

# Making good decisions

## Appendix 2 of Making decisions in Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings Committee Working Group on the Decision-Making Process of Meeting for Sufferings, 2006

1. Good decision-making has the following requirements:

- Clarity
- Transparency
- Openness
- Timely, good-quality information
- Agreement or unity
- Facilitation of the morally right decision in line with the leadings of the spirit

2. The first four of these characteristics can be ensured by preliminary preparation and it may be necessary to postpone a decision to ensure that such preparation is undertaken.

3. The final two characteristics can only be ensured by utilisation of the traditional discipline of the Meeting for Worship for Church Affairs.

Such utilisation requires preparation by the participants:

- It requires becoming acquainted with the issues and the possible alternatives to be considered.
- It involves reading and studying the preliminary papers and other relevant materials..
- It requires a belief that if used correctly the process will result in the right decision, a belief that if the process is used appropriately (in 'right ordering' in the traditional phraseology) conflicts will be resolved and unity achieved, but not just any old unity, a unity around the right decision.
- Above all this preparation includes the avoidance of prejudging the issue, and entering the worship process in a seeking/listening mode rather than a debating/argumentative mode.

4. The decision recorded in Sufferings Minute "Inclusion of Friends with disabilities" probably exhibits most of the characteristics defined above as those required by good decision-making:

- The monthly meeting provided some of the requisite information. Meeting for Sufferings asked MSC to acquire further information from around the Society and this was fed into the decision making process.
- The monthly meeting was clear about the 'downstream' issues involved in implementation and could point these out to Sufferings.
- Finally, there was no conflict on the values or of interests. The relevance of this issue to the Testimony on Equality was clearly seen and accepted and also the importance of the issue was recognised.
- So a united decision was possible on a matter of importance to the Society in a manner which could be implemented to give clear and concrete results and it is at least arguable that the decision was a 'good' decision in the moral sense of goodness.