

## REVIEW OF ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT and STRATEGY FOR CURRENT TRIENNium

### Introduction

This mid-triennium review of the Assembly Secretariat is to consider measures which could be undertaken to address issues of delivering on work priorities in an environment of changed work arrangements and a potential precarious financial situation. It is a review of whether the way the Assembly Secretariat currently works with its current resourcing is fit for purpose for its current priorities in this triennium, while also being able to adapt to what is required in the future.

While a reduction in Synod funding and a potential increase in redress liability provided the catalyst for the review, to only focus on the financial situation would not provide a solution that enables the Assembly to adequately carry out its responsibilities and deliver the Assembly Strategic Plan and important projects.

A reduction in funding does not have to result in failure, ineffective teams or non-delivery of projects or programs. It can provide an opportunity to think innovatively about how teams work, the potential for collaboration, and new possibilities for financial sustainability.

Therefore a wholistic approach has been taken, incorporating a consideration of the culture and values required for a strong and effective team that delivers on the priorities of the Assembly alongside continued work to identify options for its financial sustainability.

As indicated previously, this review covers the operations of the Assembly Secretariat for the period of the current triennium.

The scope of the review (See Attachment 1) presented at the November 2021 ASC meeting identified the following principles to inform the review:

- Adequate resourcing is required for the Assembly to fulfil its responsibilities as the national council of the UCA
- Our national commitment to the Covenant remains
- We will fulfil all redress obligations
- The Act2 project will be delivered and guide our thinking
- The Assembly will work collaboratively wherever possible
- Our staff are key to delivering Assembly responsibilities, the Assembly Strategic Plan and the Act2 Project
- The Assembly needs to be realistic about future revenue and how that influences how we work
- Any staffing changes will be carried out with respect and care

The following has occurred since the November 2021 ASC meeting:

- A workshop, *Working Together for the Future* was held with all Secretariat staff to consider principles that guide our work, how what we had learnt in recent years and particularly relating to the COVID19 pandemic, could help us to think differently about how we work, and what was needed to support our work.
- Options for effective and efficient operations were considered
- A three-year financial forecast was carried out, until end of the 2023-2024 financial year. In addition mapping of the previous financial situation of the Assembly since 2015 was undertaken to give a sense of the trajectory of Assembly finances
- AFARC considered options for the Assembly's financial sustainability for a conversation with ASC at its March 2022 meeting (see AFARC report)

Also note that the period for this review and associated actions (see below and throughout the report) occurs immediately before the transition to a new General Secretary. This transition will also require a certain flexibility prior to the new General Secretary beginning their tenure.

**The actions proposed in this report include:**

1. Deliver on priorities of the current Assembly Strategic Plan, Act2 Project and supporting Assembly governance committees and task groups
2. Extend the current Assembly Strategic Plan until the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly
3. Align the next Assembly Strategic Plan with the new triennium, following the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly
4. Provide opportunities for staff development to enable staff to work together for innovative outcomes
5. Staff will meet regularly to identify opportunities for collaboration across the Secretariat or with people/groups in the wider UCA
6. For the remainder of the current triennium no additional staff will be recruited, and if a staff person resigns or comes to the end of a contract, consideration will be given as to whether they are replaced
7. If Assembly staff provide training/resourcing to the wider UCA, expenses will be requested for what is provided.
8. Operational efficiencies will continue to be considered in all instances, eg travel and meeting costs. Relevant policies and guidelines will be updated to reflect this, eg Assembly Travel Policy.
9. The ASC meets online for at least one of its three annual meetings.
10. Assembly Committees and groups meet mainly online with a protocol developed for agreed in-person meetings over a triennium.
11. Request the ASC to reconsider payment of the annual grant of \$200k made to UnitingWorld from the 2022-23 financial year.

## Act2

The scope of the Act2 Project is such that decisions made at the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly reconvened meeting and the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly could affect the operations of the Assembly. Therefore, this review is for the period until the meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

Staff and operations will be flexible throughout the remainder of this triennium if change is required, or resources need to be re-allocated in order to achieve Act2 priorities. Existing staff have a range of skills and relationships across the Church which will assist in delivering on this project.

## Markers of Success

The following markers have been identified for the success of the work of the Assembly and the Assembly Secretariat for the current triennium and beyond:

- **A resilient staff team that is change ready** – this will involve whole-of-staff meetings/workshops for information sharing, problem solving and openness to innovative options when work priorities and directions need to be adapted/re-set/set aside.
- **A strong team that works together, collaborating to deliver on priorities** – staff units will meet together regularly to be aware of each other's work and offer ideas/options.
- **A financially sustainable Assembly that thinks innovatively and is open to new opportunities** – the funding sources for the Assembly, mainly funding grants from Synods and returns on investments currently do not provide surpluses to increase reserves. The Assembly also carries important responsibilities in redress liabilities. Being open to new opportunities for financial sustainability is key for the resourcing of the future work of the Assembly.
- **An Assembly that is connected to the whole UCA to fulfill its responsibilities, offer value and resource the church nationally** – as a Council of the UCA, it is important that the Assembly (like the other Councils) is connected to, and collaborating with the wider UCA to offer value and national leadership as we consider the future of the UCA, particularly through the work of Act2.

## Culture

The culture of the Assembly has its foundation in the Assembly values, including *how each value relates to the ambitions for the Assembly and its work*:

**Hope** : We participate in God's Mission in the world, working together to make a difference  
*We collaborate together in our teams and across the UCA to deliver on the responsibilities of the Assembly and our priorities*

**Justice** : We seek peace and wholeness for every person and creation, where all are able to flourish  
*The Assembly creates an environment where staff and others involved in the work, are treated justly and can flourish.*

**Compassion** : We care for others with empathy, guided by the love of God in action  
*Staff and those who interact with the Assembly are valued and respected.*

**Respect** : We accept and honour diversity, uniqueness and the contribution of others  
*We work hard to listen to and include voices from across our church, honouring the participation of Congress and our CALD communities*

**Integrity** : We dedicate ourselves to being honest, consistent and working ethically in our interactions  
*We are open, truthful and ethical in our dealings with our staff and the wider church*

**Innovation** : We collaborate for courageous and creative possibilities and solutions in everything we do  
*We collaborate across the church, drawing in people, open to the ideas and possibilities they and our staff may bring.*

## The Work of the Assembly (carried out by the Secretariat)

The Assembly Secretariat is responsible for the following:

- Mandated responsibilities of the Assembly as set out in the Constitution and Regulations
- Delivering on the resolutions from triennial Assembly meetings including resourcing the work that is directed to committees and task groups

- Delivering projects from the Assembly Standing Committee including resourcing the work that is directed to committees and task groups.
- Delivering the initiatives in the Assembly Strategic Plan
- Supporting Congress National, including annual financial contribution
- Supporting Assembly Agencies, including annual financial contribution to UnitingWorld
- Supporting 13 National Conferences, including annual financial contribution
- Ecumenical coordination (nationally and internationally) for the Uniting Church, including any membership financial contributions
- Coordinating and assisting with national collaboration projects

## **Priorities for the Remainder of the Triennium**

The priorities for the work of the Assembly Secretariat for the remainder of the triennium will be:

1. Delivering on the Assembly Strategic Plan 2020-2023 – this plan includes the mandated responsibilities of the Assembly, and work from the triennial Assembly meeting and the Assembly Standing Committee
2. Act2 Project – this national project has been carried out by the Act2 Task Group to date. However, following any resolutions that come from the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly Reconvened Meeting in May, it is envisaged that some Assembly resources will need to be redirected to this project.
3. Supporting and resourcing Assembly governance committees, task groups

The current triennium finishes with the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly in July 2024. The current Assembly Strategic Plan is due to finish at the end of June 2023. At this time the ASC could consider whether to extend the current plan until the new triennium, so that the new Strategic Plan takes into account resolutions from the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

In order to be flexible, the Assembly may need to adapt its commitment to certain directions and initiatives in the Strategic Plan. Any new projects from the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly reconvened meeting or the ASC will also need to be considered from a people and financial resourcing perspective.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Deliver on priorities of the current Assembly Strategic Plan, Act2 Project and supporting Assembly governance committees and task groups
2. Extend the current Assembly Strategic Plan until the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly
3. Align the next Assembly Strategic Plan with the new triennium, following the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly

## **Assembly Secretariat Team**

In the last financial year, the following staff changes have occurred:

- The Assembly Consultant, Covenanting finished their three-year term. This position will not be replaced.
- A part-time admin assistant (0.6 FTE) resigned to take up another position. This position will not be replaced.
- Communications and Resources Officer in ARU (0.8 FTE) moved to take the position of Assembly National Manager, Media and Communications (0.8 FTE). The position in the ARU will not be replaced.
- A Communications Officer was recruited to fill a vacant position in the Comms Team.
- The Assembly Theologian in Residence placement was reduced to 0.6 FTE (0.4 with the Assembly Secretariat, 0.2 with UnitingCare Australia).
- These changes represent a net reduction of 2.0 FTE.

Assembly Secretariat Team (current)

<b>Work Unit</b>	<b>Team</b>		
Office of the President	President	1	
	Executive Assistant	0.6	1.6
Office of the General Secretary	General Secretary	1	
	Executive Assistant	1	2
Assembly Resourcing Unit	Associate General Secretary	1	
	Executive Administrative Assistant	1	
	National Consultants (3)	3	
	Assembly Theologian in Residence	0.4	
	Assembly Archivist	0.6	6.0
Assembly Services Unit	National Director, Strategic Finance and Admin	1	
	Senior Administrative Officer	1	
	Management Accountant	1	3
	National Manager, Media and Communications	0.8	
	Communications Officers (2)	1.8	2.6
	<b>Total</b>		15.2FTE

Following a review of the priorities for the remainder of the current triennium, the current Secretariat staffing mix is seen to be fit for purpose. Over the past few years, Secretariat staff work within their discrete areas, and also across these areas, becoming a multi-disciplinary and flexible team which has:

- Developed strong relationships within and outside the team
- Technical skills required to achieve outcomes, although there isn't a surplus of these
- Become respected throughout the UCA
- Skills required to contribute to resourcing Assembly projects, eg Act2
- Collaborates in its work, drawing in expertise from across the UCA

The importance of volunteers in Assembly governance committees and task groups so that the work of the Assembly can continue is also acknowledged.

Current priorities do not make it feasible to work with a further reduced staff team. Therefore, efficiencies will be sought, and innovative ways of working will be considered. Assembly staff provide training opportunities for Synods in areas such as intercultural education for committees and boards. In order to continue this resourcing to the wider UCA, any associated expenses will need to be paid by the part of the church where it is provided.

For the remainder of the current triennium:

- No additional staff will be recruited
- If a staff person resigns or comes to the end of a contract, consideration will be given as to whether they are replaced

**ACTIONS**

4. Provide opportunities for staff development to enable staff to work together for innovative outcomes
5. Staff will meet regularly to identify opportunities for collaboration across the Secretariat or with people/groups in wider UCA
6. For the remainder of the current triennium no additional staff will be recruited, and if a staff person resigns or comes to the end of a contract, consideration will be given as to whether they are replaced
7. If Assembly staff provide training/resourcing to the wider UCA, expenses will be requested for what is provided.

# Financial Position

Assembly Cost Base Historical Assessment and Forecast	Actuals							Forecasts				
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	
	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	\$000's	
<b>Movement in Balance Sheet</b>												
Net Assets at the beginning of the Financial Year	9,939.7	5,168.9	5,375.2	5,661.9	5,349.7	5,664.5	4,148.9	4,479.0	4,579.8	4,741.7	4,356.2	
Frontier Services loan fully provisioned	(5,000.0)		5,000.0									
Frontier Services loan written off and provision reversed			(5,000.0)									
<b>Current Year Activity</b>												
Revenue	4,720.4	4,446.9	3,470.0	3,712.2	3,882.1	3,592.6	3,516.1	4,003.8	3,079.0	3,135.5	3,213.9	
Expenses	4,491.2	4,240.7	3,183.3	4,024.4	3,567.3	5,108.2	3,185.9	3,903.0	2,917.1	3,520.9	3,384.1	
Net Profit(Loss)	229.2	206.2	286.7	(312.2)	314.8	(1,515.6)	330.2	100.8	161.8	(385.4)	(170.2)	
Net Assets at the beginning of the Financial Year	5,168.9	5,375.2	5,661.9	5,349.7	5,664.5	4,148.9	4,479.0	4,579.8	4,741.7	4,356.2	4,186.0	
<b>Extracted Outlier Considerations</b>												
Gain on sale of property					430.0			1,000.0				1,430.0
Telstra Rebate	328.7	240.1	174.0									742.8
Jobkeeper/Cashboost - Covid Assistance						192.0	345.0					537.0
Provision for Claims ( Matters of Redress)				(420.0)		(2,064.0)	(525.0)	(900.0)		(500.0)		(4,409.0)
<b>Total Outlier Considerations</b>	<b>328.7</b>	<b>240.1</b>	<b>174.0</b>	<b>(420.0)</b>	<b>430.0</b>	<b>(1,872.0)</b>	<b>(180.0)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(500.0)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(1,699.2)</b>
<b>Profit/ Loss</b>												
<b>Revenue</b>												
Synod Grants	3,002.0	3,044.0	3,223.1	3,312.2	3,286.9	3,292.1	3,077.6	2,922.0	2,995.1	3,069.9	3,146.7	
Less: Assembly Grant to UW	(221.5)	(221.5)	(221.5)	(221.5)	(220.8)	(220.8)	(200.0)	(200.0)	(200.0)	(200.0)	(200.0)	
Less Assembly Grant to UAICC	(225.0)	(350.0)	(350.0)	(350.0)	(350.0)	(350.0)	(300.0)	(300.0)	(300.0)	(300.0)	(300.0)	
Net Synod Grants	2,555.5	2,472.5	2,651.6	2,740.7	2,716.1	2,721.3	2,577.6	2,422.0	2,495.1	2,569.9	2,646.7	
Bequests & Donations	7.3	23.0	40.0	328.0	113.0	160.5	74.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	
Investment Income ( Dividends/Rent)	341.9	315.3	270.4	199.0	166.0	109.0	84.2	200.0	200.0	200.0	200.0	
Telstra Rebate	328.7	240.1	174.0									
Pilgrim House	80.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	
Royal Commission Task Group - Recharge			164.0	274.5	189.0							
Gain on sale of property					430.0			1,000.0				
Jobkeeper/Cashboost - Covid Assistance						192.0	345.0					
Other Income	1,407.0	1,276.0	50.0	50.0	148.0	289.8	315.3	211.8	213.9	195.5	197.2	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>4,720.4</b>	<b>4,446.9</b>	<b>3,470.0</b>	<b>3,712.2</b>	<b>3,882.1</b>	<b>3,592.6</b>	<b>3,516.1</b>	<b>4,003.8</b>	<b>3,079.0</b>	<b>3,135.5</b>	<b>3,213.9</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>												
Personnel Cost	2,555.2	2,781.0	2,204.3	2,107.4	2,197.4	2,091.0	2,022.8	1,912.3	1,960.1	2,009.1	2,059.3	+2.5%
SLA								+2.5%	+2.5%	+2.5%	+2.5%	
SLA Cost - NSW.ACT Synod				400.0	415.5	459.0	470.5	482.3	494.3	506.7	519.3	
SLA Cost (recovered) from agencies				(194.0)	(209.5)	(253.0)	(309.8)	(317.5)	(325.5)	(333.6)	(342.0)	
Net SLA cost to ASM	0.0	0.0	0.0	206.0	206.0	206.0	160.7	164.7	168.8	173.1	177.4	
Occupancy Cost	164.8	162.9	190.4	195.1	200.0	177.0	115.0	119.0	123.2	127.5	132.0	
<b>Operating Costs</b>												
Grants - Ecumenical	140.0	143.4	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	142.0	
Governance/Meeting Expenses	68.7	69.0	111.4	146.0	126.0	35.8	13.4	20.0	40.0	60.0	80.0	
Travel	376.3	205.1	232.7	216.4	214.0	144.0	25.2	50.0	100.0	120.0	150.0	
Triennial Assembly ( net of recoveries)		418.0			291.0			220.0			250.0	
Provision for Claims				420.0		2,064.0	525.0	900.0		500.0		
UCA Redress - Share of Running costs					30.0	36.0	47.6	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	
NSCU - Share of Running costs					5.5	21.4	23.2	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	
Other Operating Expenses	1,186.2	461.2	302.5	591.5	155.4	191.0	111.0	300.0	308.1	314.3	318.4	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>1,771.2</b>	<b>1,296.7</b>	<b>788.6</b>	<b>1,515.9</b>	<b>963.9</b>	<b>2,634.2</b>	<b>887.4</b>	<b>1,707.0</b>	<b>665.1</b>	<b>1,211.3</b>	<b>1,015.4</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>4,491.2</b>	<b>4,240.7</b>	<b>3,183.3</b>	<b>4,024.4</b>	<b>3,567.3</b>	<b>5,108.2</b>	<b>3,185.9</b>	<b>3,903.0</b>	<b>2,917.1</b>	<b>3,520.9</b>	<b>3,384.1</b>	
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>229.2</b>	<b>206.2</b>	<b>286.7</b>	<b>(312.2)</b>	<b>314.8</b>	<b>(1,515.6)</b>	<b>330.2</b>	<b>100.8</b>	<b>161.8</b>	<b>(385.4)</b>	<b>(170.2)</b>	

In order to provide some historical understanding of the current financial position of the Assembly, information has been provided in the table on page 6 from the 2014-15 financial year; while budget forecasts have also been provided until the end of the 2023-24 financial year, the end of the current triennium.

## **NOTES**

### **Frontier Services Loan**

- Frontier Services loan of \$5M (2015) from the Assembly, had a significant impact on the Assembly's Net Assets (essentially halved from \$10M to \$5M)
- The loan was provisioned not long after it was made in 2015, and subsequently forgiven in 2017 (with AFARC recommendation) as Frontier Services struggled with a significantly deficit balance sheet, and was at risk of breaching going concern and other corporations law principles
- This experience raises the question of the Assembly acting as the Lender of Last Resort should an agency find itself in difficulty, and potentially adds significant weight to the need for Assembly to hold a higher level of reserves

### **Investment Returns**

- The \$5M loan to Frontier reduced the amounts of funds held in investment and correspondingly investment returns
- Interest rates tending to nil over the last 4-5 years have not helped; but with the assistance of the AIAC we are looking to increase investment returns

### **Matters of Redress**

- The Gross Provisioning by the Assembly of \$3M for matters relating to Mogumber to 30 June 2021, with an additional expected amount of \$1.4M has had a significant impact
- Whilst we consider the provisioning as conservative (erring on the side of caution), the Redress Scheme runs for 10 years (claims must be submitted by the commencement of Year 9) and we are currently in Year 4, and therefore there is a high level of uncertainty
- To date approximately \$1.7M of claims have been paid. This has been borne equally between the Secretariat and UnitingWorld. Future payments will be monitored closely from a cashflow viewpoint. It is expected that some of the proceeds from the sale of Burwood and Penshurst manses will need to be directed to help settle these items
- Initial increased provisioning has been included in the forecast allowing for any decision re liability for Croker Island Mission

### **Normalising the Result**

- From the attached tables, when outliers are excluded, given recurrent items hold to their current levels, it can be estimated that the Assembly has a net Income of approx. \$3.1M annually. People costs are \$2.1M, and operating costs of approx. \$1M. This places the Assembly at the breakeven position, unable to build reserves and also unable to increase staffing or expenditure in any meaningful way.
- Whilst not included in the model attached, some natural attrition of staff might assist in reducing people costs. Such attrition would mean the Assembly Secretariat would need to reduce its work program accordingly.
- As part of the net income received, the Assembly provides annual grants to UAICC National of \$300k and to UnitingWorld of \$200k, as well as paying annual membership contributions for the UCA to national and global ecumenical bodies of \$142k.
- Operating costs have limited further scope for reduction; two of the larger costs of the Assembly, being travel and meeting costs, have already been significantly reduced by COVID restrictions and are not being planned to return to pre-COVID levels.

AFARC is continuing its work on the long-term financial sustainability for the Assembly, including a workshop being held at the March 2022 ASC meeting. This will be crucial for the future funding of the work of the Assembly.

Over the past two years, COVID has re-shaped the work of the Assembly. The transition to new working arrangements has included efficiencies which have been positive for the budget. Efficiencies that have already been undertaken include:

- Sydney Assembly office relocation to 262 Pitt Street (2020) in order to lease a smaller space at a cost less than the increased lease that would have been paid by staying at 222 Pitt Street
- Greater use of technology over the past two years to assist work being undertaken, rather than staff travelling to different parts of the country and possibly working with fewer people
- Reduction in travel for Assembly staff and meetings of Assembly Committees
- Reduction in travel by UCA representatives to national and international ecumenical events

#### **ACTIONS**

8. Operational efficiencies will continue to be considered in all instances, eg travel and meeting costs. Relevant policies and guidelines will be updated to reflect this, eg Assembly Travel Policy.
9. The ASC meets online for at least one of its three annual meetings.
10. Assembly Committees and groups meet mainly online with a protocol developed for agreed in-person meetings over a triennium.
11. Request the ASC to reconsider payment of the annual grant of \$200k made to UnitingWorld from the 2022-23 financial year.



## Risk Profile

Description of Risk	Updated Assessment March 2022						Current Actions/ Controls	Future Actions/ Controls	Control Effectiveness	Owner
	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Consequence	Inherent Risk	Residual Likelihood	Residual Consequence	Residual Risk				
Staff resign due to future uncertainty	3 - Possible	3 - Moderate	Significant	2 - Unlikely	3 - Moderate	Moderate	Initial meeting with staff has taken place	Regular staff briefings and gatherings to include staff, encourage ownership and understanding	Moderate	GS and Management
Identified priorities are unable to be delivered due to insufficient resources	3 - Possible	3 - Moderate	Significant	2 - Unlikely	2 - Minor	Low	Priorities have been identified in the review	Priorities will be reviewed at least quarterly by Secretariat leadership to assess if they are able to realistically be delivered. Report to ASC of inability to deliver with proposed actions and impact.	Strong	GS and AGS
A new priority emerges requiring significant staff time and resources	3 - Possible	4 - Major	Significant	3 - Possible	3 - Moderate	Significant	Maintaining relationships across the wider UCA	Maintaining relationships across the wider UCA	Weak to Moderate	GS and AGS
Synod grants are further reduced	3 - Possible	4 - Major	Significant	3 - Possible	4 - Major	Significant	ND Strategic Finance and Admin (NDSF&A) in contact with Synod CFOs re grants for 22-23 financial year	NDSF&A regular contact with Synods Efficiencies in Secretariat operations to provide a buffer in the budget Financial sustainability options are identified	Weak	GS and Management

Redress liabilities are greater than what is provisioned for	3 - Possible	4 - Major	Significant	3 - Possible	4 - Major	Significant	Provisioning for redress considered by GS and Management, AFARC and auditors Data from UCARL informs provisioning	Modelling for any further redress liabilities undertaken Current provisioning re-assessed if required AFARC and ASC oversight	Weak to Moderate	GS, NDSF&A, AFARC
--	--------------	-----------	-------------	--------------	-----------	-------------	--	---	------------------	-------------------

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **SCOPE**

In the August 2021 General Secretary Report, the following was noted:

*The future sustainability of the Assembly, particularly the Secretariat, is becoming increasingly challenging and uncertain. In order to enable the Assembly to continue in a healthy and viable way over the coming triennium, particularly as we undertake the significant work of the Act2 Project, I am intending to review the Assembly operations to consider options for this to occur.*

The details of the review will be brought to March 2022 ASC meeting, with implementation to commence by no later than the end of this current financial year.

**The scope for the review is the operations of the Assembly Secretariat, for the current triennium.**

The following context, principles and risks provide the foundational understandings for the review.

### **Context**

The context for this review involves the following:

- To align the work of the Assembly Secretariat to our developing understanding of future needs through the Act2 Project
- Reduced revenue for the Assembly, including Synod grants
- Potential external financial liabilities, eg Northern Synod redress conversation
- Sustainability challenges for other Councils/parts of the UCA
- The review is initially in relation to the Assembly Secretariat

### **Principles**

The following principles will inform the review:

- Adequate resourcing is required for the Assembly to fulfil its responsibilities as the national council of the UCA
- Our national commitment to the Covenant remains
- We will fulfil all redress obligations
- The Act2 project will be delivered and guide our thinking
- The Assembly will work collaboratively wherever possible
- Our staff are key to delivering Assembly responsibilities, the Assembly Strategic Plan and the Act2 Project
- The Assembly needs to be realistic about future revenue and how that influences how we work
- Any staffing changes will be carried out with respect and care

### **Risks**

The following risks will be considered as the review is undertaken:

- The Assembly is not able to provide national leadership due to inadequate funding and staffing
- Synods don't see the value of the Assembly or the national council of the UCA
- More Synods reduce funding grants to the Assembly
- National collaboration initiatives (for example NSCU and UCA Redress Ltd) are funded by Synods at the expense of funding for the Assembly
- Staff morale is low when they hear about the review. This may lead to them feeling uncertain about employment stability and so look for other employment
- Redress responsibilities are not able to be funded by the Assembly

### **The review will include the following:**

- Detailed financial overview and projections
- Overview of deliverables for the current triennium
- Staffing and operational plans to provide resourcing for delivering on agreed priorities
- Risk register for the review

### **Timeline:**

- Review plan will be presented to the March 2022 ASC meeting
- Implementation of the plan to commence by 30 June 2022