

## GENERAL SYNOD

### **In Each Generation: a programme for reform and renewal**

1. In February the Synod had a first opportunity to consider the programme of work emerging from the work of the various Task Groups. After engagement through presentations, questions, group discussions and four debates the Synod passed four motions, which for ease of reference are attached at Annex A.
2. Since then there has been an extensive round of engagement with dioceses. The format has varied from place to place but has included events attended by Archbishops' Council members and Church House staff with diocesan synods, bishops' councils, rural deans, area deans, lay chairs and bishops' staff. The sessions have been widely welcomed by dioceses.
3. At the time of writing, events have been held in the following dioceses: Bath & Wells, Bristol, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Chichester, Coventry, Durham, Europe, Exeter, Gloucester, Guildford, Leicester, London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, Portsmouth, Rochester, Salisbury, Sheffield, Southwark, St Albans, Southwell & Nottingham, St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, West Yorkshire and the Dales, Winchester, Worcester and York. The materials used at the events are available for dioceses to adapt for further meetings in their areas.
4. In addition, sessions on reform and renewal are included as part of regular meetings with a number of groups. I spoke at the lay chairs and clergy chairs conferences and will attend the diocesan secretaries conference at the end of June. Sessions on reform and renewal formed part of the Inter-diocesan Finance Forum, the Newcastle Lay Voices conference, and the diocesan directors of education conference, among others. There has also been direct consultation with the Theological Education Institutions (TEIs).
5. Many important points have been raised about elements of the proposals; overall the ambition and range of the proposals has been well received. A summary of the main points that have emerged to date from the events in dioceses is at Annex B.
6. In parallel, staff from the Strategy and Development Unit and Ministry Division have been meeting senior teams in dioceses to discuss the detail of the Resourcing the Future (RtF) and Resourcing Ministerial Education (RME) proposals. So far meetings have been held with fourteen dioceses: Bath & Wells, Bristol, Canterbury, Chelmsford, Derby, Exeter, Hereford, Liverpool, Newcastle, St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, Sheffield, Truro, West Yorkshire and the Dales, and Worcester.
7. These discussions have been candid and constructive. In most places, there has been broad endorsement of the overall shape of the RtF proposals and – to date – acceptance of the consequences for those who are seeing a reduction in their formula funding, although it is clear that the transition funding is critical to them.
8. In most cases dioceses have still been digesting and assessing the implications of the more wide ranging RME proposals. The proposals have arrived at a time when dioceses are already reflecting on the future shape of their own ministry strategies and particularly the role of lay ministry. Most have therefore undertaken to revert with a more

considered response in due course, but some are likely to need significantly more time before they are in a position to develop their plans. We are ready to respond to requests for practical support.

## Updates on progress

9. More detailed updates on progress on the main areas of work that contribute to the reform and renewal agenda are at Annex C. For clarity, they are presented as eight work streams. However, they are interconnected and all are underpinned by the overarching vision of discipleship and evangelism.
10. The main developments in summary are:
  - i. **Resourcing the Future:** we are developing the detail further, informed by the ongoing discussions with dioceses. As the new funding arrangements will operate from January 2017, there is a need to provide clarity for dioceses in the first half of 2016. In leading this work, I am committed to building on the foundations of earlier work in the Church, for example the report on *Accountability and Transparency within the Church of England* (GS 1580A).
  - ii. **Developing Discipleship:** further theological work has been undertaken to resource a significant conversation on discipleship, leadership and ministry at the College of Bishops meeting in September. The House of Bishops Standing Committee has asked a small group to do some scoping work on the possible revision of the Catechism and resourcing discipleship.
  - iii. **Encouraging Vocations:** the Archbishops have appointed the Bishop of Guildford to support the Bishop of Sheffield in leading the national work to support delivery of the desired 50% increase in ordinations. A working group of representatives from dioceses and regions is being established to assist in responding to this challenge.
  - iv. **Facilitating Lay Leadership:** the current conversations with dioceses demonstrate growing momentum in the area of developing lay ministry and leadership. There is as yet no consistent view of what new or enhanced forms of lay roles and service dioceses are seeking and no consensus around the scope for national interventions to assist dioceses in giving effect to their visions. Possible areas for consideration include identifying and celebrating examples of lay commitment and service; encouraging a change of culture; pinpointing barriers in terms of rules, practices and legal issues that should be removed; developing proposals for leadership development and formation of lay leaders; and identifying changes in practice and provision in what the National Church Institutions do to support lay members.
  - v. **Resourcing Ministerial Education:** consultation on the RME proposals is continuing. There is wide recognition that changes are needed but varied views on some of the original 12 proposals. Following written consultation in March with diocesan bishops and TEIs, meetings have been held with bishops and their staff and with TEI principals and staff. The RME proposals will be reviewed to reflect the aspirations of the dioceses and to respond to the concerns raised by TEIs and others about aspects of what is proposed. An additional meeting of the Ministry Council in September will consider revised proposals and there will be further consultation with dioceses, TEIs and other partners during October and November.

- vi. **Nurturing and Discerning Future Leaders:** the ‘mini-MBA’ for cathedral deans took place in March and received highly positive feedback from participants. 18 Suffragan bishops are participating in the new modular development programme in 2015/16, designed to support bishops as priests, prophets and theologians as well as good stewards. Candidates for the Learning Community have now been selected. Feedback on the panel interviews demonstrated that the majority of candidates (whatever the outcome) had found even the initial stages insightful and affirming.
- vii. **Simplification:** the Synod is being asked in July to approve the changes to Regulation 29 described in the Task Group report. In addition, two consultation documents were published on 13 April. The first invited views by the end of June on the proposals for legislative and other changes and included a request for suggestions for the next phase of the simplification work, to begin in 2016. The second consultation document dealt with proposals for a simpler way of reforming church legislation (part of the report on Optimising the role of the National Church Institutions, GS Misc 1094). Comments are sought by the end of July.
- viii. **The Role of the National Church Institutions:** the Bishop of Worcester is leading a review of **church buildings**, which will produce a report to the Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners in September. A significant expansion is under way in the scale of **safeguarding work** undertaken nationally to support bishops and dioceses. Scoping work is being carried out on what more might most cost effectively be done nationally to exploit the opportunities provided by **new digital technology**. This work stream includes consideration of how we develop central functions to best serve the dioceses and to serve the wider Church through identification of creative solutions to nationwide problems.

## Next Steps

- 11. A further update on progress on the reform and renewal work will be brought to the first meeting of the new Synod in November 2015. The expectation is that the Archbishops’ Council and the House of Bishops will take some decisions in December, which will then come to the Synod for scrutiny in February.
- 12. In parallel, work is proceeding on preparing proposals to the Commissioners for additional distributions, primarily to support transition on RtF and to fund RME. The expectation is that initial proposals will be made to the Commissioners by the Council this autumn. In framing the approach the Council will need to reflect particularly on how best to use additional distributions in support of the Church’s mission with children, young people and young adults. We shall also want to take account of the emerging ideas from the Archbishops’ Task Group on Evangelism.
- 13. As we have concluded each of the events in dioceses:

*“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or conceive, by the power which is at work among us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever. Amen.”*  
*Ephesians 3.20-2*

John Spence  
 Chair of the Finance Committee, Archbishops’ Council  
 23 June 2015

**TEXT OF MOTIONS PASSED IN FEBRUARY 2015**

**DISCIPLESHIP (GS 1977)**

‘That this Synod, mindful that the Church of Jesus Christ inspired by the glory and grace of God shown in the face of Jesus Christ and is called to be a community of missionary disciples and in view of its resolution of November 2013 which highlighted the priority of evangelism and making new disciples:

- a. commend the Ten Marks for Developing Discipleship for further study and reflection with a view to the development in each diocese of an action plan for implementation at diocesan, deanery and parochial level; and
- b. invite the House of Bishops:
  - i. to prepare a new Revised Catechism with a view to its approval by the General Synod under Canon B 2; and
  - ii. to identify and commission other resources to help the whole Church to live out our common discipleship.’

**RESOURCING THE FUTURE (GS 1978) AND RESOURCING MINISTERIAL EDUCATION (GS 1979)**

‘That this Synod,  
welcoming the objective set out in paragraph 4 of GS 1978 of investment focused on dioceses’ strategic plans for growth, and with a strong bias to the poor; and  
the vision set out in paragraph 8 of GS 1979,

invite the Archbishops’ Council and the House of Bishops to reach early decisions on the specific recommendations in the two reports once the current consultation period with dioceses, theological training institutions and others is concluded and bring those decisions back to Synod for more detailed scrutiny before implementation.’

**SIMPLIFICATION (GS 1980)**

‘That this Synod, welcoming the proposals in GS 1980 and noting the support that the Archbishops’ Council, the Church Commissioners and the House of Bishops have given them, invite the Archbishops’ Council and the Business Committee, in the light of any comments from dioceses and others, to bring the necessary amending legislation to the Synod for more detailed scrutiny.’

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS' FUNDS AND INTER-GENERATIONAL EQUITY (GS 1981)

‘That this Synod,

welcoming GS 1981; and  
noting that the funds of the Church Commissioners are a permanent endowment, held in perpetuity to support the Church of England as it seeks to proclaim the faith afresh in each generation,

support the Commissioners, in consultation with the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council, giving consideration to the basis on which they might, for a limited period, release additional funds in order to support changes that will equip the Church of England more effectively for sustainable mission and ministry over the coming generations.’

## SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES FROM ENGAGEMENT EVENTS WITH DIOCESES

### 1. The spiritual dimension of growth

There was a strong a desire for the spiritual dimension of growth to be central to the proposals. A number of dioceses mentioned the need to have an explicit eschatological framework for reform and renewal. Many felt the programme should have a greater focus on growing discipleship than on congregation or clergy numbers, although they hoped that these would be the outcomes emerging from a wider growth initiative.

### 2. The need for urgent and radical change

There was widespread understanding of and encouragement for the urgent need to press ahead with plans that supported mission and evangelism. In some dioceses, there was discussion of whether the proposals were radical enough. Dioceses with well-developed Mission Action Plans wanted the progress already made by existing initiatives more explicitly acknowledged in the reform and renewal statements.

Some sensed a degree of institutional defensiveness in the proposals and wondered whether they were born out of a fear of declining numbers and a wish to preserve the institution, rather than a real and radical commitment to mission.

Some suggested putting the views of those who are outside the Church at the centre of renewal, in order to make it more radical and energising. The role of ecumenical partners in securing growth was raised, as well as the importance of learning from how others were approaching these challenges.

There was a desire to create greater strategic capacity within dioceses in order to equip them to meet the challenge of growth and renewal in their locality.

### 3. Lay Leadership and Lay Ministry

There was a strong sense that many dioceses were working out their own vision for more lay leadership and lay ministry and wanted to see a greater focus on this: the issues were discussed in some depth in virtually every gathering. There were signs of different views between clergy and lay people about what shape greater lay involvement might take. There was some criticism that the RME report appeared to treat lay leadership as an afterthought.

A number of dioceses highlighted the need for greater involvement of lay people in a wider range of roles, for example in leadership and governance, and drew attention to the importance of investment and training to support this.

A number emphasised that lay leadership should be in partnership with clergy, not subservient to it.

While acknowledging the need to grow lay vocations and accepting the importance of lay-led services (e.g. in dispersed rural areas), the importance was underlined of also growing clergy numbers in order to be able to administer the sacraments. There was a sense that the concept of vocation was not widely understood in the general population and the Church needed to explain this better, both for reasons of mission and in order to be able to have a wider pool to draw on for recruitment purposes.

Some lay participants said that they sought the following: permission to do more, better support and training and – closely linked to this – greater confidence in talking about their faith. If given those, many felt that they could reach out to traditionally excluded people in ways that clergy could not, particularly since lay people were involved in workplaces and communities in ways that the clergy could not be.

There were different views across dioceses on whether authorised lay ministry should be used more as the basis for more lay leadership, with some favouring wider use, and others not regarding it as important. Some lay participants focused on what lay people could do in the community to grow the Church and support the Common Good.

There was understanding that these were issues that dioceses needed to address themselves and that they were beginning to do so; national interventions could be helpful in supporting this, but a centralising approach was not sought. The idea of ‘subsidiarity’ was eagerly received by dioceses.

#### **4. Resourcing the Future**

There was strong endorsement of the principle of mutual support in Anglicanism and interest in how better resourced dioceses could support those less well-off. There was keen interest in how the new arrangements would work in practice and whether they would be sufficiently calibrated in order to take account of differences within a diocese (for example, poor parish churches in affluent areas, or affluent churches in poor areas). A theme for many was the need to be bold in developing growth opportunities, to overcome fear, take risks and collaborate more.

The importance of accountability for the distribution and use of national funds was emphasised in order to ensure that the aims of mission and growth were supported.

Some people expressed concerns about the fact that dioceses would have to apply for the development funding and emphasised the need to ensure that all dioceses were helped to have the capacity to make successful applications. It was important to avoid the concept of competitive bidding.

A number of participants pointed to the need to learn from experiences in dioceses about the links between investment and growth.

Specific questions were raised about how indices of deprivation would be compiled and how they would be used for mission strategy.

## **5. Resourcing Ministerial Education**

In most dioceses these were probably the most discussed proposals, often opening up thinking about laity and clergy, vocations and the Church's role in society. Generally, there was a strong desire for more detail and more theological underpinning of the RME proposals. Some wanted to see more radical proposals. There were a variety of views over the desirability and deliverability of the 50% increase in ordinands on the proposed timescale and some lack of clarity over whether the aspiration referred to stipendiaries or all ordinands. Some dioceses said, however, that they were on track to achieve it. Others argued that the target would be impossible to attain and that the only option was to think more imaginatively about the role of the laity in the church to replace declining numbers of clergy. Several participants underlined the need to ensure that increasing the number of ordinands did not come at the cost of rigorous training.

There has been a need for careful explanation at every point that RME is not proposing an overall increase in the numbers of clergy. Even a 50% increase in the number of ordinands will result in an overall reduction in clergy numbers compared to the present (but much less than would otherwise be the case).

There was support for a vision of collaborative ministry, encompassing ordained and lay people. It was widely accepted that the clergy who were recruited needed to reflect the makeup of the communities the Church served.

There was general agreement that dioceses needed wide debate internally in order to decide what kind of ordained ministers they required, which would then inform decisions about the forms of training that were needed. The need for different leadership models to reflect differences between dioceses (e.g. metropolitan, urban, mixed and rural) was acknowledged.

The importance of not allowing short-term financial pressures to determine long-term ministerial needs was emphasised.

There was a desire to see more and better quality continuing professional development for ministers, and some commented that it should be mandatory. Some commented on the need for clergy to be equipped through ongoing training for the particular challenges that they faced: for example in rural areas; for working across denominations and in ecumenical partnerships; to be mission-ready in a culture that can be not merely indifferent but hostile.

There was general agreement on the importance of working closely with theological institutions to devise training. Some commented that different people learned in different ways: as the Church sought to draw in people from different backgrounds, traditional training routes might not be sufficient. There was agreement on the importance of high quality theological training for ordinands.

The need to do more to equip clergy for the challenges of management was raised several times across dioceses – countered to an extent by others who saw the role of clergy as evangelists, enabled by laypeople with management experience.

There was a desire to learn from the success of some dioceses in attracting younger ordinands; participants noted that more resources were required to sustain such initiatives.



Some participants commented that more resources should be invested in Initial Ministerial Education 2 (IME 2).

There was a range of views among dioceses on the RME proposals in respect of candidates over the age of 50 with some supporting, some opposing and others supporting a higher cut-off.

## **6. Nurturing and Discerning Senior Leaders**

In general, there was less discussion of this report than other aspects of the programme.

Some (clergy) participants welcomed the changes, noting that they needed more training to help with the demands of modern management as well as with ensuring personal resilience, supervision and support. Dioceses underlined the links between training for clergy and changing the culture in respect of lay involvement and service.

Some noted that this report had received public criticism for being too managerial and sought a more scriptural/theological approach as well.

There was a wish for archdeacons' training as they are in senior leadership positions in a diocese. Some questioned whether clergy would be overlooked for the 'talent pool' because they did not have the right experience.

The Faith and Order Commission report on leadership was commended.

Some were concerned that Synod had not had the opportunity to debate this report.

## **7. Simplification**

There was widespread support for the principle of simplification. The desire to see simpler structures and processes, in order to release time and energy for mission, was welcomed. Some noted that it was important to appreciate that energy might be consumed in achieving that change. Others suggested that the proposals were not radical enough.

There was interest in some areas in mechanisms for standing down, cost-effectively, clergy who were not rising to the current challenges the area faced.

Several dioceses called for consultation with the parishes on simplification proposals, as well as more work in this area in the future.

## **8. Younger people**

Dioceses agreed on the need to attract a more diverse range of people to church, and in particular the urgency of reaching out to younger people. Most dioceses were already working on this, but they welcomed more focus on it via the reform and renewal proposals.

Some wanted help from the centre to use social media and modern communications better (although some saw these as fashionable now, rather than here to stay). Some noted that social media was not a panacea and that face-to-face engagement was necessary.

Some emphasised the importance of engaging young people outside the church/Sunday setting. Some participants drew attention to the need to do more through Church schools to reach out to and retain children and young people, in order to lead to spiritual and numerical growth among young people. The need to establish youth work as a career with a future, rather than ad hoc appointments, was raised.

## **9. Church buildings**

Most dioceses felt that the burden of maintaining buildings had had insufficient recognition. The opportunity cost in terms of time, energy and resources was very great. Simplification of processes that related to buildings was seen as important to release resources for mission.

## **10. General concerns**

Some participants were concerned about what they saw as ‘managerialism’ but overall this was not a frequent criticism. Some were concerned about whether the current consultation was genuine, with some suspicion that changes would be imposed regardless. There were also some more fundamental questions about whether the Church’s patterns of worship, liturgy and Sunday-based worship were appropriate for the contemporary age in a secularised society which, as they saw it, had lost any vestiges of its Christian moorings.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

### Resourcing the Future: report by John Spence

1. The Resourcing the Future (RtF) Task Group was created by the Archbishops' Council to:
  - Review whether there should be changes in the ways in which the Church of England's resources – human and financial – are deployed which would enable it to advance its goals of mission and growth more effectively;
  - Recommend how any such changes should be delivered and over what period in order to secure an orderly transition.
2. The Group reported in November 2014. It concluded that the present ways by which the Church's national funding was distributed to dioceses have only a superficial link to growth and have failed the poorest communities. A large amount of money is subsidising decline.
3. The report proposed that, in future, all of the funding distributed to dioceses should be for one of two purposes. Half of the sum available should be earmarked for the support of mission in the poorest communities. Half should be for the development of new growth opportunities across the whole country.
4. The Task Group recommended that the transition to the new funding arrangements should be undertaken in an orderly fashion over a ten year period, but was keen that its proposals achieve early impact rather than waiting until that transition is well advanced. Without extra money that would not be possible (because the transition would have to be a zero sum game) and so the report expressed the hope that additional distributions from the Church Commissioners could be found for a quicker build-up of funding available for proactive investment in growth.
5. The Task Group's proposals were endorsed by the Archbishops' Council and House of Bishops (November and December 2014). The text of the motion passed by the Synod in February 2015 is at Annex A. In addition, the Synod, like the Council and the House, welcomed the Commissioners' willingness to consider the possibility of releasing more funds to support changes emerging from the reform and renewal work streams.
6. The Task Group report outlined how its proposals should be implemented. Further development of the detail is in train, informed by the current discussions with dioceses. As the new funding arrangements will operate from January 2017, there is a need to provide clarity for dioceses in the first half of 2016.
7. Current work focuses on the following main issues:
  - i. **The peer review system:** the Task Group proposed a system of peer review to help ensure mutual accountability over how resources are being used and shared learning between dioceses about what works, in terms of strategies for mission and growth. This builds on the foundations of earlier work in the Church, for example, the report

on *Accountability and Transparency within the Church of England* (GS 1580A). In his introduction to the report, the then Bishop of Liverpool wrote:

‘Transparency and accountability, as we make clear, involve communication. The test of effective communication is that it leads to and enhances communion. The initiative of God in communicating with the human family leads to us entering into communion with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who exist in communion with each other. It is God’s own transparent self-disclosure that is the communication that leads to communion and fellowship. This is the model to inspire the Church’s internal relationships. The outcome of our commitment to greater transparency and accountability is that our communion and fellowship should be strengthened. ....’

‘Evidence suggests that whenever there is greater openness there is greater occasion for mutual learning and delighting in what the other is doing within the Mission of God.’

The details of how the peer review system will work in practice are now being developed.

- ii. **Developing growth:** the Task Group proposed that half of the national funding should be available to all dioceses to support new opportunities for growth in their areas. The funding stream will be developed from the current Strategic Development Funding, which seeks to help dioceses with mission plans that will make a significant difference to their mission and financial strength. Detailed proposals are being developed on how this increased funding stream can be distributed and how we can ensure that all dioceses are on a level playing field, avoiding any sense of competitive bidding.
- iii. **Additional distributions from the Church Commissioners:** it is envisaged that additional distributions will be requested for 2017-2026 in order to accelerate the impact of the RtF changes. If this funding were not made available, the transitional relief to support dioceses facing the phasing out of Darlow support could only be provided by reducing the amount of development funding for growth, especially in 2017-19. The Council is working on the detail of the funding request to the Commissioners.

## **Developing Discipleship: report by the Bishop of Sheffield**

1. *Developing Discipleship* (GS 1977), which was discussed at the February Synod, opened up questions about our renewal as disciples and the nature of discipleship as the primary and foundational calling before any other vocation to roles or authorised ministries. The Synod discussion picked up themes about discipleship in the world and the calling to lay and ordained alike to be faithful and bear witness to Christ. The paper was offered as a starter for discussion and invited further reflection in a renewed and more lively understanding of discipleship.
2. Since the Synod the following progress has been made:
  - i. Further theological work has been undertaken by a group of theologians and bishops to resource a significant conversation on discipleship, leadership and ministry at the September 2015 College of Bishops which will feed into further discussion in Synod and among the dioceses.
  - ii. The House of Bishops Standing Committee has asked the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Bishop of Exeter, Dr Paula Gooder and myself to follow up our work on the Pilgrim project by creating resources and to scope a possible revision of the Catechism as a source and inspiration for discipleship. We have been asked to report to the Standing Committee by the end of 2015.
  - iii. The new Head of Discipleship and Vocation was appointed in May 2015 and has begun to support the exploration of the renewed understanding of discipleship with dioceses, using the *Developing Discipleship* paper and the *Ten Marks*, and is encouraging the sharing of resources and good practice.

## **Encouraging Vocations: report by the Bishop of Sheffield**

1. At its May meeting the Ministry Council considered the next steps in seeking the significant increase in numbers of ordinands to meet the needs of dioceses. The next steps are to:
  - i. Develop and deepen the habit and practice of intercession for growth in vocations.
  - ii. Identify a bishop to lead on seeking the 50% increase and to encourage and advocate for growth in the number of candidates for licensed ministry. (The Archbishops have now appointed the Bishop of Guildford to take a lead nationally on vocations).
  - iii. Establish a working group around the lead bishop made up of those who will represent the dioceses and influence them to respond to the challenge. Regional groupings of bishops and dioceses are already responding to a request for members and the working group will begin its task in September.
  - iv. Scale up the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme and engagement with black and minority ethnic communities and develop training for incumbents as key figures in stimulating vocations.
  - v. Look at the link between resources given to vocations and the work of Diocesan Directors of Ordinands in individual dioceses and the level of vocational response, and examine how the administration and procedures around discernment and selection in both dioceses and nationally can be minimised.
  - vi. Consider whether a major national intervention or campaign might help to change the culture.

## Facilitating Lay Leadership: report by the Bishop of Sheffield

1. Building on the conversations with dioceses in 2014 as part of the Task Group work, the model below has been developed to help to structure the current engagement with dioceses about the different aspects of lay commitment and service, and their ambitions for growth.
2. The model utilises four quadrants – Discipleship, Leadership, Ministry and Expertise - to show the wide range of lay roles and service and provides examples within each. It is not intended to be a definitive or exhaustive statement about the roles of lay people in the Church today, to constrain development, or impose artificial boundaries; it recognises that people may fulfil not one but many roles, and may serve in different roles at different points in their lives. Using this model to frame discussions with dioceses is lending greater depth to conversations and – crucially – is helping to ensure that focus is not solely on lay leadership or lay ministry, but that we are open to the full range of lay commitment and service and in a better position to release and encourage the laity in leadership and mission.

### Aspects of Lay Commitment and Service



3. The conversations with dioceses continue to reveal growing momentum in the area of developing lay ministry and leadership. These issues are being explored in greater detail than previously (both in the detailed meetings with senior teams in dioceses and in the wider events). However, there is as yet no consistent view of what forms of lay roles and service dioceses are seeking; consequently, there is no clear view on what actions should be taken, and in particular whether national interventions might assist dioceses in giving effect to their visions.

4. At the conclusion of the current engagement with dioceses, the next steps might centre on:
  - Identifying and celebrating examples of lay commitment and service that could be encouraged more widely.
  - Finding ways to encourage and support a change of culture that encourages lay commitment and service, for example in a fresh initiative in ministerial education or through a Church-wide programme of change and communication to affirm better attitudes and mutual regard and support between lay and ordained.
  - Pinpointing barriers in terms of rules, practices and legal issues that should be removed in order for lay commitment and service to flourish.
  - Developing proposals for leadership development and formation for lay leaders, including mentoring, training tailored to particular roles, and regional or national Higher Education provision for specialist lay roles.
  - Identifying changes in practice and provision in what the National Church Institutions do to support lay members, for example enhancing digital services for information or learning.
5. We will reflect further at the conclusion of the current consultation with dioceses about the needs that they perceive and will aim to reflect back a vision for lay leadership, some objectives to achieve it and the resource implications.
6. The Ministry Council considered how to develop the work around lay leadership and lay ministry and will develop a proposal for a working group to address the significant change of culture required over the next quinquennium. In principle it was agreed that it needed to be chaired jointly by a lay and an episcopal leader and based on an understanding of lay leadership in its own terms and of the mutuality between lay and clerical leadership within the Church.



## **Resourcing Ministerial Education: report by the Bishop of Sheffield**

1. Consultation on the RME proposals is continuing. Following written consultation in March with diocesan bishops and staff in Theological Education Institutions (TEIs), meetings have been held with bishops and their staff and with TEI principals and staff.
2. In the light of this, the RME proposals will be reviewed to reflect the aspirations of the dioceses and to respond to the concerns raised by TEIs and others about aspects of what is proposed. Significant issues have been raised in the consultation about how to ensure equity over funding and to sustain the quality of both learning and theological teaching and research. However, there is wide recognition that some changes are needed and dioceses in particular welcome the flexibility and opportunities for innovation they offer, provided that affordability and quality can be maintained.
3. The Ministry Council recognises the need to build trust and engagement with the proposals and it has agreed that two TEI Principals will attend its meetings over the next six months to encourage this. An additional meeting of the Council in September will consider revised proposals on the basis of which there will be a further programme of consultation with dioceses, TEIs and other partners during October and November.

## **Nurturing and Discerning Senior Leaders: report by the Bishop of Ely**

1. The main themes of the work embraced in Nurturing and Discerning Senior Leaders are:
  - A prayerful cadre of bishops and deans - confident leaders and evangelists releasing energy for mission and growth
  - Leadership in the Church and in the Nation
  - Developing collaborative teams - both lay and ordained
  - Management skills to oversee resources, structures and people
  - Individual formation in ministry, life and prayer
  - Developing a diverse pool of those who may be called to posts of wider responsibility in the near future and in years to come.

### **Leadership Development**

#### *The 'mini- MBA' for Deans*

2. The 'mini-MBA' for cathedral deans was delivered in March 2015 by Judge Business School, Cambridge. There were 28 participants (19 deans and 9 leaders of the Greater Churches) and content covered strategic planning, project management, team leadership, financial management and marketing. The feedback from the programme was very positive with participants valuing the extent to which the Judge professors had thoroughly researched content to ensure that it reflected a deep understanding of context. Some testimonials are set out below (at Attachment 1) for information. It was an intense programme and a particular learning point was that a number of participants would have appreciated more personal reflection time.
3. Following discussion at the Deans' conference in April, the majority of those who did not attend the first programme have requested a further programme and one will be scheduled for 2015.
4. Other follow-up events requested included a two-day team leadership seminar for the Deans which will build on the introduction to high-performance leadership in the Judge programme, along with two leadership seminars (Marketing for Cathedral Marketing Directors/Managers and Accounting and Finance for Cathedral Finance Managers) for members of the Deans' leadership teams. This will allow us to re-use materials from the programme for the benefit of the Deans' teams and in doing so, help embed the learning from the programme deeper into the Cathedrals.

#### *Modular Programme for Bishops*

5. 18 Suffragan bishops are participating in the new modular development programme 2015/16 and the first meeting is later in June. The programme is designed to support bishops as priests, prophets and theologians as well as good stewards through 'critical appropriation' and will be designed to support them in their ongoing developmental journey mindful that development of leaders is a process and not an event. An experienced external coach has joined the design team and she will bring her deep knowledge from working with many bishops to the design process.

6. Dates for the Diocesan bishops' modular programme in 2016 are currently being put in place.

## **The Learning Community**

### *A profile*

7. 79 candidates were nominated for consideration for the Learning Community, 57 of whom have been invited to participate. Of these 44 (77%) are male and 13 (23%) female (compared to 24% female stipendiary clergy). 91% are White British, and 9% are of other ethnic and racial origin, including 7% Black or Asian. The pool includes a broad spectrum of church tradition, including Traditional Catholics and Conservative Evangelicals. The youngest is 36 years, the oldest 56 years and the median age is 44 years.

### *Discernment Process*

8. To discern who should go forward to the Learning Community panel interviews were held between 20 April and 8 May and 18 senior clergy participated in these. Candidates took part in a structured interview and also a psychometric profiling process designed by the Hay Group. All candidates will be offered feedback from both Hay and a representative from the panel. A consistent theme in the feedback on the panel interviews is that the majority of candidates (whatever the outcome) had found even the initial stages insightful and affirming.

### *The programme*

9. Those invited to join the Learning Community will attend a module at Lambeth Palace in July and a two-day residential session in Canterbury in September as part of a five-year development and discernment journey. The full programme is currently being shaped and will be designed around six Learning Streams.
  - Personal Formation and spiritual development
  - Theological Exploration
  - Growing the Church
  - Community Transformation
  - Re-imagining Ministry
  - Organisational Leadership.
10. The design team will draw on a wide range of inputs for the programme context and teaching both within and outside the Church.

## **The Archbishops' Review Group**

11. This group has had one meeting and will meet again on 7 July. The first meeting focussed on the responsibilities of the group in relation to project oversight and evaluation.

## Attachment 1: Testimonial Feedback from the Mini-MBA programme

- *“All sessions had been carefully researched by the teachers, so they were relevant and had authenticity for our contexts”.*
- *“This has been, by a country mile, the most impressive course I have undertaken in over 30 years of ordained ministry. Fears that ‘management speak’ would be untranslatable to the world of the Church and theology were unfounded, as the greatest effort was made to ensure that the bridge between disciplines was well-travelled. The choice of subjects and their weighting in the course (finance vs. communication vs. team work, etc.) was well chosen and provided enough breadth and range to cover the many and diverse needs of Deans and incumbents. The cohort members quickly found cohesion as a group and found a commonality and purpose which will, I am sure, provide energy for sustaining the discussion for the future. I hope there will be follow-up to this course to build on what has been begun here”.*
- *“The ‘jump’ from church to corporate culture was acknowledged, not just papered over – there was a genuine attempt to reconcile differences of language and outlook”.*
- *“I came to see that many of the settled management ideas I have absorbed are, in fact, very insecurely based and the programme has encouraged me to reflect critically on the way I am currently leading the institution as well as chairing a board. It was useful to calibrate some of my performance and ideas against colleagues”.*
- *“I have valued this programme as the best ministerial development I have had in the Church though it was too pressured in time with too much good content”.*
- *“I have gained many valuable insights...(in my ministry) I have been faced with examples of poor or bad leadership activity, which I will try to avoid in future. I hope to disseminate what I have learned to my senior colleagues”.*
- *‘It has reinforced certain habits and challenged others and given me new ways of understanding my role...I am hugely grateful for the quality of teaching and input and the environment, which has furthered learning. It is interesting that we have had better engagement with each other as Deans than any of us remember elsewhere and on other occasions’.*
- *“This has been the best CME I have had in 18 years of ministry”.*
- *“It has been a first rate week, thank you – I shall be drawing on it heavily for many months. The input was as well chosen as a syllabus, accurately identifying the areas in which I (and others, I believe) have been most conscious of my need for training and was superbly delivered by highly able and expert practitioners. If there is one obvious way in which to amend the programme for the future, it would be to build in more reflection time – most days my mind was full and frazzled by the end of the afternoon and that is not how I learn best. Maybe the input for 3 days could be spread over 5, with space and the other 2 days’ worth fed into the routine Deans’ days. But what a brilliant first effort, thank you! Given the haste and the flak, it has been extraordinary. More of the same please!”*

- *“This has been the best training course I have attended in 30 years. The quantity and quality of the information is high and will take time to assimilate and process. There are tools in this material that will be invaluable in setting the cathedral’s immediate and long-term goals”.*
- *“This has been a hugely valuable time to dig into experience, to receive shaping insights and to do so with colleagues in very similar posts. Key for me now will be to go away, reflect and try to embed some of the principles and practices I have been shown. Is there a way in which a catch-up/refreshers/reminder gathering could be offered – part of the regular cycle of Deans’ meetings/conferences?? My work has been greatly enhanced by these days. How can I now keep hold of it in a very busy life?”*

## **Simplification: report by the Bishop of Willesden**

1. The Simplification Task Group was charged with bringing forward options for simplification and deregulation in response to concerns about legislative constraints to mission and growth (GS 1980).
2. At the July Group of Sessions, the Synod will be invited to approve regulations to give effect to the Simplification Group's recommendation that the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 should be amended to extend the range of circumstances in which appointments may be made to ecclesiastical offices on a short-term basis.
3. In addition, two consultation documents relating to Simplification were published on 13 April. The first invited views on the proposals for legislative and other changes set out in the Simplification Task Group's report. It included a request for suggestions for the next phase of the simplification work, to begin in 2016. Consultation responses were sought **by the end of June** and are now being analysed. The consultation document can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2212167/consultation%20on%20simplification%20programme%20april%202015%20final.pdf>

4. The second consultation document deals with proposals for a simpler way of reforming church legislation. This takes forward the proposal for a new enabling measure to simplify the process for amending part of the Church's rule-book. This was part of the report on Optimising the Role of the National Church Institutions (GS Misc 1094). Comments are sought **by the end of July** and the document can be found here:  
  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2212596/gs%20misc%201103%20-%20consultation%20paper%20on%20possible%20new%20power%20to%20amend%20legislation%20by%20order.pdf>
5. The Bishop of Willesden and staff will be analysing the findings from the first consultation in July and will prepare a paper with recommendations on next steps to go to the Archbishops' Council meeting on **24 September**. It is likely that a significant package of Simplification legislation will be brought to the **February 2016 General Synod** and will continue its passage from there.
6. The Archbishops' Council has requested that a **second phase** of work on simplification should begin in 2016. The first consultation exercise has sought views on areas this might cover. In addition, in September 2015 there will be the launch of an electronic survey of parishes seeking their views on future areas of work for phase 2 of the simplification project.
7. Suggestions for phase 2 from both these consultations will be analysed in the first quarter of 2016 and a new Simplification Group will convene in March 2016 to plan a way forward, reporting back to the Council and General Synod later in the year.

## **Optimising the role of the National Church Institutions (NCIs): report by William Fittall, Secretary General**

1. The report on *Optimising the Role of the NCIs* (GS Misc 1094) was commissioned by the Joint Employment and Common Services Board. It proposed areas for further work to ensure that the NCIs can serve and support dioceses better.
2. The report recommended a new enabling measure. This is now being carried forward within the Simplification work stream. The other three major areas of follow up to this report are:
  - **Church buildings:** the Bishop of Worcester is chairing a review of what functions need to be carried out nationally in relation to our church buildings and how best they should be carried out. It is looking widely at the strategic challenges in relation to church buildings. The group is due to produce a report to the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners in September.
  - **Safeguarding:** a significant expansion is under way in the scale of safeguarding work undertaken nationally to support bishops and dioceses. It is likely that there will need to be further reviews of the governance, resourcing and output of safeguarding at national level during 2016 and 2017. The Government's Independent Panel Enquiry into Child Abuse in Public Institutions will place the Church under unprecedented public scrutiny and will necessitate considerable work by national and diocesan staff to service the Enquiry. There will also be financial and operational implications for the Church arising from its findings which will need to be dealt with as they arise.
  - **Digital technology:** scoping work is being carried out on what more might most cost effectively be done nationally to exploit the opportunities provided by new digital technology. Priority in 2015 has had to be given to renewing the NCIs' IT infrastructure and planning the updating of the Church of England website. This work stream includes consideration of how we develop central functions to best serve the dioceses and to serve the wider Church through identification of creative solutions to nationwide problems.