

**THE APPOINTMENT**

**PROCESS FOR**

**ARCHDEACONS**

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## **1. General introduction**

Due to the variety of contexts and responsibilities of Archdeacons, it would be difficult to have a single uniform process for all appointments. It is, however, possible to have common principles and a common framework which will give a minimum standard of transparency and fairness across the Church. This framework is set out below.

## **2. Overview of process for appointing Archdeacons**

An overview of the process for appointments can be found [here](#).

## **3. Authorisation process**

Each diocese will have its own procedures in place for authorising that the vacant post should be filled.

## **4. Appointment and role of the Bishop's Advisory Group**

The decision as to who is appointed to the role of Archdeacon rests with the Bishop. It is however, recommended that a small Advisory Group be appointed to work confidentially with the Bishop throughout the appointments process. Different Bishops may wish to work with this group in different ways and it is important that the role of the Advisory Group is made clear to members at the outset.

The group should be compact (perhaps 4 -6 people) and consist of:

- Clergy and lay members drawn largely from the Bishop's Council, although the Bishop may wish to choose others if this would help bring diversity and different perspectives to the discussion
- Any Suffragan Bishop who has responsibility (either by an Area scheme or less formally) for the geographical area which includes all, or part of the Archdeaconry
- The Dean, where the Archdeacons role is combined with that of a Residentiary Canon.

The role of the group is to advise the Bishop during the selection process and to bring different perspectives and expertise to the selection process. The group will:

- Support the Bishop in drawing up the role and person specification
- Assist the Bishop with the short listing of candidates
- Interview the candidates with the Bishop, if the Bishop requires this
- Advise the Bishop on strengths/weaknesses of the candidate against the profile of the role.

Members of the group will need to have sufficient time to commit to this process and must also be prepared to receive a briefing in good practice interviewing techniques if this is required.

The membership of the group should be reported to the Bishop's Council.

## **5. The role specification**

Each role should have a clear written description of what is required, prepared by the Bishop working with the Advisory Group. This should be set out in a role specification.

As Archdeacons have various statutory functions, it is recommended that these are involved in the role specification (a copy can be found here).

Prior to the completion of the role specification, the members of the Advisory Group or the Bishop should consult the following people in order to capture the full complexities of the role and the key challenges facing the appointed candidate. This may be either in written form, by asking them to write in with their views, or through face to face meetings.

- The present or most recent occupant of the role
- The Bishop's senior staff
- Members of the Bishop's Council
- The diocese's General Synod members
- The chairs of the houses of clergy and laity of the Diocesan Synod
- The rural deans and lay chairs of the relevant deaneries
- The Diocesan Chancellor, Registrar and Secretary

This list is not exclusive and there may be others whom the Bishop wishes to consult.

The purpose of this consultation is to aid the Bishop's thinking. It is not necessary or desirable for the role specification to reflect everything that has been said. The Bishop will wish to ensure that the specification sets clear priorities for the ministry of the new Archdeacon.

If the post involves significant responsibility in the local community or with other churches then they should also be invited to make representation. If the role is to be held with another post then relevant people should also be consulted.

Once the role specification has been finally drawn up by the Bishop it will be discussed by the senior staff and the final version should be submitted to Bishop's Council for endorsement. In the event of disagreement, it is for the Diocesan Bishop to finalise the document.

## 6. Finding the candidates

### 6.1 Internal or external appointment.

Before a decision is made about the means of identifying suitable candidates, the Bishop will consult with his or her Advisory Group as to whether the appointment should be made from within the clergy of the diocese or also open to external candidates.

If it is determined to recruit internally, the Bishop will need to identify the method of recruitment. The clergy of the diocese should be given the opportunity to express interest in the post. This may be achieved in a diocesan mailing or direct communication with the clergy. This will give them the opportunity to suggest names if they wish to do so.

### 6.2 Advertisement and/ or search processes

The normal expectation is that posts will be advertised, although there may be reasons why this might be supplemented e.g. an appointment has not been made following an advertisement, encouraging under-represented groups to apply for a role.

Given that there is no longer a central database for sourcing candidates, the Chair of the Panel may wish to widen the possible pool of candidates by sharing the details of a role with those who might be able to draw it to the attention of suitable candidates. These might include other bishops, the national CMEAC Adviser, Deans of Women's Ministry, the Archbishops' Advisers for Appointments and Development amongst others. It is important that potential candidates approached in this way are aware that they will need to apply as other candidates and that they are considered against the same criteria at the shortlisting stage.

### 6.3 Monitoring diversity

In order to monitor the contribution of selection and development policies to a diverse senior leadership in the Church, diversity monitoring information needs to be collected.

It is recommended that when candidates request information on a post, the [Diversity Monitoring Form](#) is sent out with other information. Candidates will need to complete this and send it in with the application form.

The form should be detached from the application form prior to shortlisting. Once the selection process is complete, the Bishop's office should complete the "[Fostering Diversity: Summary Sheet](#)" and return it to the office of the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments.

### 6.4 Long list of names and shortlisting

The Bishop will collate names of those who have applied or been submitted and produce the long list for the Advisory Group to consider. He or she may choose to involve the Advisory Group in the shortlisting process or decide upon

a shortlist after discussion with the group. It is recommended that at least two candidates should be interviewed.

A possible short listing form is set out [here](#).

Referees should not be contacted for further information until a candidate has been advised that they have been short listed for interview.

#### 6.5 Invitation to interview

The letter inviting candidates to interview will need to include the following information:

- An outline of the selection and any briefing process, and the number of candidates to be seen
- The date, time and location of the interview and the names of the panel members
- The purpose of the interview and the role of the Advisory Group
- The next steps
- Arrangements for the provision of further information
- The role specification and any other relevant documentation.

#### 6.6 Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Best endeavours should be taken to ensure that candidates are not in a position to discover the identity of others at any stage throughout the recruitment process. Candidates are clearly free to share their candidature but if others involved in the process share this information, it can cause difficulties for the candidate and their families. If the Diocesan Bishop is seeking additional references he or she may also wish to make it clear to referees that his or her request should be kept confidential.

### **7. Candidate briefing prior to interview.**

If it is felt to be useful, the Diocesan Bishop will nominate a person who will meet with the candidates prior to interview and give them an outline of the diocese, role and current issues and priorities. This person will need to be kept in touch with the thinking of the Advisory Group so that they have a clear understanding of the challenges of the role. They will not take part in the interviews. In the interests of fairness, this meeting should take place with candidates from the diocese as well as those from outside.

### **8. Selection processes**

#### 8.1 Wider involvement in the selection process

Some Bishops like to ensure that candidates have met with as wide a group as possible prior to interview to ensure that they have a detailed understanding of the context and challenges of the role, and so that they can build up a wider

picture of the candidate. There are several models for this. The guiding principles should be that (i) it is clear to candidates when they are being assessed and when discussions are set up to inform them; (ii) that each candidate has the same opportunity to meet the same people and to discuss the same issues; (iii) if the purpose is to provide information that will assist the candidate then each candidate should meet the group prior to the formal interview.

In the light of (ii) it is not recommended that social gatherings at which a group of candidates are expected to 'work a room' are part of a selection process. Those designing selection processes will also wish to be very careful about when spouses and civil partners are invited to visit the diocese. Ideally this will be once a candidate has been offered a role so that candidates are not evaluated on whether or not their spouse or civil partner has accompanied them or, indeed, the perceived suitability of their spouse or civil partner.

Possible models for wider involvement include:

- Establishing a number of interview panels which will convene for a review meeting when all interviews are complete
- Setting up a series of meetings with different groups at which the candidate is invited to explore particular issues e.g. a group from the Bishop's Council, a group of clergy/laity, and a group from the wider community who will feed back to the appointing Bishop.

## 8.2 Interview structure, questions and assessment form

The interview will be conducted by the Diocesan Bishop, in most cases with the Advisory Group, perhaps augmented by others. Where a Suffragan Bishop has been given responsibility for an area within a diocese that includes all or part of this archdeaconry, he or she should be a member of the interviewing panel, as should the Dean if the Archdeacon has a role in the Cathedral.

The Diocesan Bishop may or may not choose to use the Advisory Group as the interview panel. If he or she does, he or she will advise the Advisory Group of their role in the interview process. The Group may be invited to explore how candidates might conduct the role, identifying strengths and areas of concern and advise the Bishop accordingly, or it might be requested to make a recommendation of a preferred candidate to the Bishop, or it might take a full role in the selection of the candidate. It is vital that both the Group and the candidate are aware of which role the Group will be taking.

Interviews should be structured and appropriate for the level and kind of post. The Bishop will need to ensure that members of the panel are appropriately skilled and experienced to interview at this level. If required, the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments can provide some briefing/ training materials. Preparing and structuring the interview can help improve its ability to predict how a candidate will undertake the role and also assist in the comparison of candidates.

The interview will look at the role specification and the specific challenges of the role and consider the skills, experience and strengths of the candidates against these areas. It may also include an exploration of vocational issues relating to the candidates' individual ministry and how their calling and experience will enable them to fulfil the needs of this particular role.

Following the interview with the Advisory Group one or more candidates may be invited to meet with the appointing Bishop. The Bishop will make it clear to candidates whether they are a preferred candidate or meeting him as one of a number of possible candidates.

### 8.3 Additional selection methods

The interview is an important part of the selection process, but it is also useful to build up an understanding of a candidate's strengths and gaps against the profile via other means, which might include:

#### *i) Presentations*

These are usually prepared in advance on a topic specified by the panel. They demonstrate ability to present, knowledge and lateral thinking and to communicate vision and ideas about areas of work relevant to the role.

#### *ii) Exposition of a biblical text*

Candidates would be requested to prepare a brief talk on a particular biblical text. This would give insights into someone's teaching style, their ability to communicate theological ideas and to engage people.

#### *iii) Tests*

There are different schools of thought on the value of testing as part of a selection process. They can be useful as a way of identifying areas that it would be useful to explore further with candidates but it is important that they are used carefully. It is advisable to get professional advice if the use of tests is being considered and if the diocesan HR Advisor is not able to support this, the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments is available to do so.

### 8.4 Individual meeting with the Bishop

After interview, the Diocesan Bishop may wish to have an individual meeting with the preferred candidate. The purpose of this meeting is for both the Diocesan Bishop and the candidate to ensure that they will be able to develop a successful and effective working relationship together.

Where the Archdeacon is to work closely with another Archdeacon it may be appropriate for that Archdeacon to meet with the preferred candidate(s), prior to them having a final meeting with the Bishop and an offer being made. The Bishop will decide what weight, if any, to place on any comments made.

Following the meetings, the Diocesan Bishop will decide whether to make a verbal offer of appointment. The offer will be subject to a satisfactory DBS check and the appointing Bishop will decide whether a medical examination will be helpful.

## **9. Offer and Appointment**

Appropriate arrangements should be made for the candidate(s) to visit the house, have full information about the stipend and other financial details (including the expense of running the house) and to ensure they have a full understanding about the role, its challenges and benefits before deciding whether to accept the nomination.

Shortly before the appointment of the new Archdeacon is announced, the Diocesan Bishop should inform members of the Advisory Group, in confidence, of his or her name.

## **10. Archdeacons held with another post**

### **10.1 Archdeacons who are also Suffragan Bishops**

If the Archdeaconry is held with a Suffragan Bishopric, the process for appointing a Suffragan Bishop should be used.

### **10.2 Archdeacons who are also Residentiary Canons**

In addition to the processes set out above:

- i) The Dean should be a member of the Advisory Group and will interview the candidate, either with the Bishop or separately. He or she will also draw up the job specification for the cathedral part of the role jointly with the Bishop
- ii) The Chapter (ordained and lay) – should be given the opportunity to meet preferred candidate(s) before the Bishop makes his or her decision and to feed in any comments. If the Bishop is making a decision following an individual meeting with candidates after the interview, the Chapter need only meet the preferred candidate. If the decision is being made in the context of a meeting of a wider interview panel, the Chapter will need to meet all candidates who are interviewed.

### **10.3 Archdeacons who are also Parish Priests**

In addition to the processes set out above;

- i) Appointment - the Bishop will need to ensure that the appointment is conducted within the framework of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, sections 11 and 12 and that the Parish is mindful of the archidiaconal

responsibilities of their parish priest when they consider the needs of the parish

- ii) Role specification - The Bishop will produce a role specification for the archidiaconal role as set out above and will liaise with the PCC on how the duties of both roles may be combined. The appointing Bishop and the PCC will agree a final role specification covering both aspects
- iii) Finding the candidate - as set out above it is anticipated that Archdeacons' posts will normally be advertised. Under Section 11 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 the parish can request that a post is advertised
- iv) Patron's rights – where the Bishop is not the patron, the patron's rights will need to be recognised in the process and the patron will need to be given the opportunity to participate within the framework of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. It will be important to have clarity about the roles of Bishop and Patron from the outset
- v) Advisory Group – it is recommended that the Bishop set up an Advisory Group. This would produce the short list with the Bishop and form the core of the interview panel. It is recommended that the patron and the PCC representatives are included in the Advisory Group. If they are not, then separate interview arrangements will need to be set up for the parish.

The candidate must visit the parish and meet the staff and ministry team, if any, before deciding to accept the post.

Other arrangements for the selection of Archdeacons should continue to apply – namely the process for establishing the role specification, the role of the Bishop's Council, senior appointments documentation, the candidate briefing, consideration of a meeting with a colleague Archdeacon, DBS and medical and a one-to-one meeting with the Bishop.

## **11. Next steps**

### **11.1 Medical and DBS checks**

After nomination and before confirmation of appointment, the candidate must have a DBS check. The Bishop may also consider whether a medical examination would be helpful. The purpose of any medical is to ascertain whether there are any medical issues the Church and the candidate need to take into account on taking up the appointment.

### 11.2 Paperwork

On completion of the interview process, the Diocesan Bishop needs to ensure that:

- i) Any paperwork on candidates held by the Advisory Group is destroyed
- ii) One set of paperwork is held on file for six months, at which point it should be destroyed
- iii) The diversity monitoring form is returned to the office of the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments.

### 11.3 Feedback

Candidates should be entitled to information as to why they have not been successful in their application. This may involve advising why they have not been short listed for interview or why they have not been selected after interview. It is recommended that a clear record of short listing discussions is kept to assist with this. At the end of an interview process it is helpful if the panel agree the messages to be passed back to unsuccessful candidates. Feedback will either be done by the Bishop or someone delegated to do so on his or her behalf. A note on effective feedback can be found [here](#).