

GENERAL SYNOD**Appointment of the Chair of the Dioceses Commission****Background**

1. Canon Professor Michael Clarke has been a member of the reconstituted Dioceses Commission since 2008. He served as Vice Chair from November 2010, and as Chair since February 2011 (in succession to Dr Priscilla Chadwick). His initial appointment by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York ran until 30 April 2016 (when the terms of all existing Commission members expire).
2. Although this is an appointment made jointly by the two archbishops, the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014 provided that the General Synod should also approve the appointment, given that the person appointed serves as an ex-officio member of the relevant House of the Synod. (Previously the Chair could only have been drawn from members of the House of Clergy or the House of Laity.)
3. The Archbishops recognised the leadership that Professor Clarke has given the Commission since 2011, notably seeing through the scheme that brought the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales into being. They were also conscious of likely changes in the composition of the existing Commission: four members are elected by members of the General Synod – and three new such members will be taking up places in May – and four are to be appointed by the Appointments Committee.
4. The Archbishops consequently invited Professor Clarke to serve a further term. Subject to the Synod's approval, Professor Clarke has accepted the Archbishops' invitation.

Canon Professor Michael Clarke CBE DL

5. Professor Michael Clarke is a former Vice-Principal (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) of the University of Birmingham. He has served as a member of the General Synod since 1990 (with the exception of 1993-5), and latterly as a member of the Panel of Chairs. During this time he has taken part in various reviews of strategic organisational and governance issues. He also has extensive experience of local government, was Deputy Chairman of the former Local Government Commission and then a member of its successor, the Local Government Boundary Committee for England. He is chairman/member of a number of public bodies in the West Midlands and was a lay member of Worcester Cathedral Chapter. He has served as a Canon Emeritus since 2010.

Synod Motion

6. The Archbishop of Canterbury will move a motion inviting the Synod to approve its appointment of Professor Michael Clarke as Chair of the Dioceses Commission for a further term of five years beginning on 1 May 2016.