

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

A meeting of the House of Bishops was held in the Great Hall, Bishopthorpe on 18 – 19 May 2015. Those matters reported below were taken in Committee of the whole House, under SO 14.

1. The House heard two presentations. The first was from Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield on the **Reflections on the Context following the General Election**. The second was a Presentation by and Discussion with the President and Deputy President of Tribunals (Lord Justice McFarlane and Sir Mark Hedley) on **The Operation of the Clergy Discipline System**.
2. The House received an update on different elements of the **Reform and Renewal Programme**. These are as follows: **Discerning and Nurturing Future Leaders, Resourcing Ministerial Education, Simplification and Resourcing the Future**.
3. The House discussed a number of items relating to its governance. With regards to **issues relating to rights of attendance at meetings of the House of Bishops**, the House agreed to some changes to Standing Order 12 and requested that further work should take place on the rights of Regional Representatives and Suffragans to attend meetings of the House, requesting that the current Regional Representatives should take part in this conversation. The House also considered the process by which some of its members join the **Archbishops' Council**.
4. The House approved an outline of a National Society initiative in relation to plans for the **the development of teaching and educational leadership partnerships**. They received updates on the **Process for the Revised Catechism**, the **outworkings of the House of Bishops' Declaration** in the dioceses and parishes, the work of the **Evangelism Task Group** and **progress on the Shared Conversations**.
5. The House approved a number of **Safeguarding Policies and Practice Guidance** for use by the dioceses and parishes. These were as follows:
 - **House of Bishops Policy on Safer Recruiting**
 - **House of Bishops Policy on Responding to Serious Situations relating to Church Officers**
 - **House of Bishops Policy on Risk Assessments for individuals who may pose risk to children or adults**
 - **Joint Practice Guidance: Single Congregational Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)**
 - **Practice Guidance: Safeguarding in Religious Communities**
 - **Joint Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Records**
6. The House also received an update on plans for a national roll-out of **Safeguarding Training**. The House agreed to review all the Safeguarding Policies and Practice

Guidance annually at its May meeting, starting in **May 2016**. However, the House agreed to review the policies on **Risk Assessments** and **Responding to Serious Situations** at its next meeting in **December 2015**.

7. The House considered particular options identified by the Dioceses Commission for a **Review of Provincial Boundaries** and was not in favour of taking these further.
8. The House considered one item of Article 7 Business, namely the **Draft Additional Texts for Holy Baptism**. After some minor amendments to the texts, the House agreed to return them to Synod in the form approved for consideration at the Final Approval Stage.
9. The House discussed plans for future discussions with the **Church of Scotland** on a Formal Agreement between the two Churches.
10. The House received updates on forward-planning for the **July Synod**, the **September College of Bishops meeting** and the **Inauguration of the new General Synod** in November.
11. The following items were approved by the House as Deemed Business:
 - **Membership of the Advisory Council for the Relations of Bishops and Religious Communities**
 - **A new system for collating statistics on clergy marriage breakdowns**
 - **The 2014 Report of the Clergy Discipline Commission**

Church House
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June 2015

William Fittall
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