

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE CHURCH¹

This paper offers some questions to start with, comments of useful process, and some components that will be helpful.

It is important to affirm that there are a number of different models for producing strategic plans.

Why use a strategic planning model at all?

- Planning processes enable wide participation in setting priorities and development of ministry for mission.
- Planning helps keep the wider vision to the fore and allows longer-term aims to be developed without being captured by the immediate.
- Careful planning enhances the ability of the Church effectively to fulfil its mission and ministry mandate.
- Good planning helps ensure that appropriate resources are made available to local ministry and mission initiatives.
- Planning should continually refer back to the local setting and specific needs.
- Planning establishes manageable and achievable objectives.
- Planning requires evaluation of outcomes.
- Careful planning and decision-making processes make best use of resources.
- Careful planning offers the opportunity for the co-ordination of activities, programmes and resources across the local, regional, national and ecumenical aspects of the church
- Careful development planning helps the church respond to change and support people through change.

The Process

It will be useful to write the Context sections first.

The information needed is already available, Annual Report and Financial statements.

Council Reports on remits from the General Assembly (Blue book) and up to date operational plans.

This information describes and reveals much of the character of our church.

These descriptive sections should lead easily to defining vision, mission statement and strategies that are based in reality rather than wishful thinking.

AN OUTLINE OF A STRATEGIC PLAN²

Our Identity and Heritage

Who are we?

Where have we come from?

What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

¹ The Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

² Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand link <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/national-ministries/national-mission/strategic-planning>

What are the key strategic relationships within which we work?

What is our organisational structure?

What are our core values and assumptions

Our Context

What is the environment in which we work?

What are the givens of our society, nation and church?

What are the issues affecting people?

What would Good News be in this context?

Who are we responsible and accountable to?(Governance)

Who can we rely on?

Who are we here for?

How do others see us? What is our reputation?

Our Vision

What is a short and memorable way of saying what we stand for?

Great Commission,

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:16-20

Building up of the church

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:11-16

Declaratory Articles

The Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland reads:

"This Church is in historical continuity with the Church of Scotland which was reformed in 1560, whose liberties were ratified in 1592, and for whose security provision was made in the Treaty of Union of 1707. The continuity and identity of the Church of Scotland are not prejudiced by the adoption of these Articles. As a national Church representative of the Christian Faith of the Scottish people it acknowledges its distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish of Scotland through a territorial ministry."

The Church is constitutionally committed to providing a ministry, understood as including a ministry of Word and Sacrament, in every part of Scotland without exception. The Special Commission on Structure articulated in May 2008 that everything that we have been called upon to consider in the areas of structure, finance and the allocation of resources, flows from the imperative contained in the Third Article and, in particular, its third sentence which determines that congregations must be maintained, irrespective of their ability to support themselves and therefore that other congregations must take on the burden of that support.

The vision of the Church of Scotland is to be a church which seeks to inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the good news of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic, worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.

Our Mission

What would faithfulness mean for the Councils and agencies of the Church?

What are we here for?

Who are we here for?

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Panel on Review and Reform

Reporting Directly:
Guild; General Trustees, Judicial Commission, Ministries Appeal Panel, Personnel Appeal Panel, Child Protection Appeal Panel, Nomination Committee, Committee to Nominate the Moderator, Iona Community Board

Council of Assembly

Church and Society Council

National, political, social and ethical issues
Peace, international, Europe and migration
Equalities and human rights
Health and social issues
Poverty and justice
Science, religion and technology
Parliamentary affairs
Climate change
Education
Schools

Ministries Council

Recruitment, training, support and development of all recognised ministries
Planning and deployment
Emerging ministries
Interim ministries
New charge development
Area Team Ministry
Chaplaincy work

Mission and Discipleship Council

Mission and evangelism
Education and nurture
Worship and doctrine
Church art and architecture
Publishing
Parish
Development Fund
Church without Walls

Social Care Council

CrossReach
Provision of caring services to people in need

Support and Services Council

Assembly Arrangements
Central Services
Ecumenical Relations
Legal Questions
Safeguarding
Stewardship and Finance

World Mission Council

Overseas partnerships and charges
Local involvement and development
Israel centres

Key Mission and Ministry Areas

In what areas will we need to be achieving if we are to fulfil our mission and ministry?

Goals, Objectives and Action Plans

Goals

What is the current goal under this Key Mission and Ministry Area?

Where will we have to get to in this area to have been faithful to our mission over the next two years?

Each Key Mission and Ministry Area can be expressed as a current goal for specific fields of responsibility, and generate specific objectives.

Each Council would prepare their goals and objectives toward fulfilment of the agreed vision with regard to their own remits.

Goal statements begin with **To...** eg ***To establish clear and effective structures of Governance for Presbyteries***

To develop a Mission Review strategy for all congregations and Presbyteries

To resource the poorest and marginalised church communities

To devolve responsibility and related funding to induct ministers to charges in any region

To keep under review the central administration of the church, with particular regard to resolving issues of duplication

Objectives

What projects or tasks are we going to do to help achieve this goal?

Objectives are statements of specific projects or tasks that will need to happen to achieve the goal. There is often more than one objective for a goal.

Action Plans

What steps do we need to take, when and by whom to accomplish the objectives?

What resources will be needed to enable the objectives to be accomplished?

What resources do we already have?

What resources do we need to look for?

The group needs to regularly review its Key Mission and Ministry Areas and agree to strategies that will achieve stated objectives.

Action Plans are the steps of how you are going to accomplish the objectives.

Priorities

In which Key Mission and Ministry Areas is the present state limiting our ability to fulfil our Mission? Which objectives, if they were met, would make most contribution to fulfilling our Mission?

Priorities are statements to guide action in the short term (say, the next six months). These are the things that if done will make most difference in accomplishing our goals and mission.

GOAL/OUTCOME	ACTION	WHO LEADS	WHEN	RESOURCE NEEDED	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
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Review Process

Features of successful strategies

- shared vision, goals and priorities
- change before you have to
- look inward and outward
- address opportunities with positive courageous initiatives
- build on existing capabilities
- apply strategic cost management
- produce creative solutions
- plan back from the future
- availability of data
- apply high standards
- understanding
- urgency
- clear direction
- discipline

Common causes of failure

- small incremental improvements
- inappropriate investment
- inappropriate cost cutting
- losing the best people
- damaging morale and enthusiasm
- restructuring as strategy
- destabilising the core
- poor communications

Leadership [how to motivate and reduce barriers to success]

- provide a sense of mission
- recognise and influence emotions
- inspire confidence
- involve people
- align goals to individuals
- develop initiative in people
- develop common purpose
- develop trust, team work and positive relationships
- develop strong lines of communication

Monitor and evaluate

Priorities

Priorities need to be reviewed and if necessary modified at least annually.

Action Plans

Action Plans need to be reviewed and if necessary modified at least quarterly.

Objectives

Objectives need to be reviewed and if necessary modified at least every two years.

Key Mission and Ministry Areas

Key Mission and Ministry Areas need to be reviewed and if necessary modified at least every three years.

Context

The statement of Context needs to be reviewed and if necessary modified at least every two years.

Vision and Mission

The Vision and Mission Statements need to be reviewed and if necessary modified about every five years.