

The House of Bishops met on the afternoon of Thursday 24th June remotely via Zoom.

The meeting began with the House wishing goodbye to the Bishop of Rochester, giving thanks for his ministry while welcoming Bishop Emma Ineson as the new Bishop to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. The House also noted this was the last House of Bishops meeting for Jonathan Neil Smith, who has worked for the NCIS for 40 years including many years serving the House of Bishops.

The Secretary General of the Church of England addressed the House in relation to proposals for the election of UK Minority Ethnic (UKME) observers to the House and its subcommittee. The House agreed the proposals and it is anticipated that the House will be asked to approve changes to its Standing Orders at its next meeting in July.

The House was then addressed by the Director of Libraries and Archives regarding the handling of Clergy Personal Files and approved an updated version of the House of Bishops 2018 policy. The updated June 2021 edition supports the earlier recommendation of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) recommendations on data sharing between the Church of England and the Church in Wales and clarifies the lawful basis on which clergy personal data is processed.

A short update was then given by the Social and Public Affairs Adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury regarding the Anti- Racism Task Force Report.

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich then introduced a series of proposals for delivering new ways of working and cost savings for the National Church institutions (NCIs). The House broke into regional groups and provided comment on the proposals.

The House was then addressed by the Deputy Director of Finance for the NCIs who gave an analysis of dioceses' financial situation in the wake of the pandemic. The House was asked to take note of the analysis provided, with the Bishops considering what action individual dioceses could take to help improve the financial situation of parishes and further action to be taken to improve diocesan financial strength and sustainability.

The Bishop of Hereford then gave a short briefing on the Review of Clergy Remuneration which has been circulated with Synod papers and which will be discussed at a separate meeting by the House of Clergy in July.

The meeting closed with a blessing given by the Archbishop of York.

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