

From Lament to Action, the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Task Force report, which was published in April 2021, recommended that the Church should take action to increase the participation of UK Minority Ethnic / Global Majority Heritage peoples in all aspects of its life, including its governance structures. The House of Bishops agreed at its July meeting that there should be some UKME/GMH 'Participant observers' at its meetings, and that these observers should be elected to these roles from amongst their peers by an electorate comprised entirely of UKME/GMH clergy of the Church of England.

The House of Bishops Standing Committee intends that changes to the Standing Orders will be made, at the meeting of the House of Bishops on 13 - 14 December, and that the first elections will take place in early 2022. The proposal is as follows:

1. Until there are six UKME/GMH bishops able to sit as members, a number of UKME/GMH clergy will be elected as participant observers. They will be able to attend all meetings of the House. They will have the right to receive all the papers for each meeting and to address the House, but not to vote
2. The electorate will comprise all persons who are ordained clergy (deacon, priest or Bishop) and identify as UKME/GMH. The list of those who are in the electorate will be cross-referenced with the National Clergy Database only for the purpose of confirming that the person is ordained. The list will not be used for any other purpose
3. Any person who is on the list of electors and who has been ordained for at least five years can be nominated to be an observer. The process for nominations and elections will be in accordance with the rules recently adopted for all elections in which the Synod, or any class of its members, is the electorate (see General Synod Standing Orders 131-135O).

We do not have lists of UKME/GMH clergy across the Church compiled for this specific purpose, that complies with GDPR regulation. For those clergy seeking guidance on who might qualify as UKME/GMH; this is a standard self-identifying categorisation.

We share this notice to make all Church of England Clerks in Holy Orders aware of this initiative, and to ask those who self-identify as such to email clerk@churchofengland.org directly by 1 December 2021 if they consider that they are eligible to be part of this electorate. Please read the privacy notice which explains how your data will be processed.

Thank you for your assistance with taking forward this Anti-racism Task Force recommendation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Canon Dr Sanjee Perera

Archbishops' Adviser on Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns
