



The House of Bishops met by Zoom for its 29 November meeting.

The Chair began the meeting by inviting the Bishop of London, Chair of the Next Steps Group, to offer reflections on Living in Love and Faith (LLF) and the recent meeting of the College of Bishops. A range of views and reflections were discussed by the House regarding both the content and the LLF process, with the Bishop of London acknowledging the complexity and depth of feeling around the issue. The Bishop of London concluded by urging the House to continue listening to God and thanked the House for its participation and contribution to LLF to date.

The House then turned its attention to the Mission and Pastoral Measure Review and was addressed by the Third Estates Commissioner and by the Head of Mission, Pastoral and Church Property. The House was invited to comment on the general scope of the main recommendations including the approach to church buildings, patronage changes, and other changes which would support episcopal ministry in the long term. The House gave its views on a range of policy issues which will be incorporated in the recommendations of the Review as they are finalised.

The Bishop of Rochester then introduced the House to the recently appointed national Director for Safeguarding who provided a summary of his role to date, before turning the House's attention to how it will respond to the final report of IICSA and its key recommendations.

The Bishop of Sheffield and the Executive Chair, Diocesan Secretaries and Chief Executives both introduced a paper highlighting a range of issues related to the recruitment, induction support and accountability of Diocesan Secretaries. Several proposals were discussed by the House with a view to reducing unnecessary staff turnover and ensuring that Diocesan Secretaries operate as effectively as possible. The House endorsed the development of the proposals as well as a best practice framework for Dioceses and requested an update on progress be made to the House in May 2023.

A paper relating to the process of assessing the return to ministry of respondents who have been subject to a limited prohibition under the Clergy Disciplinary Measure 2003 was then discussed by the House and presented by legal officers of the National Church Institutions. The House endorsed the refinement of current guidelines and gave comment and observation on the Draft Code of Practice on Return to Ministry.

The Bishop of Guildford updated the House on recommendations made by the National Church Governance Project Board in relation to the role of bishops in the governance arrangements of the National Church. The House discussed the recommendations and gave advisory guidance on the recommendations contained in the paper.

The Secretary General then updated the House on the distribution so far of national Church grants totalling £15 million to dioceses, to help them meet the challenge of increased energy costs.

The meeting ended in prayer.