

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

1. The Archbishops' Council presents this report on its activities since the November 2013 group of sessions in accordance with the requirements of the National Institutions Measure 1998.
2. The Council is chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Archbishop of York and has met once since its last report was prepared – on 25-26 November 2013.

Challenges for the new Quinquennium

3. The work of the Council and its staff is now primarily focused on the themes identified for the new quinquennium: Going for Growth, the Common Good and Re-Imagining Ministry.
4. The Council offered suggestions for improving a draft report on *the future shape of ministry* before its submission to the House of Bishops and agreed to set in train a review of how ministerial education should be resourced for the future.
5. It also gave preliminary consideration to proposals for a covenant between the Church of England and the Armed Forces. It invited the MPA Council to work further on developing the proposals.

Resources

6. The Council has agreed to initiate a wide-ranging review of the resource needs of the Church and of the way in which national funds should be distributed after 2016. It was agreed that there should be cross-membership with the review of ministerial education and the Spending Plans Task Group and that the review should include consideration of the Sheffield and Darlow formulae.
7. The Council considered the planning framework for the budget that it will need to submit to the Synod in 2015, within the financial strategy agreed by the Synod in 2009 (GS 1731).

Fees

8. Following changes to the calculation of fees for funerals and burials in order to address certain anomalies, the Council agreed to make a five-year Order for parochial fees. Fees will

be subject to an annual increase in line with inflation during the period (negative inflation will mean no increase in fees for that year). The Synod will be invited to approve the Order in February (GS 1937).

Stipends

9. The Council agreed that the National Minimum Stipend should be increased by 2% from April 2014.

Safeguarding

10. The Council has given further consideration to the structural and legislative framework for the Church's engagement in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This is an area in which the Church must do and be seen to be doing substantial work. The Synod will be invited to consider the proposals – in advance of legislation being introduced in July this year – at the February group of sessions (GS 1941).

Governance

11. The Council has given further detailed consideration to its own agendas and responsibilities and has set further work in train to improve its working practices.
12. The Council has also begun its quinquennial review of the constitutions of its Boards, Councils and Committees. The review will provide the opportunity to examine the effect of the substantial reductions in membership as a result of the last review (in 2010).

Government and Parliament

13. The Council discussed a number of current legislative and other public affairs issues of particular relevance to the Church, including the implications of the Immigration Bill in relation to ecclesiastical preliminaries and the consultation on the future of Civil Partnerships.

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Secretary General

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