

<b>SLOUGH BAPTIST CHURCH POLICY</b>	<b>Redundancy Policy</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER: SBCP-22</b>	



Primary Responsibility:	Treasurer	
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## DISTRIBUTION

Original	Slough Baptist Church Office
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### 1. Introduction

The Trustees shall exercise a cautious approach to employment of ministerial and support staff, with careful assessment of needs and funding, to avoid creating a potential redundancy situation in the first place. However, as the ministries of the church develop, it may prove necessary to change the structure of the organisation to provide the right focus. Additionally, in the event that there is a prolonged drop in income, the Trustees will take responsible steps to ensure the ongoing viability of the church, and this may involve a reduction in the number of employees.

A redundancy situation will arise if the church's work requirements have ceased or diminished and at least one employee's contract is no longer required for operational reasons. If a redundancy situation will affect ministerial staff, agreement of a Slough Baptist Church Special Members' Meeting is required. In that event, the requirements of the church constitution shall be followed and the Trustees shall consult with the Regional Minister for the Southern Counties Baptist Association.

Slough Baptist Church will comply with the Statutory Redundancy limits set out in legislation at the time of any redundancy situation. At present, collective consultation is required in any situation that involves 20 or more redundancies. The church is unlikely to be a position that requires collective consultation. However, it will engage with all staff members (irrespective of whether they are individually at risk of redundancy) in a process of individual consultation.

More guidance can be found under Section 8: Redundancy in the Baptist Union guideline leaflet [L08: Employment](#). A guidance note on redundancy consultation can be requested from the Baptist Union HR Team Leader ([HR@baptist.org.uk](mailto:HR@baptist.org.uk)).

The Trustees shall follow a process made up of the following phases:

- Assessment
- Consultation
- Decision
- Transition
- Closure

## **2. Assessment Phase**

The Trustees should continuously monitor the needs of the church and seek to address new and developing needs through minor adjustments to operational priorities that may be achieved without material impact on the job descriptions of ministerial and support staff. If more significant change to job roles appears desirable, the Trustees shall establish an appropriate sub-committee to review the staff structure needed to meet the mission of the church, in line with its stated values. The sub-committee shall report back to the full Board of Trustees in a timely manner, providing recommendations which may include one of the following:

- The existing staff structure still meets the mission of the church
- Changes to job roles are required to meet the mission of the church, whilst maintaining the current staffing level
- Significant changes to the number of staff or job roles are required

At this point, the requirement for redundancies will not have been determined.

If the Trustees agree that changes are required, the process will move into the Consultation Phase.

## **3. Consultation Phase**

During the Consultation Phase, meetings will be held with each member of staff to gain their input into the proposed changes. As the church employs only a few members of staff, and some have line managerial responsibility for others, these initial consultations will be conducted by nominated non-staff Trustees. Whilst the staff are not considered to be formally “at risk of redundancy”, they will be allowed to bring a friend or colleague to support them during the consultation.

The aim of this phase is for staff members to provide their perspective and ideas into the decision-making process. They may be able to propose new options to the Trustees, based on past experience, personal ambition or God-given insight. Notes of each meeting will be taken by the Trustees and these will be shared with the staff member as a record of the consultation.

Following the individual consultations with all staff members that wish to be involved, the Trustee interviewers will summarise the staff views and feed these back to the full Board of Trustees.

The Consultation Phase should be completed in a reasonable length of time, typically 2 weeks, and should not be unduly delayed through waiting for one member of staff to return to the office. If any member of staff is absent for an extended period (e.g. sabbatical, long-term sickness) then the Trustees should make sensible attempts to contact the employee and gain their perspective.

## **4. Decision Phase**

Once all staff consultations have taken place, the Trustee sub-committee shall review all of the staff feedback and prayerfully reconsider the staff structure. The sub-committee shall present their updated recommendations to the Board of Trustees for adoption or modification. It may be appropriate for staff Trustees to recuse themselves from this discussion. The Trustees may agree one of the following positions (the same options as in the Assessment Phase) as follows:

- The existing staff structure still meets the mission of the church
- Changes to job roles are required to meet the mission of the church, whilst maintaining the current staffing level
- Significant changes to the number of staff or job roles are required

If the first option is selected, then the Trustees shall inform the staff of the decision and the process ends.

If changes to the staff structure are deemed to be required, the Trustees will then prepare a decision paper, laying out the future vision, the preferred structure of the team going forward, and the steps that will follow.

Any proposed changes to the number or job description of Ministerial staff should be discussed with the Regional Minister from the Southern Counties Baptist Association before the Decision Paper is finalised.

The decision paper may be shared with the staff as appropriate during the Decision Phase. Care shall be exercised in this decision. For example, it might not be appropriate to share the full decision paper with a staff member that is unaffected, whilst other personnel are at risk of redundancy.

The Trustees will inform the Members that changes to the staff structure are to be implemented. The amount of information shared with the members should be carefully balanced against the right of the staff members to privacy and confidentiality.

### **Changes to Job Roles**

Where the same staffing level is proposed, but it is deemed necessary to make significant changes to job descriptions, each affected member of staff will be called to a meeting with at least two Trustees. The employee will be allowed to bring a friend or colleague to support them during the meeting. At this meeting, the employee will be informed that they are being placed "at risk of redundancy".

The Trustees will present their proposed changes to the individual's job role and explain the reasons why the changes are necessary. The changes may include changes to reporting lines, working hours, or responsibilities. Any impact on take-home pay or benefits should be clearly outlined by the Trustees. The staff member will be given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the proposal and how this affects them. They will then be given time (typically 2 weeks) to consider whether they are prepared to accept the proposed changes. The Trustees shall record notes from the meeting which will be shared with the employee as soon as possible after the meeting, to support their decision-making process.

If the employee accepts the changes, then they will be issued with a new Job Description and / or contract and asked to confirm in writing their acceptance of the new role.

If the employee is not willing to accept the revised job role, then the Trustees should convene a meeting to advise the person that they are to be made redundant, see 'Redundancy' below.

### **Reduction in Staffing**

Where it is determined that a reduction in staff levels is required, or that one or more staff do not have the right skills or experience to meet the future needs of the church, then the Trustees shall call each affected member of staff to an individual meeting with at least two Trustees. The employee will be allowed to bring a friend or colleague to support them during the meeting. At this meeting, the employee will be informed that they are being placed "at risk of redundancy".

Where there is only one person in a role being made redundant, or if everyone in a group is being made redundant, then the employee(s) will be informed that their role is at risk and there will be a short period of consideration before their position is made redundant. The period of time should be advised to the employee(s) and recorded in the notes of the meeting. This period should be relatively brief (typically 2 weeks) but may be longer if the Trustees believe other options may exist that could be investigated.

Where two or more employees share a similar job description and the number of available roles is reducing, then each employee will be informed of the number of roles to be removed, the criteria that will be used to select the individuals that will be retained on the staff, and the time period over which the assessment will be made. The employee may ask questions about the process, but should not treat the meeting as an opportunity to 'sell' their case to remain in the team. Notes of each individual meeting will be shared with the employees.

### **Voluntary Redundancy**

Where more than one employee is at risk of redundancy, the Trustees may choose to offer all of the affected employees the option of applying for voluntary redundancy. The employees should be provided with a suitable time period (typically 2 weeks) in which they are able to apply for voluntary

redundancy. The Trustees are not obliged to accept any application for voluntary redundancy and should determine the outcome of any application based on the best outcome for the church.

Voluntary redundancy shall not be offered on terms that are less generous than for compulsory redundancy.

### **Selection Criteria**

The Trustees will develop specific criteria for determining which employee(s) are kept on the staff. These criteria shall be based upon the current job description of the role and shall relate to the skills, competencies and qualifications of the staff members.

The selection criteria should not include:

- Length of service
- Pregnancy or maternity-related reasons
- Part-time or Fixed-term status (legislation requires that these staff are not treated less favourably than other employees)
- Trade Union membership (or non-membership)
- The fact that an individual has requested flexible working
- Any protected characteristic, which would amount to a breach of the Equality Act (2010)

The Trustees may choose to place different weightings on different criteria, but must agree these before the selection process takes place. A score for each criterion for each employee will be assessed, preferably by at least two Trustees independently and then a weighted score developed. It may be appropriate for the Trustees to discuss performance of individuals with their line manager before scores are developed, so long as this does not create a conflict of interest.

The scores will be reviewed by a third Trustee to identify any large discrepancies in scoring. Where any large differences are apparent, these should be resolved by consensus in a meeting including all scorers and the reviewing Trustee.

The employee with the lowest aggregate score will be selected for compulsory redundancy.

### **Redundancy**

Any employee selected for compulsory redundancy will be called to a meeting with at least two Trustees. The employee will be allowed to bring a friend or colleague to support them during the meeting. At the meeting, the employee will be informed of the decision to make their position redundant and given notice of the termination of their employment. The employee may ask for a summary of the assessment scores made for them against the criteria, but they may not see assessments for other staff members. A formal letter informing the employee of the decision will be provided directly after the meeting.

The other employees will be notified in writing that they are no longer at risk of redundancy.

Note that under the Constitution of Slough Baptist Church, removal of any member of Ministerial Staff can only take place with the approval of the church members at a Special Members' Meeting convened for the purpose. This process should take place after the employee has been advised of the Trustees' decision to make them redundant and before any formal letter of redundancy is issued.

The notice period provided will be consistent with the contractual notice terms for the employee.

Every employee has the right to appeal against a decision to make them redundant. The processes outlined in the Grievance Policy & Procedure, SBCP-18, should be followed.

## **5. Transition Period**

Following any decision to make a staff member redundant, and after formal notice has been provided, the staff member will remain in position until the end of their notice period. During this period the church will provide reasonable support for the employee's search of new employment, e.g. use of paid time and SBC laptops to seek out, apply for and interview for other posts. However, the employee will otherwise continue to perform tasks in line with their job description.

Where an employee has found another position with a different organisation, the church will not unreasonably refuse a shortening of the notice period, if requested by the employee. In this case, salary and other benefits will be paid to the new agreed finishing date, and the redundancy payment will be determined using the new end date.

Where an employee has free use of church property (e.g. The Manse) as part of their package of benefits, that entitlement shall end with termination of employment. Under extenuating circumstances, the Trustees may consider an extension to the use of the property, but this shall be managed under a specific contract with all rights reserved by the church.

Should there be a material change in the position or outlook of the church finances or vision, the church retains the right to rescind the notice of redundancy and related redundancy payment.

## **6. Closure**

Following completion of the notice period, the contract of the employee will be terminated and a redundancy payment shall be made. Redundancy payments will be made in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Trustees shall advise the members that the period of staff reduction is complete.

Attachment: Redundancy Process Flow Chart

