

The Dioceses Commission

Annual Report 2010

1. The Dioceses Commission is required to report annually to the General Synod. This is its third report.

Membership and Staff

2. The Commission consists of a Chair and Vice-Chair appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York from among the members of the General Synod; four members elected by the Synod; and four members appointed by the Appointments Committee.

3. The membership and staff of the Commission are as follows:

Chair: Dr Priscilla Chadwick (co-opted) (to Nov. 2010)
Canon Prof. Michael Clarke (Worcester)
(from Feb. 2011)

Vice-Chair: The Ven. Richard Seed, Archdeacon of York (York)
(to Oct. 2010)
Canon Prof. Michael Clarke (Worcester)
(Nov. 2010 to Feb. 2011)
[Vacancy]

Elected members: The Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford
(St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)
The Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)
Canon Prof. Michael Clarke (Worcester) (to Nov. 2010)
Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford) (from March 2011)
Mr Keith Malcouronne (Guildford) (from March 2011)
Mr Michael Streeter (Chichester) (to Oct. 2010)

Appointed members: Mrs Lucinda Herklots
The Revd Sarah Mullally, DBE
Canon Prof. Hilary Russell
The Rt Revd Nigel Stock,
Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

Secretary: Dr Colin Podmore
Assistant Secretary: Mrs Jo Winn-Smith
(on maternity leave from Sept. 2010)
Mr Sion Hughes Carew
(from Sept. 2010)

4. Two positions on the Commission became vacant in October 2010: the Archdeacon of York did not stand for re-election to the General Synod and Mr Michael Streeter was not re-elected. Prof. Clarke was appointed by the Archbishops to succeed the Archdeacon as Vice-Chair, and the two places for elected members of the Synod were filled by election in March 2011.
5. As a co-opted member of the General Synod, Dr Priscilla Chadwick ceased to be a member of the Synod (and hence eligible to chair the Commission) when the new Synod was inaugurated. She was not co-opted to the new House of Laity and in February 2011, therefore, the Archbishops appointed Prof. Clarke to succeed her as Chair of the Commission. The Commission wishes to place on record its gratitude to Dr Chadwick for her leadership during the first two years of its life.
6. Mr Sion Hughes Carew was seconded part-time from the Church Commissioners to act as Assistant Secretary of the Commission from September 2010 during Mrs Jo Winn-Smith's absence on maternity leave.

Duties and Powers of the Commission

7. The Commission's duties and powers, laid down by the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, are summarized in paras 7-13 of its 2008 Annual Report (GS Misc 920), which is available, with other information about the Commission and its work, in the Commission's area of the Church of England web site: www.diocom.org

Boundary Review no. 1: Dioceses of Peterborough and Ely

8. The Commission's report on its review of the boundary between the Diocese of Peterborough and the Diocese of Ely was published on the Commission's website in February 2010.
9. The report made seven recommendations. The final recommendation was that the Commission should in due course return to the issue of the configuration of the Diocese of Peterborough.

Boundary Review no. 2: Yorkshire

10. After preparatory work in 2009, the Commission's review of the Yorkshire dioceses began in January 2010. The review was undertaken by a Review Team consisting of Dr Chadwick, Prof. Clarke and the Secretary.
11. Between January and June the Review Team made five visits to Yorkshire over a total of 15 days. In all, 80 meetings were held and oral evidence was taken from over 200 individuals, including senior diocesan staff, rural deans and lay

chairs, parish clergy and lay representatives, ecumenical partners, Lord Lieutenants, and members and officers of local authorities.

12. In March 2010 the Commission decided that in order to make it possible to publish an initial report before the end of the year, the first stage of the review should focus on the Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon & Leeds, Sheffield and Wakefield, and on the western boundary of the Diocese of York.
13. The full Commission received copies of all written submissions and detailed reports of the Review Team's meetings. It discussed the evidence and agreed its recommendations at its residential meeting, held in Ilkley, in June. It considered a draft report in September and approved the final text at its November meeting.
14. The Report was published on the Commission's website on 9 December, together with a Guide to the Report (subsequently circulated to the Synod as GS Misc 970). Copies had been sent to the senior staff of each of the dioceses concerned, as well as to individuals and bodies that had been identified as interested parties.
15. At its December meeting the Commission considered a first draft of the Compensation Rules, concerning the compensation of office-holders who would be displaced by a scheme, that the Commission is required to lay before the General Synod for approval.
16. The Commission also received two pieces of legal advice from the Legal Office. One confirmed that an episcopal see must be a place or places (rather than an area) and that a diocese takes its name from the see of the diocesan bishop. The other indicated that an arrangement whereby the same person held the offices of suffragan bishop in, and dean of the (or a) cathedral of, a diocese could give rise to conflicts of interest that would be likely to make it unworkable from the legal point of view. These pieces of legal advice were published on the Commission's website.

Suffragan Sees

17. Section 17 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 (concerning the filling of vacant suffragan sees) and the related section 12 (which requires diocesan bishops to keep the provision of episcopal oversight within their dioceses under review) came into effect on 1 January 2011. In anticipation of this, the Commission issued guidance for diocesan bishops (about which it had consulted the House of Bishops) on the operation of these sections of the Measure. This guidance was published on the Commission's website.
18. The Commission proposes to issue further guidance to bishops in due course, in the light of its consideration of the proposals received in 2011.

Joint Diocesan Working

19. The Commission published a paper on joint working between dioceses on its website in March. This drew on case studies and the answers to questions which it had put to diocesan contacts about how joint working had come about, what the arrangements were, their evaluation of the joint working, and whether they had learned any lessons in the process.
20. The paper was also presented to, and discussed by the Diocesan Secretaries' Liaison Group in March and the Diocesan Secretaries' Conference in June.

Conclusion

21. The experience of 2010 has brought home to the Commission just how much is involved in undertaking a review such as the Yorkshire review. It is a major exercise which has required the investment of a very significant amount of time on the part of staff and members.
22. While noting this, the Commission also wishes to pay tribute to the many people from the Yorkshire dioceses and beyond who have given up their time to meet the Review Team and also to discuss the report and write submissions in response to it. We are grateful for the effort that they too have put into the exercise.

On behalf of the Commission

MICHAEL CLARKE
Chair

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