

THE CHAIR Revd Canon Ruth Worsley (*Southwell and Nottingham*) took the Chair at 4.57 p.m.

The Chairman: We come now to Questions, and you should have them in front of you in that weighty bundle on your seats.

Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells): On a point of order, Madam Chairman. It has been the custom that those of us who have a Question down are also given the answer, but I have not received mine yet. Have I been selected as an unworthy recipient?

The Chairman: We shall ensure that you get it.

Questions

Questions asked in accordance with Standing Orders 105-109 were answered as follows, those for written answer bei22ng marked with an asterisk.

Ministry Division

1. *Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Could the Ministry Division please explain what is the researched educational evidence basis for the proposed policy of top-slicing the funding allowed to the theological colleges and courses in order to sustain higher levels of funding for pre-ordination theological education offered by theological colleges associated with certain universities; and if such evidence is not available could the Ministry Council account for such a policy being proposed in the absence of it?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James): In fact, there was no top-slicing of the block grants to colleges and courses in 2009-10, and decisions about the coming year have yet to be taken. More broadly, following guidance from the House of Bishops on this point, the Ministry Division has continued to seek to provide appropriately stimulating training for the whole range of ministerial candidates, and this is bound to include equipping some candidates to be the theological educators and leaders of the future.

Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester): I am grateful for the information that top-slicing has not yet been applied, but would the Bishop give an assurance that should such funding decisions have to be made they will be made in relation to candidates irrespective of the institution in which a candidate is currently studying, rather than in relation to the funding of institutions?

The Bishop of Norwich: We will not be limiting this to the ancient universities, if this is what Canon Oliver was suggesting. We are one Church, training all our candidates for one ministry, and that is a very important theological point, which is why the resources that we have need to be shared and why we need, for our most able candidates, wherever they train, to provide the most stretching training. I would agree with Canon Oliver that it is not related to supporting particular institutions; it must be related to providing the best available training for the best and most creative candidates.

2. *Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Could the Ministry Division please explain to the General Synod what contingency proposals are envisaged with regard to the pre-ordination phase of theological education for ministry for a situation where serious cuts in central Government funding for universities and the imposition of tighter limits on allowable student numbers may result in a significantly lower contribution to the costs of IME 1-3 from the resources of the Higher Education Funding Council for England?

The Bishop of Norwich: What is clear is that the Government intend to make cuts in the funding of higher education, but it is not possible to predict precisely how such cuts might work through to the public funding which is a very welcome but secondary source of income complementing the Church's own investment in the funding of training. In the coming months – indeed, it has already begun – the Ministry Division will be reviewing the options for the Church's continuing provision of training as the situation clarifies.

Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester): Would the Bishop undertake to ask Ministry Division to make a statement to the July sessions of the General Synod - which will come after the General Election and probably very early on, when budgets of national Government are being made - on the possible effects that those cuts in higher education may have on our plans for our pre-ordination training of candidates?

The Bishop of Norwich: I shall certainly consider with the Ministry Council making such a statement. If the Ministry Council does not do so, then I am sure there will be an appropriate Question that will cause it to make a statement.

3. *Dr Peter Capon (Manchester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How many ordinands in training currently attract HEFCE funding and how many full-time-equivalent students does this correspond to?

The Bishop of Norwich: As the applications to HEFCE are made by universities and not ministerial training institutions, the Ministry Division has not had routine access to this information, so I cannot actually answer, I am afraid.

Dr Peter Capon (Manchester): If his information is lacking, how can we be confident that Ministry Division can plan adequately for funding in the future?

The Bishop of Norwich: I think that if Dr Capon waits for the answer to his next Question he will know why.

4. *Dr Peter Capon (Manchester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How many HEFCE-funded places have training institutions applied for in the current round of allocations?

The Bishop of Norwich: In contrast to the past, because of the special allocation to the Church of additional student numbers, we know that institutions have applied for 492 places in the current round of allocations.

Dr Peter Capon (Manchester): I am sorry I do not know the number of places there are in the special allocation, but if this is more than the number that HEFCE has allocated, or we are allocated by HEFCE in the future, what criteria would the Ministry Division hope to see applied when the decisions are made as to how these places will be allocated?

The Bishop of Norwich: I think it would be much more related to the institutions themselves, and the universities themselves, than to the Ministry Division in terms of the allocation of HEFCE monies and HEFCE places, so I do not think that it will be the Ministry Division that will be determining the number of places.

5. *Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Is it the policy of the Ministry Division to fund the core costs of training in colleges and courses, or are colleges and courses now required to fund a systematic shortfall (e.g. by diversifying their activities or by seeking charitable donations); and, in either event, what is the response of the Ministry Division to the evidence that the way the present funding system is applied appears to discriminate against the more successful training institutions?

The Bishop of Norwich: It is the policy of the Ministry Division to fund the core costs of training in colleges and courses. The Ministry Division does not believe that the present funding system discriminates against successful institutions. It is the case that institutions which recruit more students and hence move up a funding band get only half the increase of the new band in the first year, but that is balanced by the point that those which drop into a lower band equally reduce by only half a band in the first year. In both cases this is because institutions are unlikely to increase or reduce staffing for the first year when the size of the student body has changed rather marginally. More broadly, the institutions are encouraged to diversify where appropriate and to seek other sources of funding to enrich the training they offer on behalf of the Church.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans): Is the Bishop aware that there is at least one theological college that I know of which currently finds itself in a situation where it is being penalized financially for doing all that is being asked of it and attracting the right number of students, and also, as part of that, that the staff/student ratio is now under threat? It seems as if specific problems are being created as a result of this college doing precisely what it has set out to do according to the rules it is trying to follow.

The Bishop of Norwich: I do not know to which college Mrs Rees is referring but I do know that, to take one rapidly expanding college in recent years, we have worked very closely with it, increased the bishop's allocated maximum, and that college has grown and prospered as a result of the work that has been done with the Division. I really cannot answer a hypothetical case but I find it difficult to believe, because the banding system rewards growth but does so more gradually than was the case at one

time. That kind of smoothing mechanism is, I believe, beneficial to the whole provision of theological education in the Church of England, whereas in the past there have been some very successful institutions which have grown rapidly but which have led to the diminishment of some others; it has been very difficult then for those which have diminished to recover.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Given that that was part of the purpose of the recommendations of the Structure and Funding of Ordination Training working party, otherwise known as the Hind report, precisely to prevent that kind of competition to which reference has just been made, will we be getting any further reports on the implementation of the Hind proposals, particularly with regard to the regional training partnerships?

The Bishop of Norwich: I will take that back to the Ministry Council as to whether there ought to be a further report to the Synod. There are constant reports to the Ministry Council about the implementation of regional training partnerships and so on. I would welcome that: if Synod wants a debate on the subject, it would be a very welcome one.

6. *Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Is the Ministry Division aware of the unhappiness that many colleges and courses feel about the uncertainty and shortfall of funding per student that still exists, and would it consider (a) restoring the representation of colleges and courses on the Finance Panel and (b) setting up a group to review how the funding system has been working so far and to explore methods and means of funding for the diverse modes of training that institutions now offer?

The Bishop of Norwich: The Ministry Division is in regular touch with colleges and courses and has discussed these issues with them. Given the need to live within the financial constraints of the Church as a whole, the Division continues to believe that the level of funding per student is adequate and that the working of the block funding scheme has proper arrangements for transitional funding if numbers in individual institutions change. These matters, of course, are always under review. Given the need to avoid conflicts of interest in the Finance Panel, it will not be reverting to its former membership but the Division will keep talking to the institutions through regular meetings and through the new national Ministerial Training Forum which is in the process of being established.

7. *Revd Professor Richard (University of London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given that over the past couple of decades various working parties of this Synod have debated Vote 1 funding and the fluctuations in the number of ordinands, and their reports and Synod debates have decided against imposing a cap on numbers in training as a way of providing a solution, is it now the case that such a cap has been decided upon and, in addition, that recruitment should be related to deployment by accepting for training only those ordinands who have already been accepted by a diocese; and, if so, what was the process by which this decision was arrived at, and which bodies or groups were consulted during this process?

The Bishop of Norwich: A report brought to the Synod in July recorded the Archbishops' Council's conclusion that the amount asked for by way of the Apportionment for Vote 1 each year should not be more than one per cent above the overall increase in the Apportionment, which itself would be strictly controlled over the next five years. The primary motivation of this policy was to control the rapid changes up and down in the size of Vote 1 that have been experienced in the past and so help dioceses to plan their budgets more carefully in a time of financial difficulty. Since then the Ministry Division has been working on a further set of proposals, yet to be approved, which seeks to relate the numbers entering into training to the ministry plans of dioceses. These proposals are at an early stage of development and include consultation with dioceses and training institutions; this is already under way, which is probably why Professor Burridge has heard about it.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge: – King's College, University of London and not, as it says on the sheet, Southern Universities (that is out-of-date information from 15 years ago). Thank you for saying that it is in the early stages of development and consultation. Will that consultation also please include those of us who are involved in vocation advice, particularly those in universities, who are often fostering the vocations of students in one diocese, where the university is situated, who have come from a different diocese, their home diocese, which therefore impacts on the intention to relate the diocese to the student prior to training? Will these proposals, after the consultation, come back to this Synod for approval in line with the previous Synod discussions, or will they be decided elsewhere?

The Bishop of Norwich: It would be almost certainly a matter for the House of Bishops who will get a report in May. I can certainly give Professor Burridge the assurance that we would include him in any consultation. How widely we would go into the university sector I do not know: it depends on DDOs, I think, also consulting those with whom they work. Certainly it would be very surprising to me if the whole question of relating deployment and recruitment did not come to this Synod in one way or another, but it will be primarily the House of Bishops which will consider it and approve any system first.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham and Newcastle Universities): Please could the Ministry Division assure us that any such plans seeking to relate the numbers entering training to the ministry plans of dioceses will be formulated in such a way as to maintain maximum flexibility, recognizing that over two or three years of residential training an ordinand's churchmanship or gifting, for example, may change and develop in unforeseen ways, and also, particularly, that their family circumstances may change considerably, with significant implications for their deployment? I am thinking, in particular, of the many ordinands who meet and marry one another in the course of their training and so need to move dioceses to find training parishes which are reasonably near each other.

The Bishop of Norwich: Yes, this is not intended to lock people into their dioceses. What we are attempting to do is to look to the future to actually get dioceses to say how many stipendiary titles they think they can offer in the future, how many clergy they need, and then recruit according to that total, which would reduce the anxiety that the Synod has expressed that we are sometimes training people for whom we do

not have employment at the conclusion of their training. What we are also attempting to do, of course, is to distinguish between a vocation to the ordained ministry and the calling to have a stipend: the one is not the same as the other.

8. *Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given that there have been consistent appeals for younger ordinands in recent years (for example, through the 'Call Waiting' initiative, among others), what thought has been given to the impact of the decisions regarding capping of numbers and the relating of recruitment to future deployment with regard to university students and recent graduates, particularly those on one-year pastoral/parish/chaplaincy assistant schemes who would traditionally expect to attend a BAP towards the end of their year's placement?

The Bishop of Norwich: First, younger candidates on gap years do not have to wait until later in their gap year to attend a bishop's advisory panel. The bishops' advisory panel process is about assessing potential, particularly in the case of younger candidates, and we seek therefore not to disadvantage younger candidates at a BAP at all. If they have a discernible vocation they can and indeed perhaps ought to be sent to an advisory panel earlier rather than later. Second, if candidates do wait until the end of such a gap year before coming to a panel there is a possibility, as with other candidates coming later in the year, that they may have to wait to enter training until the following year. The main point is that we want to encourage younger vocations, and it was good to hear, for example, that a 19-year-old candidate at a panel a fortnight ago was recommended for training.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Thank you for that reply on gap years, which are traditionally understood as the year between school and university when a young person may well have discerned their vocation in that one diocese for some time. My Question was more about the years after university, on a one-year placement, or current students, who have been in one diocese for their degree and then in a completely different diocese for their placement. Can consideration please be given for such students and placement assistance to be processed through increasingly long diocesan procedures much more quickly if we want to get them to a BAP rapidly in the year (and then of course have to find yet another diocese to accept them before their training starts), given that dioceses with major universities, such as London, always produce more ordinands than they can have back and have sought to serve the wider Church in that way?

The Bishop of Norwich: I think the answer to this is that directors of ordinands need to work together, and they are increasingly doing so, especially in relation to younger candidates. My view is that it is best to send a candidate at the beginning of their gap year to their advisory panel, so that they do not have it hanging over them, as if the maturing process or whatever it is thought to be in that gap year is then tested at the panel. That is not what the panel is about. It is about discerning vocation rather than whether they have had a successful gap year.

9. *Revd Canon Dr Alan Hargrave (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Can a report be given to the Synod, whether in response to this Question or otherwise, on the current position of St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy, with particular regard to the trustees' proposals for the use of their remaining funds, including whether they have considered using them to support proactive health care for the clergy, such as by providing regular medicals, occupational health consultations and work-life balance consultations?

The Bishop of Norwich: St Luke's is an independent organization and I have placed a copy of a recent report of their future plans on the notice board.

10. **Mr Terence Musson (Truro)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

What national guidance or codes of practice exist regarding the appointing of house-for-duty clergy and where is it to be found? If no such guidance or codes currently exist, what would be the best avenue by which they might be requested?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds replied: There is no national guidance or code of practice regarding the appointment of house-for-duty clergy, although we believe that some dioceses have local guidelines.

The Retired Clergy Association has suggested to the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee that some work might be done to develop national guidance. Before making a decision to allocate resources to this work we plan to canvass dioceses to see whether there are already local guidelines in place that might usefully be shared.

In 2009 we asked dioceses about their numbers of house-for-duty priests. According to their figures there are around 400 house-for-duty clergy across the country. Of these, just over half are in receipt of a clergy pension.

11. *Mrs Margaret Tilley (Canterbury)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Did the College of the Resurrection consult the Ministry Division before announcing a decision not to admit to the college ordinands who are unable in conscience to attend celebrations of the Holy Communion at which a woman presides but who nevertheless wish to engage constructively with fellow ordinands of other traditions and train alongside them; and, if so, what advice, if any, was given?

12. *Mrs Anneliese Barrell (Exeter)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Has the Ministry Division considered the decision of the College of the Resurrection to exclude from consideration for admission those ordinands whose conscience prevents them from attending celebrations of the Holy Communion at which a woman presides and, in particular, whether that decision complies with the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993; and, if it has not, will it now please do so?

The Bishop of Norwich: With permission, Madam Chairman, I shall answer these Questions together.

Theological colleges are independent institutions with their own governing bodies and they are primarily responsible for the policies that they adopt. Nevertheless the Ministry Division works closely with colleges and courses to ensure that they provide theological formation that is consistent with both secular and ecclesiastical legislation and the policies which the Church has established at a national level. So far, only informal discussions have taken place between the College of the Resurrection and the Ministry Division on this matter; no formal advice has been given or, as far as I am aware, sought. The Ministry Council, however, will be considering the matter – including the question of whether Mirfield’s policy complies with the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod – at its next meeting in March, and is consulting the Legal Office. There may well be more to be said then.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Would the Bishop underline yet again to the Synod that the concept of reception remains the doctrinal basis not just of the Episcopal Act of Synod 1993 but of the 1993 Measure itself, enabling women to be ordained, and as it is reaffirmed in my amendment to Synod of July 2007, that both traditions in this matter are of equal right and have an honoured place in the life of our Church, and therefore this must be reflected in the life of our theological colleges, especially those of a Catholic tradition where this remains a disputed question, and that it will continue to have fundamental significance to us as we go on with our discussions on women bishops – (*The Chairman rang the bell.*)

The Chairman: I am afraid that that question is ruled out of order. It does not relate to the original answer.

The Bishop of Beverley (Rt Revd Martyn Jarrett): Notwithstanding the controversies over its theological college’s policy, is the Bishop aware that the ministry of the Community of the Resurrection is greatly valued by those on both sides of the debate on the ordination of women and especially in the northern province?

The Bishop of Norwich: As Visitor to the Community of the Resurrection as well as chair of the Ministry Division I would fully endorse what the Bishop of Beverley says.

House of Bishops

13. *Revd Ian Chandler (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House considered the decision of the College of the Resurrection to refuse admission to any prospective ordinands who are unable in conscience to attend celebrations of the Eucharist at which a woman presides and, in particular, whether it accords with the express wish of the General Synod that ‘the integrity of differing beliefs and positions concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood should be mutually recognized and respected’ (Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993) or, more generally, provides an appropriate model of mutual recognition and respect for those preparing for ordination in the Church of England; and, if not, will it now do so?

The Bishop of Norwich: This is not something that the House has considered. However, as I said in reply to the previous two Questions, this is a matter that the Ministry Council will be considering at its next meeting, and the House may well wish to hear what the Council has to say on the matter.

Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

14. *Mrs Gill Ambrose (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Following the publication by DRACSC of the model policy in *Dignity at Work* in 2008, (a) what information has DRACSC been able to gather from dioceses as to whether they have a policy in place in relation to bullying and harassment at work, and (b) how many bishops and members of diocesan senior staff teams have undertaken training in relation to the issue of bullying and harassment and from where has this training come?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer): In May 2008 we circulated almost one thousand printed copies of the *Dignity at Work* booklet across the Church, and several dioceses have since purchased more copies from us. It is also being downloaded from the Church of England website. We have not asked dioceses to tell us what action they are taking, but some have been in touch to tell us that they are developing diocesan policies, and all dioceses have counselling services that clergy can access confidentially for support. I know that a number of clergy, including bishops, have undertaken the Bridge Builders training in conflict resolution and mediation.

Mrs Gill Ambrose (Ely): Would members of the Committee be prepared to meet some people who have been in this position to hear their experiences and to work together to identify appropriate training opportunities, so that when these sorts of issue arise they can be dealt with swiftly, appropriately and professionally rather than dragging out, injuring individuals, parishes and the institutions?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: It is important to continue to assert that one case of bullying matters and that there can be no place for that within the life of the Church. We are involved in discussions with a number of people and groups on development within the area of dealing with bullying, and indeed people may like to be at a fringe meeting on Wednesday lunch-time in order to pursue that further.

15. *The Archdeacon of Bournemouth (Ven. Adrian Harbidge) (Winchester)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

What issues relating to common tenure remain to be resolved by the Terms of Service Implementation Panel, and will the number or nature of those issues have any impact on the date on which common tenure is introduced?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: Tomorrow Synod will consider the capability and grievance directions. The Panel is working on directions for parental leave, which will come to Synod in July, and is also running regional workshops on the implementation of common tenure and the drafting of statements of particulars. Feedback from the workshops indicates that preparations are generally well in hand. The Panel will contact dioceses to review progress in the autumn.

We fully expect common tenure to be implemented at the end of January 2011.

The Archdeacon of Bournemouth (Ven. Adrian Harbidge): I speak on behalf of the southern archdeacons, who have discussed this. Can I ask that the role of the patron be mentioned in despatches somewhere there? LEPs: will this apply to a minister of another denomination, common tenure; and will second curates have unlimited common tenure? Finally, who will own the role descriptions and the statements of particulars over the years and centuries that follow?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I am not sure how many questions that is, Chair!

The Chairman: He asked four questions. You need answer only one.

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I think the most helpful thing actually is for the southern archdeacons or Adrian to put those questions down on paper and we will ensure that they are considered by the Terms of Service Implementation Panel.

16. *Revd Alan Bashforth (Truro)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Following the publication of the second report of the Retirement Housing Review (GS Misc 919) what, if any, progress is being made to implement its recommendations?

17. *Revd Alan Bashforth (Truro)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Will the issues relating to clergy retirement housing addressed in GS Misc 919 – which is a very important matter for clergy and their families – ever be brought before the General Synod for debate?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: With permission, I will answer these Questions together.

Mr Bashforth is absolutely right that these are important matters. There is no plan to debate the report itself but it is relevant to tomorrow's debates on pensions.

The retirement housing group's recommendations fell into two broad areas. The first is on work to ensure the sustainability of the CHARM retirement housing schemes; this is being progressed by the Pensions Board and includes putting in place new funding arrangements following the Church Commissioners' decision to cease funding the scheme with effect from July 2010. The second is on work to equip clergy to make well-informed financial decisions. DRACSC is taking a three-strand approach: providing advice to an independent working party that is developing a clergy credit union; piloting and disseminating information about personal financial education through the CMD network; and identifying sources of good quality independent financial advice for clergy.

Revd Alan Bashforth (Truro): Has the review group now completed its work, or should we expect report number three?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: There will be further reports from DRACSC on developments in all those elements.

Revd Alan Bashforth (Truro): Supplementary, Madam Chairman? I think I am allowed two, am I not?

The Chairman: Unless anyone else wishes to ask a supplementary question? On this occasion, we shall allow it.

Revd Alan Bashforth (Truro): That is very kind. Seeing as we are debating this item on retirement housing, we are also looking at pensions; the issues of stipend and stipend levels are alive in our dioceses and at the same time we are beginning to consider who is responsible for what particular parts of maintenance of clergy houses, and as *Generosity and Sacrifice* is ten years old next year, is there any intention of revisiting the entire clergy remuneration package rather than dealing with it in this piecemeal fashion?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I recognize the issue. I think at the moment we are not convinced that another – yet another – full examination of the whole package would actually be of value. There is a good deal of work going on in a number of different areas, and I would like to see that producing rather more in the shape of a way forward before we dig it all up and start looking at it all over again.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): On a point of order, Madam Chairman. You just said that on this occasion you would permit Mr Bashforth to ask a second supplementary. Did he not ask two Questions? Is it not the case that you are allowed to ask two supplementaries? Can we have that clarified?

The Chairman: For clarification purposes, as we understand it, two Questions were asked and there was a supplementary for each Question. However, it is at my discretion and on that occasion I gave it.

Central Readers' Council

18. *Mr Nigel Holmes (Carlisle)* asked the Chairman of the Central Readers' Council:

In the debate on Reader ministry in July 2008, the then chairman of the Central Readers' Council said, 'The report [GS 1698] with some extra items [should] be given or made available to all Readers.' As Readers have not received the report, nor has much coverage been given to the report, survey or debate in *The Reader* magazine, how can the diocesan responses due this coming July adequately reflect the views of their Readers?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson): The report has been made available to all diocesan Readers' wardens and is available for anyone to download through the *Reader* website. Most diocesan Readers' boards have purchased numbers of copies of the report and discussed it in detail. Any Reader who wishes to take part in the debate ought to have ample opportunity to do so through his or her diocese; dioceses which have not so far taken part in the debate are strongly encouraged to do so.

The Archdeacon of Newark (Dr Nigel Peyton) (Southwell and Nottingham): I enjoy reading *The Reader* magazine. I think the original report that we had back in 2008 was a somewhat more difficult read. If we recall, it was encyclopaedic in its coverage and perhaps less helpful in strategic direction. May I ask the Bishop if there are any plans to bring a bit more strategic focus and options for strategic direction which will help us with this, so that we do not keep going round in circles? Perhaps that will answer the following Question and make it unnecessary.

The Bishop of Sodor and Man: I think there has been some question about whether this report should have been published more widely than in *The Reader* magazine. The magazine is essentially a tool for reflecting on Reader ministry and not so much an information bulletin. The abbreviated report is now available and in it the Bishop of Norwich and I pose some questions which are not addressed in the report but which we believe need to be posed formally. Responding to the 30 recommendations of the report, we believe, will not achieve the state of Reader bliss that may be desired by some. It requires a lot more work but I can assure the questioner that the work is already initiated.

19. *Mr Nigel Holmes (Carlisle)* asked the Chairman of the Central Readers' Council:

The average age of Church of England congregations is now 61, almost the same as that of NSMs and Readers, and that of stipendiary clergy is 51 (Church Statistics 2007/8). Given these disturbing figures and the facts that the number of Readers in training has fallen by 28 per cent between 2000 and 2008 and that a similar proportion of licensed Readers say that they are under-used, will the function and nature of Reader ministry and the use of this valuable and experienced but ageing group of able volunteers be addressed as a matter of urgency?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man: Yes. Indeed, the implication of the Question that the matter is not already being considered is itself erroneous. The Executive of the Central Readers' Council recently set up a small working group to discuss the key underlying issues relating to authorized lay ministry, including that of Readers.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Would particular consideration be given to mobilizing at least some Readers, especially those who feel under-used, as missionaries in their communities and in the workplace and as equippers of other laity for their mission and ministry in their places of work?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man: Without any doubt. The initial Question and this Question relate to an issue behind the whole lot, which is the use of Readers in a whole range of different ministries today. A few Readers feel threatened by this range of ministries and simply cling to the old view of Readers. I think those threatening times will soon be over. My work and that of the Central Readers' Council is to encourage exactly this kind of diversity and to urge all authorized lay ministers to work together and to get used to the fact that between ministries there will be many blurred edges. This is happening.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

20. **Revd Canon Gill Calver (Canterbury)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

The Palestinian Kairos Document was launched on 11 December 2009 in Bethlehem by a group of clergy and laypeople representing all the Christian Churches in the Holy Land. It calls on Church members round the world to stand alongside the suffering of the Palestinians by visiting them, and endorsing their cry for resistance to the evil of occupation. Has the Mission and Public Affairs Council of the General Synod responded to this call and, if not, when will it be in a position to do so?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: Given the timing of its publication, the Mission and Public Affairs Council has not yet had an opportunity to consider the Palestinian Kairos Document. The Council next meets in May and we hope that some time at that meeting will be given to a preliminary reflection on this report. The Palestinian Kairos Document is an important document emerging from the Churches in the Holy Land and needs to be treated seriously. In the meantime the Council's framework position on the Holy Land remains that which was agreed by the General Synod in 2002.

21. *Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What consideration and what response in terms of evangelistic strategy has been, or will be, given to the latest figures showing a fifth year-on-year decline in average weekly attendance, from 1.187 million in 2003 to 1.145 million in 2008, and that the average age of a member of a Church of England congregation is now 61, with men a diminishing proportion, and to the slight acceleration in the rate of decline in the past twelve months?

Dr Philip Giddings: Careful perusal of GS Misc 938 shows that the headline figures do not tell the whole story. Patterns of attendance are changing and current figures do not include those attending Fresh Expressions of church. Given such factors as the aggressive secular attacks on all faiths and the deepening time pressures on people in work, evangelism in parishes and dioceses is bearing fruit from difficult ground. The number of under-16s attending weekly actually rose by three per cent over the year, we are told. As noted in GS Misc 938, the Church's age profile raises deep questions about attitudes to faith and community commitment at different stages of life; certainly more research is needed here.

There is no room for complacency. Strategies to reach younger people and men of all ages are vital to our witness and very much on MPA's agenda. We continue to seek ways to encourage and support the front line of evangelism in parishes and dioceses.

Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells): In thanking Philip Giddings for that answer, may I also thank the Synod staff for the personal delivery of my envelope!

Has the research that he mentions included any study of the apparent ability of many of the newer community, independent and other Churches to attract younger adults in much greater numbers than most Church of England churches, to see what the Spirit might be saying to us which might then be communicated to our parishes?

Dr Philip Giddings: I do not know the answer to that but I will find out and write to the member. I recognize the thrust of the question.

22. *Mr John Freeman (Chester)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Does the Council support Iain Duncan Smith's proposals to give married couples a payment of £20 a week through the transferable married couple's tax allowance, and what benefits does it think this will bring to the stature of married life?

Dr Philip Giddings: The Church of England is committed to marriage as the best context for raising a family and as the bedrock of society. The Council has consistently called on Her Majesty's Government to acknowledge that the quality of adult relationships is key to the well-being of families and children. This includes addressing the financial penalties placed on marriage by the tax and benefit system. While it is wrong for fiscal policy to penalize marriage, it would be sad if the political rhetoric gave the impression that major life decisions should be influenced by relatively small financial benefits. Marriage is a lifelong undertaking in love and fidelity, not a calculation of tax advantage.

23. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

As the Islamic Viva Palestina Convoy of aid to Gaza has hit the press substantially recently, what is the Church of England doing to support and help Palestinian Christians?

Dr Philip Giddings: Church of England humanitarian support for Palestinian Christians is expressed through a variety of channels such as the work of Anglican mission agencies, voluntary associations and specific diocesan companion links. In addition there is the assistance provided by ecumenical development agencies like Christian Aid and Tearfund. The support offered through these channels is ongoing. It is not restricted to Palestinian Christians but is provided to all who find themselves in need. It will be remembered that, with the encouragement and support of both Archbishops, General Synod last February held a collection to support the Al Ahli Arab hospital in Gaza.

Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield): Thank you. I wish, though, that Question 20 had been for oral answer. However, my Question was broader than finance, as I visited the Holy Land in August. What is the Church of England doing to protect the access of all Christian sites to all Christians, as Palestinian Christians have difficulty reaching Jerusalem and Bethlehem? Could you perhaps encourage churches to twin with Palestinian Christian communities?

Dr Philip Giddings: As chair of Mission and Public Affairs Council, I often find it difficult to answer questions like 'What is the Church of England doing?' It is, thank God, doing many things that I do not know about. I am sure we need to hear what lies behind that supplementary question. I will find out whether there is anything more I can usefully share with the Synod by a notice. Thank God, however, that we can

respond to these needs in all kinds of ways without waiting for a National Institution to take action. We will support where we can.

Dr John Dinnen (Hereford): Will the MPA produce a new report to stimulate debate on human rights and self-determination of Palestinians and Israelis in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel?

The Chairman: I am afraid that supplementary is out of order as it does not relate to either the Question or the answer.

24. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Is it true that the Church of England has only appointed for the first time this year an official representative at the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, whereas many other provinces of the Anglican Communion have had official representatives for some years, and what arrangements have been made for paying the expenses of our appointed representative?

Dr Philip Giddings: The answer to the first part of the Question is No. The Anglican Observer has for many years asked the Archbishop of Canterbury to nominate representatives for an Anglican delegation to the UNCSW. The Mothers' Union also sends delegates. Since 2003 Lambeth has consulted MPA over nominations. Each year since then, one or two Church of England representatives have attended.

Until 2009 the expenses of the whole Anglican delegation were covered by the Anglican Observer's office. In 2009 the MPA Council was asked to cover the travel expenses of one representative. In 2010 representatives from developed nations are expected to find their own funding for the costs of the visit. The invitation this year came too late for consideration by the Appointments Committee and, as a member of the General Synod was already attending at her own expense, she was asked to represent the Church of England on this occasion.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): The answer talked about the Anglicans and the Mothers' Union as well as the Church of England. It also talked about representatives as well as official representatives. Can Dr Giddings confirm that the Church of England did have official representatives in the past and, if so, say who these were? Can he also confirm that the Church of England's official representatives in the future will have their expenses paid?

A member: May I just say something – ?

The Chairman: No, you cannot. Please let Dr Giddings answer.

Dr Philip Giddings: No I cannot give those confirmations because I suspect that there is a subtle distinction between official representatives and others on which I will need careful advice before I can answer the supplementary question.

25. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What role is the Church of England Parliamentary Unit playing in alerting the Government to the widespread concerns triggered by its apparent belief, reflected in the Equality Bill, that people can separate their personal religious beliefs from their behaviour in the workplace?

Dr Philip Giddings: The Parliamentary Unit sent briefing material to a large number of MPs and peers in connection with this Bill. MPA and other colleagues have also been active in discussions with Government about the Bill's provisions. We should be grateful to the Lord Bishops who have played a significant part in the debates in the House of Lords. The Parliamentary Unit and the Division will continue to brief MPs and peers as parliamentary consideration of the measure proceeds.

The broader question of upholding the public role of religion and the place of the Church of England in the public square is a crucial priority for the Parliamentary Unit, for the wider team at MPA and for the whole Church. We are engaging with this important matter on many fronts.

Appointments Committee

26. *Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chairman of the Appointments Committee:

How many members of the House of Laity and how many members of the House of Clergy have not been appointed by the Appointments Committee to bodies (including Revision Committees) and roles so far this quinquennium, and how many of each House have been appointed to more than one body or role during this quinquennium (numbers for each House to be broken down by gender, please)?

Revd Prebendary David Houlding: The Appointments Committee has appointed around half the members of the House of Clergy and around half the members of the House of Laity to various roles this quinquennium. Women have been appointed to 25 per cent of those roles in the House of Clergy and 50 per cent in the House of Laity. As a whole, women represent around 25 per cent of the membership of the House of Clergy and 40 per cent of the House of Laity. In the House of Clergy around half the men and half the women appointed have been appointed to more than one role. The figures for the House of Laity are around one-third and one-half respectively.

The Committee takes care to consider all the factors which have to be taken into account in making any appointment, but in the final decision we must always appoint the person who, in our judgement, is the most appropriate to the task.

Revd Canon Tony Walker (Southwell and Nottingham): Given that a significant number of members of the House of Clergy and the House of Laity have been appointed to more than one role by the Appointments Committee, could the chair tell us what steps will be taken to ensure that the voice of all members of Synod, whether or not they have particular technical expertise, is heard in the bodies and roles behind the scenes in the life of the Synod?

Revd Prebendary David Houlding: I can most certainly give the assurance that in our work a great number of considerations are taken into account always, and before

anyone is appointed to another role, having already been given one in the first place, even further consideration is given as to whether that is appropriate. In the end, as I said, it is as it were our bottom line that we always try to appoint the person who is most appropriate for the task in hand. That is always the point that we come back to in making any appointment. We also take into account the various submissions that members make at the beginning of a quinquennium about the interests they have in doing any further work for the Synod.

Business Committee

27. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

What steps are being taken to ensure that the work being done by the women bishops Revision Committee will be debated by this current Synod rather than by the new Synod, many of whose members will not have been party to all the earlier work and debates?

28. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Assuming that the Revision Committee considering the draft legislation on women in the episcopate completes its work in time, can we be assured that the Business Committee will include the debate on its report and the subsequent revision stage at the July group of sessions and that, in that event, the Revision Committee's report will be circulated as early as possible so that informal consultations can be held in the dioceses before the debate takes place?

29. *Mrs Madelaine Goddard (Derby)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Assuming that the Revision Committee considering the draft legislation on women in the episcopate completes its work in time, can we be assured that the Business Committee will include the debate on its report and the subsequent revision stage at the July group of sessions and that, in that event, the Revision Committee's report will be circulated as early as possible so that members have sufficient time to study it thoroughly before the debate?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I will, if I may, answer these three Questions together. The Business Committee has prepared a long and full agenda for this group of sessions in order to leave as much time as possible in July to progress the revision stage of the women in the episcopate legislation, if that is Synod's wish. If Synod takes note of the report and is able to complete the revision stage, it will be possible to send the revised legislation to the dioceses in July. The timing of the publication of the report depends on when the Revision Committee finishes its work, but I am very much hoping that it will be possible to circulate it before the House of Bishops and the Business Committee each meet in the week of 17 May.

30. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

The College of Bishops having now considered the ARCIC report *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*, why is the debate on the report which this Synod specifically requested neither on the agenda for this group of sessions nor forecast for the next?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: The Synod requested that all the reports of the second phase of ARCIC should be brought to Synod. *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* is the last of these. The Business Committee considers requests for debates on ecumenical texts from the Council for Christian Unity which, in turn, consults with the House of Bishops. When such a request is received, the Business Committee will decide, in the light of advice from the CCU and the House, when the report *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* should be brought to the Synod.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Is the chairman of the Business Committee telling us that an express request from Synod is ignored unless supported by the CCU, and what right does the Business Committee have to ignore indefinitely a request from Synod for particular business to come before the Synod?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: No I am not saying that at all. *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* will come to Synod; Synod has requested that and it will happen. However, the timing of it is in the hands of the Business Committee, who will decide when a request comes from the CCU in consultation with the House. So we are not talking about whether it will come; we are talking about the timing of it.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Would the chair of the Business Committee undertake to bring a report to the next meeting of the General Synod explaining what are the difficulties of timing which are holding this important business up?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I am afraid I am not the one who needs to be asked to bring the report. It would need to be, probably, the House of Bishops.

31. *Mrs Anne Toms (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

As part of its consideration of whether guidance should be issued to members on the declaration of interests in debates, has the Business Committee sought to establish how many of the House of Laity could have interests, through spouses who are members of the clergy, of a kind which in other walks of life they would be expected to declare, and will any guidance which the Committee issues deal with that situation?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: The Business Committee has discussed the issue of declarations of interest by those participating in debates and intends to issue guidance to existing members and, through the induction process, to new members of Synod in November. No 'register of interests' is envisaged, but members will be advised that declaration of a relevant interest at the beginning of their speech is welcomed and expected. The Committee has not sought to identify the number of members who might have interests of the kind referred to but, plainly, any guidance will have to take into account the possibility of interests that arise through a spouse.

Mrs Anne Toms (Peterborough): Thank you for the answer relating to the future guidance and arrangement. How significant an issue is this among members of the present House of Laity who, in other spheres of public life, would be expected to declare a personal and prejudicial interest linked to that of the House of Clergy? The relevance of this to a debate on clergy pensions is clear.

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I think what we are talking about here is convention really, and there is a convention that people will declare an interest that may affect what they say or what they feel about an issue; most people do abide by that convention; but it may be that we actually need to write something down.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): I am very grateful for that answer. Should not that guidance also take effect when Questions are being asked? Should there not be a declaration there as well?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I did not say that it would not be done for Questions as well. Questions are part of what we do.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): With respect, you talked about 'in debates'; you did not specifically mention Questions.

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I beg your pardon.

The Chairman: You are asking for an opinion, I think, so we will leave it there.

32. **Mrs Wendy Kinson (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Bearing in mind that 2010 is the 40th anniversary of the General Synod, are there any plans to recognize the long and faithful service shown by the small band of members who have served on the General Synod since it began in 1970?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick replied: No long service awards exist, but I am sure it might be deemed appropriate for these members' long and faithful service to be mentioned during the farewells. Perhaps the customary 'revue' will function as a 40th birthday party.

Legal Advisory Commission

The Chairman: Question 33 is for the Legal Advisory Commission.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): On a point of order, Madam Chairman. I originally submitted this Question as one for written reply rather than oral reply and I am therefore prepared to waive the right of an oral reply in order to get a longer written one.

The Chairman: Dr Hartley, I think you have the reply you have.

33. *Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford)* asked the Chairman of the Legal Advisory Commission:

In the period of concern about swine flu we were advised (a) not to offer the wine at Communion and to administer only the bread, and (b) that it was not lawful in the Church of England to consecrate the wine in a lipped chalice or flagon and then to administer it by pouring it into individual glasses and offering each communicant an individual cup. Has the Legal Advisory Commission considered the arguments that (a) it is a principle of the Reformation, and required by canon law, that in the Church of England the Sacrament should be offered to communicants in both kinds, and

although the individual communicant may decline to accept both kinds, the priest may not decline to offer both kinds; and (b) the justification (in *Legal Opinions*, page 348) of the practice of intinction as 'lawful where a communicant or the congregation as a whole is fearful of contracting or communicating a contagious disease through drinking from the cup' by 'the doctrine of necessity' would imply that the use of individual cups, in which the wine is held in a cup instead of in the bread, would also be lawful in these same circumstances; and if it has considered these arguments, what is its view of them?

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Christopher Hill): – speaking on behalf of the chairman of the Legal Advisory Commission.

The principles of law and theology that the Commission considered are set out, as I think Dr Hartley is aware, in its opinion of 1991, which was revised in 2003. The Commission distinguished between a method of intinction – which it considered would be 'consistent with the custom and law' that is set out in the opinion – and the use of individual cups which would not be consistent with that custom and law. The Commission has not considered the question further since 2003.

The legal position is principally governed by section 8 of the Sacrament Act 1547. That section – which remains in force – requires that '... the ... most blessed Sacrament be hereafter commonly delivered and ministered unto the people ... under both the kinds, that is to say of bread and wine, except necessity otherwise require ...'.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): In view of the fact that there is now considerable experience of this question up and down the country and that the Commission has not considered it since 2003, would it either do so or alternatively write to me with its reasons for not doing so?

The Bishop of Guildford: I can assure Dr Hartley that these questions will be drawn to the attention of the chairman and the Commission, and I shall do so myself.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Thank you.

Liturgical Commission

34. **Mr William Nicholls (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission:

Why is the proposed authorized use of the Additional Eucharistic Prayers for use when children are present restricted to occasions when significant numbers of children are present or when it is otherwise pastorally appropriate to meet the needs of children present, rather than extending to use on a weekly basis at the main celebration of Holy Communion in the parish church, with the result that those of us who live in areas where congregations would value their language will not be able to benefit from what are excellent prayers?

The Bishop of Wakefield replied: The motion brought to the General Synod by Durham diocese in February 2008 asked for '... the expeditious preparation of a Eucharistic Prayer suitable for use on occasions when a significant number of children

are present or when it is otherwise pastorally appropriate to meet the needs of children present'. This motion was carried in an amended form which asked for prayers rather than a single prayer. The Liturgical Commission has since worked to draft prayers in line with the Synod's request.

One of the primary contexts envisaged for the use of such prayers is school worship, where the majority of those present are children. In its drafting the Liturgical Commission has had in the forefront of its mind the intended contexts of those who asked for them. It is for that reason that Note 1 on 'the use of the prayers' makes clear that the intended context of their use is not the weekly celebration of Holy Communion in the parish church. The intention is that they should not supplant the eight existing authorized Eucharistic prayers provided for use with Holy Communion Order One, but rather be an additional resource for use on appropriate occasions.

This is not to say, however, that the prayers must never be used at a Sunday celebration of Holy Communion in the parish church. There could well be occasions when a parish priest might decide that to use one of the prayers on a Sunday would be both appropriate and desirable. Note 1 does not forbid this but rather stresses that these prayers should not become the sole diet at eucharistic worship in a parish.

I am delighted that, during the period of trial use, we have 721 parishes and other places of worship authorized to 'road test' the prayers, and trust that this will enable us further to refine the texts prior to introducing them into the Synod in due course.

Archbishops' Council

35. *Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Given the value of the work undertaken on behalf of the Church by the staff of the NCIs and that, for the first time ever, some staff of the Archbishops' Council are holding a ballot on industrial action as a result of the decision to offer a zero per cent pay settlement in 2009, can it be confirmed whether the Archbishops' Council was consulted on the pay settlement being offered to staff this year?

Mr Andrew Britton: The staff of the National Church Institutions are on common pay systems. Responsibility for taking decisions about their terms of service has been delegated by the various bodies corporate, including the Archbishops' Council, to a joint board consisting of the First Estates Commissioner, the chair of the Pensions Board and me. The Board reports regularly to the Council and the other governing bodies.

We very much regret having to freeze the pay for 12 months from last July, not least given the hard work and commitment of staff, but the NCIs cannot be immune from the same financial pressures that have led many dioceses to take similar steps in relation to clergy stipends and lay employees. In addition we are having to make substantial additional contributions to the closed defined benefit pension scheme.

Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford): Noting that responsibility rests with the joint board but that accountability remains with the Archbishops' Council, can Mr Britton

confirm which, if any, members of the Archbishops' Council, as opposed to its officers, are involved in decisions on staff members' terms and conditions?

Mr Andrew Britton: The responsibility for setting pay and conditions was delegated by the Archbishops' Council and the other bodies to the JECSB which I chair, and I represent the Archbishops' Council on it. The remit of JECSB was, as it happens, reviewed last year so I think it is absolutely clear to all trustees how these decisions are taken.

Revd Canon Anne Stevens (Southwark): Would Mr Britton kindly convey to the Archbishops' Council the concern that many members of Synod are feeling over the position of the staff here, and would he raise with it the question of what might be done to raise staff morale?

Mr Andrew Britton: I am certainly happy to report back both to JECSB and the Archbishops' Council itself what has been said in relation to this Question and the concern of the staff, of which we are well aware. I think we have to recognize that we are going through a time of unusual financial stringency when measures have to be taken which we regret having to take, and in this we are no different from many Church bodies and indeed other organizations in this country and elsewhere.

Church Commissioners

36. *Mr John Ward (London)* asked the Church Commissioners:

Given the value of the work undertaken on behalf of the Church by the staff of the NCIs and that, for the first time ever, some staff of the Church Commissioners are holding a ballot on industrial action as a result of the decision to offer a zero per cent pay settlement in 2009, can the Commissioners confirm whether the Board of Governors was consulted on the pay settlement being offered to staff this year?

The First Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, ex officio):

The chair of the Joint Employment and Common Services Board has explained the general background to this regrettable decision, and the Church Commissioners share that regret, as does the Pensions Board. Speaking for the Church Commissioners, we could not ignore the drop in the value of our portfolio in 2008 – although it has recovered since – nor the substantial cuts in dividends which provide our income. Like the other NCIs we remain committed to maintaining a fair deal for staff and ensuring that we are sufficiently competitive to recruit and retain the people with the skills and the expertise that we need. With price inflation running at below zero for part of the year, a pay freeze combined with increased employer contributions for the old pension scheme seemed to us a reasonable settlement in the circumstances.

Mr John Ward (London): Given the importance of corporate governance, would you confirm precisely for me which Church Commissioners, as opposed to officers, were involved in decisions on staff terms and conditions?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: I represent the Church Commissioners on the JECSB but I report my actions to the upcoming board of governors' meeting that follows that of the JECSB, and the board of governors has every opportunity to quiz

me about the decisions which we take and to comment on the annual report which we publish.

Pensions Board

37. *Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

In the light of the considerable amount of work undertaken on behalf of the Church and its clergy by the staff of the Board, and the fact that some of those staff are holding a ballot on industrial action as a result of the decision to offer a zero per cent pay settlement in 2009, is the Board satisfied that the terms and conditions of service of its staff are adequate?

Dr Jonathan Spencer (ex officio): The Pensions Board, along with the other governing bodies, receives regular reports on decisions taken by the Joint Employment and Common Services Board under the powers delegated to it. The Pensions Board supported the establishment some years ago of common terms and conditions of service across the National Church Institutions and is satisfied that the process of reviewing these each year is carried out with proper regard to external comparators as well as the Board's need to recruit and retain good quality staff. The Board regrets that it has been necessary to freeze staff pay for 12 months from last July, particularly given the hard work and commitment of staff. The overall remuneration package for NCI staff does, however, remain fair.

Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford): I declare an interest in that I am a beneficiary of the Church Administrators' Pension Fund. Has the Board had to freeze any other payments that it makes?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: The only staff that we employ are the staff covered by these arrangements, so there is no other comparable group of individuals involved.

Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford): I was thinking of pensions.

Dr Jonathan Spencer: Well, in the case of pensions we have a debate tomorrow on adjustments to the clergy pension scheme which is mirrored in various ways by the other pension schemes for which the Board is responsible, and where we are having, as members will see from the papers, to balance questions of affordability, on the one hand, against potential dilutions of pension entitlements for future service.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): Given that this pay freeze and the regrettable decision to explore the question of a ballot is also taking place in the context of a spending review and potential redundancies, can Dr Spencer, Mr Whittam Smith and Mr Britton please convey to the staff of the National Church Institutions the high regard in which all members hold them in the current situation?
(Applause)

Dr Jonathan Spencer: Of course I shall be glad to pass on those remarks which indeed mirror the views of the Board itself.

Church Commissioners

38. *Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield)* asked the Church Commissioners:

What risk assessment was undertaken by the Church Commissioners in 2007 before investing in the American property group owning the Peter Cooper Village – Stuyvesant Town development in Manhattan, and how much was that investment?

The First Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Andreas Whittam Smith, ex officio): I have kept my reply deliberately short, Madam Chairman, so as to leave room for supplementaries if members care to ask and if you care to grant their requests.

In common with all investments the Commissioners make, we undertook due diligence regarding the financial, market, ethical, legal and tax risks associated with our investment of approximately £40 million in the Peter Cooper Village – Stuyvesant Town partnership. This work was done in conjunction with a number of external professional advisers.

Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield): Have the Commissioners now written off the entire value of this £40 million investment and what lessons have they learnt from such a massive loss?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: We have written off the entire value; we did it in two steps, in 2008 and we will be writing it off in our 2009 accounts. Even so the value of our property assets in 2009 will have risen by five per cent, after this write-off, and that will be quite well ahead of most other property funds.

As to lessons learnt, the lesson obviously is that this partnership, although it is no safeguard, had very formidable partners – the Government of Singapore, the California Teachers' Pension Fund and so on – but the amount of borrowing which the partnership undertook – and which I have to say was convention at the time, though that is no defence – was too great. That was the reason why our investment was wiped out. There were other reasons but that was far and away the main reason.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Andreas, on the second page of GS Misc 941, which is here attached and which I think is part of your answer, you give the impression (in the top paragraph) that the 'legal ruling that many [of the] apartment rents would continue to be regulated regardless ...' was a surprise. Is that the impression you are trying to convey and, if so, could you say something about the advice you receive overseas with this kind of thing?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: Two things went on at the same time: one was the thing which you can receive advice about, which is the state of the market and the quality of the asset, and the second thing was the change in the politics of New York State, which swung from Republican to Democrat and substantially changed the atmosphere in which owners of residential property in New York work. Not only was an important case, regarding rents which could be charged to market or must be protected, lost, but what, from the perspective of the Church Commissioners, I recall is that legislation hostile to landlords was also making its way through that legislature and affecting the value of the assets.

39. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Church Commissioners:

What has been the cost to the Church Commissioners of implementing the new SAP accounting and business software system from the time it was decided that a replacement was required, year on year; what percentage of the total cost to the National Church Institutions of implementation does that represent; and what are the ongoing costs each year in operating and maintaining this system?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: SAP, which successfully went live across the NCIs in 2009, is an enterprise-wide system which replaced some 20 different 'legacy' business systems used to manage property investments, loans management, the CHARM housing portfolio and retirement homes as well as accounting. Since 2003 a total of £4.5 million has been spent acquiring and implementing SAP, of which £2.8 million will be capitalized and written off over five years. The rest has been charged to revenue in the year in which the cost was incurred. Of the total £4.5 million expended, £2.1 million has fallen to the Church Commissioners, which is 47 per cent. The ongoing cost of running and maintaining SAP is budgeted to be £400,000, of which the Commissioners' share is £180,000.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): Given the £400,000 per annum cost of operating SAP and other enterprises also supplying software which would be comparable, have the Church Commissioners and other National Church Institutions considered different means now of delivering the same end, for example, Software As A Service, in which the software is hosted elsewhere but our staff operate it, or Business Process Outsourcing?

The First Church Estates Commissioner: Frankly, we have been through so many trials and tribulations with introducing this system, over a number of years now, that now we have got it working very well, a great deal of training has taken place and it is beginning to produce very good results, I think you would find it very hard to persuade us to look at any alternative system.

Pensions Board

40. *The Archdeacon of Lincoln (Tim Barker) (Lincoln)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

I understand that clergy pension contributions are payable by dioceses even after the maximum contribution for a pension has been paid in respect of an individual clerk in holy orders. If so, why is this the policy, given that it represents a significant cost to dioceses for their senior priests?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: Excluding those members who have completed maximum pensionable service from the requirement on employers to pay contributions would not reduce the overall cost of the scheme since the contribution rate is derived by dividing the total cost of providing for the benefits for all members by the total pensionable payroll. Removing those with full service from the calculation would reduce the total pensionable payroll, but not the total cost. The contribution in respect of the remaining members would, therefore, be correspondingly higher. You might call it a zero sum.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln (Ven. Tim Barker): Will the chairman invite the Board to consider, notwithstanding his helpful reply, whether greater transparency about the linkage of contributions to individual clergy might be appropriate?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: I am not sure there is very much that could be done to meet what I think is the point of the Question here. The nature of pension schemes is that they are collective: there is money paid in at a rate designed to produce the required level of benefits at a later point. However, in a defined benefits scheme of the kind we operate there is not a precise match between the contributions that are paid in in respect of any individual clergyperson and the benefits that they personally receive at a later point. If we went to a defined contributions scheme of the kind that we may find ourselves discussing tomorrow, in that case the contributions are always paid precisely in respect of the individual and what they get back at a later point in benefits is much more closely matched to the contributions that have been paid in their respect (ignoring little questions like mortality, of course).

41. *Revd Canon Susan Booy (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

The proposals in GS 1758 involve the replacement of the contracted-out status of clergy by participation in the State second pension scheme. Is the Board aware of concerns by women approaching the age of 60 and men approaching 65 who have not earned a full Church pension and who plan to continue holding stipendiary office, for whom dioceses would not be able to continue National Insurance contributions, and are there any plans to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by the new provisions affecting work after the ages of 60 and 65 respectively?

Dr Jonathan Spencer: The Board is aware that further accrual of benefits under S2P stops once someone reaches their State pension age. The Pension Task Group has received legal advice that any additional provisions would be open to legal challenge on the grounds of age discrimination. It is important to note that those working beyond their State pension age do not pay employee's National Insurance, which represents a saving to them of 11 per cent of their stipend compared with what other scheme members pay. Such people would be able to earn extra pension by investing this saving in the AVC scheme offered by the Board or through other personal pension plans. In addition, individuals can receive increased State pension payments if they delay drawing their entitlement while they are still working and receiving a stipend.

The progressive increase in the women's pension age to 65, and subsequently of all pension ages to 68, will eventually eliminate this issue altogether.

Church Urban Fund

42. *Revd Canon Dr Alan Hargrave (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the Church Urban Fund:

Can a report be given to the Synod, whether in response to this Question or otherwise, on the Church Urban Fund's current financial position, with particular regard to how many staff are currently employed compared to, say, two years ago, how much capital the Fund holds and how it intends to apply it?

The Bishop of Dudley (Rt Revd David Walker): The Church Urban Fund is completing the process of moving from being a traditional grant-making trust to being a development organization and has now, as was always planned, successfully spent its endowment. As a development organization it has to raise the money it spends and, in line with current best practice, provide services in addition to grants. Poverty, of course, is about more than money.

A restructuring of staff is presently taking place and this will enable CUF to fulfil its new role and continue to ensure that costs are kept to a minimum without detriment to local churches. The staff budget for 2010 is £160,000, or 18.4 per cent below what the actual costs were in 2007 without adding anything for inflation. That budget figure is probably a better representation of staff costs than a simple head count.

The draft accounts for 2009 show unrestricted accumulated capital of £2.1 million, £600,000 above the reserves policy level. CUF's long-term plans show the accumulated capital falling to the level of reserves policy over the next two to three years.

Archbishops' Council

43. *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Given that it is now over two-and-a-half years since the General Synod endorsed the relevant recommendations of the Pilling review of senior appointments, contained in *Talent and Calling* (GS 1650), invited those responsible to give effect to them and invited the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod during 2008 on progress with implementation, (a) have those recommendations now been implemented; and specifically (b) which, if any, of the six recommendations relating to fostering diversity (chapter 4 of the report) have not yet been fully implemented?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr Rowan Williams): The recommendations have been for the most part implemented; there are monitoring processes in place; dioceses need to be aware of the information they need to be reporting centrally; and bishops are aware (and indeed are occasionally reminded) of the need to ensure that appointments to all senior vacancies are made in the light of the Act of Synod. I hope that they and their advisory groups continue to abide by this in the making of appointments.

The area where probably most remains to be done is in 'talent management', as the report put it, and a framework for that has yet to be finalized. Perhaps one of the most acute problems in that area is to do with the recommendation about bishops identifying clergy from minority constituencies who could be developed for senior office. The Archbishop of York and I have commissioned a report reviewing the situation with regard to black and minority ethnic clergy in relation to senior appointments.

Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London): Given that it is now over two and a half years since this Synod endorsed the Pilling report, what is the timetable for fully implementing the 'fostering diversity' recommendations?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I am not aware that there is such a timetable, but I do not think that we are unaware of the urgency of completing the work that I have mentioned. I shall note that and pass it on.

Sister Anne Williams (Durham): If dioceses are aware of the information, they should be reporting centrally. Are they actually reporting it?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I am afraid I cannot comment on that. They are aware of this.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark): When was the last black or Asian member of the clergy appointed to a senior position, and what percentage of total senior clergy does this represent?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I do not have the information here, but I shall see that it is conveyed.

44. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Archbishops' Council:

What arrangements are there for employees of the National Church Institutions to declare an interest when they are advising or working for a board, council or committee of the Archbishops' Council or the General Synod or another National Church Institution, including Revision Committees?

Canon Dr Christina Baxter: The organizations' values statement and compliance policy impose specific obligations on staff, including considering whether they can properly be involved in relevant meetings or casework where there may be a conflict of interest or loyalty. Declarations of interest are also required where necessary at particular meetings from members and staff alike. As part of their contractual responsibilities staff are expected to act professionally, impartially and in the best interests of the body they serve. My experience is that they do just that.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Are these declarations of interest and the other things Dr Baxter has just mentioned published anywhere, or to whom are they actually made available?

Canon Dr Christina Baxter: I do not have to hand the answer to that question, but I will make sure I find out and I will make sure that you find out.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Thank you very much.

45. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Has consideration been given to the possibility of the Church of England working with other Christian organizations to supplement the existing range of church attendance statistics by developing a series of indicators of Christian engagement in community life to show current levels of involvement, and subsequently changes over time, using measures such as the number of church-based youth workers, the number

of street pastors, levels of volunteering by Christians, and other relevant indicators for which national estimates may be derived from national or regional surveys?

Dr Philip Giddings: The Church of England and other Churches co-ordinate attendance and membership statistics collected locally. We also have research round table links with several Christian research agencies to co-ordinate exercises such as national surveys. The Research and Statistics department sets diocesan and national statistics in the context of results from wider national surveys among the public.

We also work with Church Urban Fund and the Commission of Life and Faith to develop toolkits for local churches of any denomination to quantify the social capital they bring to their community through youth workers, volunteering, community groups and opening buildings for community use. This is maintained on the CUF website and can be used by local churches to monitor changes over time.

More detailed work is being done regionally among ecumenical Christian fora to quantify the social capital contributed by Churches. They are necessarily diverse in their approach. There is a lot of work going on, and there is more work which will be done.

46. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

The number of minority ethnic clergy has increased significantly in several dioceses since 2005. When will the results of the 2005 Clergy Diversity Audit be updated?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James): The Archbishops' Council is committed to regular diversity monitoring across clergy and congregations. Synod has among its papers for this February group of sessions the report of the recent diversity monitoring among core parish congregations. This has established better methods of monitoring congregation profiles and points towards the benefits of continued efforts to develop robust and rigorous methods of monitoring in liaison with the dioceses. It is intended that the monitoring of clergy diversity in particular should become an integral part of the annual statistics of licensed ministers.

Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark): I refer to the last sentence: when will this be implemented?

The Bishop of Norwich: It is in the process as I understand it of being implemented now. We hope that the next group of annual statistics may contain this information.

47. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Would the Archbishops' Council consider rebalancing the basis for ministerial deployment throughout the Church so as to include provision to recognize and encourage success in mission, and build such an approach into both training and diocesan support arrangements?

The Bishop of Norwich: Patterns of ministerial deployment are primarily the concern of the dioceses, supported by the Archbishops' Council in terms of a national

framework and guidance. Dioceses are encouraged to reflect on their emerging and future needs in mission and to deploy their ministers to meet those aims. I am sure that dioceses already relate their provision to their mission priorities and align the deployment of ministers with their ministry development plans.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): The Question, of course, relates particularly to the Sheffield formula which allocates numbers of clergy between dioceses. Would the Bishop address this far-reaching but specific aspect of ministry deployment in respect of relative diocesan success in mission?

The Bishop of Norwich: The Sheffield formula - the clergy share system - is a practical but rather blunt tool to provide fair access to the Church's ministry: it is a guide and not a rule. I think how you define success in mission is significant in itself and we probably ought not to go into that here, but population, area, membership, numbers of churches, they are the things that determine the Sheffield formula; but it is not an imposition on the dioceses.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Is it not the case that, because we have a Sheffield formula, dioceses have a kind of mini-Sheffield thought pattern when they are thinking about deploying their clergy, and is not the point of the Question to try to find some way of addressing that?

The Bishop of Norwich: If you look at the Sheffield formula and then you look at the distribution of clergy in the Church of England, it does not match what the Sheffield formula says. In a characteristic way in the Church of England, we have a guide but we do not always follow it!

48. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

In the debates on the Equality Bill currently undergoing parliamentary scrutiny, the Church of England has expressed a desire to maintain exemptions in respect of the recruiting of ministers of religion, or others to a small number of senior lay posts. Concerning appointments by the Archbishops' Council to its boards, councils, divisions and Central Secretariat, can the Council inform the Synod of those posts to which, if they were to become vacant today, this exemption would currently apply?

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): There is no list. Any genuine occupational requirement in relation to religious affiliation can be determined only at the time that a particular post is advertised. Since discrimination on grounds of religion and belief became unlawful in 2003 only a small proportion of the Archbishops' Council's posts which have been advertised have required applicants to be Christian, and only a few of these – for example, the Director of Ministry post – that they be a communicant Anglican.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): My understanding is that there are two sets of regulations, one concerning religion and belief and the other concerning sexual orientation. When the Council determines that there is a genuine occupational requirement in relation to religious belief, does it always apply that any candidate who is sexually active in a same-sex relationship will not be considered?

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The Archbishop of York: If Mr Butler will wait for the answer to his Question 49, he will hear what I am going to say to him about it. Do you want me to go ahead?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): You are going to answer that question under 49, Your Grace?

The Archbishop of York: Yes.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): My view would be that you have not answered that question under Question 49.

The Archbishop of York: Pardon?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): My view would be –

The Archbishop of York: Well, if you do not think so you can ask another supplementary!

The Chairman: Let us move on then to Question 49.

49. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Given the Church of England's support for amendments to the Equality Bill which maintain the current exemptions, can the Archbishops' Council indicate (a) what steps it has been taking since the implementation of the 2003 Regulations to ensure that, when seeking to appoint people to 'senior lay posts that involve promoting and representing the religion', candidates 'are able to demonstrate an ability to live a life consistent with the ethos of the religion, as well as sharing the faith'; and (b) whether any changes to this historical practice are now to be made?

The Archbishop of York: There were two sets of Regulations in 2003, one relating to discrimination in relation to religion and belief and the other to discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. The Equality Bill will bring together into a single framework these regulations and other legislation in relation to a number of other characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The proportion of Archbishops' Council's posts that are advertised with a religious genuine occupational requirement is small. There is no expectation that the Equality Bill, as now amended, will lead to any change in that or to the way in which the requirements are applied.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): With respect to the Archbishop, my Question concerned the way the Church of England has implemented the regulations, not what the regulations actually say. So could the President inform the Synod, for example on the question of same-sex sexual activity, how it goes about discovering whether a

candidate meets the genuine occupational requirement? Is it in the advert or in the personal –

The Chairman: I am afraid this question is out of order.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): On what grounds?

The Chairman: Because the question relates to religious affiliation and not to sexual orientation.

Revd Professor Richard Burridge (University of London): On a point of order, Madam Chairman. In the light of your previous ruling about asking two questions and getting two supplementaries, and given that Canon Butler's supplementary to Question 48 was not answered, would you now permit him a second supplementary?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): My understanding of my Question is that it relates to both sexual activity, outside of marriage, and religious affiliation, in Question 49. With respect to the latter, could the Archbishop please answer the Question?

The Archbishop of York: Yes. For the small number of posts where a Christian or Anglican affiliation is specified, candidates would be expected to confirm their faith affiliation during the application stage. It would be only in an exceptional case that issues about a candidate's marital history or lifestyle might be considered. In general, there are a very small number of roles where it would not be credible to appoint as a representative of the Church someone who chose to act contrary to its teaching. So it is in the application stage.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford) rose –

The Chairman: I think we have had enough supplementaries at this stage. Can we move on to Mrs Alexander's Question?

50. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Can the Archbishops' Council spell out the nature of the exemptions currently available to the Church in respect of equality legislation and employment law as they apply to lay employees which are referred to by the Bishops of Winchester, Exeter and Chester in their recent statement and which might be lost under the present Equality Bill?

The Archbishop of York: The 2003 Regulations generally make discrimination, whether on grounds of religion and belief or of sexual orientation, unlawful in the field of employment, save where there is a genuine occupational requirement or where an exemption indeed applies. Employment includes for this purpose the holding of an office. The law does not distinguish between sexual orientation and sexual activity. The Regulations exempt posts which are for purposes of an organized religion and where a requirement in relation to sexual orientation is imposed so as to comply with the doctrines of the religion or to avoid conflicting with the strongly held convictions of a significant number of its followers.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark): Since the House of Bishops' statement of 1991, *Issues in Human Sexuality*, concerns itself with clergy in this respect, is Synod right to infer that there has been a further development in the thinking of the bishops on the employment of laypeople beyond that statement and the 2003 publication *A Guide to the Debate*?

The Archbishop of York: I think, if I hear you aright, there is a widespread misunderstanding that *Issues in Human Sexuality* applied a different principle for clergy and laity. It in fact established a common principle that applied to both but went on to affirm that gay and lesbian laypeople who in conscience decided to order their lives differently should nevertheless be welcome within the fellowship of the Church. That is not establishing a different principle.

Where laypeople are appointed as evangelists, youth pastors or in high-profile representational roles requiring a Christian affiliation, those responsible for the appointment are entitled to form a view whether the person's life and beliefs are consistent with the teaching of the Church of England. The 1987 Synod motion affirmed that 'all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality, and that holiness of life is particularly required of Christian leaders'.

House of Bishops

51. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In the context of the current debate about the impact of the Equality Bill on employment, particularly of laypeople, would this Synod be correct to assume that the 1991 distinction between the 'sexually active' and the 'sexually inactive' as applied to clergy who are gay will be equally applied to lay employees who are gay, should the law allow?

The Archbishop of York: In representations from Church of England bodies on the Equality Bill and on previous anti-discrimination legislation, it has consistently been made clear that the Church's concern is solely in relation to sexual activity and not to sexual orientation. The difficulty is that the law makes no such distinction.

52. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Was the statement by the Bishops of Winchester, Exeter and Chester relating to the employment of homosexual persons, made on 23 January in connection with the debate in the House of Lords on the Equality Bill, made on behalf of the House of Bishops?

The Archbishop of York: The statement from a number of Lords Spiritual was issued to draw attention to the important debate due in the House of Lords on 25 January. It reaffirmed the consistent line on the Equality Bill taken by Church of England representatives, including in submissions from the Archbishops' Council, statements from various bishops, conversations between both Archbishops and Ministers of the Crown, briefing from our Parliamentary Unit and my own speech at Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords. The issue at stake was not what the Church of England's policy should be on homosexuality but whether, in relation to those who

represent Churches and other religions as ministers of religion and more generally, the law could prohibit the imposing of requirements on a range of matters including gender, marital history, being a transsexual person and sexual activity.

53. *Mrs Gill Ambrose (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In view of the slow progress towards the development of legislation to enable the consecration of women as bishops, would the House of Bishops consider inviting a number of female observers to its meetings so that the insights of women are not lost to the Church at this high level of leadership and policy development?

The Archbishop of York: The simple answer is No. Although I regret the length of our legislative processes, there are no short cuts. Granting some women – however they were chosen – observer status now would not grant them a full voice in the House and would risk being a diversion from the central task, namely how to find a way of admitting women to the episcopate which also enables as many people as possible to remain in the Church of England whatever their theological convictions on that issue. We must continue to hold on to the view held by the Synod and the rest of the Anglican Communion that those who are in favour and those who are opposed are both loyal Anglicans.

Mrs Gill Ambrose (Ely): Are we to assume then that the Church can still afford not to hear the voice of women at this level when issues on which women have important things to say come up for debate in the House of Bishops?

The Archbishop of York: Many women are, in any event, members of bishops' staff in their dioceses. Members of the House will consequently have had the benefit of their insights in policy discussions within the diocese which will inform the thinking that they bring to the House of Bishops' discussions.

The selection of women observers would itself be invidious, I think. Other interest groups, for example young people, could also argue for such representation. Women have been present at the House as supporting staff: currently the assistant secretary to the House is a woman in holy orders. Policy matters are regularly brought to the House on appointments matters, educational issues, HR and training matters by women in advisory roles.

Pursuing this further, it would be invidious to suggest, for example, that when the House of Laity is considering some rather difficult theological issue bishops should be there as observers.

54. *Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

There is plenty of anecdotal evidence to support the view that the gender balance in Church of England congregations is getting seriously out of line. Given the importance of this matter, and its neglect by comparison with other important issues such as age and ethnicity, has the House of Bishops (a) discussed changing the information required in statistical counting to include gender, in order to gain hard evidence on this matter; (b) debated the profound theological issues which

characterize a Church with a gender imbalance; (c) considered the significant missiological issues that emerge when a Church experiences a testosterone deficit?

The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill): As GS Misc 938 shows, we are trying to move beyond anecdotal evidence and build our mission policies on something more substantial. This monitoring survey of core parish congregations already includes information on gender. We also need fuller profiles for Fresh Expressions, chaplaincies and wider congregations, which may be different and certainly suggest other missiological approaches to the problem.

I do not know which theological issues the questioner has in mind, since every soul is precious to Our Lord and the gospel is the same for men and women alike. There are certainly some ecclesiological questions about structures and leadership, best left, perhaps, to the Revision Committee at this stage.

The social analysis here is complex and there are no quick fixes in terms of mission practice. However, I believe every bishop is concerned to build a well-balanced Church, and mission amongst men and younger people is on everyone's agenda.

Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield): This Question is not about the ministry of ordained women, but I think many Anglicans now recognize that in many churches up and down the country many men are now feeling culturally alienated from Church life in all traditions. In the light of that and of the Bishop's answer, can he point specifically to any actions and initiatives for mission among men which the House of Bishops is aware of and could approve?

The Bishop of Bristol: I think there would be a number of initiatives that are not produced by the central Church in relation to mission among men, and here I should declare an interest, for Mr Bruinvels's sake: I am a man.

I think bishops are very well aware of this; members will have read some of the books that have been produced, and a number of ministries a member of this Synod, whose expertise has been brought to bear on this subject, has done quite a lot of speaking about, on exactly the subject that you raise.

55. *Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In view of the 30 per cent decline in the number of confirmations over the past 10 years, what action is being taken to arrest and reverse this trend?

The Bishop of Bristol: In the recent strategy document *Going for Growth* the Board of Education identifies the Church's specific intention at every level to 'work towards every child and young person having a life-enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ'. In its plans for 2010-2011 are actions to 'develop resources that will enhance support for parents, god-parents and confirmands'.

A group of diocesan youth officers has researched young people's views and expectations of confirmation, reflecting on its importance in their lives today. A publication and resource materials are being developed with Church House Publishing, for release in September.

Mission and evangelism strategies in the dioceses help bring new people to Christ: they are a key source of confirmation candidates. Diocesan advisory staff continue to support parishes in preparing candidates for confirmation, offering training for parishes and clergy to develop young people in their faith and bring them to confirmation.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): Thank you for that answer, Bishop, but has the House of Bishops considered whether the practice of some dioceses of encouraging Communion before confirmation may have some bearing on the decline in the number of confirmations?

The Bishop of Bristol: I think that is a very valid question. I cannot recall myself that we have specifically looked at that, although of course we have discussed Communion before confirmation in great detail, and at that point in the discussion those issues were raised, as I think they are raised in dioceses which seek to allow that practice to happen. I am sure that the bishops present have heard your Question and will give some further thought to that, but I cannot recall that we have specifically looked at it.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Given Bishop Colin Buchanan's description of confirmation as a rite in search of a theology, and given the expanding different patterns of Christian initiation that there are now, when was the last time that the House of Bishops had a serious look at the part that confirmation plays in various pathways towards full Christian initiation?

The Bishop of Bristol: I cannot answer that because I honestly do not know, but I will try to find out and let you have a written reply to that.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) rose –

The Chairman: I think we will move on if that is OK, Mr Scowen.

56. *Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What steps are being taken to ensure that the availability of title posts matches the number of those expecting to be ordained in 2010?

57. *Mrs Gill Morrison (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In what ways is the House of Bishops encouraging dioceses to find title posts for ordinands?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer) : With permission, Chair, I should like to answer these two Questions together.

The House had a good discussion of this issue in December. Bishops affirmed their desire to provide sufficient title posts for our future clergy in order to complete their training. Work has been going on since the summer to support the successful placement of the 334 stipendiary students we expect to be ordained this year.

Last year Ministry Division met with the Association of Ordinands and Candidates for Ministry, along with some DDOs and college principals, to discuss ways to improve our support for the placement process. As a result, this year we have launched web pages to help deacons find title posts. These contain answers to questions about the process and between January and Petertide are being updated on a weekly basis with information about available title posts in dioceses. The website address has been placed on the notice board.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): I am delighted to hear that work has been going on since the summer to support the successful placement of 334 students. Could the Bishop confirm that dioceses have allocated sufficient financial resources to fund 334 stipendiary posts?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: We are very close to that position at the moment. It is normal at this time of year for there still to be a number of posts which we are looking at and trying to ensure that they will actually be available to people; and the situation this year is much as it has been in recent years.

Revd Canon Chris Lilley (Lincoln): Did the House in its discussions go on to consider the position I am concerned about: when stipendiary curates have completed their curacy will there be sufficient further posts for them in the stipendiary ministry?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: This is one of the things the clergy share system is all about. This is a continuing topic within the House of Bishops and within our explorations, and we are aware of the need to ensure that dioceses do achieve those numbers which are implied by the share system.

58. *Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Given the likely expectation that (a) stipendiary clergy will have to work additional years for a full pension, and (b) will be unable to retire before 68 or 70, and (c) that most clergy already work a six-day week, has the House of Bishops considered the possibility of rebalancing stipendiary clergy lifestyle stresses by promoting the provision of an additional two weeks' holiday per year in order to help them extend their working lives in a more sustainable manner?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: The House has not considered this directly but I am happy to refer the suggestion to the Terms of Service Implementation Panel. It is worth pointing out that the Terms of Service legislation provides a *right* to 36 days' annual leave for the first time ever. I hope that clergy will take this leave.

Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield): Has the House of Bishops considered the whole issue of helping stipendiary clergy to sustain extended working lives: appointments, developing, going further on, scaling down?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I do not think that the House of Bishops as such has discussed that recently, though individual bishops are very aware of the issues. They are among those which the whole Terms of Service development is looking at and is

considering, and the House of Bishops, like the Archbishops' Council and others, is involved in those discussions.

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich): In light of the information you have just given us about annual leave entitlement, does the House of Bishops have any evidence to suggest that clergy patterns of work and retirement ages are any different from those in secular employment? For instance, is there any difference between what is expected of the laity in their employment and what is expected of clergy?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: It will depend which laity. It is not something which the House of Bishops as such has been looking at, but it is something which DRACSC frequently looks at.

59. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What precedents are there in the history of the Church of England for limiting candidates for ordination and salaried employees to those holding or not holding a particular opinion about humanity, and for proscribing membership of a political party or of any other organization?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: The Bible teaches that God made us in his own image. The second Article of Religion teaches that Christ took our nature upon him, being wholly God and wholly human. This incarnational principle makes the Christian understanding of humanity wholly inconsistent with practices or policies which diminish the image of God in others.

Ministers of the Church of England make the Declaration of Assent on ordination and at the taking up of new appointments. This affirms belief in the faith which is revealed in Holy Scripture. That faith asserts the breaking down of racial and other barriers. We belong to a global Church. In 1977 the Lutheran World Federation, and in 1982 the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, issued a *status confessionis* declaring the responsibility of Christians to oppose racism and *apartheid*. Racist views are inconsistent with public, paid roles within the Christian community.

Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark): Proscription is a historically tainted word. In applying it both to non-PC views about aspects of racial difference and to the BNP as such, did the House of Bishops take any account of worries expressed in some ecumenical quarters, such as that put by Elizabeth Simon of the London Churches Group for Social Action to the effect that Vasantha's motion was a gift to the BNP which could then portray itself as the persecuted underdog, as it did in its poster campaign for the European elections, and is the BNP today a threat comparable to Mosley's British Union of Fascists in the 1930s?

The Chairman: You have already put one question, Mr Sutcliffe.

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: Which one would you like me to answer?

Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark): Take the second – it is much more important. Does the BNP pose a comparable problem to the British Union of Fascists?

The Chairman: Please sit down, Mr Sutcliffe, and let the Bishop answer.

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I think there is a real issue as to the way in which the BNP can describe itself, portray itself, as a persecuted minority, but I think it is absolutely crucial that the Church should affirm the scriptural and theological position which it owns, and if some of the results of that are undesirable we should tackle those results when we come to them.

60. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

On what basis does the House of Bishops consider itself bound to implement opinions expressed in successful Private Members' Motions, and has the House received legal advice on the implications under current employment law of itself (or a committee of bishops and advisers it may set up) determining what constitutes support or promotion for a party or organization whose policies or objectives it itself defines as incompatible with Church of England teaching, especially considering that Church of England ministers of religion have never hitherto been obliged to affirm anything not to be found in the Bible, Book of Common Prayer and Articles of Religion, where the words 'race equality' and 'racial equality' do not appear?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: Where any motion has been passed which requires the Church to take action and this is explicitly agreed by Synod, then the House of Bishops (or the relevant Church body) will implement it. Legal advice on the relevant area of law, including the Human Rights Act, was given to the committee on these issues prior to the committee making its recommendations to the House.

Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark): Did the House of Bishops, with regard to the big stick it aims to apply to ordained and professional Church workers but not to laypeople, consider that equivalent differential restrictions in 5.17 and 5.18 of Issues in *Human Sexuality*, about which there may be some doubt, have been widely ignored and may even explain why the wider British public is now twice as tolerant of homosexuality as it was 25 years ago?

The Chairman: I am afraid this is not relevant to the Question, Mr Sutcliffe, thank you.

61. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Would the House of Bishops encourage Christian communities to engage actively with love and compassion towards Muslim communities in their neighbourhood, thereby (a) witnessing the love which is God, in practical ways, without introducing concerns or fears which may be raised through direct evangelization; and (b) helping to reduce suspicion and the seeds of conflict in the Middle East, including Afghanistan and Pakistan, as a result of communication within networks of families/friends?

The Bishop of Bradford (Rt Revd David James): The House of Bishops already encourages Christian communities to engage actively with love and compassion towards our neighbours of other faiths, including those who are Muslims. This was illustrated by contributors to the debate in February 2009 initiated by Mr Paul Eddy.

The report requested then by Synod will be published and is complementary to the General Synod's Presence and Engagement programme described in GS 1577 (2005) and GS 1720 (2009). These make clear the Church of England's commitment to remain present in all neighbourhoods and to serve the spiritual and material needs of all parishioners in the name of Christ.

The relationships of trust that grow from such local engagement help to reduce the anxieties and misunderstanding, and this has a positive impact on inter-religious relations internationally.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): While I agree that this is the Synod's wish, is there any evidence that it is happening? Is the task group monitoring engagement at the local level, as my experience suggests that people are fearful and in need of guidance in this respect?

The Bishop of Bradford: There is monitoring taking place through the Presence and Engagement group which meets every year with diocesan representatives, and the reports which are coming back from that are certainly about an engagement which is helpful to community cohesion and helpful to the sharing of the gospel, in a way which is not threatening. I recognize that in certain organizations there can be, shall we say, a crusading spirit, but within the Church of England what we pick up is that what is happening is very much in the spirit of love and service and a desire to engage with people responsibly and respectfully.

62. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

If John Humphrys in the *Daily Mail* (Friday 23 January 2010) can acknowledge hope at the heart of Christianity, through the 'risen Christ, the belief that it is possible to roll the boulder away from the tomb and overcome the cross', can this Synod have assurance that our leading clergy will have sufficient confidence in their beliefs to do the same, as the Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel commands us to do?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr Rowan Williams): Having been at the receiving end of John Humphrys's probing mind on a few occasions, I was very encouraged indeed that he should see fit to make this reference in his recent article, which was prompted by the extraordinary survival of some of the earthquake victims in Haiti. Triumph over death is at the heart of our Christian faith, and I am confident that my colleagues will proclaim this without compromise, especially in the Easter season which is not too far away from us. I am confident also that members of this Synod will seek to shape their lives and actions by that same belief. I dare to hope that one expression of shaping lives and actions in that respect will be a generous contribution from the Synod to the Haiti appeal.

Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield): Thank you. My Question was not specifically about Haiti but about Christian hope in general, and thank you for your reassurance. So via an article in *The Guardian*, the views of Muslim colleagues and my taxi-driver last night, the supplementary is this: can the Archbishop confirm that it remains appropriate in our current multi-faith climate for all Christians not just confidently to wear that faith in our victory over death on our sleeves but actually to proclaim it

constantly? It refers a bit to the earlier Question, whether we are doing it to Muslims or whoever. Do we really need to wear our faith on our sleeve?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: The questioner has already referred to what was said in relation to the previous Question, and the answer is really there. We have in this Synod had a very good and robust debate about the need to be unashamed about our Christian commitment, and the need to be able to draw the distinction between confidence in the gift we have been given and bullying or manipulation in respect to people of other faiths.

63. *Mr John Freeman (Chester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Given the wisdom and Christian leadership the Lords Spiritual bring to the nation, has the House of Bishops considered whether it needs any help from members of the Synod to encourage the Government to help it retain its presence in the House of Lords following any changes in the membership of the House of Lords?

The Bishop of Leicester: The most important support members of Synod can give is to continue making the case for the role of the Lords Spiritual in people's communities, congregations and networks, basing their arguments firmly on facts, countering misinformation, and remaining reasonable and polite in the face of occasional provocation.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): In thanking the Bishop of Leicester for his response, does he accept that the bishops play a vital, valued and unique role in the House of Lords, that their presence should not be taken for granted and that, whether or not there is a change in Government, this matter must not be left under the radar as, either way, they are talking about reducing the number of bishops to as few as seventeen?

The Bishop of Leicester: Yes I certainly do accept that and, I think, so do Members of Parliament of all parties, as I can witness to in my conversations with the party leaders in the House of Lords over recent weeks.

64. *Mr John Ward (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Does the House of Bishops intend to reflect on and produce a report on the role of bishops in the legislative process, whether in Synod or in Parliament?

The Bishop of Leicester: Much reflection on this subject has taken place and continues to do so. There have been a number of public skirmishes and debates recently, notably the debate set up by the Labour humanist group in Parliament on 27 January, where I was ably assisted by Baroness Butler-Sloss in rebutting the attacks of Polly Toynbee and Jonathan Bartley (of the think-tank Ekklesia) on the motion 'Should the bishops be evicted from the House of Lords?' The case we were able to make in that debate was the product of much thought, prayer, reflection and preparation by a number of people: we have our arguments, and the facts, closely to hand.

The terms of the debate are changing as the wider arguments about parliamentary and constitutional reform evolve. I am not convinced that the time is ripe now for a published report, although such a report is by no means ruled out at a future date.

Mr John Ward (London): In any such report in the future, would the House consider it appropriate to reflect on whether it is appropriate for the Lords Spiritual to represent the Church in all its diverse glory and to make it clear when there are differences of theological view on any particular point firmly held within the Church?

The Bishop of Leicester: The point implied in the question is at the heart of much of the debate about the place of bishops in the House of Lords, but it is certainly clear that the role the bishops play in the House of Lords is one in which they represent a wide diversity of views from their many contacts and connections in their dioceses and regions and in their national work; and that representative role is appreciated at many different levels, not only in the Church but in other faiths and in other organizations.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): The Question refers to the role of the House of Bishops in Synod as well as in Parliament, Bishop. You have answered about 'in Parliament'. Could you answer about 'in Synod', particularly the role of the House in the final stages of legislation and liturgical business?

The Bishop of Leicester: I am not sure that I can answer on that because I did not read the Question in that way. The Question is open to two interpretations, and I took it to be a Question about the place of the bishops in the parliamentary process, and it is certainly capable of that interpretation.

The Chairman sought leave of the Synod to extend the sitting by not more than 15 minutes. *(Not agreed)*

65. *Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House discussed, or does it plan to discuss, the figures published in October showing that during the 'credit crisis' the running costs of our 113 bishops rose in 2008 to c.£16 million, spent on staff salaries, office expenditure, legal costs and travel, compared to £14.1 million in 2007 (at a time when the Church's assets plunged from £5.67 billion to £4.36 billion), and the fact that two national newspapers noted that this came at a time when bishops were calling for the nation to live a more frugal life; and, if and when it does so, will it bear in mind the call at a recent group of sessions seriously to consider a reduction in the number of dioceses and senior appointments?

The Bishop of London (Rt Revd Richard Chartres): I am grateful to Mr LeRoy for this Question. The bishops have indeed discussed this financial situation. The increase in the 2008 bishops' office and working costs included both one-off adjustments and exceptional costs, notably a contribution of £700,000 towards the cost of the Lambeth Conference. Excluding these adjustments, the increase in bishops' office and working costs was due to bishops employing their full allocation of support staff to enable them to undertake an increasing burden of administration, tasks that are required of bishops.

Synod, however, will want to know that the House has agreed that bishops' and archbishops' office and working costs should be fixed in ratio to the Commissioners' funding for parish ministry: there should be a fixed ratio and this will obviously enable the Commissioners' support to be balanced and not escalate out of control. When considering these matters, the House has indeed borne in mind all the views expressed in last July's Synod debate.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): What will this fixed ratio be?

The Bishop of London: It is going to be adopted in 2011. It is the ratio that currently obtains, which balances the support for the administration of the Church of England – that is what we are really talking about – with the distribution to parishes. So it is a freeze on the present situation so that we do not get into the scenario that the administration ever exceeds the distribution to parishes.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Given that the bishop's work is more likely to be in ratio to the number of benefices, would that not be a better measure than to the number of parishes?

The Bishop of London: I think that is a very arcane matter! We are not discussing duck houses or moats here, you know (with the possible exception of the Bishop of Bath and Wells who really cannot help it!). I think I can assure you that frugality and parsimony are in control, both in the Church Commissioners and in the House of Bishops.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Is the Bishop able, perhaps with the assistance of the Church Commissioners, to put some quantity on the much heard-of (and, I think, widely understood) assertion as to the dramatically increased administrative task now being placed on bishops, so that we can have some understanding of what this Synod, among other bodies, is adding to, in terms of the work of bishops in their day-to-day ministry?

The Bishop of London: I think that is a very helpful Question indeed. Clearly, when you look at things like the clergy discipline procedures and what is round the corner in the shape of the terms and conditions regulations, the capability procedures, I think there is a large amount of evidence for this; at the moment it is only anecdotal, and perhaps, following your helpful Question, it would be right to try to quantify it rather more and produce some specimen diaries. Certainly in the discussions in the House of Bishops it is clear that almost all bishops regard their own workloads as having increased very considerably in recent years.

66. *Mr Robert Hurley (Church of England Youth Council)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Can the House provide information on (a) the number of bishops who have made directions under the Admission of Baptized Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006 allowing applications to be made in their dioceses under the Regulations; (b) how many parishes have made such applications within those

dioceses; (c) how many of those parishes have had their applications granted; and (d) how many parishes have had their applications refused and on what grounds?

The Bishop of Lincoln (Rt Revd John Saxbee) : With the exception of the diocese of Carlisle, where a review of current policy is now in process, all diocesan bishops in England allow applications from parishes to be made under the Admission of Baptized Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006.

The total number of parishes which have made application is not known. In November 2009 the number of parishes which have had their applications granted was about 2,013. The number of parishes which have had their applications refused, and the grounds for that refusal, is not known.

67. *Mr Robert Hurley (Church of England Youth Council)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Can the House provide information on (a) the number of bishops who made policies under the former House of Bishops guidelines set out in GS Misc 488 allowing applications to be made in their dioceses; (b) how many parishes made such applications within those diocese; (c) how many of those parishes had their applications granted; and (d) how many parishes had their applications refused, and on what grounds?

The Bishop of Lincoln: The number of diocesan bishops who made policies under the former House of Bishops Guidelines set out in GS Misc 488 allowing applications to be made in their dioceses was 39.

The total number of parishes which made such applications we do not know. In 2005 the number of parishes which had their applications granted was about 1,546. The number of parishes which had their applications refused, and the grounds for that refusal, is not known.

68. *Dr Peter May (Winchester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In the light of the reassurance given at the July group of sessions in York that the new Canons and Constitution of ACNA had been tabled for consideration by the Theological Group of the House of Bishops, how many meetings has that Group held and what progress has been made?

The Bishop of Chichester (Rt Revd John Hind): The House's Theological Group has met three times since last July. The Canons and Constitution of the Anglican Church in North America have been considered by the Group and its discussion was reported to the Secretary General to inform his note, circulated as GS 1764B, as background for the debate on the relationship between the Church of England and the Anglican Church of North America to be held in this group of sessions.

The following Questions were answered in writing:

Secretary General

69. *Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford)* asked the Secretary General:

What is the position under the Standing Orders as regards (a) the attendance at Revision Committee meetings of members who have made submissions on the draft legislation concerned and (b) the information they are entitled to receive?

The Secretary General replied: Under SO 53(b) a member of Synod who submits a proposal for an amendment has the right to speak to the Revision Committee about it and to be present while it is being discussed. If unable to attend, he or she may authorize another member to speak and attend. The one other entitlement in the Standing Orders is for the member concerned to have 21 days' notice of the time and place of the meeting.

70. *Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans)* asked the Secretary General:

Will the Secretary General clarify what the requirements are (whether under the Standing Orders or otherwise) as to the confidentiality of submissions to, and the papers, business and decisions of, Revision Committees considering draft legislation?

71. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General:

When and how are submissions made by Synod members to legislative Revision Committees, the papers considered by those Committees and the minutes of those Committees made available (a) to those Synod members making submissions; (b) to other Synod members; and (c) to the general public?

The Secretary General replied: I will, with permission answer these two Questions together.

The Standing Orders require each Revision Committee to include in its published report a list of all proposals for amendment received in time from Synod members which raise points of substance and to summarize the Committee's reasons for accepting or rejecting them. Beyond that the Standing Orders are currently silent on these matters, so each Revision Committee has the power to determine its own rules of procedure. The long-standing custom has been that Committees do not meet in public and do not make details of papers and proceedings generally available, though there has been some variety of practice over the supply of papers to other Synod members. The current Revision Committee decided, after discussion, to follow the traditional practice and not to sit in public. Later in this group of sessions the Synod will be invited to agree a change in Standing Orders which will mean that in future all submissions to Revision Committees will be made available on the web.

72. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Secretary General:

In the event of a Revision Committee in future wishing to make an interim statement as to its provisional conclusions, will the Secretary General give an undertaking that any such statement will be communicated to the members of the General Synod *before* it becomes the subject of a press release?

The Secretary General replied: Any decision to make a public statement about its work is the responsibility of the relevant Revision Committee. In the absence of an

amendment to Standing Orders I cannot, therefore, give an undertaking that would bind present or future Committees. There could also be practical difficulties if statements had to be issued to Synod members before release to the press. I can, however, give an assurance that staff will endeavour to ensure that Synod members whose e-mail addresses we have will in future receive any such statements as quickly as possible.

73. *Revd Canon Susan Booy* (Oxford) asked the Secretary General:

Given the acknowledged ease and regular use of e-mail by Church House to communicate with members, why did Church House staff not advise the Revision Committee for the legislation on women in the episcopate to seek a means of communicating with Synod members to prepare them for the Committee's unprecedented action in issuing press releases during the life of the Committee?

The Secretary General replied: In his statement to Synod the chair of the Steering Committee has explained why the Revision Committee concluded on 8 October and 13 November that reports of particular decisions were bound to get into the public domain quickly and that it needed, therefore, to put on the public record straightaway a statement that reported its decisions accurately and set them in context. Synod members who have signed up to the free RSS link from the Communications Office are alerted to copies of all Church House press releases as soon as they are issued so will have had access to these statements straightaway. With the benefit of hindsight, it would have been sensible in this case to have e-mailed the statements to all Synod members, and I regret that this was not done.

74. *Mrs Sarah Finch* (London) asked the Secretary General:

What recourse is there for patrons when a notice of vacancy is not issued for several months after the vacancy has occurred, and who then find that the nine months during which they can present are deemed to have begun from the date of the vacancy as specified on the notice?

The Secretary General: Section 7 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 requires a bishop to give notice to the designated officer of an impending vacancy arising from a resignation before that resignation takes effect, except where the living has been suspended. In the case of a vacancy arising as a result of death, notice must be given to the designated officer as soon as practicable after the bishop becomes aware of the vacancy. The designated officer must in turn serve notice on the patron as soon as practicable after receiving the bishop's notice. Since these are statutory obligations, the charitable assumption must be that the situation referred to in the Question could have arisen only by oversight rather than design. In the event of failure to comply with those obligations, a remedy is available by way of judicial review in the Administrative Court.

75. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford* (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich) asked the Secretary General:

Is the Secretary General aware that many mortgage providers are insisting on chancel repair insurance being taken out as a condition of acceptance of new applications, and

preventing applicants from investigating whether it is required, and what action will be taken to stop this practice?

The Secretary General replied: We are aware of no cases in the past 25 years when someone has discovered a chancel repair liability that they were not aware of when they bought the property. In the case that has attracted much publicity, the House of Lords were clear that the purchasers had been aware of a liability. It is, however, theoretically possible for someone to acquire a property for which chancel repair liability is not apparent from the deeds or the registered title. That will no longer be the case after 13 October 2013 so, to the extent that the purchasers of unaffected properties are currently being made to take out insurance, that should stop in three-and-a-half years' time.

76. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Secretary General:

Has any advice been issued to the national and diocesan institutions of the Church to ensure that they act in accordance with the law when seeking information, in application forms and at interviews, about an applicant's marital or other status?

The Secretary General replied: The Archbishops' Council sent guidance on the two new sets of Equality Regulations to all dioceses in 2003 and in 2005 copied them for information the latest version of the National Church Institutions' own equal opportunities policy.

The NCIs ask for information on marital status only in the confidential part of the application form for employment which is not shared with the selection panel but, like information on ethnic background, is kept for monitoring purposes. The current national clergy application form does ask a question on marital status. This is, however, being reviewed with the whole appointments process for clergy as part of the Terms of Service work, and new guidance will be issued later this year.

77. *Revd Ruth Yeoman (Bradford)* asked the Secretary General:

Soon all parishes will be individually registered with the Charity Commission. Have discussions taken place at a national level with the Charity Commission to build a significant relationship towards good communication about our situation and their work?

The Secretary General replied: Only PCCs with an income of at least £100,000 have to register with the Commission. The Government agreed that the threshold should be set at that level following Archbishops' Council representations that a proposal to set it at £50,000 would be too burdensome for the Church. Council staff have had many meetings with Charity Commission staff both to secure an orderly introduction of the registration requirement – working together on a standard application form and related guidance – and to help the Commission in developing its guidance on public benefit in relation to the advancement of religion. There have also been a number of helpful discussions about a range of issues with the chair of the Charity Commission.

78. *Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield)* asked the Secretary General:

What advice is available from national Church organizations of the Church of England to dioceses considering the formation of new team parishes which have passed Resolutions A, B or C, about the consequential limitations on having female team rectors?

The Secretary General replied: Paragraphs 26-29 of the Code of Practice on the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1994, issued by the House of Bishops in January 1994, deal specifically with appointments in such parishes. In the light of experience over the past 16 years there are aspects of the guidance which might usefully be updated, but there are unlikely to be resources to devote to that for some time. I have arranged for a copy of this section to be placed on the notice board in the Bishop Partridge Hall.

Clerk to the Synod

79. *Revd Prebendary Colin Randall (Bath and Wells)* asked the Clerk to the Synod:

Given that very few parish clergy – including none of my acquaintance – possess convocation robes, i.e. an academic gown and/or preaching bands, and in 34 years of ordination I have never seen them worn let alone worn them myself, can consideration be given to suggesting a different mode of formal dress for clergy for the formal opening of Synod at the new quinquennium in November?

The Clerk to the Synod replied: Every five years the members of the newly elected Convocations are summoned by Royal writ to assemble in Westminster Abbey. At meetings of the Convocations, convocation robes are worn unless the President dispenses with the wearing of robes. In the recent past, the Presidents have dispensed with the wearing of robes at meetings of the Convocations held during groups of sessions of the General Synod but not for the Inauguration or for meetings of the York Convocation held separately from a General Synod group of sessions.

The Presidents will, I am sure, take all the relevant considerations into account when deciding whether to dispense with the wearing of Convocation robes at the Inauguration, including the points made by Prebendary Randall. Any change to what constitutes Convocation robes (as distinct from dispensing with the wearing of them) would fall to be considered by the Convocations themselves.

Board of Education

80. *Mr Edward Keene (Church of England Youth Council)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

In the course of assisting schools with their legal obligation to provide regular services of a broadly Christian character, and/or in equipping diocesan boards of education to do so, what is the Education Division doing to ensure that the unique characteristics and beliefs of the Christian faith – and the unique claims of Jesus Christ – (principally that of salvation by faith alone) are effectively communicated to pupils?

The Bishop of Lincoln replied: Collective worship in Church schools is inspected under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) where the question asked by inspectors is: How well does the collective worship develop the learner's

understanding of Anglican traditions and practice? All aspects of the worship programme are assessed in the context of Christian belief.

The National Society supports schools and dioceses by training inspectors, revising the inspection process, highlighting issues in the annual report and producing a toolkit for school self-evaluation. Dioceses also provide support for their schools through guidance on collective worship, training and resource materials. Diocesan advisers maintain best practice through their annual conference resourced by the National Society.

Collective worship is only one of the many ways in which pupils in a Church school grow to understand the unique nature of Jesus Christ: the distinctive ethos characterized by commitment to Christian values and religious education plays a key part.

81. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

What response has the Church of England made to the Maurice Smith review of the provisions which prevent the promotion of racism in schools?

The Bishop of Lincoln replied: Maurice Smith was asked by the Secretary of State to carry out a review of the provisions in place and, in particular, to consider whether a ban on membership of groups and organizations that promote racism is appropriate. Due to the very short time-frame the Education Division was able to consult only with those most immediately involved in schools when framing its response.

The response considered the framework within which teachers work, especially the duties laid on governors and staff in ensuring equality of opportunity and community cohesion, and a range of policies including anti-bullying and valuing diversity. In addition, the Code of Practice and Conduct identifies the professional expectations on teachers.

The conclusion reached in the submission was that the safeguards in place governing the life of the school and the conduct of teachers were sufficient to prevent teachers with racist views from promoting these views in the classroom.

82. *Canon Alan Cooper (Manchester)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

Would the Board agree that much of the criticism directed against faith schools during the past twelve months has been selective and generally ill-informed, and will the Board ensure that the good work carried out in the Education Division and in dioceses to promote and protect the good name of our Church schools will be reinforced as we approach the General Election?

The Bishop of Lincoln replied: The Board of Education acknowledges that, while opposition to faith-based schools can be a matter of principle, the evidence called in support is often misleading. The Board has a number of strategies for maintaining positive communication about Church schools: regular meetings with Ministers and Department officials to enable an accurate picture to be held and acted upon;

responding to press comment to correct inaccuracies and promote a less biased view; the use of NS News and website to inform Church schools of good practice and events; commissioning and publishing research, for example *Strong Schools for Strong Communities* (November 2009), which highlights the strength of Church school approaches to community cohesion; contact with leading politicians to inform the formation of policies in relation to Church schools; and promoting new schools, especially academies, where the commitment to the service of deprived communities is visible and successful.

Finance Committee

83. *Revd Ruth Yeoman (Bradford)* asked the Chairman of the Finance Committee:

As parishes are being encouraged to use the good work developed in *Giving for Life* at a local level, what is happening at a national level to encourage the dioceses towards greater financial transparency and a sharing of resources across diocesan boundaries towards our mission as a national Church?

Mr Andrew Britton replied: The Charity Commission encourages all charities to improve the quality of information available about their activities, outcomes and how they provide public benefit. The NCIs aim to rise to this challenge, which is commended to dioceses. We aim to build on the evaluation work on the use of the Commissioners' funds in dioceses and parishes: see <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/churchcommissioners/missionandministry>

Diocesan resource per stipendiary clergy member helps determine the Council's allocation of ministry support for low-income dioceses made from the Commissioners' funds. In allocating mission development funding, diocesan resource per person is a key factor. The Council's budget, considered by Synod each July, is apportioned between dioceses on a formula taking their financial resources into account.

The NCIs support and encourage collaboration between dioceses where this can be mutually beneficial, partly through the Diocesan Secretaries Liaison Group and the Procurement Group. Examples of such collaboration include HR, IT, finance and education.

84. *Mr James Humphery (Salisbury)* asked the Chairman of the Finance Committee: Has consideration been given to whether there is anything in Scripture or the Anglican tradition which encourages borrowers to tithe from the amounts they borrow?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds replied: 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 offers a wealth of guidance on giving, including that 'the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have'. While we are called to be wise stewards of all our wealth, nevertheless tithing is usually taken as referring to income, and borrowed monies are not 'ours' as they need to be repaid in due course. The recent *Giving for Life* report took as a key principle that our generosity should impact on every aspect of our lifestyle. That will affect decisions on borrowing, saving, spending and giving; but it will do so in different ways for different individuals.

8 February 2010

After the closing act of worship, the Synod was adjourned at 6.59 p.m.