

EDI Concerns in Stationing (Notice of Motion 2019/207)

The 2019 Conference received the following notice of motion:

Notice of Motion 2019/207: EDI Concerns in Stationing

The Conference is grateful for the work that has been done on its behalf by the many people involved in the stationing process. It acknowledges the increasing challenges faced by the Committee in deploying the ministerial resources of the Church in the most effective way and the attempts that have been made to improve the system.

The Conference notes with extreme concern the implication given in paragraph 2.6 [*of the Stationing Committee report to the Conference*] that appropriate monitoring and auditing of processes with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion commitments are currently not being done. Many members of the Conference are very aware of situations in current and previous connexional years where issues of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age or marital or family status have played a part in the failure to make a match. It recognises the immense pain and damage to vocation often done to individuals faced with such situations.

Whilst it is welcome news that monitoring is now on the Committee's agenda, the Conference directs that this issue be given top priority and that the Stationing Committee:

- a) establishes an EDI sub-committee to take forward this work, with membership including the Connexional EDI Adviser and at least one former President or Vice-President;
- b) seeks and records all feedback from individual ministers and Circuits where issues of exclusion or discrimination may have been factors in decisions reached;
- c) develops and implements audit tools, in consultation with the EDI Officer, whereby all processes and protocols involved in stationing are properly assessed for their compliance with the connexional EDI guidance and all relevant legislation;
- d) drafts and publishes guidelines for Stationing Matching Group, Stationing Advisory Group and Circuit Invitation Committees outlining the grounds by which matches and invitations can and cannot be refused in accordance with EDI policies, and provides appropriate training;
- e) liaises with the Law and Polity Committee to review guidance on complaints and reporting for those involved in the stationing process and where necessary designs appropriate interventions to ensure that discrimination can be tackled immediately once reported;
- f) establishes feedback and monitoring procedures that require Circuits, individual ministers and District Chairs or Lay Stationing reps to provide reasoned statements for decisions taken throughout the process;
- g) includes, from now on, a section on EDI in each report to the Conference detailing monitoring and progress to date.

The Conference declined the Motion but received a report from the Conference Business Committee, which invited the Conference to refer the issues raised within it to the Council. This was by way of acknowledgement that insufficient time had been available to debate the substance of the notice of motion fully at the time it was taken.

The Council will therefore receive a verbal report, including a contribution from the chair of the Stationing Committee, to enable it to consider the issues to which the notice of motion refers.