

The Inclusive Methodist Church: Introductory notes for the Council discussion

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Purpose	To facilitate discussion of the reports that the Council is asked to receive from the EDI Committee and the EDI Task Group

Introduction and Background

At its meeting in April 2019, the Council passed resolution 44A/4:

In order to assist the EDI Committee in its work of shaping the Methodist Church to be the inclusive Church we have long committed ourselves to be; the Council agreed to establish a task group to:

(i) define the Council's EDI strategy giving careful attention to all areas of inclusion.

(ii) work closely with the connexional EDI adviser

(iii) review the composition of the EDI Committee.

(iv) bring an initial report to the next meeting of the Council, and a final report to the Council no later than March 2020.

Over the last year, the task group has met with the Chair of the EDI Committee and the EDI Adviser and has developed the vision of 'The Inclusive Church' which is reflected in both the report that it brings to the Council and the report of the Committee. The main themes of 'The Inclusive Church' were outlined to the Council at its meeting in October (see MC/19/87).

Whilst the EDI Committee is grateful to the task group for its help and advice and for raising the profile of EDI work before the Council, there remain areas on which it has not been possible to achieve consensus. The Council therefore has before it two reports with overlapping content but some differing conclusions.

The Council is asked to receive the report of the EDI Committee. In doing so, it will note the implementation Action Plan with time scales and costings. The recommendation of the task group is that those proposals are not formally adopted by the Council at this point but that the task group itself review them and work further on implementation with the EDI Adviser (51/3).

There is now general agreement that the current structure of the EDI Committee needs to be replaced with a community of expertise that can support the EDI Adviser in implementing the aims outlined in the reports. However, there is no agreement on the timescale. The Council is asked to note that the EDI Committee believes that if passed resolution 51/5 should not be implemented until the Conference of 2021.