

## 9.3.6 Guidelines for a Local Church Review

### **What is a review about?**

The aim of the review is to develop a dialogue between the church courts and the local church, as well as promoting discussion within the local church. A review is not an inspection and it is not supposed to be threatening.

The review report should give a fair reflection of the life and work of the local church, a sense of their vision for the future, and evidence of mission planning. Specific recommendations ~~can~~ [may](#) be included for partner churches or the local church to act on.

### **Who runs the review?**

The Convening Partner of a local church, in consultation with the other partner(s), is responsible for convening a review team, but this task may be delegated, by agreement with the partners, to a Regional Forum. Each local church partner should have at least one appointee on the review team.

### **Who pays for the review?**

Any costs of accommodation and travel of the reviewers should be borne by the local church.

### **How often should a review be held?**

For a church with stipendiary ministry, the frequency of review is five years, but the timing should be sensitive to the pastoral needs of the church. A church review is usually undertaken before settling new ministry. For a church with local shared ministry, the frequency is three years.

### **The process**

The pattern of the review is not mandated. Denominational materials may be used with agreement from all the participating partners.

*The following documents are usually reviewed: a copy of the latest annual report, financial statements for the last three years, strategy documents, minutes of last three council meetings, and the previous review report.*

*The following questions give an overview of the areas that should be discussed with the review team. Some questions will be treated lightly, others may need deeper exploration.*

1. What are some of the positive aspects of your church life?
2. What are the challenges that your church is facing?
3. What is happening with worship in the church?
4. What are the mission aspects of the church?
5. What strategies/plans have you got for the next 5 years? Is the church in a viable position?
6. What structure does your church management have? Is this effective for you?
7. Is there a positive working relationship between minister and church council?
8. How well does the church plant meet the needs of the parish and wider community?
  - a. Are there plans for any major development?
  - b. Are the buildings structurally sound?
9. Is the leadership structure of the church effective in mission?
10. Are there positive relationships with the participating partners?
11. Are there ways that the partner churches could resource your mission?
12. What are the Health and Safety policies and processes in place?

A draft copy of the review document should be made available to leaders of the local church to check for accuracy and to avoid any pastoral insensitivity.