



EAST MIDLANDS SYNOD COUNCIL

Synod Council



Your guide to the role and responsibilities of the East Midlands Synod Council

New ways of supporting our Synod Mission in a rapidly changing world

What is the Synod Council?

The Synod Council is the planning and decision-making body of the Synod that reports to, and takes direction from, the East Midlands Synod Meeting and as required by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church. The Synod Council will have devolved authority from the Synod meeting to act on behalf of the Synod where deemed necessary, appropriate or expedient by Synod Officers. For example, the Synod Council will be able to meet its accountable body responsibilities for such issues as GDPR (Data Controller) and Safeguarding.

What are its primary responsibilities?

- **Developing a strategic direction** for the workings of the Synod which reflects priorities within the denomination and those of the East Midlands Synod.
- **Setting/agreeing priorities, objectives and reporting arrangements** for the six key areas of activity, Safeguarding and Call Process coordinator; and agree planning and reporting arrangements with the Synod Trust.
- **Be the responsible body** for Safeguarding, GDPR, financial management, risk management and performance management for the areas of devolved activity.
- **Act as the final decision-making body** where there are areas of dispute which cannot be resolved elsewhere.
- **Plan for and manage** the business and meetings of the East Midlands Synod.
- **Authorise and agree** terms of reference, budget and timescales for Synod Focus Groups.

Who are the members of the Synod Council?

- Synod Moderator
- The Convenor of:
 - Ordained Ministry Group
 - Lay Ministry Group
 - Ministerial and Lay Training and Development Group
 - Children and Youth Development Team
 - Finance Group
- ❖ Chair of one of the Synod Focus Groups representing all the groups
- ❖ Youth representative
- ❖ Synod Officers: Clerk, Treasurer, Deputy Moderator

Who will attend Council meetings and how will it operate?

In addition to those listed above the Council will invite others to attend, in order to present or inform specific areas of discussion. Synod Council will set up a schedule of meetings which deal with specific areas such as budget planning and reporting. Council will define 'business as usual' and its meetings will focus on the discussion of key issues and exception reports.

How will it work with, and support, local churches?

- The setting up of Synod Council Groups with specific areas of responsibility will provide a 'one stop' shop for local churches. The group will remain the point of contact even if the work is being carried out by another group.
- The setting up of a link from local churches to the council through enablers, networkers, officers and convenors will provide the route to draw on expertise and resolve issues at a local level.
- Synod Focus Groups will provide expertise and guidance in areas such as Mission and Ecumenical work where this can be used by those who understand the local setting for such work.

What are the key links for Synod Council with other areas of the Synod and beyond?

East Midlands Synod Trust

- Trustees will be involved in all strategic and financial planning discussions at Council and Finance Group level and other areas where there might be significant financial requirements. The chair of the Trust will attend Council meetings where there are specific areas of interest or concern.

Safeguarding

- Council will authorise the East Midlands Synod Safeguarding Officer to act on its behalf within the guidelines, structures and processes of the denomination. The officer will produce an annual report. Other issues will be raised by exception, where a wider decision is required.

Call Process Group

- Receive regular reports of activity and attend meetings where issues require a decision by Council.

The wider United Reformed Church

- Officers and office holders to be active at Assembly level reporting key developments and issues to the Council to ensure all Council members are informed, up to date and can recommend appropriate action to Synod Meeting.

This leaflet is produced by the SSPRG team who will be providing a series of leaflets about the new Synod Council and its supporting functions to assist you in understanding the changes.

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