

Notice of Motion 2024/101: Amendments to Resolutions 22/21 & 22/22

While the Conference appreciates the work already done in response to M21(2022) regarding the employment of the District Safeguarding Officers (DSOs), it also notes the following feedback from DSOs around the Connexion:

- There is a strong feeling the consultation carried out has not been adequately meaningful.
- Minimal consideration has been given to how a consistent and transparent set of standards is to be devised.
- The focus on the employment of DSOs is an overly limited approach and may fail to achieve the best safeguarding structure and practice to build on for the future.
- The rationale given for the proposals fails to consider the underlying causes of the historic lack of consistency (such as the absence of transparent and clearly communicated connexional standards for Districts to be held accountable to).
- The apparent focus on service standards and employment structures offers a limited approach to an issue that should principally be seen as being about transparency of standards and clear guidelines at a connexional level.

In the light of these concerns, the following amendments to the resolutions are made:

22/21. The Conference directs the Connexional Council to undertake further consultation with appropriate persons, groups and organisations, including District Safeguarding Officers and District Chairs, to explore a wider range of possibilities in terms of developing greater excellence in the consistency and transparency of our Safeguarding work as a Church. The outcomes of this consultation and any further proposals shall be reported to Conference 2025.

22/22. The Conference adopts the Report as an interim further reply to M21(2022), with a final reply to be made in 2025.

Proposed: The Revd Andrew J Brazier

Seconded: Mrs Laura Tunnacliffe

1. The Revd Mark P Hammond
2. Mrs Angela M Brydon
3. The Revd Dr Tracey Darling
4. Katrin Hackett
5. Emma Crippen
6. Miss Naomi Prince
7. The Revd Andrew J Sterling
8. The Revd Naomi N Kaiga

Impact

What are the benefits of the proposal?	<i>Input from the Districts on what the issues are with the current structure</i>
By what criteria will the benefits be measured?	<i>Safeguarding in the Methodist Church would be a cohesive and transparent practice</i>
Why is the proposal a particular priority for the Church at this particular time?	<i>In light of IICSA it is important that the Methodist Church looks at getting its house in order and that would include the safeguarding function</i>
Does the proposal require a person in a local church or circuit to do something new or different?	<i>No</i>
How is it proposed that the work will be done? What is the time commitment?	<i>The memorial to the Conference back in 2022 asked for proposals to be presented in 2023, in 2024 there is just one proposal</i>
Does the proposal require additional work from the Connexional Team? Has the potential impact been discussed with the Connexional Secretary?	<i>Yes No</i>
What are the financial implications of the proposal including both the implementation costs and the ongoing costs?	<i>None</i>
How is it proposed that the financial consequences are funded?	<i>Not applicable</i>

Response from the Conference Financial Committee	There has been extensive consultation over the connexional year on these proposals and as the districts have already been consulted it is unclear what further issues will be highlighted. Consultation with staff affected will follow in due course as part of the restructuring process. A further round of consultation will require additional resource of time and create delays to the implementation of the improvements anticipated from making the changes. The impact on connexional and district staff who will have a year's delay to answers about their future roles could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing.
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Notice of Motion 2024/102: Methodist Council, Section G: Methodist Children and Youth Assembly

The Conference welcomes the updating of Standing Order 250, which had become out of date, and the opportunity this provides to focus on the importance of the Youth Assembly, the Youth President and the Church's work with children and young people. The strengthening of the Youth President's role is particularly welcome. The revisions could be further improved by some additional amendments, which are presented below.

The proposed removal of the previous purpose of the Assembly in clause (2) means that the purpose of the Assembly would in future be less clear than it could be. The Conference believes it would be helpful to instead replace this with the new purposes of the Assembly, which were agreed by the Methodist Council last year.

The opportunity is also taken to make modifications to clause (8) to clarify reporting lines and clause (11)(i) to ensure that the age of eligibility for the youth representative to the Conference is not lost due to the removal of the Assembly's procedures.

In 2023 the Mission Committee approved a 5-year Children, Youth and Family Strategy. This included a decision that the Youth President and the Youth President's Advisory Group "be the primary way in which the collective voices of children and young people are heard and fed into the governance life of the Church" (Conference Agenda 2023, p 310). Since the Advisory Group is now being disbanded by the deletion of clause (9), an alternative way of hearing these voices is required.

This year, the number of Conference representatives elected by the Assembly has reduced from 3 to 1, and the 2 representatives elected to the Methodist Council are replaced by 0 members elected to the Connexional Council or the other major committees of the Church. It is noted that no nominated member of the Connexional Council is under 30, and only one current or nominated member of the Mission Committee is under 35. Simply electing youth representatives to these bodies (especially the Council) may not be desirable or sufficient, but a review into ways in which the voices of children and young people may be heard by these bodies in their new configuration (in addition to the attendance of the Youth President as an observer) would be valuable at this point. Therefore, proposal C below is made.

The Conference of 2009 voted to establish the Methodist Youth Assembly in replacement of the Methodist Youth Conference, defining and regulating the Assembly in Standing Order 250 and in the Deed of Union, including defining the age range for attendees. Further Conferences have from time to time adjusted this age range and have reaffirmed the Assembly as the "Methodist Children and Youth Assembly", as it caters for both children and young adults in the Methodist Church. The Conference believes that now is an appropriate time to reconsider the best age range for the Assembly, but affirms that this remains an important aspect of the nature of the Assembly, and it is appropriate for the age range to continue to be included in Standing Orders.

In particular, the Conference understands that it is currently proposed that the upper age limit of the Assembly be reduced to 18, thus removing young adults from the scope of the Assembly and making it for children only in future. The Conference understands that the Connexional Team have given this question careful consideration. The Conference also believes that this would be a significant step in altering the nature and purpose of the event. The Conference feels it is hence appropriate for the Conference to take this decision itself, and would therefore welcome receiving further information to explain the reasons that were behind this proposal, to allow it the opportunity to positively endorse such a change. It is therefore proposed to retain an age range in clause (3), update it to reflect the recent reduction in the lower age limit to 4, and add a further resolution 22/6A (proposal B) to allow the Conference to express its opinion on reducing the upper age limit.

Proposals

Therefore:

- A. The Conference amends Resolution 22/4 by replacing paragraphs (2), (3), (8) and (11)(i) of Standing Order 240 as given on pp 208-210 of the Conference Agenda with the wording given at the end of this Notice of Motion.

- B. The Conference agrees to the debate, later in the Conference, of an additional Resolution 22/6A, as below, to be accompanied on the Order Paper with a statement by the Mission Committee giving a rationale for this change and summarising the plans for future alternative work with young adults.

22/6A The Conference amends Standing Orders as follows:

240 Methodist Children and Youth Assembly

- (3) The Assembly shall be open to children and young people between the ages of 4 and ~~18~~ 23 years old.
- C. The Conference requests the Youth President for 2024-25 and the youth representatives, seeking advice as required from the JDS Committee, the Secretary of the Conference and the Mission Committee, to review the participation and representation of young people on the principal committees and bodies of the Church, and the means through which children's and young people's voices are heard in those fora, and to bring recommendations to the Conference on any changes that may be desired to strengthen such participation and voice.

Amended wording for Standing Order 240:

(2) The Assembly ~~exists to provide an opportunity within the Methodist Church to hear from and be informed by children and young people.~~ shall be

- (i) ***A place of celebration, inspiration and empowerment for all children and young people associated with the life of the Methodist Church in Britain.***
- (ii) ***A place where dialogue happens across generations.***
- (iii) ***A place for the Christian discipleship of children and young people in the Methodist tradition.***
- (iv) ***A place for the upskilling and inspiring of those with a ministry among children, young people and their households.***
- (v) ***A place where vocational experiences and opportunities are presented for all attendees***

(3) The Assembly shall be open to children and young people between the ages of ~~8-4~~ **4 and** 23 years old ~~and the Assembly shall meet in sessions according to age. The age range of each session shall be determined annually by the Youth President's Advisory Group.~~

(8) There shall be a Youth President elected in accordance with clause (10) of this Standing Order who shall be a member of the Conference and the Connexional Leaders' Forum as a representative of the Assembly ~~and shall more widely act as an encourager and representative of children and young people in the life of the Church~~ **and shall thereby be enabled to give effect to two core purposes of advocacy and involvement in decision-making on behalf of all children and young people in the life of the Methodist Church. The Youth President shall also have a wider strategic role, as may be determined from time to time by the Secretary of the Conference.**

(11) ~~There shall be elected annually sessions of the Assembly shall through procedures agreed by all the sessions jointly elect the three representatives~~ **the representative of the Assembly** to the next Conference required under Standing Order 102(5)*. To be eligible to be elected, a person shall:

- (i) ***be aged 18 years or over but under 22 at the date of the opening of the Conference*** ~~be a member of the Assembly at which the election takes place;~~ and

The rest of this clause is unchanged from as it is presented in the Agenda, p 210

* If Resolution 49/9 has already been passed, then this cross-reference becomes Standing Order 102(1)(viii) – see p 544

Proposed: Martin Harker

Seconded: Ms Martha Rand

1. Kevin Jones
2. Anna Malnutt
3. The Revd Leslie Newton
4. The Revd Nicholas A Oborski

Impact

What are the benefits of the proposal? By what criteria will the benefits be measured?	<p><i>Changes to Standing Order wording: increased confidence of the Conference in the governance of the Youth Assembly and in the Connexional Team. Modest benefit, not measurable.</i></p> <p><i>Review of youth participation and voice: will hopefully lead to improvement in the participation and voice of young people in the Church. This cannot be measured until the proposals results from this review are brought to a future Conference, but the benefits would be positive.</i></p>
Why is the proposal a particular priority for the Church at this particular time?	<p><i>Engagement with and involvement of young people in the Church is essential to the Church's future</i></p>
What are the financial implications of the proposal including both the implementation costs and the ongoing costs and where will this be funded from?	<p><i>Changes to Standing Order wording: none</i></p> <p><i>Potential changes to age range for Youth Assembly (subject to if 22/6A is agreed): none, as this would not affect the maximum capacity of Youth Assembly.</i></p> <p><i>Review of youth participation and voice: this would be carried out by the Youth President within the time available for their full-time job, falling within their job description as work for young people in the Church. Therefore, no additional cost.</i></p>
Are there any Equality Impacts as a result of this proposal which will require mitigation or management?	<p><i>Positive equality impact as the voice of young people in the Church would be improved.</i></p>
What is the impact on the workload of local churches and circuits?	<p><i>None</i></p>
What is the impact on the workload of the Connexional Team? Has it been agreed with the Connexional Secretary that the proposal can be incorporated into the workload of the Team?	<p><i>No impact on members of the Connexional Team other than the Youth President (insofar as they may be considered a member of the Team). This will alter what work the Youth President undertakes during the year, but not increase their amount of work.</i></p> <p><i>There may be a small amount of time involved by (volunteer) members of the JDS Committee and Mission Committee, but they would expect to spend time considering some issues connected to youth work as part of their agenda during the course of the year, and this would fall within that expectation.</i></p> <p><i>No deadline has been placed upon this work, so if it is not feasible for the Youth President and/or the committees giving advice to complete this by the 2025 Conference, the work could be spread out over a longer period</i></p>
Response from the Conference Financial Committee	<p>The Youth President is a member of the Connexional Team. If this piece of work was added to their workload in 2024/25, this would mean less focus on other priorities.</p>

Notice of Motion 2024/103: Memorials 12 and 13

The Conference amends the reply to Memorials M12 and M13 by deleting the words ‘it declines the memorial’ at the end of the first paragraph and by adding the following: ‘it accepts the memorial in the best interests of full accountability and transparency that may impact similar decisions in the future, and to mitigate the enduring hurt levied by the implementation of this decision on our mission partners. Answers to these memorials will be provided to the 2025 Conference’.

- Specific to the first and second points put forth in both memorials, and in the absence of any documented theological reflection done prior to the decision being made, the Conference asks the Faith and Order Committee to express a view as to whether the apparent variation in treatment of lay and ordained mission partners is compatible with our theological principles about equality, diversity and inclusion and the ‘priesthood of all believers’.
- Specific to the third and fifth points of both memorials, the Conference recognises the basis of the decision was because of financial projection concerns, and it requires a timeline as to when the concerns were first noted, by whom, to whom were the concerns raised, and what alternative actions were considered.
- Specific to the fourth and sixth points in both memorials, the Conference expresses its concern about the lack of transparency and accountability for these decisions.

Proposed: Deacon Margaret E Patchett

Seconded: Melissa Newell

1. Deacon Suzie G B Viana
2. The Revd Dr Andrew J Lunn
3. The Revd Stephen J Radford
4. The Revd James Patron Bell

<p>What are the benefits of the proposal? By what criteria will the benefits be measured?</p>	<p><i>Answers not yet given would help in a greater sense of understanding for mission partners who have lost their jobs, and in lessons learned for future decision making through better and less distanced accountability, acknowledging the full process in the public arena of the Conference.</i></p> <p><i>It will be measured by recommended actions that will allow full accountability and transparency for future actions by individuals and committees.</i></p>
<p>Why is the proposal a particular priority for the Church at this particular time?</p>	<p><i>The decision undermines the connexional EDI inclusive church strategy and training. Mission partners felt let down by the Church, as the decisions made were inadequately communicated to them and that the support offered proved inadequate. This must not happen ever again.</i></p>
<p>What are the financial implications of the proposal including both the implementation costs and the ongoing costs and where will this be funded from?</p>	<p><i>The financial implications will be dependent on what appropriate actions the Conference will agree to take forward.</i></p>
<p>Are there any Equality Impacts as a result of this proposal which will require mitigation or management?</p>	<p><i>Yes. After the process last year, lay mission partners were left unclear about the thinking and process which led to their redundancy. This is unfair. The memorial requested transparency about process, most of which has not been given by the reply to the memorial. For example, the memorial reply refers to a ‘confidential paper’ (‘the missional</i></p>

	<i>thinking was set out in a confidential paper'). For what reasons, and in whose interests is missional thinking to be kept confidential? Is it kept confidential to hide bias against lay members? Why have the papers pertaining to this process leading to redundancy not been made available to mission partners, Conference members and overseas partners, despite requests throughout the year?</i>
What is the impact on the workload of local churches and circuits?	<i>There should be none if they are already seeking to implement the Inclusive Church strategy.</i>
What is the impact on the workload of the Connexional Team? Has it been agreed with the Connexional Secretary that the proposal can be incorporated into the workload of the Team?	<i>There are already Districts who seek to support the connexional Global Relationships team in working together to share the workload.</i>
Response from the Conference Financial Committee	This requires additional work for the Faith and Order Committee.

Notice of Motion 2024/104: Connexional Council

Recognising that members of the Connexional Council are appointed by virtue of the skills and experience they bring and not as representatives of the District in which they reside, one area of expertise which needs to be held is a full understanding of the different and varied needs of jurisdictions other than England and Wales.

Therefore, the Conference amends resolution 45/4 to add '... and that one of the appointed members of the Connexional Council is given the remit of holding before the Connexional Council the needs and differences of jurisdictions other than England and Wales on all matters considered by the Connexional Council, particularly those with legal and jurisdictional dimensions such as GDPR, Employment Law, relationship with TMCP, Charity Legislation, etc.'

Proposed: The Revd Stephen P Ingrouille

Seconded: The Revd Dr David Hinchliffe

1. The Revd Dr Janet E Corlett
2. The Stephen J Charman
3. The Revd Helen R Kirk
4. The Revd Dawn J Saunders

Impact

What are the benefits of the proposal and how will they be measured?	<i>To have the needs and differences of non-UK jurisdictions fully understood at the formulation stage of reports and committees will assist in the streamlining of production of reports and other work of the Connexional Council.</i>
Why is the proposal a particular priority for the Church at this particular time?	<i>To build this into the remit of a Connexional Council member at the start of this new way of working.</i>

What are the financial implications of the proposal including both the implementation costs and the ongoing costs and where will this be funded from?	<i>As this individual will be a person already named for appointment to Connexional Council, there are no financial implications.</i>
Are there any Equality Impacts as a result of this proposal which will require mitigation or management?	<i>none</i>
What is the impact on the workload of local churches and circuits?	<i>This will assist local churches, circuits, and districts in jurisdictions outside England and Wales by lightening their workload through reducing the need to translate reports and standing orders in ways that align with their laws and procedures - as such differences will be captured in the creation process.</i>
What is the impact on the workload of the Connexional Team? Has it been agreed with the Connexional Secretary that the proposal can be incorporated into the workload of the Team?	
Response from the Conference Financial Committee	Having in mind the impact on jurisdictions outside England and Wales is already a responsibility of the Connexional Council so this has no additional resource implications.