

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

The Archbishops' Council presents this report on its activities since the July 2010 group of sessions in accordance with the requirements of the National Institutions Measure 1998.

Chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury or, in his absence, the Archbishop of York, the Council has met on three occasions since its last report was prepared – on 28 September, 7 December and 12 January.

In considering the matters before it, the Council aims to hold together issues of policy and resource. Among the matters considered since its last report were:

ACCOUNTABILITY

In September and December, the outgoing Council took stock of the way it had worked in the light of some structured input from the members and senior staff of the Council.

It offered some reflections for the new Council to consider. In January the new Council considered the task facing it over the next five years and agreed that some changes were desirable in the number and pattern of meetings from 2012 and, in due course, in the size of the Council, which, unlike the Synod and the Boards, Councils and Committees of the Council had not seen any reduction in membership since its creation.

STRATEGY

The 2010-2015 Quinquennium

In September and December the Council considered drafts of the document that, as GS 1815, is presented to the Synod jointly with the House of Bishops.

The Big Society

On a closely related subject, the Council has also considered what the Church's engagement with the Big Society might be. Its Mission and Public Affairs Division resourced a debate at the inaugural group of sessions in November and discussions with government continue.

Research, evaluation and development funding

The Council – and the Church Commissioners – agreed a process for carrying forward the research strand of the funding stream described in GS MISC 946.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

The Council has continued to receive regular updates on the position around the dioceses in the light of the difficult economic context.

FEES

Following Final Approval of the Ecclesiastical Fees (Amendment) Measure at the February 2010 group of sessions and detailed work by a working group under its Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, the Council discussed in December and January possible approaches to the drawing up of the first Fees Order under the new legislation. The principles are to be the subject of a Synod debate in February (GS 1813).

STIPENDS

The Council agreed to recommend an increase in the National Minimum Stipend (that part of the stipend which is pensionable) of 4.6% from 1 April 2011, reflecting the increase in the RPI to September. This decision reflects decisions taken by the Synod in July 2010 in respect of the indexation of the NMS.

GOVERNANCE

Review of constitutions

Following debate at the July 2010 group of sessions, the Council approved the constitutions of its Boards, Councils and Committees. These were published as GS Misc 965 and circulated to members in advance of the inaugural group of sessions in November.

REVIEWS

In its annual programme of reviewing the work of its divisions, the Council received reports on the work of the Ministry Division, the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division and Human Resources.

GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT

The Council discussed a number of current legislative and other public affairs issues of particular relevance to the Church.

Church House
Westminster SW1P 3AZ

18 January 2011

William Fittall
Secretary-General

**Published by the General Synod of the Church of England
and on sale at the Church House Bookshop**

31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN

Copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2010

£1