complaints rooted in conflicts. These are affecting local churches, Synods and the General Assembly.

The complaints process (Section Q) works on the basis that initially mediation is used, where at all possible, to try to resolve conflicts before moving to formal investigation. However, those operating the policy have to seek individuals willing to take on mediation. We have no standing panel that either Synods or the General Assembly can draw upon, to bring expertise in this area.

The Business Committee believes this is something which could be of service to the whole church, and therefore invites General Assembly to initiate a process of consultation to test this, and if appropriate, to bring costed proposals to Assembly

to enable the gift of this work to reach more people. They now work in partnership with the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Methodist Connexion.

Place for Hope has a long history of offering foundation training to people wishing to be equipped as mediators, leading to accreditation through Scottish Mediation. They also offer supervision and continuing professional development for their accredited mediators.

As well as training mediators, the charity is also committed to facilitating culture change in order that conflict is avoided wherever possible. For example, they offer a course, delivered online, called Living Well with Differences.

Place for Hope talk about conflict transformation, rather than conflict resolution.

Proposal

There are many good reasons for entering a service-level agreement with Place for Hope:

1. Staffing

There would be no need for the URC to employ additional staff to administer the team, develop training or deliver training.

2. Cost

There would be no need for the URC to bear any additional costs in terms of buying in reconciliation and mediation from external contractors. The most recent (November 2023) engagement on behalf of the General Assembly with purchasing a mediation/facilitation service to address one situation in a Synod will cost £100 per hour for what is likely to >8 hours.

3. Objectivity

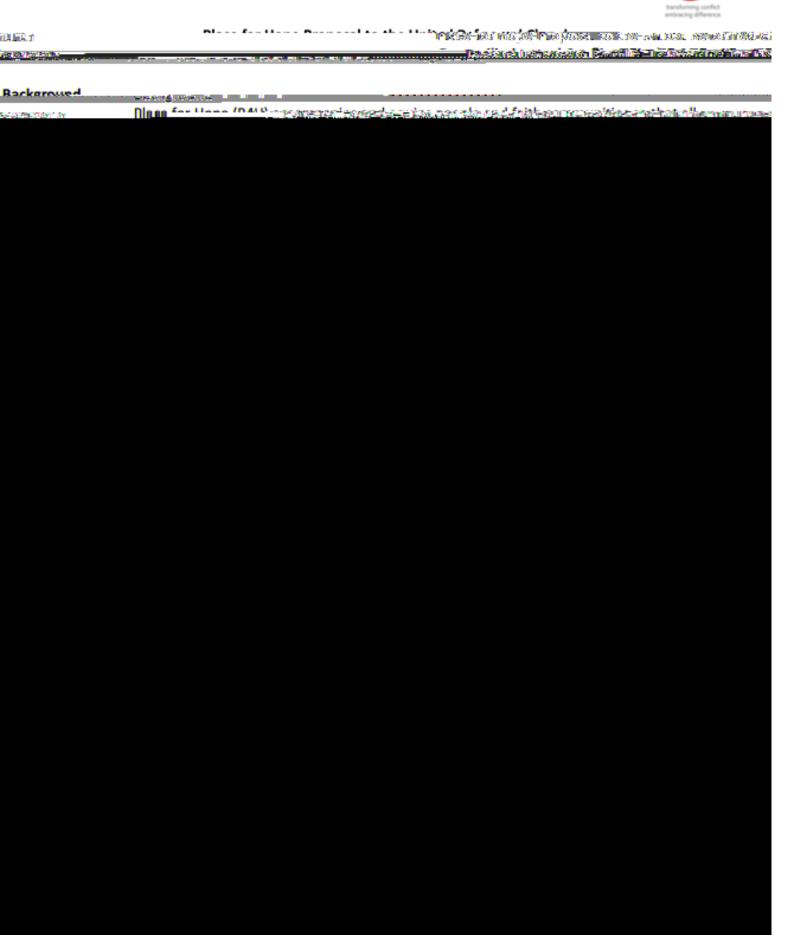
The pool of URC accredited practitioners could be added to the pool of accredited practitioners from the Methodist Church, Church of Scotland and Scottish Episcopal Church to ensure that people can be found for any situation which may arise who have no prior knowledge of individuals, their background, location or circumstances. Likewise, URC accredited practitioners might be available to other denominations for the same reasons.

4. Experience

Place for Hope has a proven track record of providing precisely the service we 3.3P -fletpiiTel()TjEMC /LBody &MCID322 >>BDC /TT1 1 Tf-0.001 Tc 0.001 Tw -1.775 -1.15 Td54. Euro

Annexe





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Plan

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Drogramma Management

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