

Update on work from the Conference

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Action Required	Decision
Resolutions	<p>69/1. The Council receives the report.</p> <p>69/2. The Council directs that further work is undertaken relating to Notice of Motion 2018/211, and further directs that update reports are brought to future meetings of the Council.</p> <p>69/3. The Council directs the Conference Arrangements team to implement the spirit of Notice of Motion 2018/210, from the 2020 Conference onwards.</p> <p>69/4. The Council appoints a task group to consider the issues of human trafficking as directed by Notice of Motion 2018/207, as set out in paragraph 2.</p>

The Council is asked to note the following updates on work from the 2018 Conference and previous Conferences.

1. Notice of Motion 2018/206: Homelessness

... the Conference directs that:

- (i) a letter be sent by the President and Vice-President of the Conference to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing the Conference's deep concerns at the sharp increase in rough sleeping and homelessness in the UK, requesting details of the actions being undertaken and the funding streams being made available to address the issue and the causes and urging an acceleration of the target dates and a significant increase in support.*
- (ii) evidence be gathered from the Districts of the various responses that Methodist Churches and Methodist people are making on the ground across the connexion in the areas of reduction, respite, recovery and reconnection and a composite report be made available in time for Spring Synods as a focus for discussion.*
- (iii) the work being undertaken in Greater Manchester to produce alternative housing models be shared via the Joint Public Issues Team to inform and to enable the models to be operated in other parts of the UK.*

The President and Vice-President of the Conference have written to the Secretary of State as directed in the notice of motion. That section of the notice of motion is therefore considered complete. The Joint Public Issues Team has been gathering evidence as requested in part (ii) of the motion alongside the signatories to the Notice of Motion.

2. Notice of Motion 2018/207: Human Trafficking

...the Conference: ...

- (iii) directs the President and Vice-President to write to the Home Secretary informing him of the concerns of the Conference in relation to Modern Slavery, and asking what actions the government is taking to raise public awareness of the reality of Modern Slavery, in particular as to how the general public can recognise signs and respond appropriately.*

- (iv) *directs the Methodist Council to appoint a task group in conjunction with the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT), to review the existing available resources and, drawing upon them, produce a set of easily accessible theologically reflective and practical materials (to be made available via the Methodist Church website) which can be used to raise awareness among Methodists, to assist in individual and collective decision making, and to influence government policy at a local and national level in response to the reality of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.*

The President and Vice-President of the Conference have written to the Home Secretary as directed in the notice of motion. That section of the notice of motion is therefore considered complete.

The proposer and seconder of the Notice of Motion have offered to form a working group, drawing on expertise within and beyond the Methodist Church. The group will collate existing theological and practical resources for individuals and groups to use in raising awareness of and informing decision-making and policy around Human Trafficking.

This group will meet and communicate electronically and be supported by Bethan Laughlin, JPIT intern, who will also coordinate the group. The group will focus on identifying theological and practical resources related to Human Trafficking and work to find ways of promoting these within the Methodist Church. There will be specific emphasis on drawing on experts on Human Trafficking from within and beyond Methodism in order to point to the most effective resources possible.

The Council is asked to appoint the group as follows:

The Revd Dr Sheryl M Anderson - Chair of the Liverpool District

The Revd David I H Hardman - Superintendent of the Hyde and Denton circuit in the Manchester and Stockport District and has been involved in promoting and leading many popular campaigns (including Tax Justice, Climate Change, Refugee Action, Modern Slavery and Trade Justice) enabling Christians to find their voice and take action in simple, creative and effective ways.

The Revd Paul J Worsnop - Supernumerary minister, formerly Deputy Chair of the Nottingham and Derby District

The Revd Ian S Rutherford - City Centre Minister at Methodist Central Hall, Manchester, involved in projects addressing modern slavery and human trafficking within Greater Manchester being undertaken by Hope For Justice and Stop The Traffik

The Revd Catherine H Bird - Superintendent of the Hackney and Stoke Newington Circuit, with a long standing interest in the Methodist Church's involvement in actions relating to peace and justice. Trafficking is a live issue in the area in which she works.

3. Resolution 20/2 (2017): 3Generate

The Conference directed the Methodist Council to ensure that the Joint Public Issues Team, in partnership with 3Generate, produce resources for Local Churches and Circuits so that children and young people can be enabled to participate effectively with issues of social justice.

This has been done and the work is considered complete.

4. Memorial M17 (2017): Online returns for churches without property

...The Conference declined the specific solution proposed in the memorial but instructed the Methodist Council to oversee a review of the online returns facility in order to ensure that it best reflects the needs of the Church.

A review was conducted, linked to the review of the statistics for mission which the Strategy and Resources Committee requested. The process has been streamlined and the number of questions reduced. The work is therefore considered to be complete.

5. Resolution 39/2 (2015): Fellowship Groups

The Conference asked that consideration be given as to whether an agreed number of representatives of 'fellowship groups' should be representatives to the Conference as a temporary measure.

It is felt that consideration has been given to this matter, as it has to representatives of other groups and voting places on the Conference, and that it would not be appropriate at this time to increase the membership of the Conference. The broader issues about accessibility to the Conference have now been addressed following the work of the accessibility to the Conference working party. This work is therefore complete.

The following two notices of motion were referred by the Conference to the Council, without the Conference expressing its mind:

6. Notice of Motion 2018/211: Advance Special Projects of the United Methodist Church

The Conference directs the Methodist Council, in formulating the policy of the Connexional Grants Committee, to study the "Advance Special Projects" of the Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church (our Concordat Partners), and to consider whether a similar scheme would be of value for the British Methodist Church.

The Conference referred the Motion to the Methodist Council.

Work towards this has begun as we give consideration to how we might enable people to donate directly to various projects throughout the Connexion for a limited period of time. This will necessitate development in a number of areas including finance and the Methodist Church website. Work will continue in the months ahead and the Council will be updated accordingly.

7. Notice of Motion 2018/210: Fasting

In the light of the President and Vice-President's addresses to the Conference, the Conference wishes to encourage representatives to forgo their evening meal on the Sunday of future Conferences. Such a fast would demonstrate the Conference's commitment to God and to those who are struggling with little resources. The fast would be voluntary. The Conference would donate the money saved to the nearest Methodist food bank.

The Conference referred the Motion to the Methodist Council.

If the Council is in agreement with taking this forward, then it will be referred to the Conference Arrangements team for implementation. The district and circuit where the Conference is held will be asked to identify the nearest foodbank. It should be noted that the contractual arrangements made with the venue for the 2019 Conference preclude this possibility. The earliest date for implementation is therefore the 2020 Conference.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

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- 69/3. The Council directs the Conference Arrangements team to implement the spirit of Notice of Motion 2018/210, from the 2020 Conference onwards.**
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