**CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY**

**LEADERSHIP MODEL**

**Introduction**

1. This paper explores the future leadership model for the Community in the light of the discussion at the September Community Weekend. On that occasion, Members expressed serious reservations over Council’s proposals for a “shared leadership” model. Instead there was a desire for a Faith Leader working alongside the Executive Director, who would ensure that the Community and its programmes remained true to our vision and mission. There was, however, some acknowledgement of the importance of developing a more inclusive style of leadership, reflecting the diversity of our membership, including gender and religious belief. Council has prepared this paper as a basis for a substantive discussion of the way forward on the occasion of the AGM on 18th January.

**Leadership Role**

1. Council has revisited the role of the Leader as described when the position was last advertised. It believes that the role of the Leader can be described in terms of three overlapping areas:
2. Vision;
3. External Relations; and
4. Pastoral Care.
5. In regard to **Vision,** Council believes the key responsibilities are to:

* Promote Corrymeela’s vision, values, aims and objectives, as set out in the Community’s Strategic Plan 2013-16;
* Provide spiritual leadership to the Community, including the development of our theology of reconciliation; and
* Hold together the Community and the organisation in a clear partnership.

1. In regard to **External Relations,** Council believes that the key responsibilities are to:

* Develop the Community’s wider prophetic role to society;
* Represent, influence, network and develop relationships with others, including key stakeholders, the churches, ecumenical and other bodies;
* Maintain and promote the status of Corrymeela as an international peace building community; and
* Communicate with the media.

1. In regard to **Pastoral Care,** Council believes the key responsibilities are to:

* Develop relationships with and between Members, and encourage Members to care for one another;
* Help Members make connections between faith and life;
* Build up Community life, liaising closely with the Community Life Committee over arrangements for community meetings, community weekends and the annual dedication service; and
* Support the Executive Director in the building of a “lived community” in Ballycastle, reflecting the vision and mission of the Community.

1. Council believes that these key leadership responsibilities should be discharged under the authority of Council and in collaboration with the Executive Director, in order to ensure that the work of Corrymeela continues to be guided by our vision, values, aims and objectives as set out in our Strategic Plan 2013/16. **Are Members content with this description of the Leadership role?**

**Leadership Models**

1. The possible dimensions of a leadership model include the following:

* Full-time or part-time;
* Ordained or lay;
* Fixed term or open ended;
* Salaried or stipend (and at what level?); and
* With a support team of Members or with, say, one or two Deputies (paid or unpaid).

1. In addition, the suggestion was made at the Community Weekend that the Leader might be designated the Chair of Council, as a mechanism to reinforce the faith dimension of Corrymeela’s work. This proposal has been explored with the Community’s legal adviser. She has expressed strong reservations for several reasons. Firstly, she believes that the skills required of a Leader are not the same as those required of a Chair, who is expected to discharge on behalf of the Council key corporate governance responsibilities in respect of Corrymeela as a charity. Secondly, there could be a conflict of interest between the role of Leader and that of Chair. Thirdly, if the Leader is the Chair of Council, to whom is the Leader responsible in governance terms? Council believes that these reservations are strong enough to rule out this option.
2. A full-time post could in theory absorb the responsibilities of the proposed Faith and Life Worker post outlined in the “Review of the Structure and Organisation”, although the latter was intended to be primarily involved in programme work (and a possible leadership support person), rather than someone involved in the discharge of the strategic level responsibilities listed above. **Are there other dimensions of the leadership model that Members believe Council should take into account?**

**Proposed Way Forward**

1. The above dimensions of the leadership model could generate several alternative ways forward, leading to the formulation of a Job Description and Personnel Specification based on what is determined to be the “ideal” model, followed by an open advertisement.
2. There is an alternative suggestion that Council would like to explore with Members. Now that the Leader no longer has responsibility for the “Organisation”, with the Executive Director due to report directly to Council, the Community is freer to appoint a Leader from within its own membership. (To satisfy corporate governance requirements it is likely that the Community would have to be seen from a charitable perspective to be meeting the Leader’s stipend from its membership’s pockets – a concept that already exists in Corrymeela.) This would help ensure that the Leader of the Community was sensitive to the Community’s vision etc while knowing the membership. Indeed, the Leader would be the principal advocate of the vision, supporting Council in its corporate governance role as the guardian of the vision.
3. Council proposes that instead of agreeing a leadership model in terms of the above dimensions, Members should be asked to consider who might be our next Leader from within our existing membership. Having sifted the nominations, an approach would then be made to the person perceived to be best equipped to lead the Community, with a view to exploring their interest and the nature of the commitment he or she felt they could make to Corrymeela, together with the support they might require. This could include the appointment of a “Faith and Life” Worker. This model could allow, for example, a part-time Leader to emerge who could be supported by one or two Deputies, with complementary skills, and reflecting a more diverse leadership model. Such a model would potentially help ensure that the Community does not depend on a single person to lead, would help develop new Leaders and could encourage Members to participate in the leadership task. **Do Members believe an internal search for a new Leader is a suitable way forward?**

**Conclusion**

1. Members are asked to consider at the AGM:

* Are you content with the description of the leadership role in paragraphs 2 to 6 above?;
* Are there any additional dimensions of the leadership model set out in paragraphs 7 to 9 above that Council should take into account?; and
* Are you in favour of an internal search for a new Leader as set out in paragraphs 10 to 12 above?

1. Any Member who cannot be present at the AGM is invited to send in written comments in advance to John Hunter before 14th January.
2. Finally, Council has agreed that the discussion of this paper at the AGM would be preceded by a period of silent reflection, prayer and discernment.

John Hunter (Chair of Council) 20th December 2013.