs and that is responsive to ongoing learning. This will require one paid professional supervision trainer per

training course and five Methodist facilitators drawn from amongst the DMLN, other connexional/district roles, and other suitably identified volunteers who can be seconded or are able to offer their time free of charge. A total of 30-32 people involved in the training will be needed to meet a two year timetable for the main roll out. This would require the teams to be fully briefed to take part in the training between July and December 2017 and an average commitment of 2.5 days per month per team member from January 2018-June 2019. Such a frequency of engagement in the training would be desirable in order to keep the teams cohesive and the work fresh in their minds. Using a high proportion (26/32) of people already paid by the Methodist Church or able to offer their services free will help to contain costs.

- 5.2.2 Those nominated by Districts to supervise are not automatically allowed to do so but are assessed for their suitability following bespoke training and do not supervise if they are not considered competent to do so.
- 5.2.3 It is proposed that the process for approval follows the pattern used with District Chairs and consists of three components:
- successful completion of training and assessment by members of a connexionally appointed delivery team
  - endorsement of fitness to practice: by their own supervisor after at least six months 1:1 supervision/reference from an external supervisor/evidence of supervisory work provided by a professional qualification or accreditation e.g. APSE
  - where the supervisor is nominated as an alternate to a minister in oversight, this nomination for training and assessment should happen with the agreement of the District Chair.
- 5.2.4 Supervision of supervisory work will be carried out and evidenced through Agreed Records.
- 5.2.5 A mechanism will be put in place to monitor the work of supervisors through the appointment of a Nominated Third Party who will receive the Agreed Records in cases where the minister in oversight is the supervisor.
- 5.2.6 Highly skilled external supervision continues to be available to senior officers including District Chairs, and on an occasional basis to anyone dealing with the kind of issue that it would be toxic to explore in a Methodist context and budget provision should be made for this for the period 2017-20.
- 5.2.7 A skilled and experienced Supervision Reference Group will be appointed by the Conference to succeed the Supervision Working Group in order to oversee this crucial implementation period of work with a remit to:
- Monitor implementation
  - Identify policy gaps
  - Bring a report to the Council of January 2019 concerning the supervision of ordained ministers in the connexional team and the Conference Office; ministers in appointments outside the control of the church; authorised ministers.
  - Bring a report to the Conference of 2020 reviewing the implementation of the policy and making further recommendations in the light of experience concerning the supervision of ordained people, the use of group supervision and the supervision of lay people with significant pastoral responsibilities.
- 5.2.8 A new post will be created within the Connexional Team for the period 2017-20 in order that the following key responsibilities can be discharged:

- 1 To advocate for supervision and support its development as a core practice within the MCB
  - a. To field enquiries about supervision from within and beyond the MCB
  - b. To identify and co-ordinate a group of advocates for supervision who can respond to invitations to brief groups about the policy and answer questions
  - c. To identify and support those who should develop a ministry specialism in this area to develop a broader connexional resource.
- 2 To co-ordinate the supervision of district chairs and other senior officers who receive external supervision
- 3 To oversee the initial training of approximately 400 supervisors according to the training model developed and approved by the Supervision Working Group including:
  - a. The putting together of appropriately trained and resourced training teams to staff the 50 training events needed.
  - b. The putting together of regional learning groups to attend those events
  - c. The provision and distribution of approved training materials to those leading and attending events
  - d. The monitoring of course evaluations and the taking of appropriate actions in relation to the quality of training offered
  - e. Involvement in training teams as appropriate to training experience
  - f. The convening of 2 faculty days per year for those offering supervision training on behalf of the MCB
- 4 To work with the District Chairs on the implementation of the interim policy in their districts, including:
  - a. Receiving and discussing implementation plans for each District
  - b. Identifying resources and training needs for each District before and after initial training of Superintendents and Alternates
  - c. Providing support to the District Chair in briefing the ministers of the district about that implementation
  - d. Supporting the District Chair in the resolving of difficulties arising in relation to that implementation
  - e. The identification of appropriately trained, resourced and approved supervisors for probationer ministers
- 5 To manage the budget for supervision and to identify budget lines for the next year's budget as part of the connexional budget making process
- 6 To work with the Supervision Reference Group to:
  - a. Monitor implementation
  - b. Identify policy gaps
  - c. Bring a report to the Council of January 2019 concerning the supervision of ordained ministers in the connexional team and the Conference Office; ministers in appointments outside the control of the church; authorised ministers.
  - d. Bring a report to the Conference of 2020 reviewing the implementation of the policy and making further recommendations in the light of experience concerning the supervision of ordained people, the use of group supervision and the supervision of lay people with significant pastoral responsibilities.

## 6 Timeline for implementation

Throughout this report the suggestion has been that the period governed by the Interim Supervision Policy should span three connexional years: 2017-2020.

An indicative training timeline for 2018-19 has been shared for consultation with the District Chairs, the key features of which are:

- 2017-18      Training teams are formed and briefed for working together. Some work has already been done on team formation and briefing but a further event is needed for a further 15 people.
- The pilot districts (Group A) complete their Supervision Implementation Plans and move from the Draft Policy to the Interim Policy with the support of some top-up training and the assessment of those nominated to supervise.
- Other nominated districts (Group B) who are ready to begin this work present their Supervision Implementation Plans and training events are organised to train their nominated supervisors and to brief any superintendents who are not intending to offer supervision.
- Those who will be supervising others enter into supervision with chairs and others already trained.
- Six months later those approved to supervise begin supervising their circuit colleagues
- Groups C and D submit their Supervision Implementation Plans so that sufficient nominated supervisors to act as alternates for District Chairs can be identified and trained.
- 2018-19      Groups C and D follow suit meaning that by the 2019 Conference all ordained ministers in the circuits will be receiving supervision. There is some leeway for slippage and to work within the constraints of the training team - particularly those who are part of the Learning Network.
- 2019-20      Following a Report to the Methodist Council of January 2019 plans will be made for the training of those to supervise ordained ministers in connexional and other appointments. The training and supervision of those intending to supervise will be undertaken in the year 2019-20 with the aim that by the time of the 2020 Conference all ordained ministers will have been in supervision for six months.

## Interim Supervision Policy 2017-2020

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Scope

This Interim Supervision Policy provides a framework for and outline of the requirements for supervision for all ordained ministers in the active work in order to ensure that there is greater accountability and support for ministerial practice. This policy is intended to include Chairs of District, all ministers appointed to circuit and district appointments and supernumeraries undertaking roles under SO 792(2). The policy will be implemented in the districts according to the timeline set out in Section 6 of the Report from the Supervision Working Group with the intention that all ordained ministers appointed to the circuits and districts should be in supervision by the Conference of 2019.

Within the lifetime of the policy it is envisaged that following further consultation supervision will be extended to apply in an appropriate form to ordained ministers in the Connexional Team, including those in the Conference Office, to ministers in appointments outside the control of the church and to authorised ministers. This policy does not currently extend to lay employees in pastoral roles but districts and circuits are encouraged to explore ways of achieving this as soon as practicable.

It is acknowledged that implementing this policy is a major undertaking. For this reason it is an Interim Supervision Policy that is proposed in order to allow time for supervision to be experienced by all ordained ministers before a further audit is taken and final recommendations are made. It is anticipated, for example, that further work will be needed on the future shape of superintendent ministry as a result of the implementation of this policy. It is hoped that a more extensive use of group supervision than is recommended here might be possible once there is more experience and expertise within the connexion of the processes and methods appropriate to it.

#### 1.2 What kind of supervision?

Whilst the word supervision has many different meanings and usages, supervision as it is being adopted by the Methodist Church is understood as an exploratory and reflective process in which one or more ministry practitioners meet together with a trained, resourced and approved supervisor to reflect on their vocation and practice. The intention of such regular and focused reflection upon practice is to support a change of culture in the life of the church from one which is often one of isolated and vulnerable practice, to one of accountability, support and more safety for ministers and for those amongst whom they work.

Whilst this supervision policy has arisen directly out of the recommendations of the Past Cases Review of 2015 there has been a growing sense over many years of the need for structured supervision for all those engaged in pastoral work and particularly for ordained ministers because of the responsibilities they carry. Structured supervision is now being introduced for deacons and presbyters across the church as a realistic expression of the covenant between ordained ministers and the Conference. This covenant implies a duty of care on behalf of the Conference, and a willingness on the part of those ordained for their ministry and character to be overseen by those appointed by the Conference to do so as already set out in Standing Orders.

The experience of those who have reflected on the impact of the supervision they received during the pilot phase of the implementation is that it has operated as both a redemptive structure - a practice that shapes the encounters and interactions that happen within it in ways that promote human health and wellbeing in the light of God's self-revelation (not only for those present but for those amongst whom ministers work)<sup>iii</sup> - and as a means of grace<sup>iv</sup> in which God's transforming presence may be encountered. Further information is offered about the findings from the pilot in the SWG Report.

### 1.3 The functions of supervision

Supervision in the Methodist Church, then, has three main functions:

- to support the minister in their vocation and practice and its development;
- to safeguard the interests of those amongst whom ministry is practised including those of children and vulnerable adults;
- to ensure that the ministry offered in the name of the Methodist Church is collegially and accountably reflected upon in the light of God's mission and the purposes of the Methodist Church.

Effective supervision in this context rests on three pillars<sup>v</sup>:

#### **Normative:**

- Shared theological reflection on the practices and vocation of ministry within the horizon of God's mission and within the Methodist Church's code of conduct;
- The shared identification of risks to self and others and the identification of steps to ameliorate those risks.

#### **Formative:**

- Support for life-long learning, formation and development in ministry through shared reflection;
- The exploration of creative approaches to demanding issues of ministry and relationships as they arise.

#### **Restorative:**

- Ensuring that the vocation and work of the minister is shared, valued and nurtured;
- Ensuring that that health and wellbeing issues for ministers are addressed.

### 1.4 The process of each supervision

Whilst exploratory supervision draws on many generic skills - like active listening - that can be transferred, it is a particular discipline that requires training and practice. The process of supervision adopted under this policy is presented in summary as the Greenwich Foot Tunnel Process<sup>vi</sup>. This picture offers a structure for supervision and a way of conceptualising the journey of supervision that echoes John Wesley's approach to pastoral visiting, involving constant prayer (before, during and at its conclusion) and a series of key questions to be asked. Training and assessment by a process approved by the Supervision Reference Group will be required of all those nominated to supervise as part of this policy in order to assure the quality of the supervisory experience for supervisees and to ensure that supervision meets the desired outcomes.

Each supervision should provide opportunity for:

- An update on agreed actions from previous supervision.
- Attention to risk in relation to potential harm to self or others (whether or not this becomes the focus of the session).
- The recording of explicit actions in relation to safeguarding, fitness to practice and any other matter for referral

Over time a series of supervisions should provide for rounded attention to the whole ministry practice of the supervisee including:

- The vocation and vision of ministry of the practitioner
- The minister's aims and priorities in the ministry context
- Key relationships in the ministry context and the minister's approach to them

- The health, resilience and well-being of the minister
- Equality and diversity issues.
- Learning, development and support needs
- The supervisory work in which the minister is engaged both under this policy and more informally

Issues for exploration in supervision can be raised by either the supervisor or the supervisee, and may be drawn to the attention of either by the minister in oversight if he or she is not the supervisor.

### 1.5 Supervision and Oversight

Supervision in the Methodist Church is being introduced as a collegial and accountable process that is supportive of life-long learning in ministry and is a realistic means by which Christians in ministry can 'watch over one another in love' for the sake of everyone involved.

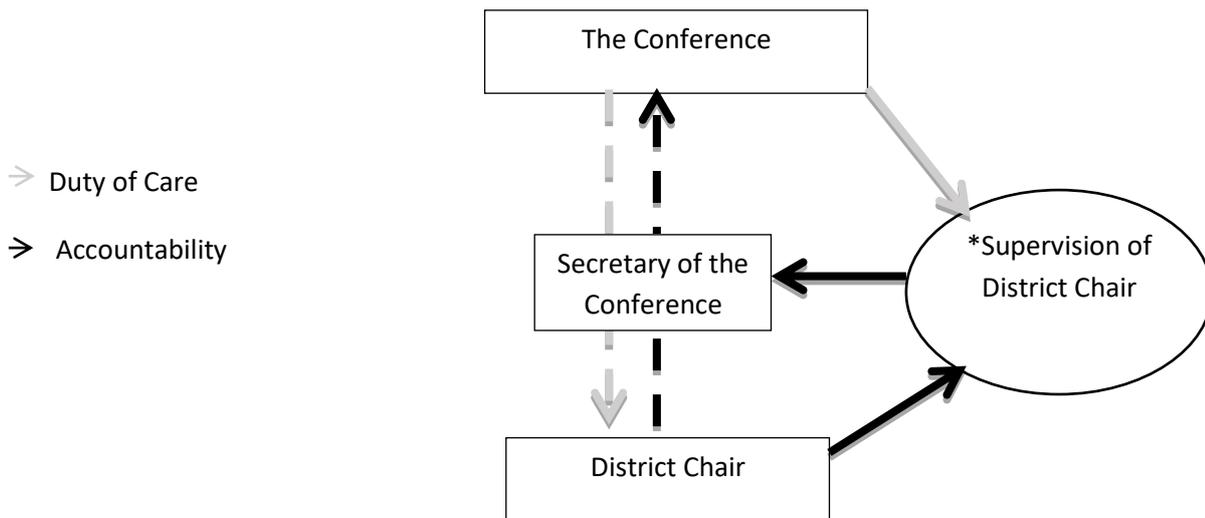
This 'watching over one another' is the means by which the members of the body of Christ remain true and faithful to the calling of the Church. In the British Methodist context it is a corporate and shared activity undertaken by the Conference and by groups and individuals working on behalf of the Conference that is commonly referred to as 'oversight'.

Oversight in the circuits and districts is exercised corporately by bodies like circuit meetings and church councils. At the same time ordained ministers have particular responsibilities for the oversight of the life of the church. This is particularly visible in the roles of Superintendent Ministers and District Chairs/the Warden of the MDO who are to oversee the work of the circuits, and the character and fidelity of ordained ministers, respectively.<sup>vii</sup>

Ministers with such oversight responsibilities are to ensure that those they oversee receive regular, structured supervision according to this policy. It is not necessarily the case that every ordained minister will receive supervision from their minister in oversight. It is necessarily the case, however, that all ministers in oversight will receive Agreed Records of all supervisions, stating the topics covered and recording any issues for referral that relate to safeguarding, to fitness to practice or to any structured support that should be considered to enable the minister to function effectively. Ministers in oversight, whether or not they are in a particular instance, the supervisor, also have the responsibility to ensure that issues of importance that they are aware of are brought to the attention of the minister concerned for exploration in supervision.

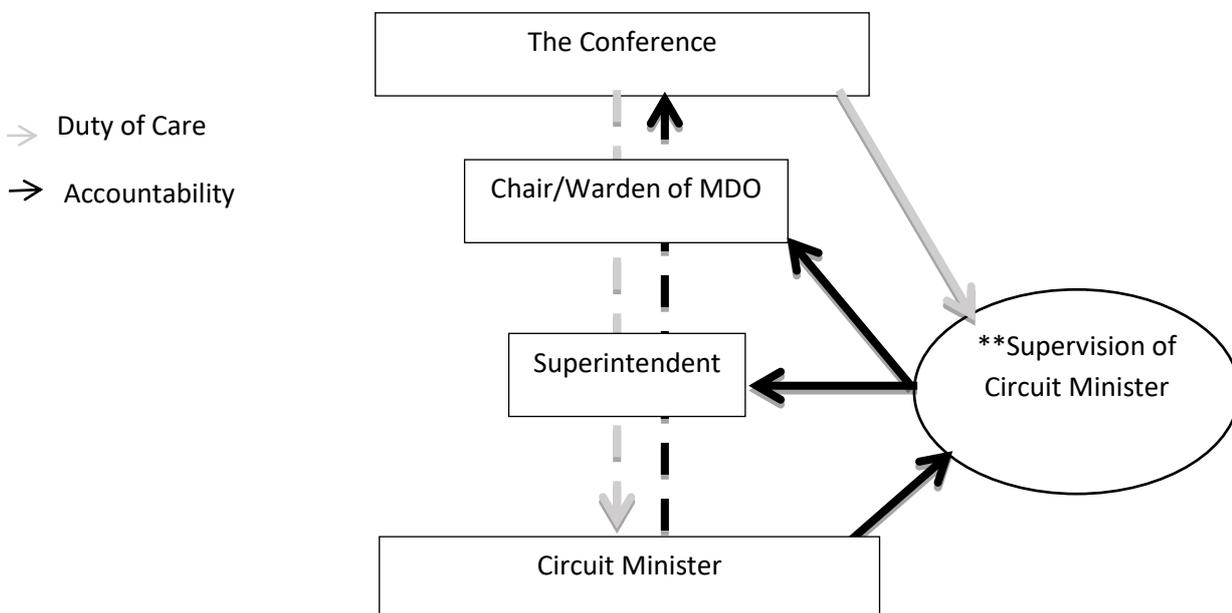
By this means supervision is intended as a contribution to effective oversight. Its main contribution is through the open exploration of the work of the ordained minister, providing support, collegiality and the broader and deeper perspectives that come from intentional and shared reflection and discernment. In its restorative and formative functions it is an expression of the duty of care that the Conference has for those with whom it has entered into a covenant. In its formative and normative functions it is a means of accountability for all ordained ministers and a contribution to the processes by which the Methodist Church oversees the ministry exercised in its name. To be accountable through supervision is literally to share an account of what is happening in ministry (like the apostles in Mark 6.30 who after they had been sent out gathered around Jesus and 'told him all that they had done and taught') at a sufficient level of detail and, over time, in a sufficiently rounded way, for a supervisor /minister in oversight to be confident in the practice, self-awareness and wellbeing of the minister concerned. This is not about ensuring perfect practice from perfect practitioners. It is about ensuring good-enough practice amongst well-enough supported practitioners.

**Figure 1: Diagram of Oversight and Supervision in relation to the office of District Chair**



\*Those supervising District Chairs are approved external supervisors. Their responsibilities are to provide exploratory supervision to the Warden of the Diaconal Order and to the District Chairs, that is normative, formative and restorative, and to report to the Secretary of the Conference, by way of an Agreed Record, key issues that belong in the realm of oversight.

**Figure 2: Diagram of Oversight and Supervision in relation to the office of a Circuit Minister**



\*\*Those supervising circuit ministers may either be their own superintendents or another ordained minister or suitably qualified and approved supervisor. Their responsibilities are to provide exploratory supervision to circuit ministers, that is normative, formative and restorative, and to report to the superintendent, by way of an Agreed Record, key issues that belong in the realm of oversight.

## 2 Implementing Supervision in Circuits and Districts

### 2.1 Who will be approved to supervise?

Whilst it will not necessarily be the case that every District Chair or superintendent will act as a formal supervisor under this policy, it will often be the case that these are the officers best placed to do so. Future appointments of District Chairs, superintendent ministers and other ministers in oversight should bear this in mind as part of discernment and selection. In most districts and in some circuits it will be necessary for additional supervisors to be appointed to share in this work. It is not recommended that any supervisor should undertake a one to one supervisory or line management relationship with more than eight people. This includes the supervision of ministerial colleagues and the line management of lay employees.

Because supervision involves a significant exercise of power on the part of the supervisor and the appropriate handling of Agreed Records not only by all supervisors but all ministers in oversight, bespoke training will be offered to all District Chairs, superintendent ministers and nominated supervisors. Only those who are suitably trained and assessed will be approved to supervise under this policy.

### 2.2 Handling the relationship between supervision and oversight

Whilst this Interim Supervision Policy allows for some local flexibility resulting in a connexional pattern of supervision in which some will be supervised by their minister in oversight and others not, consistency will be expressed through the embedding of the following principles:

- Anyone who supervises will be in supervision with a Methodist Church (MCB) approved supervisor who has either completed the approved training and been assessed as ready to practice, or who has the qualifications to act as a professional pastoral supervisor and who has signed a contract to supervise under this policy.
- A covenant will be made between the supervisor and the minister to ensure that the boundaries of the supervision space are understood and respected by both parties.
- The supervision process shall be exploratory and happen as far as possible in an atmosphere of trust, where normative as well as formative and restorative dimensions of the work can be explored without fear of presumptive action being taken by any minister in oversight. Any action to be taken by the minister in oversight that has arisen from a discussion in supervision should be recorded on the Agreed Record (this is true whether or not the minister in oversight is acting as supervisor in order that appropriate boundaries for the supervisory space are maintained).
- Where such trust is not possible an alternative supervision arrangement should be considered with the approval of the appropriate district/connexional officer and any such arrangement noted on the district supervision plan.
- A minister who already receives external supervision may apply to continue in this arrangement provided that:
  - The supervisor is suitably qualified and insured
  - The supervisor agrees a contract with the Methodist Church to supervise according to this policy
  - The minister in oversight is in agreement
  - The expense is borne locally either by the minister or by the circuit/district
  - The arrangement is noted on the district supervision plan
- Agreed Records should only contain the information necessary for oversight responsibilities to be exercised, recording

- That the supervision has happened
  - A list of the topics covered
  - Any issues of risk/safeguarding named
  - Any issues to be referred outside the supervision process i.e. of which the minister in oversight and/or another party needs to be aware or upon which the minister in oversight needs to act.
- Anything on the Agreed Record can be appropriately raised by the minister in oversight with their colleague.
  - Anything which the minister in oversight, or the nominated third party, notes has not been covered in the Agreed Records can be referred by them or brought to the supervision. For example, if safeguarding has not been considered for some time.
  - Nothing should be written on the Agreed Record that could identify a third party.
  - Agreed Records are to be kept according to the provisions of the data protection act as sensitive documents. They are not confidential as:
    - A copy will be routinely sent to the minister in oversight/nominated third party
    - Copies are to be passed on to a new supervisor when either the supervisor or the minister moves on.
    - Copies are available for use in other formal processes e.g. a safeguarding enquiry; a competence process; a complaints process.
  - Beyond those matters recorded on the Agreed Record the supervision is confidential to the supervisor and the minister concerned except that the supervisor is expected to take issues arising to their own supervisor for reflection. This is a safeguard for all concerned and would not require the disclosure of names or places.
  - There should be no closed loops that might allow any inappropriate pressurizing of ministers through supervision by those in oversight – this should be monitored in the supervision of those supervising and through the appointment of a Nominated Third Party to receive the Agreed Record. In the case of those not being supervised by their minister in oversight the Agreed Record will go to the minister in oversight. Where the minister in oversight is the supervisor an appropriate officer should be appointed to receive and monitor the supervisory process (this person should be named in the District Supervision Implementation Plan).
  - Oversight is also maintained by ensuring that a report of the supervisory process goes annually to the minister in oversight *and* the lay representative in the MDR process and a report of the development outcomes goes from the MDR to the supervisor for implementation and monitoring. Suitable proformas will be provided.

### 2.3 How will the pattern of supervision be determined for each District/Circuit?

Under this policy each district will need to complete a Supervision Implementation Plan. This document should be completed in consultation with the Superintendents in the District and with the connexional officer appointed to oversee this work. An approved plan will articulate:

- 1 The normative pattern of supervision for those in circuit and district appointments
- 2 An appropriate plan for the supervision of ministers in appointments outside the control of the church
- 3 The names of those nominated to supervise and the dates of their training and approval
- 4 The noting of any exceptional arrangements

- 5 The noting of those Nominated Third Parties who will receive and monitor the Agreed Records of supervision where the supervisor is the minister in oversight.

Each district will be asked to select a pattern of supervision from the following options:

- A All ministers to be supervised by their minister in oversight
- B All ministers to be supervised by their minister in oversight or a nominated alternate
- C All ministers to be supervised by a minister other than their minister in oversight

In most districts Pattern A will not be practical in its entirety as numbers of circuit staff vary considerably. Districts will be asked to articulate their own pattern using A, B and C above. For example:

A+B: in District X there are 8 Superintendents who will all be supervised by the District Chair (Pattern A); because of variations in circuit staffs, the superintendents will each supervise their own ministerial colleagues except where numbers make this difficult. In this case some ordained ministers will be supervised by a colleague from a neighbouring circuit (Pattern B).

B+C: In District Y there are 12 Superintendents. These will be supervised by the District Chair and by a nominated alternate who is supernumerary (Pattern B). The remaining 40 ordained ministers will be supervised by a ministerial colleague who is not their own Superintendent. 10/12 of the Superintendents will be nominated for this work, taking 4 supervisees each in addition to any lay employees they already supervise or manage (Pattern C).

C: In District Z there are 12 Superintendents and a further 36 ordained ministers. 12 people will be nominated from the District, including the District Chair, 8 Superintendents and 3 lay people with suitable experience and skills. Each of these will supervise 4 ordained ministers each. (Pattern C)

The pilot has demonstrated that there are different advantages and disadvantages associated with being supervised by the minister in oversight and by someone else. Being supervised by someone outside of the oversight structure perhaps gives more freedom for difficult issues to be explored; on the other hand, those who have experienced effective supervision from their ministers in oversight have valued the increased sense of collegiality this has brought.

During the period governed by this interim policy, all three patterns will be permitted and any combination of them as approved by the responsible connexional officer through the mechanism of the District Supervision Implementation plan.

### **3 Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1 A Supervision Reference Group shall be appointed for the period 2017-2020 to:

- e. Monitor implementation
- f. Identify policy gaps
- g. Bring a report to the Council of January 2019 concerning the supervision of ordained ministers in the connexional team and the Conference Office, ministers in appointments outside the control of the church; ministers of other churches.
- h. Bring a report to the Conference of 2020 reviewing the implementation of the policy and making further recommendations in the light of experience concerning the supervision of ordained people, the use of group supervision and the supervision of lay people with significant pastoral responsibilities.

3.2 A new post should be created for the period 2017-20 in order that the following key responsibilities can be discharged:

- To advocate for supervision and support its development as a core practice within the MCB
- To co-ordinate the supervision of District Chairs and other senior officers who receive external supervision
- To oversee the initial training and assessment of those who will supervise in the districts and circuits
- To work with the District Chairs on the implementation of the interim policy in their districts through the mechanism of Supervision Implementation Plans
- To manage the connexional aspects of the budget for supervision
- To work with the Supervision Reference Group to:
  - Monitor implementation
  - Identify policy gaps
  - Bring a report to the Council of January 2019
  - Bring a report to the Conference of 2020

### 3.3 Chairs of District are responsible for:

- Ensuring that superintendent ministers are fully aware of their role and responsibilities in relation to this supervision policy and that supervision is provided in accordance with the Methodist Church policy on supervision.
- Ensuring that ordained ministers in district appointments receive regular supervision.
- Leading developments in supervision practice in the District.
- Ensuring that ministers serving in district and circuit appointments receive supervision in line with the Methodist Church policy on supervision and taking action to address this if this is not the case. (Probationer ministers are supervised during their probation; see section 5 below for the integration of existing practice in the trained to supervise probationers with the arrangements in this policy).

### 3.4 Superintendent ministers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all deacons and presbyters in circuit appointments are fully aware of their role and responsibility in relation to supervision and that supervision is provided in accordance with this policy.
- Leading developments in supervision practice.
- Ensuring that they receive supervision in line with this policy and taking action to address this if this is not the case.

### 3.5 All ordained ministers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they receive supervision in line with this policy and taking action to address this if this is not the case.
- Ensuring that Agreed Records of their supervision are provided regularly to their minister in oversight on the connexional proforma.

## 4 Practicalities

- 4.1 Every ordained minister governed by this policy (and see section 5 below for the Supervision of Probationers) should be supervised 1:1 six times in each year. Additional supervisions may be arranged where either party feel this is necessary - up to 8 times in each year.
- 4.2 Each supervision should last 1.5 hours (including time for arrival and departure)

- 4.3 MDR meetings are in addition to this. A short report should be made from the supervisory process to the MDR process on the form provided, and from the MDR process to the supervisory process at its conclusion naming any issues to be taken forward/monitored in supervision.
- 4.4 At the first supervision a covenant should be made on the connexional proforma in order to establish common expectations. Copies should be retained by the supervisor and the supervisee and sent to the minister in oversight/nominated third party for their information. The covenant should be reviewed annually to give opportunity for both parties easily to name what might need changing.
- 4.5 Some supervisions may be conducted by skype or telephone. At least two supervisions each year should be face to face.
- 4.6 All supervisions should be conducted in confidential space, free from interruptions. The use of skype or telephone requires both parties to think carefully about how to protect the space and time from other distractions.
- 4.7 Dates and venues for supervisions should be agreed in advance with more than one in the diary. The earlier dates are fixed the easier it is for everyone to honour the commitment. Except in the case of emergency, supervision dates are to be considered a priority and may only be changed by mutual consent.
- 4.8 At the conclusion of each supervision an Agreed Record Form should be completed by the supervisor and the supervisee. Copies should be kept by both parties for reference and a copy sent to the minister in oversight/nominated third party for their reference. Supervisors and supervisees may wish to keep more detailed notes for their personal reference.
- 4.9 All Agreed Records should be kept either in locked cabinets or electronically in a safe format to which others do not have access.
- 4.10 The provision of group supervision is at the discretion of the circuit/district concerned and may be offered only *in addition* to individual supervision and used in the following ways:
- As peer supervision in staff meetings
  - In groups of peers, e.g. of District Chairs, with a facilitator present
  - Group supervision should not be a context in which team issues are discussed except in the presence of an external supervisor
  - Records need not be kept though supervisees should be responsible for reporting any issues for referral identified to their supervisor/minister in oversight.
- 4.11 Those engaging in group supervision are encouraged to use the tools for supervision learned in the training in order to develop structured and intentional use of the time. The further use of group supervision will be subject to review once more experience of supervision has been gained by the connexion as a whole.

## **5 The supervision of probationer ministers and those new to the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB)**

It is envisaged that by 2020 all probationer ministers and those new to the Methodist Church in Britain will be supervised by those who have been trained and assessed and approved under this policy. In addition to this training those supervising probationers will be required to undertake a briefing about the particular issues pertaining to the supervision of probationers including:

- Frequency
- Supervision of those new to ministry
- Benchmarks for ordination

- Oversight in relation to probationers
- Evidential report writing

Those supervising ministers new to the Methodist Church in Britain should receive briefing in relation to

- Frequency
- Cross cultural supervision and ministry

In the meantime the current courses preparing supervisors for probationers and ministers new to the MCB will continue to run using materials in common with the approved connexional supervision training. Those running these courses will need to be sensitive to the timeline for implementation and the fact that districts will not all receive the approved connexional supervision training at the same point. Discretion will need to be exercised about the appropriate training for those who have received the approved connexional supervision training early in the cycle.

The supervision of probationers and those new to the MCB is subject to this policy in all other respects, e.g. the keeping of Agreed Records; the need for a Nominated Third Party to receive the records.

## **6 Necessary Paperwork**

The following documents are necessary for the implementation of this policy and are available to download at: (web address to be supplied)

- Covenant Form
- Agreed Record Form
- MDR Report Forms A and B
- Supervision Implementation Plan

## **7 Addressing problems with the supervision process**

- 6.1 If any supervisee is unhappy with the supervision they are being offered they should in the first instance discuss the matter with their supervisor and secondly with those responsible for their oversight in the Circuit/District
- 6.2 In cases where the matter cannot be resolved within the District, the connexionally appointed officer responsible for supervision should be consulted.
- 6.3 Concerns about policy issues should be addressed to the connexionally appointed officer responsible for supervision or to any member of the Supervision Reference Group.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

- 46/1. The Council receives the report.**
- 46/2. The Council commends the interim policy on supervision to the Conference.**
- 46/3. The Council directs the Connexional Team to proceed with the implementation of the recommendations in the report.**

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<sup>i</sup> Extract from the National Crime Agency paper CEOP Thematic Assessment The Foundations of Abuse: a thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions. 2012. Accessed 02/02/17:  
[www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/CEOPThreatA\\_2012\\_190612\\_web.pdf](http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/CEOPThreatA_2012_190612_web.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Responsibility for the character and fidelity of deacons lies with the Warden (SO754.2) whilst for deacons in circuit appointments responsibility for their work lies with the Superintendent. (According to SO 520.2 'It is the duty of the Superintendent appointed to each Circuit to enable the relevant courts, officers and ministers to fulfil their specific responsibilities under Standing Orders and to ensure that they do so.')

Similarly responsibility for the character and fidelity of presbyters in circuits lies with the District Chair but responsibility for the work lies with the Superintendent.

<sup>iii</sup> Edward Farley, *Interpreting Situations: An Enquiry into the Nature of Practical Theology*, reprinted in Woodward and Pattison, 1999, *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, Wiley-Blackwell

<sup>iv</sup> John Wesley, 1786 Sermon On Visiting the Sick. 'On Visiting the Sick'. Available at:  
<http://wesley.nnu.edu/johnwesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-98-on-visiting-the-sick>

<sup>v</sup> Adapted from Inskipp & Proctor, 1995, *Art, Craft and Tasks of Counselling Supervision: Professional Development for Counsellors, Psychotherapists, Supervisor and Trainers Pt.2: Becoming a Supervisor*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: Cascade.

<sup>vi</sup> For the processes of supervision summarised in this model see Leach & Paterson, 2015, *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook*, London: SCM chapter 2.

<sup>vii</sup> Responsibility for the character and fidelity of deacons lies with the Warden (SO754.2) whilst for those in circuit appointments responsibility for their work lies with the Superintendent. (According to SO 520.2 'It is the duty of the Superintendent appointed to each Circuit to enable the relevant courts, officers and ministers to fulfil their specific responsibilities under Standing Orders and to ensure that they do so.')

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