

GENERAL SYNOD

In Each Generation

A programme for the renewal and reform of the Church of England

Introduction

1. In a paper for the Synod in February (GS 1976 ¹) the Archbishops wrote, ‘In obedience to the commission that Jesus gave to his disciples the Church’s vocation is to proclaim the good news afresh in each generation. As disciples of our Risen Lord we are called to be loyal to the inheritance of faith which we have received and open to God’s Spirit so that we can be constantly renewed and reformed for the task entrusted to us.’
2. The reform and renewal programme aims to fulfil this vision. This paper provides an update on the different initiatives that contribute to it. Eight are described, four of which were developed from the original Resourcing Ministerial Education (RME) Task Group report: Developing Discipleship, Encouraging Vocations, RME – future funding model, and Lay Leadership. All the elements are interconnected and are held within the overarching vision of discipleship and evangelism set out by the Archbishops.

Progress and Next Steps

3. The following paragraphs set out the progress and next steps so far. Following meetings with dioceses and others before the summer, consultation and engagement continue to take place as further detail is developed.

Resourcing the Future

4. All the national funding distributed to dioceses will be explicitly directed for mission and growth. Half will be for mission in the poorest communities and half will be for new growth opportunities across the whole country. At its meeting on 24 September, the Archbishops’ Council approved:
 - The allocation method for distributing the poorest communities funding.
 - The process for distributing the expanded amount of strategic development funding.
 - The transitional funding arrangements.
 - The peer review arrangements.
5. The Council also agreed the terms of a request to the Commissioners for additional time-limited distributions to maximise the impact of strategic development funding during the transitional period. The Commissioners’ Assets Committee and Board of Governors are due to consider the request at meetings in November.

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2140062/gs%201976%20-%20a%20note%20from%20the%20archbishops%20giving%20an%20overview%20of%20the%20task%20groups.pdf>

6. It is planned to issue guidance to dioceses on the new arrangements around the end of this year. Synod will scrutinise the proposed funding changes in February 2016. Final decisions about the quantum of money that the Commissioners can make available for all categories of expenditure will be made in the second quarter of 2016 following the triennial actuarial review. It is after that that dioceses will be informed of funding levels for 2017-19.

Developing Discipleship

7. Developing Discipleship (GS 1977) opened up for discussion 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. In September, the College of Bishops devoted significant time to reflecting on discipleship, theology and leadership.
8. The authors of Pilgrim are meeting to write a catechism that underpins the Pilgrim resources. It is planned that this will form the basis of a series of texts aimed at different audiences (newly baptized, group leaders, academic students) alongside a digital catechetical resource. Use of the Ten Marks of developing discipleship in dioceses is being planned for 2016.

Growing Vocations

9. The new working group, chaired by the Bishop of Guildford, has had its first meeting and reviewed existing data on current activity in dioceses. The preliminary conclusion was that an increase in resource for effective active vocations work in dioceses would increase candidate numbers. Research has also revealed barriers and encouragements to ordained ministry. A strategy is now being developed centring on capacity building in dioceses for vocations; spreading a message of vibrancy and diversity through multiple channels; and increasing opportunity for exploration and experience, particularly through the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme (CEMES).

Resourcing Ministerial Education: Future Funding Model

10. This work remains closely linked to that on vocations and discipleship. The ultimate purpose of the funding proposals is to support growth in the number and quality of those serving as ministers in the Church of England, which in turn serves the purpose of supporting the mission and growth of the Church.
11. The original twelve proposals presented at Synod in February 2015 have been revised significantly in the light of the consultation during April to July with dioceses and Theological Education Institutions (TEIs). The revised proposals are based around a standard grant, the payment of a contribution at ordination from the deploying diocese to the sponsoring diocese and continuation of family maintenance pooling. The preferred model includes a differential level of grant according to typical forms of training in age groups. Further models based around the total cost being paid by the deploying diocese or by the sponsoring diocese have been developed for consideration.

12. The proposed objectives for any new financial funding model are to:
- Support an increased number of ordinands, and younger ordinands in particular.
 - Provide greater transparency around decisions and financial outcomes.
 - Operate with simplicity and certainty.
 - Ensure fairness to dioceses, candidates and TEIs.
 - Maintain mutual support across the dioceses.
 - Avoid transitional turbulence during the early years of implementation.
 - Support the mixed economy of TEIs.
13. Further consultation with dioceses and TEIs on the revised proposals is now taking place, with a view to recommendations reaching the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council in December. The intention is for a report to come to the Synod for scrutiny in February 2016, with a view to implementation from September 2017.

Facilitating Lay Leadership

14. Engagement with dioceses demonstrated a strong desire to release the gifts of the laity across a fuller range of roles, and to secure a wider contribution to the life of the Church. This represents a change in culture, as well as a need to remove barriers, and a need for more training and support. In September, the Archbishops' Council established a working group on lay leadership, chaired by Matthew Frost, a lay member. The group will have a lay majority. It will begin work during autumn 2015 and will report to the Council in September 2016. The working group's terms of reference are at Annex A.
15. In parallel and in the light of diocesan conversations on Resourcing the Future and Resourcing Ministerial Education, Ministry Council has established a working group to propose a framework for lay ministries in the Church of England. It will make recommendations to Ministry Council by late 2016. This review will also support the wider work on lay leadership.

Nurturing and Discerning Future Leaders

16. The main themes are of this work are: developing 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; enhancing management skills to oversee resources, structures and people; supporting individual formation in ministry, life and prayer; and developing a diverse pool of those who may be called to posts of wider responsibility in the near future and in years to come.
17. A number of programmes have taken place in 2015 including a business programme for Deans at Judge Business School and a Leadership Programme for Suffragan Bishops. A follow up programme on team working for Deans and an extended induction programme for Bishops will be run in December. The Strategic Leadership Development Programme was launched in July 2015. Support has been provided for newly appointed women bishops.

18. The programme schedule for 2016 will be more intense. Currently plans include repeating the programmes for Deans and Suffragan Bishops who were unable to attend this year, a programme for diocesan bishops, a positive action programme for clergy from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, and a further induction programme which will also include Deans. In addition, a second cohort of the Strategic Leadership Development Programme will commence in July.
19. The feedback reveals that the participants have very much welcomed the challenge and stretch that the material has provided and the stimulus it has provided for prayer and reflection. Particular themes include:
 - An appreciation of the calibre and expertise of the teaching and the new horizons this provides.
 - The freedom provided for exploration by giving participants permission to explore outside the theological narrative.
 - The energy that training providers have put into making programmes contextually relevant.
 - An appetite to share what they have learnt and use it with others.

Simplification

20. This strand aims to simplify the Church's framework of law in order to support dioceses and parishes to be fleet of foot for mission. In July, the Synod approved amendments to the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009, which were recommended by the Simplification Task Group. The Regulations are due to come into effect on 1 November.
21. Consultation on the other recommendations - pastoral reorganisation, church buildings, Bishops' Mission Orders and clergy compensation - has been completed and the responses analysed. The aim is to bring forward further proposed legislative changes flowing from Phase I in a draft measure which would start its passage through Synod in February 2016.
22. Parishes are being consulted on changes that they would like to be included in a second phase of the Simplification strand. The expectation is that changes to legislation forming Phase II will come to Synod in February 2017, following consultation on the proposed content in 2016.
23. Work on a new Enabling Measure (which emerged from the Optimising the Role of the National Church Institutions report- see below) is also part of this strand. The purpose of such a measure would be to make it possible for the Synod to amend or repeal some primary legislation by a less complex process than is currently possible. This new, simplified process would not be available for the most sensitive and significant categories of legislation, for example of a doctrinal or constitutional kind. The results of a consultation exercise and the Archbishops' Council's further thinking in the light of the points made is reported in GS Misc 1125.

Optimising the Role of the National Church Institutions (NCIs)

24. This report by the chief officers of the NCIs identified a number of actions to improve the ability of the NCIs to serve the dioceses. Work is being taken forward on:
- **Scope and range of activities:** a fresh analysis is being done to clarify what has to be done nationally, what is most effectively done nationally and what depends on judgement about what may best add value or respond to specific diocesan needs.
 - **Church buildings:** the report of the working group, chaired by the Bishop of Worcester, was published on 13 October. Consultation on the proposals to improve support for church buildings will run until 29 January 2016. The Synod will debate the proposals in November.
 - **Social media and digital channels:** this includes work to use new ways to engage young people in particular in exploring the Christian faith; enhancing the Church of England's website to make it a more effective platform to inform and engage with people; and exploiting new opportunities in order to communicate and manage information within the Church more efficiently.
 - **Culture change:** the chief officers are leading work on culture change in the NCIs.

Conclusion and Next Steps

25. Following discussion in November, I will continue to update Synod throughout the process of change. More detailed scrutiny by Synod of the Resourcing the Future and Resourcing Ministerial Education changes will take place in February 2016. The next tranche of legislative proposals on Simplification will come to Synod on the same timescale.

John Spence
Chair of the Finance Committee, Archbishops' Council
October 2015

Lay leadership working group: terms of reference

- To review and report on the current place and role of lay leaders in the Church of England, reporting back to the Archbishops' Council in September 2016.
- To consider what changes in culture, practice and resource allocation are required to facilitate lay leadership and increase its effectiveness and confidence.
- In liaison with the House of Bishops, to consider how to enhance the quality and extent of collaboration between clergy and lay leaders.
- To make specific proposals to the Archbishops' Council for how the National Church Institutions should change the service they provide to encourage and resource lay leadership and how they can support dioceses in addressing the changes required and encouraging good practice.