

STIPEND REVIEW REPORT 2021 REVISION

Report of a meeting held on 4th February 2021 by conference call

Attendance:

Rev Sarah Tinker (Ministry Strategy Group Chair), Ken Howard (congregational representative), Rev John Carter (Ministerial Fellowship representative), Elizabeth Slade (Chief Officer), Simon Bland (Ministry and Congregational Support Officer) Rev Celia Cartwright (GA President) was unable to attend. Thanks and apologies are given to Peter Hanley (GA Hon.Treasurer) who was inadvertently missed off the invitation email for this meeting and who has subsequently approved the Panel's recommendations.

The position of Rev John Carter as a Minister in receipt of stipend was noted.

The Committee recognised the unique and challenging nature of the past, and indeed the current, year and were mindful of both the pressures on congregational finances and the need to ensure that a professional level of stipend was maintained.

Background Data

Inflation

The latest available figures from the Office of National Statistics for December 2020 (released Jan 2020) were as follows (compared to November 2019).

CPIH is now the main UK measure of consumer domestic price inflation. The Retail Prices Index is a longstanding measure.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| CPIH | + 0.8% | (+1.5%) |
| Retail Prices Index (RPI) All items | + 1.28% | (+2.2%) |

The Monetary Policy Report (formerly The Bank of England Inflation report) in November 2020 forecasts with rather large parameters that inflation is likely to fall and remain below the target of 2.0% in 2021.

Other denominations.

United Reformed Church: from 1 January 2021

£27,600 (no increase)

Congregational Federation: from 1 January 2021

£27,456 (1.1% increase)

Baptist Union Home mission stipend: from 1 January 2021

£24,500 (2% increase)

Having reviewed the background national economic data and comparable benchmarking data from other denominations, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation:

The Committee recommended a 1.5% increase to stipends for Ministers and Lay Pastors on the GA Rolls, for the year commencing January 2022.

Current scales with 1.5% increases from 1 January 2022

| | Current 1/1/21 | From 1/1/22 | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|------|
| Ministers | | | |
| Yrs. 1 - 5 | £25,969 | £26,358 | +389 |
| Yrs. 6 - 10 | £26,774 | £27,175 | +401 |
| Yrs. 10 plus | £27,938 | £28,357 | +419 |
| Lay Pastors | | | |
| Yrs. 1 - 5 | £22,774 | £23,115 | |
| Yrs. 6 -10 | £23,480 | £23,832 | |
| Yrs. 10 plus | £24,507 | £24,874 | |

These scales are the **minimum**, not recommended figures. It is recognised that financial remuneration is not a proper indicator of the value that Ministry brings to our Denomination. Congregations should pay a higher amount if they are able to and are also encouraged to provide a higher stipend when a minister has additional training, experience, or the ministry setting is particularly challenging.

As the situation of Approved Lay Leaders varies greatly the determination of any compensation is a local matter.

Manse Allowance

No Change is recommended.

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Provincial | £6,905 |
| LDPA area | £9,916 |
| London postcodes | £9,916 minimum |

If no manse is available and the minister therefore lives in rental accommodation this should also be the responsibility of the congregation, not the individual, as a manse allowance may not cover actual costs.

Resettlement Grants and Removal Costs

No change is recommended. Currently £3,700 is payable in addition to removal contractors' charges. The resettlement grant is taxable and subject to NIC unless it is payable against actual bills provided by the Minister. For further information consult HM Revenue & Customs booklet 480.

Where a personal vehicle is used for removals, mileage allowances should be claimed at General Assembly rate. If a removal contractor is used, the claim must be substantiated by receipts and the charge be the lowest of three quotations.

Mileage Allowance:

Mileage allowance is in line with HMRC rules.

Cars: 45p/mile

Motorcycles: 24p/mile

Pedal cycles: 20p/mile

Public Transport rate: 30p/mile (Reimbursed at actual cost)

Pulpit Supply

No change is recommended with current rates confirmed:

£50 plus expenses which is a minimum rate and if congregations wish to pay more they are encouraged to do so. It is recommended that special fees should be negotiated for special occasions such as Anniversary Services, where additional preparation is required. Fees should always be offered and claimed in full.

Discussion took place on the mileage rate to be paid for pulpit supply. The HMRC rates (above) were recommended with the public transport rate as the minimum if funding is a problem.

H.R Advice

Discussion also took place on the broader implications of 'Office Holder Status' for Unitarian ministers and how the movement will wish to reflect best practice in how they grant stipend and benefits. Advice was taken from Personnel Consultancy, the professional support provided to the General Assembly for Essex Hall staff matters and based upon that the following is now added to the Stipend Report.

We recommend that, if possible, a congregation will pay a minister Statutory Sick Pay and family allowances (maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental) if the minister meets the qualifying criteria for them, and grant their ministers a length of notice of termination based upon their service and pay redundancy pay according to the statutory norm at the time of their leaving.

Date of Next Meeting

To be arranged prior to the Executive Committee meeting in January 2022.

Request for Views, Recommendations and Comments:

In advance of next year's review, the Committee invites and encourages congregations and Ministers to submit views and recommendations regarding the matters covered in this report. In particular they would like views on possible comparators to use as at one time parity with the teaching profession was seen as appropriate.

In order that such submissions may be reviewed before the next meeting, please send any such communications to the Chief Officer to arrive **by 30 November 2021**.