

Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd appointments

Contact Name	Mrs Susan Barratt Vice-Chair, Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd on behalf of the WCOT Trustees
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Resolutions	<p>61/1. The Council approves the nomination by the Board of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for appointment by the 2017 Methodist Conference of the following persons as Directors, each for a three year period from 1 September 2017: Professor Beverley Clack Dr Clive Norris.</p> <p>61/2. The Council approves the nomination by the Board of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for appointment by the 2017 Methodist Conference of Mrs Susan Howdle as a Director, for a further three year period from 1 September 2017, and further recommends to the Conference that it should resolve, under Article 36 of the Articles of Association of WCOT Ltd, that a period of one year's non-service upon the Board should not be required in relation to this appointment.</p>

- As the Council is aware from recent business brought for discussion, Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd (WCOT) is the charitable company appointed by the Methodist Conference as the managing trustee of the Westminster campus at Harcourt Hill, Oxford. WCOT's function has been to oversee the continuing relationship between Oxford Brookes University and the Methodist Church, in relation to both the physical developments on the campus and the activities taking place there in which the church has a continuing interest.
- Under the company's Articles of Association, the Board consists of:
 - the Ex Officio Director, being the Secretary of the Conference or his nominee;
 - between three and seven Foundation Directors;
 - any Co-opted Directors appointed by the Board.
- Currently, Mrs Ann Leck is the Ex Officio Director, and there are four Foundation Directors: Mrs Susan Howdle (chair), Mrs Susan Barratt (deputy chair), Dr Clifford Marshall and the Revd Dr Martin Wellings. The Board co-opted Dr Clive Norris as a Director in August 2015.
- The Articles provide that Foundation Directors are to be nominated by the Board, approved by the Methodist Council and appointed by the Conference. They serve for three years and are eligible for re-appointment under the provisions of the Articles for a further three years. After that period, a retiring Director is not eligible for re-appointment without a period of at least one year of non-service, but "such period of non-service shall not be required if the Conference so resolves".
- As members of the Council will be aware, the Board has entered a particularly significant period. The Council has been involved in approving the terms of the new 99 year lease to Oxford Brookes [MC/16/76] (consent having previously been given by the Conference), so as to enable the university to move forward with its evolving estate strategy. The Board now needs to address its

ongoing relationships with the university as it deals with the implications of the renewal of the lease on commercial terms, and also, in conjunction with the church, the appropriate management and use of the significant resources available to the trust once the new arrangements are in place.

6. The Board is currently in the process of reviewing its membership to identify the range of skills and experience which will be appropriate for this new situation and will bring proposals for further appointments in due course. However, the Board wishes to seek the Council's approval, in accordance with the Articles, for the appointment by the Conference of two new Foundation Directors, Professor Beverley Clack and Dr Clive Norris (currently a Co-opted Director). Their details appear below.
7. For the next connexional year however, the depth of experience, expertise and wisdom of the present members of the Board will also continue to be crucial.
8. Mrs Susan Howdle's current term of appointment as a Board member comes to an end on 31 August 2017. As she will at that date have served more than two three year terms, her reappointment would require the Conference's resolution to waive the requirement for a 'gap' year, and the Board would wish to seek that. The respect in which Mrs Howdle is held at Oxford Brookes University, together with her wisdom, depth of experience and expertise in dealing with strategic and technical issues, her knowledge of Church protocol and proper procedure and her knowledge of the past agreements and practices, are of vital importance as the Trust works with the University to formalise arrangements for the next few years.
9. It may be that Mrs Howdle will not wish to serve for another full three year term, but the appointment is sought for that period at this stage, to enable there to be the necessary flexibility in achieving good succession planning.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

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Professor Beverley Clack
Dr Clive Norris.**
- 61/2. The Council approves the nomination by the Board of Westminster College Oxford Trust Ltd for appointment by the 2017 Methodist Conference of Mrs Susan Howdle as a Director, for a further three year period from 1 September 2017, and further recommends to the Conference that it should resolve, under Article 36 of the Articles of Association of WCOT Ltd, that a period of one year's non-service upon the Board should not be required in relation to this appointment.**

Reasoned statements

Professor Beverley Clack is Professor in the Philosophy of Religion at Oxford Brookes University. Her first degree is in Theology from Westminster College, Oxford (BA Hons, First Class, 1986); her PhD is from King's College London on 'the Suffering of God in the Work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer' (1991). In 2004-2006, she studied Psychoanalytic Theory at UCL and graduated with an MSc (Distinction).

From 2012-16 she was City Councillor for St Clements Ward in Oxford, and currently sits on the Education Commission of the Labour Party. She is a member and church steward at Cowley Road Methodist Church, Oxford.

Dr Clive Norris is a management accountant, who ended his career as a Whitehall civil servant with senior roles in finance and human relations. More recently he has been attached to the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History at Oxford Brookes where he completed his PhD, published in February 2017 in book form by Oxford University Press, 'The Financing of John Wesley's Methodism c.1740-1800'. He is a member of Putney Methodist Church, where he is senior steward. He is also a trustee of the Southlands Methodist Trust.

Susan Howdle is a Past Vice-President of the Conference and a lawyer with experience in higher education and in chairing a number of connexional bodies.