

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee's recommendation for amending Standing Order 102 (i) (g)

Contact name and details	The Revd Stephen Poxon – Chair of the EDI Committee stephen.poxon@btopenworld.com
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Resolutions	<p>10/1. The Council receives the report.</p> <p>10/2. The Council recommends to the Conference that Standing Order 102 (i) (g) be amended to read:</p> <p><i>'Six persons representing the concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion, of whom at least two shall represent the concerns of racial justice and at least two shall be under the age of 26 at the date fixed for the commencement of the Conference.'</i></p>

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To update Standing Order 102 (i) (g)
Main Points	<p>The report covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDI Committee responsibility for Standing Order 102 (i) (g). • Considerations in reviewing Standing Order 102 (i) (g). • Conclusions.
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	<p>Standing Order 102(i)(g) <i>'Six persons representing the concerns of racial justice, at least two of whom shall be under the age of 26.'</i></p> <p>The 2014 Council report 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and Architecture'</p>

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee's recommendation for amending Standing Order 102(i)(g)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Under Standing Order 102(i)(g) there shall be six persons representing the concerns of racial justice at the Methodist Conference. Since 2015 the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has had the responsibility for identifying those representatives and analysing and monitoring the impact.

2.0 Consideration

- 2.1 Though not formally designated as such; the allocation of the six persons representing the concerns of racial justice could be seen as a 'positive action' initiative under the Equality Act 2010 and antecedent Race Relations legislation because, in practice apart from the 2016 Conference, only individuals who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) have been in these roles and their presence has helped to ensure the diversity of the representatives at Methodist Conference. For further details for the Conference EDI demographic data see appendix 1.
- 2.2 At the time of its inception this may have been seen as a good start in beginning to tackle the thorny issue of diversity and inclusion at the Methodist Conference. However, the EDI Committee now believes that this sole focus on ethnicity skews the ethnicity data for the Methodist Conference hiding the challenges it faces in regards to inclusivity.
- 2.3 In reaching their conclusion the EDI Committee considered the following information: Apart from the 2016 Conference where the EDI Committee decided to directly contact Districts to identify nominees for the six roles; over the past five years most of those representing the concerns of racial justice for the Methodist Conference came from the same pool of people. (see Appendix 2). So to some extent if this was a positive action initiative then the impact for BAME individuals has been limited. Also, the focus on racial justice as a connexional process may have inadvertently hindered some Districts identifying BAME individuals as part of their district process and it may have inhibited the effectiveness of Standing Order 417 (2)

(2) Subject to clause (2b) below the election shall be made by the Synod by ballot vote or nomination. In electing such representatives members of the Synod shall have regard to age, sex and ethnic origin.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The EDI Committee concludes that the focus needs to shift to the wider question of what needs to change so that the Methodist Conference becomes diverse and inclusive; and hence truly representative of the Church's composition?
- 3.2 The EDI Committee firmly believes that Districts adhering to Standing Order 417(2) and the Conference considering its own composition as outlined in Standing Order 103(2) (*'...In electing such representatives the Conference shall consider its own composition as a whole with regard to*

age, sex and ethnic origin.’) are the most effective routes to ensure that the Methodist Conference is diverse and inclusive.

- 3.3 Rather than only focusing on a BAME presence at the Conference the EDI Committee concludes that the most effective use of Standing Order 102(i)(g) is therefore to focus on the wider question of diversity and inclusion at the Conference which affects a number of protected groups and the EDI Committee will continue to support the Methodist Council in progressing this. It recommends four out of the six allocated roles be designated as persons representing the concerns of equality diversity and inclusion.
- 3.4 However, the EDI Committee recognises the importance of racial justice in its own right and therefore recommends that two of the six roles should continue to be concerned with racial justice which is in line with other allocated protected characteristic roles at the Conference such as SO 102(vii) Methodist Women in Britain and SO 102(5) Methodist Children and Youth. The EDI Committee would also like to keep the existing ‘.. at least two of whom shall be under the age of 26’ provision in the Standing Order.
- 3.5 In recommending the amendment of Standing Order 102(i)(g), the EDI Committee is signaling that the issue of diversity and inclusion at the Methodist Conference is a mainstream issue rather than an issue that is only pertinent for protected groups. This revision will ensure that the Methodist Conference is in concordance with the current EDI architecture and the EDI Theological Underpinning, which states that:

‘It is the Church’s intention to value every human being as part of God’s creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness which demonstrates the nature of God’s grace and love for all. Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift which is offered to all people. There are no distinctions based on race, gender, disability, age, wealth or sexuality, or any discrimination associated with this gift...’ (For further information see; <http://methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/equality-and-diversity/guidance-and-report>).

*****RESOLUTIONS**

10/1. The Council receives the report.

10/2. The Council recommends to the Conference that Standing Order 102(i)(g) be amended to read:
‘Six persons representing the concerns of equality, diversity and inclusion, of whom at least two shall represent the concerns of racial justice and at least two shall be under the age of 26 at the date fixed for the commencement of the Conference.’

The EDI Profile of the Methodist Conference Representatives

Equality, diversity and Inclusion monitoring data was collected for the 2016, 2015, 2013 and 2010 Methodist Conferences.

In total there were 306 representatives for the 2016 Methodist Conference comprising; District representatives, Council elected representatives, Ex-Officio representatives and Committee representatives. 86 per cent of EDI monitoring forms were completed. This is the same as in 2015 and 2013.

Standing Order 103(2) Part 1 The Conference:

'...In electing such representatives the Conference shall consider its own composition as a whole with regard to age, sex and ethnic origin.'

Standing Order 417 (2) Part 4 The Districts:

'...In electing such representatives members of the Synod shall have regard for the composition of the membership of the District as a whole with regard to age, sex and ethnic origin.'

Age profile (available data: 96 per cent of in 2016 which is the same as in 2015)

Significantly the highest number of the 2016 Conference Representatives were in the age range 50-59 at 32 per cent with 30 per cent in the age range 60-69, this is a change from past trends where the age range 60-69 per cent has been the highest. In 2015 the age range 60-69 was 32 per cent and the age range 50-59 was 29 per cent.

In total 70 per cent of the 2016 Conference Representatives were 50 years old and over. This compares to 70 per cent in 2015, 74 per cent in 2013 and 70 per cent in 2010.

Age Band	The 2016 Conference Representatives
16 to 19	2%
20 to 29	7%
30 to 39	8%
40 to 49	13%
50 to 59	32%
60 to 69	30%
70 plus	8%

Disability profile (available data: 98 per cent in 2016 up from 97 percent in 2015)

18 per cent of the 2016 Conference Representatives declared a disability. This compares to 11 per cent in 2015, 11 per cent in 2013 and 7 per cent in 2010.

Disabilities	The 2016 Conference Representatives
physical impairment	3%
mental health disability	1%
learning disabilities	2%
long-term medical condition or illness	9%
'other' disability	3%

Ethnicity profile (available data: 97 per cent in 2016 up from 96 per cent in 2015)

Currently, the ethnic categories which are used are those used in the National Census.

Significantly, 10 per cent of the 2016 Conference Representatives who declared an ethnicity were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) categories. This shows some progress compared to; 8 per cent in 2015, 5 per cent in 2013 and 11 per cent in 2010. Representatives, representing the concerns of racial justice generally add 2 per cent to the overall BAME percentage.

Ethnicity	The 2016 Conference Representatives
Asian or Asian British	0.5 %
Black or Black British	8%
Chinese or Other Ethnicity	0.5%
Mixed	1%
White	90%

Sex profile (available data: 98 per cent in 2016 up from 96 percent in 2015)

Significantly, 52 per cent of the 2016 Conference Representatives who declared their sex were female. This compares to 48 per cent in 2015, 40 per cent in 2013 and 44 per cent in 2010.

Those representing the concerns of racial justice for the Methodist Conference

The 2010 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Revd	Lena Ali	London
Revd	Peter Brown	North Lancashire
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie	London
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Jessica Fletcher	London
Mrs	Nwabueze Nwokolo	Birmingham
Mr (under 26 Rep)	Brian Taylor	London
The 2011 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Revd	Peter Brown	North Lancashire
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Veronica Franklin	Birmingham
Mrs	Nwabueze Nwokolo	Birmingham
Revd	Joseph Suray	Nottingham and Derby
Mr (under 26 Rep))	Brian Taylor	London
Revd	Freddy Takavarasha	West Yorkshire
The 2012 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Revd	Peter Brown	North Lancashire
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Veronica Franklin	Birmingham
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie	London
Revd	Joseph Suray	Nottingham and Derby
Mr (under 26 Rep)	Brian Taylor	London
Revd	Freddy Takavarasha	West Yorkshire
The 2013 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Mr (under 26 Rep)	Samuel Akpalu	London
Revd	Peter Brown	North Lancashire
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie	London
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Veronica Franklin	Birmingham
Revd	Joseph Suray	Nottingham and Derby
Revd	Freddy Takavarasha	West Yorkshire
The 2014 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Mr (under 26 Rep)	Emmanuel Aggrey-Ogoe Jr	London
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie	London
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Tendai Mugodi	Birmingham
Mrs	Nwabueze Nwokolo	Birmingham
Revd	Joseph Suray	Nottingham and Derby

Revd	Freddy Takavarasha	West Yorkshire
The 2015 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Revd	Peter Brown	Lancashire
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie	London
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Veronica Franklin	Birmingham
Mrs	Nwabueze Nwokolo	Birmingham
Revd	Joseph Suray	Nottingham and Derby
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Alexandra Weekes	London
The 2016 Methodist Conference		
Title	Name	District
Revd	Olufemi Cole-Njie (Mentor)	London
Ms	Ria Delves	Manchester and Stockport
Ms (under 26 Rep)	Barbara Eze	London
Revd	Revd Daniel Mwilu	Leeds
Revd (under 26 Rep)	Jarel Robinson-Brown	Wales Synod
Revd	Anne Ellis	Northampton