

### 30. Report from the JDS Shadow Committee

Contact name and details	The Revd Charity Nzegwu, Co-Chair of the Shadow JDS Committee JDS@methodistchurch.org.uk The Revd Sam McBratney, Co-Chair of the Shadow JDS Committee JDS@methodistchurch.org.uk
Resolutions	30/1. The Conference receives the Report. 30/2. The Conference amends Standing Orders.

Summary of content

Subject and aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To inform the Conference of the progress of the implementation of the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity.</li></ul>
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#### Implementation of the Strategy for Justice, Dignity, and Solidarity

- 1 Following the adoption of the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity by the 2021 Conference, the Shadow JDS Committee adopted an implementation plan and task-and-finish groups were set up to further the work of each of the recommendations.
- 2 Throughout this report please refer to the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity: [Conference 2021 Agenda Volume 3 \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)
- 3 Recommendation numbers and page numbers (from the Conference report) are provided below.
- 4 This report outlines the progress made so far and planned goals for the future

#### A. General Summary

- 5 Generally, the committee is pleased with the level of engagement in this first stage of implementing the Strategy. Many parts of the Connexional Team have begun to engage with the work of the Strategy and its implications for their own work (as one example, the Annual Safeguarding Conference focused on this theme, March 2022).
- 6 Work has begun on designing, piloting and (in some cases) launching many of the recommendations.
- 7 Data, by which to measure the progress of the strategy's implementation and embedding, will be crucial. Interpretation of the data already collected will be an early next step.
- 8 A review of progress to date is being undertaken during April – June 2022 in order to begin planning for the sustaining and embedding of the work beyond the post of the current Inclusive Church Implementation Officer (summer 2023).
- 9 Some Circuits are beginning to appoint EDI Officers and some Districts are also beginning to set money aside to pay for their district EDI Officer roles.
- 10 There has been a good level of conversation beginning across the Connexion, in conjunction with the *Walking with Micah* project and the Agents for Change work of the Children, Youth and Families team.
- 11 Various challenges for the Conference to be aware of include:
  - The challenge of helping people to see that this is a Gospel agenda from a Methodist perspective, and part of the biblical mandate for social justice.
  - Keeping focused on the graciousness of God while also putting mechanisms in place to help achieve the strategy's aim of eradicating discrimination, and to ensure justice.

- Sustaining this work in the longer term. This will require embedding into all that we do as the structural, cultural and systemic changes continue.

## **B. Service of repentance, re-commitment, thanksgiving and celebration**

### **Background**

- 12 The 2021 Conference adopted the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity and the Notice of Motion which offered ‘an unreserved apology to those current and former members and ministers who have suffered abuse and victimisation’

### **Recommendation**

A service of repentance and re-commitment will be held in one of the weekday worship services at the 2022 Conference, with the same liturgy is offered to the Connexion for use locally, in districts and/or circuits, during the latter part of 2022.

## **C. The Conference commits itself to systemic, structural and cultural change so that the following recommendations can be achieved. (Recommendation 1, p.768)**

- 13 In adopting the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, the Conference committed to becoming a Church that prioritises justice and dignity for all and to standing in solidarity with those who have previously been excluded.
- 14 In order to help us all become more aware of the impact of our decisions and ways of working we have published the Equality Impact Assessment (Recommendation 6b in the Implementation plan). We ask that all Methodists, in churches and committees, use this together to help conversation, learning and to develop our ways of working to help more variety of people to participate fully.

This can be found at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/25016/jds-equality-impact-assessment-0322.pdf>

## **D. Discrimination and Abuse Response Service (Recommendation 1, p.768)**

### **Recommendation**

- 15 We have prioritised this as one of our early pilots as this service has the potential to help minimise harm through discrimination. Re-named the Discrimination and Abuse Response Service, this is being run as a pilot scheme from April – July 2022, but recognised as ‘phase 1’ of an anticipated roll-out across the Connexion. The pilot has been designed in partnership with the Safeguarding Team and with the Complaints Worker.
- 16 The DARS will include three roles: responder, pastoral supporter and accompanist.
- Initial stage: Responder – administrative (to gather contact details and pass on the details to...)
  - Second stage: Pastoral supporter – outside of the Connexional Team (listener who will pass on their details, if caller is in agreement, to...)
  - Third stage: Accompanist - Connexional Team (who will support through the next stages of the process)
- 17 An app, created by the IT team, will record and track, the progress of each case. EDI data will be collected and, later, analysed anonymously.

## **E. Mandatory EDI Training (Recommendation 5a, p.773)**

## **Recommendation - EDI Mandatory Training: Foundation module**

**18** For whom will the module be mandatory?

- i. All ministers (including Superintendents and District Chairs)
- ii. Local Preachers
- iii. Connexional Committee members
- iv. Connexional Team members
- v. Circuit and District Safeguarding Officers
- vi. Circuit stewards and church stewards
- vii. Lay Workers:
  - a. Lay Pastoral Workers
  - b. Children, Youth and Family Workers
  - c. Pioneers

**19** Mandatory training will have three aspects:

- i. Unconscious bias training
- ii. An EDI Foundation Module
- iii. Further annual learning to be reviewed at each MDR conversation (for ministers), in annual appraisal (for employees) and annually for all preachers and worship leaders on the Local Preachers and Worship Leaders meeting agenda.

### **Aims and objectives of the Foundation Module**

**20** Aim: Affirm the Methodist understanding of EDI as being at the heart of the Gospel

Objectives:

- Understand that EDI is key to the gospel
- Know that the Methodist Church affirms that the gospel cannot be lived and shared without commitment to EDI by all

**21** Aim: Knowledge of EDI

Objectives:

- Know the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (for England and Wales) regarding Protected Characteristics and other equality legislation across the British Isles.
- Be able to recognise breaches of the Equality Act 2010 and other equality legislation
- Be able to apply the principles of EDI to any situation where people may be excluded from accessing the gospel or living a full life within the church

**22** Aim: Self-awareness

Objectives:

- Be able to recognise how the carrying out of our roles can impact on others' experience of the gospel
- Be able to listen to others without judgement
- Recognise that we all need to continue to develop our understanding of EDI issues

as part of our continuing professional development

**23** Aim: Equipped for continuing EDI learning beyond the Foundation module

Objectives:

- Be able to continue personal EDI development through self-directed learning
- Know how to access professional training from external providers
- Be able to read, and learn from, professional training material from external sources, whilst remaining true to the gospel

**24** Aim: Knowledge of JDS: a Methodist approach to EDI

Objectives:

- Know and understand the basic content of the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity
- Know the tools for ensuring implementation of EDI included within the JDS strategy (including the Solidarity circles and the Discrimination and Abuse Response Service)
- Recognise the expectation that the JDS user guide is to be used across the Methodist Church in Britain
- Be able to use the Methodist Church Equality Impact Assessment

**25** How will we evaluate the training?

- i. The pass rates of learners in online assessments
- ii. Feedback from learners
- iii. Attendance rates at sessions
- iv. There will be a reduction of discrimination within the Methodist Church
- v. There will be a celebratory culture around difference within the Methodist Church

**26** Additional requirements to meet the needs of those unable to access the training as described above:

- i. Those who do not have access to online, have emotional or mental reasons not to access online, or lack the skills to learn in this way
  - a. *Either* in-person gathered sessions where all the material can be delivered person-to-person locally
  - b. *Or* local group events to collectively run through the online training with a facilitator who is able to access it
- ii. Those with disabilities and learning impairments that may limit access to the training
  - a. Read aloud option for all text and questions, to enable access by blind learners
  - b. Large font and pastel backgrounds, either as standard or as an option, to enable access by partially-sighted learners
  - c. Subtitles and BSL on all videos, to enable access by deaf learners
- iii. A flyer with details of how to access training if the Theology-X is not accessible and how to access support with it if required
- iv. Need a conversation about a budget for accessibility, perhaps to supply devices or wi-fi to churches

- v. Mobile-friendly version of Theology-X

## **F. The Collection and Use of EDI data (Recommendation 6a, p.775)**

### **Background**

- 27 The Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity adopted by the Conference required the collecting and analysing EDI data (p775).
- 28 The task group looking at this recommendation has considered the data which we already collect and has begun to work with these data, whilst also beginning to consider key issues and gaps within existing record-keeping systems that might currently prevent or limit the above Conference recommendation from being fully achieved. The Committee will continue to consider what further data needs to be collected and to develop guidance on how this data can be collected and used.

## **G. Terms of Reference for the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Committee**

### **Role and Purpose**

- 29 The JDS Committee is appointed to:
- a) give strategic direction, support, coordination and guidance to the Methodist Council in all matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
  - b) maintain an overview of policies and procedures to ensure that JDS matters are addressed effectively
  - c) oversee the ongoing development and implementation of all agreed recommendations from the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity.
  - d) ensure that the Methodist Council is made aware of and is responsive to emerging risks, challenges and opportunities in regard to the on-going implementation and further development of the strategy
  - e) In response to NoM 2021/119, the Council agreed that one of the Co-Chairs should fulfil the role of JDS Adviser/Secretary to the Conference in order that Conference's own work is effectively scrutinised and held accountable and to provide advice and expertise.

### **Membership of Committee**

- 30 The Council proposes the following constitution of the JDS Committee:
- two Co-Chairs nominated through open recruitment
  - two committee members who are members of the Methodist Council
  - up to eight members nominated through open recruitment

These are volunteer roles.

The Committee is supported by Connexional Team administrative support team and by the EDI Adviser.

The EDI Adviser and the Inclusive Church Implementation Officer will attend Committee meetings.

### **Proposed Terms of Reference**

- 31 The Committee shall:
- i. Provide a costed, coordinated plan and ongoing support, interpretation and direction to the implementers of the strategy, recognising that this is a high-level strategy report, prioritising, as necessary, and identifying any risks to successful implementation.

- ii. Provide regular reports to the Council
- iii. Utilise the considerable knowledge and experience of volunteers from across the Connexion to ensure ongoing development and implementation of the JDS strategy. The Committee shall decide how best to coordinate and manage the contributions of volunteers, in providing advice and quality assurance.
- iv. Work together with anybody appointed by the Council to support in the implementation and ongoing development of the strategy.
- v. Provide information to the JDS Scrutiny Group appointed by Conference and respond to requests from them in order to help them fulfil their role of reporting to Conference.
- vi. Identify opportunities and challenges that maybe faced in implementing the recommendations and that might require additional implementation efforts at a Circuit or Connexional level.
- vii. Examine Church structures, systems and culture, identifying key areas for improvement.
- viii. Work together with the Connexional Team to ensure early input into the development of major change programmes, strategies or policies, to enable full consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion matters and where appropriate facilitate embedding throughout development and implementation stages.
- ix. Support the Methodist Church in promoting and embedding of equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of Church life.
- x. Champion greater representation and participation of under-represented communities on Connexional, district, circuit and local committees.
- xi. Be collectively responsible for the implementation and ongoing development of the JDS Recommendations.
- xii. Review and evaluate all aspects of the JDS strategy.
- xiii. Recommend to the Council six people to be nominated to the Conference to represent EDI concerns (SO 102(1)).

### **Pattern of Meetings**

- an annual residential to be arranged for all committee members, with dates decided well in advance
- meetings on Zoom/in person for the whole JDS Shadow Committee 6 times a year, additionally to co-ordinate with the Methodist Council
- CANDO (Chairs and Officers) meetings to be held regularly (initially fortnightly and then monthly)

### **Scrutiny and Transparency**

- all recruitment to the Committee will be done by open recruitment through HR
- EDI data collection for this Committee will be done immediately and made public
- lists of names of who has taken part in the task (and finish) groups to be made available to the JDS Shadow Committee

### **Pastoral care and supervision**

- a list of pastoral carers to be drawn up for all aspects of the JDS/EDI work (with safer recruitment practices)

- supervision to be offered to all those involved in the work of the committee

### **Accessibility**

- translation to be offered
- meetings to be held on Zoom usually, enabling people from the whole Connexion to attend easily
- members of the committee (and all work associated with the strategy) to be asked to state their 'accessibility support needs' and for all reasonable adjustments to be made for them to participate fully

### **Signing off work items for the implementation of the Strategy for JDS**

- Each committee meeting normally receives a report two weeks in advance including Resolutions for voting.
- Each resolution to be debated and amended if necessary but otherwise to be agreed by a vote of the Committee
- Some items of work to be referred to a 'sub-group' or delegated to particular committee members for decision if needed between meetings.
- When decisions are needed for 'sign-off' between meetings, and the vote is to be taken by email, the recommendation/Recommendation will be put to the committee members by email with a deadline for members to vote by return email. Once a positive majority is reached the recommendation will be taken as 'passed'.

### **J. Reparations for Transatlantic Slave Trade (M22, Conference 2021)**

- 32 The working group on the Transatlantic Slave Trade has commissioned research and continues to work on behalf of the Council in order to bring a report and Recommendations for action.
- 33 We now expect the Recommendations to come to the Council during the connexional year 2022/23 and, thus to come to the 2023 Conference.

### **K. NoM 2021/111 Review of Stationing**

- 34 In adopting notice of motion 111, the 2021 Conference directed 'that work is done in consultation with the EDI Officer and JDS Shadow Committee on what "not tolerated" actually means in the [Stationing Committee] Report to the Conference and in the Code of Practice in terms of discrimination within the stationing process.' [DR 8/4/12]
- 35 This piece of work has begun with the EDI Officer attending, and sending an interim response to, the Stationing Matching Group. The work will continue and will report to the Council accordingly, ready for a report to the 2023 Conference.
- 36 Many of the other pieces of work outlined above are expected to begin to have an impact on the stationing process, along with all other aspects of Methodist ministry and mission.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**30/1. The Conference received the Report.**

**30/2. The Conference amended Standing Orders as follows:**

**336 ~~Equality, Diversity and Inclusion~~ *Justice, Dignity and Solidarity.***

**(1) The Methodist Church seeks to become a church in which God's unconditional love is expressed in word and actions, and where all are fully able to play their part in the church's life. In working to achieve that aim it follows the principles of justice, dignity and solidarity, which require that:**

- (i) diversity is reflected in all aspects of leadership in the church through the adoption of policies and procedures which avoid all unjust discrimination and enable all people to use their gifts in God's service through their service to the church;**
- (ii) the church treats all people with respect, recognising them as made in the image of God and avoiding any form of conduct which might undermine their dignity and worth;**
- (iii) the church is committed to the support of those who have suffered or may suffer any form of unjust discrimination and to standing in solidarity with them in asserting and maintaining their rights to be treated with justice and respect for their dignity.**

**(1A) The Methodist Council shall annually appoint an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion-a Justice, Dignity and Solidarity Committee, to discharge the following duties:**

- (i) supporting the work of *making strategic recommendations and giving support and guidance* to the council in all matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion by providing expert resources, advice and guidance;**
- (ii) assisting the council by scrutinising reports and policies which have regard to equality, diversity and inclusion *maintaining an overview of policies and procedures to ensure that matters of justice, dignity and solidarity are addressed;***
- (iii) assisting the council in identifying *and responding to emerging risks, challenges and opportunities in relation to matters of justice, dignity and solidarity* areas of activities that require improved awareness and understanding of inclusion;**
- (iv) supporting the council in the promotion of *taking steps to implement any policies adopted by the Conference in relation to matters of justice, dignity and solidarity, and in promoting and embedding* equality, diversity and inclusion across the Connexion;**
- (v) developing learning and development programmes and any other resources as directed by the council *nominating one of the committee's co-Chairs to act as adviser to the Conference on matters of justice, dignity and solidarity, and the other co-Chair may act as an alternate.***

**(2) The committee shall report annually to the Methodist Council.**

**(3)(a) The committee shall consist of;**

- (i) ~~the~~ *two co-chairs* appointed in accordance with sub-clause (c) below;**
- (ii) ~~a member of the Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team;~~**
- (iii) ~~a person aged 18 or over nominated by the Methodist Children and Youth Assembly;~~**
- (iv) ~~a~~ *two members* of the Methodist Council;**
- (v) *up to five eight* other persons chosen to ensure that the committee has expert knowledge, experience and skills in matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, one of whom shall be a Chair of District.**

**(b) A member of the Connexional Team shall be the convener of the committee but not a voting member. *Other members of the Connexional Team with responsibility for matters of equality, diversity and inclusion may attend committee meetings by invitation of the co-Chairs, and shall have a right to speak but not to vote.***

**(c) The *co-chairs* shall be appointed by the Methodist Council to serve for six years.**

**(d) The other members of the committee shall *be appointed by the council and shall* not *normally* serve for more than six years in succession.**

**(4) The committee shall be responsible for making nominations to the council for persons to fulfil Standing Order 102(1)(i)(g).**



## **SUMMARY REPORT OF THE JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND SOLIDARITY SCRUTINY GROUP**

In its acceptance of Notice of Motion 2020/103, the Conference agreed to the establishment of a small independent scrutiny group to provide scrutiny and assurance on the implementation of the EDI strategy (now JDS strategy) which is overseen by the JDS Committee. In October 2021 the Methodist Council appointed the JDS Scrutiny Group as follows: Ruby Beech, Bala Gnanapragasam and John Robinson. The group have met together a number of times on zoom. They have also met with Jonathan Hustler, the Secretary of the Conference on zoom on 3 occasions and with Doug Swanney, the Connexional Secretary, and with Jill Marsh, the Inclusive Church Implementation Officer, and Bevan Powell, the EDI Adviser, and been in contact with the Chairs of the JDS Committee Charity Nzegwu and Sam McBratney. We are very grateful to Jill and Bevan and the support staff for keeping us copied in to relevant papers during the year. Each member of the scrutiny Group has attended at least two of the meetings of the JDS Committee, most of which have been held on zoom. It has been agreed that the Scrutiny Group will meet with the Secretary of Conference after each Methodist Council meeting.

The Scrutiny Group has been pleased to see the progress which has been made this year and looks forward to scrutinising the implementation of the strategy as the plan becomes more detailed for the sustaining and embedding of the work going forward.

We are very aware that the first of the recommendations of the strategy that “The Conference commits itself to systemic, structural and cultural change” will be the most difficult to achieve and will be addressed by a variety of groups with particular tasks. One of the key challenges we have identified for this next year will be to ensure that consultation on different areas includes consultation with the Committee as well as the staff members to ensure that the Committee is able to give the strategic direction, support, coordination and guidance which it is tasked with doing (see para 29 of the Report from the JDS Shadow Committee on Pg 381 of the Conference Agenda). From what we have seen this year we would offer the comment that wide-reaching reports such as that on Oversight and Trusteeship including the changes of the constitution of the Conference would helpfully be seen by the JDS Committee at an earlier stage if they are to be able to offer strategic guidance and support in any meaningful way. This will also be the case for other major pieces of work such as that on Stationing Review and the review of CPD part 11.

A particular concern going forward is that it is not clear to us how the oversight of the JDS strategy would be undertaken in the revised proposals for Connexional Committees. It is disappointing that in a paper on such major structural change the issues around JDS are not clearly stated. We hope that the Oversight and Trustee Task Group will ensure that proper consultation will take place on JDS implications of all of the proposed changes.

We are heartened by the work that has been done so far but recognise that for us to really become an inclusive Church we need every body of the Church to have 55 continued awareness of the JDS implications of all that it does and that, of course, includes the Conference, which is the responsibility of us all. *The JDS Scrutiny Group.*

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTION**

**30/3. The Conference received the Report.**