

GENERAL SYNOD

July 2016

QUESTIONS

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EU REFERENDUM

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q1 In the context of the uncertainty and fear which have followed the result of the EU Referendum, what leadership does the House of Bishops intend to offer to the Church in its mission, both to the people of England and in Europe; and in particular will they (i) make it their priority to take this opportunity to commend Jesus Christ as the only true hope for this and every nation and the one who, when He is lifted up, has promised to draw all people to Himself, and (ii) encourage all clergy and laity to do the same?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Both the numbered points in the question are permanent priorities for the House and, I hope, for the whole church. The first is the foundation for all mission activities and the second is at the very heart of episcopal ministry.

More specifically, I want to take this opportunity to commend the numerous parishes and dioceses that have responded to local people's fears, especially to people from other countries and cultures, by witnessing to the welcome that the majority of the population still offers and which the ministry of the Christian churches epitomises.

In an almost unprecedented period of political vacuum, neighbourliness, expressed across political differences, may be the most important way to enable the country to recover a sense of shared purpose. The church of Jesus Christ is a school for good neighbourliness. I am confident that, in the hope of Christ, we can rise to that vocation.

The Revd Jason Roach (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q2 Will the House consider what lessons we might learn about how well the Church of England understands our nation, given the publicly aired views of our leadership on Brexit compared with the outcome of the referendum?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply:

A The House of Bishops is constantly seeking to examine its understanding, in all sorts of areas. There is a difference between understanding and agreeing, and different Bishops have different views on numerous issues, some of which match the national mood and some of which do not.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q3 Given that the recent referendum result has highlighted various serious tensions in British society, and put many in fear of xenophobic treatment, could advice and resources be made available to local churches to help tackle these issues, and to promote the Christian teaching of 'Love your neighbour'?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The referendum has certainly been followed by a sharp rise in racist incidents, at least as measured by the fivefold increase in reports to the police 'True Vision' hate crime site in the following week. There have been reports of invidious and divisive leaflets being distributed in my own diocese across West Yorkshire and a number of cases of racial abuse.

Leading figures in our church have spoken clearly and in various forums/media about the serious issues involved. The Mission and Public Affairs Division is working with many other organisations to promote reconciliation and integration, justice and compassion in local communities as well as at national level, and is assembling advice and resources to be made available to local churches on an ongoing basis, drawing from local experience as well as national sources. The first such briefing will be issued before the end of July.

The Revd Canon Peter Adams (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q4 In the light of the recent murder of MP Jo Cox allegedly by someone with sympathy with far right causes, the active engagement of far right groups in the fringes of the European Referendum, the spate of post-Referendum racist attacks with approving far right social media commentary, along with the continued far right demonstrations in our towns and cities; will the House of Bishops seek to put pressure on the Government to hold an enquiry into their current activity, causes for their growth, and ensure they are properly attended to within the existing constructs of the Preventing Violent Extremism strategy and legislation?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A We were all horrified by the murder of Jo Cox, and will continue to pray for her immediate and wider family and the local community in Batley and Spen. Jo was a remarkable MP and I salute both her work and the hugely impressive tone in which Brendan Cox has spoken, through the family's grief.

We shall continue to respond to the recent spate of violent words and actions against members of minority groups. We shall continue to promote hope not hate, respect not rejection. While robustly condemning what is utterly wrong, we must not reinforce the vicious circle of hate by hating the haters.

Extreme groups of this kind are already in scope of the Government's counter-extremism strategy, and we shall continue to urge that analysis of, and solutions to, the greater prevalence of extreme views and groups are included as a part of the Government's programme.

The Revd Canon Peter Adams (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q5 In the days following the European Referendum and vote to leave, the incidence of physical or verbal racist attacks, especially on people of Eastern European origin and Muslim people, has risen sharply. At the same time citizens of the European Union nations are living with uncertainty as to their future residential status, and family units of mixed nationality are under particular pressure. Would the House of Bishops seek from the Government a clear statement that the status of EU migrants already in the UK will be guaranteed sooner rather than later? Further to that would they consider advice to churches on addressing the needs of all made vulnerable in the present period of uncertainty?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A It is important that EU citizens living and working in Britain are reassured as to the security of their residence in Britain, with their families; just as it is important for British citizens working in the EU to have similar assurance.

These matters are all part of the complex negotiations that lie ahead; but as the question implies, the sense of insecurity goes further than legal status, and it renders the people concerned vulnerable in a variety of ways. At the least, these EU citizens living in Britain should have official assurance that their status will not change in any way before (a) full legal agreements are reached with the EU and (b) the basis on which they originally came to this country is honoured.

In relation to racist attacks, and on the question of advice to churches, I refer to my earlier answer to Question 3.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q6 Following the United Kingdom's referendum decision to leave the European Union, what steps are the House of Bishops and in particular the Diocese in Europe taking in order to maintain and build relationships with our European neighbours at all socio-economic levels?

The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England has long standing bilateral relationships with the churches of continental Europe that predate our membership of the European Union and its predecessor the European Economic Community. The Church of England is also a member of the Conference of European Churches, a fellowship of some 114 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican, and Old Catholic Churches from all countries of Europe, plus 40 national council of churches and organisations in partnership. These relationships will be particularly important after the referendum decision to leave the EU to enable us to build and maintain relationships with our European neighbours at all levels.

The Revd Paul Hutchinson (York) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q7 What plans does the House of Bishops have to monitor the impact (numerical, financial and/or other) of the Referendum vote on 23rd June 2016 to leave the EU upon the congregations and clergy of the Diocese in Europe?

The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A We in the Diocese in Europe naturally feel vulnerable amid the present uncertainties, but within the Church of England, we know that we are "family", and mutual bonds with other dioceses and national structures will remain strong.

Until we know how the Government approaches its negotiations to leave the EU, the long term impact is unclear. 2 million UK citizens live, work and travel in the other 27 Member States. They all currently enjoy the right to work, as well as access to pensions, health care and public services that are only guaranteed because of EU law.

The chaplaincies of the Diocese in Europe serve people of many nationalities, and uncertainties extend beyond those who are British citizens. The impact of the referendum on exchange rates is already being felt and the NCIs are monitoring this closely. The long term trends – financial, social and legal – will be followed attentively.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q8 On June 23rd the British people voted to leave the European Union. How is that decision expected to affect the National Church Institutions? What action is being taken to mitigate an impact of the result and what opportunities have been identified?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Others have commented on the Church's healing and unifying role following the referendum. As for the Commissioners' investments, the immediate impact has not been significant. In fact the sharp fall in sterling against other major currencies benefitted us since almost half our portfolio is invested outside the UK. We have high cash levels at around 12 per cent of total assets because we remain cautious about the outlook for markets in general.

We shall remain watchful, patient and focussed on the long-term. The investment team and the Assets Committee are ready to act should attractive opportunities present themselves as a result of increased market volatility.

MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The Revd Mark Barker (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the Mission & Public Affairs Council:

Q9 In the light of the continuing horrors that we hear of coming out of Syria, what pressure is being brought to bear by the Church of England on our Government and world leaders to intervene and particularly to prevent the ethnic cleansing of minority groups within Syria, including of our brothers and sisters – who are being persecuted and killed?

Mr Philip Fletcher to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A On 8th March 2016 the Bishop of Coventry led a short debate in the House of Lords pressing for a political solution to the civil war in Syria. In April 2016 the bishops of Leeds, Coventry and Southwark travelled with Christian Aid to Iraqi Kurdistan where they met with refugees displaced by the conflict in Syria. MPA staff are helping the bishops take forward in Parliament and with Government concerns arising from this visit. In May 2016 the Bishop of Coventry joined with other civil society leaders in pressing for a cessation of hostilities in civilian areas, such as Aleppo, and for a resumption of humanitarian aid. Sadly, this work is ongoing.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q10 Does the Council support the proposal, made recently by a Welsh civil servant, to launch a scoring system to identify and publicise faith-friendly employers, similar to the one created by Stonewall to identify LGBT-friendly employers; and, if so, is the Council prepared to take some steps to help establish such a scheme in England?

Mr Philip Fletcher to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A No. There would be no ready consensus on the objective criteria needed to identify a 'faith-friendly' employer. Precedents from the USA are not promising. There are better ways, I suggest, to seek to ensure that employers take account of the needs and wishes of employees and to allow faith groups to flourish.

CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q11 *The Archbishops' Guidelines on the Implementation of "Choosing Bishops – the Equality Act 2010 (Revised)" (GS Misc 1044)* were stated to have been prepared so that the relevant information can be provided to members of the CNC in the light of their responsibilities for nominating bishops. The Guidelines include statements which allude to the '*content and manner*' of a candidate's public disagreements with the Church's teaching on homosexuality and '*the manner in which that disagreement is expressed*'. In the interests of treating all candidates fairly, what plans are in place to provide criteria to elucidate such terms as '*content and manner*' and '*the way in which that disagreement has been expressed*'?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A As a central member Mrs Alexander was part of the discussion on this issue at the recent central members' meeting. In relation to "content and manner" it was noted that it was acceptable to disagree with the House of Bishops Statement on Issues in Human Sexuality but that statements should be within the Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral and demonstrate a serious and thoughtful attempt to engage with scripture. With regard to the way in which disagreement it expressed, it was noted that demeaning and disparaging those with whom one disagrees is inappropriate; a bishop must be capable of disagreeing with people without them feeling a sense of personal attack.

Mrs April Alexander (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q12 In the interests of fairness to all candidates, what plans are in place to make it clear that the advice given to the CNC in the *Archbishops' Guidelines on the Implementation of "Choosing Bishops – the Equality Act 2010(Revised)" (GS Misc 1044)* applies equally to the 'content and manner' of statements and publications which might be construed as homophobic and to 'the way in which disagreement' with a liberal view on sexuality 'has been expressed'?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A It follows from the fundamental calling of a bishop to be a 'focus of unity' that what is said in the guidelines about the possible relevance of the 'content and manner' of public statements applies equally to all those who comment on issues of Human Sexuality. As Mrs Alexander is aware from her membership of the CNC, consideration is being given to re-issuing the guidelines in due course to state that expressly.

Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q13 As part of the process of discerning candidates for nomination to a diocesan see, what advice is given to the members of a Crown Nominations Commission by its Chair and the Secretaries as to the matters to be taken into account in deciding which candidates are invited for interview and, before deciding on which candidates to interview, what efforts are made to bring out into the open any views held by members which might militate against any particular nomination?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A This will differ from CNC to CNC. The Secretaries provide a memorandum following their consultations in the diocese and the Archbishops share their views on the national needs of the Church. Members are also given a draft role and person specification. In the light of these, and the Diocesan Statement of Needs, the Commission agrees the priorities and challenges of the ministry to which they are nominating. The Archbishops chair the discussion and provide advice to ensure that the process is conducted within the Standing Order and other relevant guidance. Individual members may come with different views about the requirements of the diocese and we work hard in every Commission to create an open atmosphere in which they can share these with others as they engage in discussion and prayer.

Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q14 What plans exist to review the Standing Orders of the General Synod by which the Crown Nominations Commission is constituted, particularly SO 141 governing business and procedure?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A The central members of the Commission keep all elements of the Standing Order under regular review. Should they feel that any specific proposals ought to be pursued, the Synod will be informed (as it was in GS Misc 1147 in relation to Standing Order 136(3)) and proposals will be brought to it for approval in due course. As part of this continuing process of deliberation central members have recently been considering the possibility of revising the two-thirds voting requirement to require a majority of 2/3 of those present and voting rather than 2/3 of the Commission's voting members"; but they have not yet reached any conclusion on this.

FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION

Mr John Freeman (Chester) to ask the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:

Q15 Has the Faith and Order Commission considered whether it is not time that the Church of England joined our Porvoo Lutheran brothers and sisters and Methodist Covenant partners in signing the "Joint Statement on the Doctrine of Justification" with the Roman Catholic Church as a step forward in improving ecumenical relationships all round?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply as Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:

A The question of whether the Church of England should make a response to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* was raised by FAOC in 2013, in the context of preparations for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Two members wrote papers evaluating the *Declaration* positively in relation to Anglican doctrine, which were then passed on to the Director of Unity, Faith and Order for the Anglican Communion. This work by FAOC forms part of the background to Resolution 16.17 passed by ACC-16, which begins by asserting that the ACC 'welcomes and affirms the substance of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ), signed by Lutherans and Roman Catholics in 1999'. It may be that the Church of England would want to find an opportunity to support that resolution in some appropriate way, and I should be glad if it were to do so.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Dr Michael Todd (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q16 What steps are being taken to revise the Green Guide covering standards for new-build parsonages, and is there an intention to set comparable standards for parsonages which are bought already built and also those that are already in ownership, recognising that the contemporary expectations for housing have advanced considerably and that domestic circumstances are also very varied?

Mr Andrew Mackie to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A There are no current plans to revise the Green Guide. Although the Guide is primarily a guide for new-build parsonages it is, in practice, widely regarded by both clergy and diocesan parsonage boards as a benchmark against which to assess the suitability of existing parsonages and houses being purchased as parsonages.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q17 It is understood that the Church Commissioners paid, or contributed to, the £15,000 paid in settlement of a civil claim regarding alleged sexual abuse by the late Bishop George Bell. Will the Church Commissioners please (i) confirm the accuracy of this information and, if others (whether insurers, the Diocese of Chichester or any other accountable Church institution) contributed to the settlement, state the amount(s) of their respective contributions, and (ii) state whether, in addition, the Church Commissioners made any, and if so what, financial contribution to (a) the complainant's legal costs (including any success fee) and expenses, and/or (b) the costs and expenses (including the fees of experts) of the Diocese of Chichester incurred in relation to the said claim.

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Commissioners contributed to the settlement of the claim, but did not pay the whole. The damages paid were £16,800 and the claimant's legal costs were £15,000. In addition, the Diocese of Chichester's costs were £18,000. These figures include the costs of a medical expert instructed by the claimant and another instructed by the Diocese of Chichester. The Commissioners paid £29,800 towards the damages and costs, with the balance being funded by a donation from a private individual, not an insurer or another Church institution.

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q18 Whose authorisation was required for the expenditure of central Church funds on the defence of Bishop Richard Inwood in the proceedings brought against him by the Revd Canon Jeremy Pemberton in the Nottingham Employment Tribunal?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners have a discretion to fund legal costs as an expense of a bishop's office. Their Board of Governors has delegated authority to exercise that discretion to the First Church Estates Commissioner and the QC Commissioner acting together. We agreed, after consideration, to fund Bishop Inwood's costs, as acting Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, in defending the proceedings brought by Canon Pemberton.

Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q19 Which bodies fund the posts of Programme Co-ordinator and Projects Co-ordinator for the Church of England's Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners have made available £300,000 towards the overall costs of the Church of England's Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality. This will fund the majority of the costs of this work. In due course dioceses will be asked to fund the remainder of the costs as part of the General Synod charge.

Mrs Susie Leafe (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q20 As part of their commitment to transparency and good governance do the Church Commissioners take account of who else is co-funding projects before releasing funds?

Sir Andreas Whittam Smith to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Yes. Co-funding and partnerships can add real value to projects and programmes, where the aims and objectives are aligned. The benefits and any risks associated with co-funded projects are assessed before decisions are made whether or not to agree funding for projects or programmes where this applies.

PENSIONS BOARD

The Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q21 The new 'Transition Pathway Initiative' is a significant achievement by the NIBs and the letter that we have received from the CEOs explains why this has caused a delay in the publication of their 'engagement framework' by June 2016 that was requested in the motion passed *nem con* by Synod in July 2015. Can Synod be assured that robust engagement urged on the NIBs by the July 2015 motion will be well under way by the February 2017 meeting of Synod, bearing in mind that the letter only says "we expect to be able to present Synod with a detailed update" by then?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A The development of the Transition Pathway Initiative has been a major undertaking by the National Investing Bodies (NIBs). When launching in September this Initiative will help inform how we assess climate risk within our investment decision making, provide a basis to judge progress of companies and inform the way we engage and vote. In parallel to developing this initiative and tool we have continued to engage actively with companies and seen shareholder resolutions passed at Anglo American, Glencore and Rio Tinto. The Commissioners have also seen the highest level of support for a climate change resolution at ExxonMobil. The Transition Pathway Initiative will provide a framework for robust future engagement and this will be under way by February 2017.

Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q22 It is very encouraging to learn the progress being made on developing a climate change framework and the plans to profile in the first year four sectors whose carbon emissions are particularly significant. Is there a timetable for covering the entire market and will the tool take into account the impact on companies operating and domiciled in countries with differing climate change policies?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A In the first year our intention is to cover four energy intensive sectors (oil & gas, mining, utilities and auto). When launching the Transition Pathway Initiative we will also be indicating our intention to cover other sectors over the coming years. We will be prioritising sectors that are the greatest contributors to climate change. The tool will be profiling companies by sector and not by domicile or different national climate change policies.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q23 Since 2011, S2P (the state second pension) has been portrayed as a component of the clergy pension. In July 2015 the Pensions Board produced a leaflet “State Pension Changes” showing the effect of the April 2016 redesign of state pension changes: for older clergy the change is minimal, but newly ordained young clergy will see their pension reduced by ~£2,300p.a.. When is it intended to communicate this change of benefits, clearly, so that clergy have the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to buy a ‘top-up’ pension?

Dr Jonathan Spencer to reply as Chair of the Pensions Board:

A We recognised that State Pension changes would affect some of our members so we produced the ‘State Pension Changes’ leaflet. The feedback we received told us that the leaflet explains the changes clearly.

We told all members about this with their 2015 benefit statements and provided links to our website. We have reminded members and provided further links to the leaflet with their 2016 benefit statement.

We encourage members to plan for retirement and regularly draw their attention to material and resources that can help. Our website provides a direct link to the State pension forecasting service and other sources of expert guidance such as the Pensions Advisory Service and the Money Advice Service.

We also provide a good value and tax efficient Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) facility for members who want to make additional savings for retirement and we continue to remind them about this option.

ARCHBISHOPS’ COUNCIL

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:

Q24 Based on information held for pension entitlement by the Church Commissioners’ Clergy Payroll, what is the breakdown of the total numbers of the stipendiary clergy as single/married/in a civil partnership?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:

A Information of this kind is not held by Payroll, but by the Church of England Pensions Board. However, personal data of this kind can only be used for the purposes for which it was provided – on a confidential basis – by individual scheme members. It is not collected for the purposes of reporting. We cannot, therefore, make this information available.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q25 Many dioceses are seeing encouraging growth and diversification in lay ministries, including that of preaching. What provision is made by Canon, diocesan directions or advice about who may preach regularly in a Church of England church, and has consideration been given to changing it in the light of changing circumstances?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A It is a welcome development that such growth and diversity are emerging in dioceses. Canon B 18.2 provides a wide degree of flexibility about who can preach with the authority of the bishop. In a number of dioceses this flexibility has been used to permit lay people who are not Readers or licensed lay ministers to preach on a regular basis. Such permission is given generally after a short course of preparation. The Lay Ministries Working Group is developing a picture of the ways in which dioceses are encouraging such ministries and of their authorisation or recognition by a bishop. It hopes to recommend by the end of 2016 a national framework for lay ministries and will propose changes where these seem necessary. The overall aim is to clarify, simplify and minimise the process of authorisation and recognition, and to include only those ministries where it is strictly needed.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q26 In the last bullet point of para 8 of GS 2038 do the words 'legal and cultural constraints and the institutional inertias that impede necessary change' include, among other things, the culture of clericalism, which can be defined as an over-emphasis on the role and status of those who are ordained (a small minority) which unintentionally impedes the calling, resourcing and mobilising of the gifts, talents, discipleship and service of those who are not ordained, who comprise the vast majority of the whole Church?

Mr Matthew Frost to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A An important part of the Vision and Narrative for Renewal and Reform is to encourage clergy and laity to live out their common baptism as disciples of Jesus Christ, wherever they are called. This requires a major culture shift within the church. It needs all God's people prayerfully and determinedly to discover their vocation to love God and serve others. Practical steps include work by the Simplification Task Group on amendments to Canons E7 and E8 on the licensing of lay workers. The Lay Ministries Working Group is looking specifically at the licensed lay ecclesial ministry.

The Lay Leadership Task Group is developing recommendations on how the Church can do more to support Christians in formal and informal leadership roles within the workplace, community, family or church structures. Avoiding undue clericalism is part of the answer, but the challenge is much wider than this.

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q27 What representations are the Archbishops' Council proposing to make on the Government's White Paper "A BBC for the future" presented to Parliament in May by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport?

Mr Philip Fletcher to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Bishop of Chelmsford was a member of the House of Lords' Select Committee which issued the report on the BBC Charter Renewal, 'Reith not Revolution', and he made a submission to the consultation which preceded the White Paper, asking the BBC to do more to reflect the diverse communities of the UK. The White Paper includes a specific emphasis on this priority.

The Bishop of Leeds remarked in a House of Lords debate that 'religion needs to be taken more seriously by the BBC in its future shape and remit'.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has said recently that 'the promotion of religious literacy should be a specific duty for the BBC across its broadcasting services'.

Following the White Paper, further action on the BBC Charter rests with the Secretary of State, and we shall respond to any developments or opportunities for debate that arise in due course.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q28 Could you please clarify whether the St Michael's House Protocols apply equally to Synod members taking part in the Shared Conversations; to those organising and facilitating them; to the House of Bishops; and any official statements or pronouncements after the Conversations are concluded at Synod?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Yes, the St Michael's House Protocols apply equally to Synod members taking part in the Shared Conversations (including those who are members of the House of Bishops); to those organising and facilitating them; and to any official communications relating to the Shared Conversations.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q29 Are reports in *The Church Times* that there will be “cultural” representation from outside of Synod, including members of the LGBT community’ involved in the Shared Conversations accurate; and, if so, how many of these representatives are there, what groups or organisations do they represent, how were they selected, and what is their intended role?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A One of the three presentations on Monday – Changing Culture 1 (Mixed Group Presentation) – involves contributions from Christians who experience same-sex attraction or identify as LGBTI. They are not ‘cultural representatives’, nor are they there to represent any particular organisation. Their role is to share with Synod members their own faith story and relationship with God and how this has interacted with their sexuality. The speakers have been chosen because of their ability to articulate their faith journeys and because they offer a diversity of ages, backgrounds and views.

The aim of the session is not to provide answers but to provoke further questions and thoughts among Synod members by hearing stories from contexts beyond their immediate experience. As you will see in the programme, the presentations are interspersed with periods of work in small groups which will give all participants the opportunity to respond to what they have heard.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q30 Could the House confirm that the point of departure for the shared conversations that are to take place on Sunday and Monday will be the teaching of the Church of England regarding human sexuality found in the Book of Common Prayer, the 1987 Resolution of the General Synod and Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Shared Conversation is not a decision-making process around same-sex relationships. It is an opportunity for listening, reflection and encounter around the broader issues of Scripture, mission and human sexuality. It is a facilitated, relational conversation and not a legislative procedure. The basis for the Shared Conversation is the St Michael’s House Protocols. These provide the framework within which conversations which are honest, respectful and constructive can happen.

Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q31 Recognising that Standing Orders will not be applicable to the Shared Conversations, would it be correct to say that the Canons, specifically Canon A5, remain authoritative throughout the Conversations?

The Bishop of Willesden to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Canons are the legal framework underpinning the Church of England and thus are continually authoritative.

May we, however, refer to the answer given to Mrs Andrea Minichiello Williams which emphasises that the Shared Conversation is not a legal or legislative process. It is a relational opportunity for mutual listening and sharing, in which the expression of all personal faith stories and perspectives is encouraged. These Conversations are rooted in the St Michael's House Protocols.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q32 The Chichester Diocese publishes on its website a comprehensive 54 page report by Dame Elizabeth Butler Sloss into its handling of the cases of sexual predators Roy Cotton and Colin Pritchard; that report balances victim confidentiality with the public interest in having confidence in due and proper process. Given the continuing public concern at the handling of the case of Bishop Bell, will the Church now issue a comprehensive explanation of why transparency can apply in one case but not the other?

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q33 In answer to a question from Miss Prudence Dailey (Q.13) at the February 2016 Group of Sessions concerning the response of the Church to allegations made against the late Bishop George Bell, the Bishop of Durham stated that it was “legally impermissible for the Church to disclose any evidence used in the settlement [of the claim against the Diocese of Chichester]” and that the law “rightly affords [the complainant] protection to safeguard the confidentiality of their deeply personal information.” In the light of

- i. The call by the George Bell Group¹ for a proper review of both the process and the evidence that resulted in the statement issued by the Church of England media centre on 22 October 2015 effectively branding Bishop Bell as a paedophile;
- ii. The Opinion by His Honour Alan Pardoe QC and Desmond Browne QC² that there are no legal constraints to disclosure of the evidence and documents (suitably redacted to preserve the complainant's anonymity) that the Church considered before settling the claim; and

¹ <http://www.georgebellgroup.org/review/>

² <http://www.georgebellgroup.org/a-review-of-the-law/>

- iii. The fact that Dame Lowell Goddard has stated that “Bell’s guilt or innocence is not a critical aspect of this Inquiry, or of the Anglican investigation, or of the investigation’s case studies,”³ so that any reliance by the Church that the Goddard Inquiry will investigate this issue is misplaced;

Will the House of Bishops now commission an independent inquiry as called for by the George Bell Group and, if not, why not?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding:

A I will take Questions 32 and 33 together. I refer both questioners to the statement issued by the Church of England on 28 June in which it was announced that an independent review of the handling of the George Bell case would be launched shortly. The House of Bishops practice guidance states that once all matters relating to any serious safeguarding situation have been completed, the Core Group should meet again to review the process and to consider what lessons can be learnt to improve safeguarding practice in the future. It will be for the independent reviewer to consider what evidence they deem to be relevant and publish in due course their view of any lessons learned from the Church’s handling of the case.

It should be noted that the Church has always recognised Bishop Bell's principled stand in the Second World War and his contribution to peace but it also has a duty to listen to those who make allegations of abuse.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q34 Does the House agree that consideration needs to be given to the safeguarding implications of the increased use by funeral directors of ‘independent funeral celebrants’ (some of whom may be suspended Church of England clergy)? And will it consider finding ways for questions to be raised in the Houses of Parliament about the appropriate authorisation and monitoring of those who officiate at funerals?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding:

A Like Canon Banting, I have become aware that clergy who have been refused permission to officiate due to Safeguarding offences have sometimes been permitted to officiate at funerals by external commercial funeral directors. In response to this question, I will ask my successor as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding to write to Mark Pawsey MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Funerals and Bereavement, to request that he raise this issue through the appropriate Parliamentary channels.

³ <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/sites/default/files/anglican-church-revd-percy-cp-application-notice-of-determination.pdf>; and <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/sites/default/files/anglican-church-dr-chandler-cp-application-notice-of-determination.pdf>

The Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q35 Can it be confirmed whether or not DBS checks are in future to be required every three rather than five years; and, if they are, what is the estimated cost to the whole church, and benefit, of such a change?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the Joint Safeguarding Working Group:

A I will start by saying that a criminal record certificate is only truly accurate on the day it is issued. However, there is no official renewal/expiration date for a certificate. It is left to organisations to set the renewal period. The current policy in the Church of England, as approved by the House of Bishops, is to renew criminal record checks every five years. Of course, this period is kept under review. Three years has been mentioned as a possibility, as many charities, local authorities and schools adopt this time frame for renewals, but currently, no final decision has been taken to amend this renewal period. Obviously, before such a change is made an analysis of the relevant pros and cons would be undertaken.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q36 In the light of the Bishop Bell case, has any consideration been given to the view that offering pastoral support to the complainant, independently investigating the complaint, dispassionately evaluating the evidence, and simultaneously managing crises whilst protecting the good name of the Church are incompatible objectives; and will consideration now be given to establishing a properly resourced, consistent, professional and independent central complaint handling body, removing the responsibility from dioceses with potentially variable expertise and processes?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding:

A Developing a more consistent and professional approach to safeguarding across the dioceses and nationally is one of our key priorities as a church, recognising of course that good safeguarding is fundamentally something that takes place in a parish context. There are a number of key elements to achieving this through national policy and guidance, regulations, training and quality assurance, including the independent audits being conducted across all dioceses during 2016 and 2017. These audits provide an important benchmark and areas for further improvement for dioceses and the national church. The intention to develop a standards based approach will include how we provide pastoral and other support to those who are accused as well as those who make complaints of abuse. Indeed a recent case review conducted by the National Safeguarding Team has highlighted this very issue. The Church of England must remain committed to responding to non-current abuse and abuse in the present day, as well as building a safer church for the future based on prevention.

The Revd Canon Mike Booker (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q37 What steps have the House of Bishops taken to ensure that families, moving between dioceses that have sharply differing policies on the age at which children may be admitted to Holy Communion, do not find that their children are unable to continue to receive the sacrament?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Archbishops' Advocate for Children:

A The 2006 Regulations are clear and should be followed.

A child admitted to Holy Communion under the Regulations should have this recorded on their baptism certificate where practicable or, if the certificate is not available, be given a separate certificate confirming the date and place of first admission.

A child who presents such evidence must be admitted at any service of Holy Communion conducted according to the rites of the Church of England in any place, regardless of whether or not any permission under the Regulations is in force in that place or was in force in that place until revoked.

So once admitted to communion under the Regulations a child cannot be refused communion in any church, whatever the local parish or diocesan policy and practice.

Mr Samuel Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q38 In an article by John Bingham in the *Daily Telegraph* on 21 May with a headline “‘Don’t speak about your faith unless you’re asked’ to says Archbishop of Canterbury”, the Archbishop of Canterbury is quoted as saying that we ought not to speak about our faith unless we are asked to. Has consideration been given to whether an approach to evangelism of that kind is either effective or consistent with the Church’s current position (including the previous resolution of the Synod on faith in the public square) and can some do’s and don’ts or case studies be issued to give people a feel of how we can effectively share the Good News in our workplaces and communities?

The Bishop of Liverpool to reply as Co-Chair of the Evangelism Task Group:

A The quote that John Bingham refers to was made at the Inter-faith reception at Lambeth Palace. The answer given reflects the place evangelism has in dialogue between those of different faiths. Archbishop Justin has made evangelism one of his three core priorities and the Evangelism Task Group is tasked with pressing the work forward. Every Christian needs to be equipped to share their faith in words and works. As 1 Peter 3.15 says: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that

you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” We can effectively share the Good News in our workplaces and communities when we are in good relationship with people, when we listen and share our lives and our conversations; talking about Jesus Christ in a gentle and respectful way. Because we start with relationship, there is only limited value in a list of dos and don’ts – but the Task Group will certainly consider whether there is merit in sharing some useful case studies more widely.

The Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Universities & TEs) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q39 How is the national church ensuring that candidates from across the whole breadth of tradition of the Church of England (including, but not limited to, the breadth guaranteed by the Five Guiding Principles) are being identified and developed for future senior leadership?

The Bishop of Truro to reply as Chair of the Development & Appointments Group:

A Diocesan bishops and their staff teams are encouraged to consider diversity, including church tradition, when making nominations to the Strategic Leadership Development Programme. Annex 3 of GS 2026 shows how those nominated for, and participating in, this learning community self-define their church tradition.

Additionally, DAG will be running a development programme in December 2016 in partnership with the Bishops of The Society under the patronage of St Wilfrid and St Hilda. This will focus on supporting Traditional Catholic clergy in exploring a vocation to senior appointments. DAG are open to developing a similar programme for Conservative Evangelical clergy if required.

The Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q40 Given (1) the continuing difficulties of clergy recruitment in many dioceses outside the south east of England, (2) the high cost of repeat advertisements, (3) the important role of the Clergy Appointments Adviser in advising clergy looking to move from chaplaincies and extra-diocesan appointments and in the Capability Procedure, and (4) the importance of clergy being encouraged to consider appointments in unfamiliar places as part of the exploration of their vocation; what plans are there for the appointment of a successor to the Revd John Lee as Clergy Appointments Adviser to assist clergy looking for new posts?

The Bishop of Bath and Wells to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for this opportunity to express the House's deep gratitude for John Lee's ministry over the years which I expect has touched the lives of many Synod members. During the last year a review of the Clergy Appointments Adviser role and office arrangements has been undertaken. It has explored three questions: What service is needed nationally on appointments and coaching in addition to work undertaken in dioceses? What should be the focus of the CAA role? And, how best should the service be funded? I have recently written to Bishops, Archdeacons and Directors of Ministry informing them of the outcome of the review and my letter is available to Synod members on the noticeboard.

Dr Yvonne Warren (Coventry) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q41 Given the changes in society and the expectations of the clergy, would the House of Bishops agree that the pastoral care of the clergy is of supreme importance in this day and age, and, if so, what national strategy is in place to achieve this objective?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A I am confident that the House of Bishops regards pastoral care of the clergy as of the highest importance. I am also pleased to note that the Canterbury Prolocutor is initiating discussions on how to foster clergy well-being.

Pastoral care for clergy is primarily a function carried out in dioceses, where it is overseen by the diocesan bishop. It is part of a network of care that includes services such as counselling; human resources; ministerial development review; continuing ministerial development programmes and occupational health. National guidelines already exist for some of these.

Ministry Division and RACSC keep in touch with, and to some degree, coordinate efforts with the range of work across dioceses and with charities such as St Luke's Healthcare and the Society of Mary and Martha. Recent national diocesan networks have provided an opportunity to share best practice and contribute to the development of diocesan well-being strategies.

The Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q42 The General Synod resolution of July 2002 recognised that there were "exceptional circumstances" in which a divorced person might be married in church during the lifetime of a former spouse. How many such marriages (numerically and in percentage terms) have been conducted in Church of England churches in each subsequent year?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Information collected and reported by the Church of England at marriage does not include the whether those marrying had been divorced and whether their former spouse was still alive. So these data are not routinely available.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) does collect the marital status of both partners at the time of marriage registration. For a fee, ONS could make a bespoke report from these data which would identify the number of divorced people marrying in Church of England churches. However, information is not collected to identify whether the former spouse was still alive at the time of remarriage.

The Revd Kevin Goss (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q43 Bearing in mind the 1987 General Synod Report which found a “number of very fundamental reasons to question the compatibility of Freemasonry and Christianity”, has the House of Bishops already considered issuing pastoral and liturgical guidance to clergy faced with requests for services in 2017 of celebration and thanksgiving of the Tercentenary of the Foundation of the Masonic Order, and if not, will the House of Bishops please consider issuing such guidance?

The Bishop of Coventry on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The report of 1987 still stands and the House has not felt the need to revisit it. Issues regarding Freemasonry are dealt with by the National Adviser for New Religious Movements and Alternative Spiritualities, Dr Anne Richards. Any clergy faced with requests for services who require advice should contact her in the first instance.

Mrs Susie Leafe (Truro) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q44 Given that paragraph 79 of the Faith and Order Commission’s Report on Communion and Disagreement (GS Misc 1139) states that “the House of Bishops has a particular role in that task of discernment as to the nature of the disagreement that is happening in the life of the church, and therefore the shape of the conversation that is called for”, into which category does the House consider the matters under discussion in the Shared Conversations fall, and how did the House arrive at its conclusion?

The Bishop of Coventry to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The report was presented in its final form to the May meeting of the House of Bishops, where it was approved for release and commended for study. It is a substantial theological document, and some time will need to be given for it to be studied, evaluated and discussed within the Church. While the report identifies “a particular role” for the House of

Bishops, it also stresses the importance of consultation that includes the whole Church. In commending it for study, the House of Bishops affirmed the hope of the Faith and Order Commission that this report can contribute to how the Church of England as a whole, including the House of Bishops with its particular responsibilities, addresses the challenges of discernment that follow from the Shared Conversations process.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q45 Since by February, more than a year will have passed since the appointment of Rod Thomas to the See of Maidstone, can an invitation be extended to him to report on how his role is helping foster the commitment to ‘mutual flourishing’?

The Archbishop of Canterbury to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A In the 10 months since his consecration, Bishop of Maidstone’s ministry has developed to the extent that he has been invited to act as an Assistant Bishop in 10 dioceses across both provinces. Bishop Rod’s own website www.bishopofmaidstone.org provides a fuller account of his activities.

His ministry – along with that of the Bishops of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough – helps enable the ‘mutual flourishing’ that the House of Bishops’ 2014 Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests was intended to promote. If members wish to receive a wider report covering Bishop Rod’s ministry, and that of the PEVs, this would be for the Business Committee to consider.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q46 In the light of recent events and having regard to paragraphs 20 and 21 of the House of Bishops’ Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage dated 15 February 2014, will the House of Bishops as a matter of urgency clarify whether:

- It is acceptable for licensed clergy of the Church of England to conduct public services (a) in which a couple who have already contracted a civil same-sex marriage receive public prayer for that marriage and (b) which contains symbolic elements normally forming part of a marriage service, such as the exchanging of vows and the giving and receiving of rings;
- Bishops should give permission to their clergy to conduct such services; or
- Bishops should exercise discipline against clergy who conduct such services?

In particular will the House clarify the meaning of the expressions “services of blessing” and “more informal kind of prayer, at the request

of the couple” in those paragraphs, so as to avoid (i) any doubt as to what is acceptable and (ii) the impression that the Church of England’s doctrine of marriage has changed?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Paragraph 20 of the House of Bishops Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage makes it clear that, whilst ‘more informal prayer’ is acceptable, ‘services of blessing’ should not be provided’. Public services of the kind described would therefore be inconsistent with the guidance. When clergy depart from the guidance, appropriate discipline is exercised by their bishop. The small advisory group of bishops established by the House, which I chair, is considering whether there is a need for any supplementary guidance. It is also giving advice to fellow bishops on steps to be taken to maintain discipline. Thus far the number of cases referred to the group, whether about services of blessing or other matters, has been modest, which suggests that the guidance is honoured by the vast majority of clergy.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford) to ask the Secretary General:

Q47 Has an assessment been made of the monetary savings and release of time for mission and ministry that could be achieved by the Church as a whole if functions which are purely administrative in nature, particularly those undertaken by Diocesan Church Houses, were delivered in the most efficient manner without regard for subsidiarity?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The Archbishops’ Council has not made a comprehensive assessment of savings which might be achieved in this way. However, it is working with Diocesan Boards of Finance to assess whether and how the National Church Institutions could better support dioceses in just this way, by providing some more services centrally, to achieve efficiencies and save dioceses time and money.

The Revd Andy Salmon (Manchester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q48 Given increasing demands on parishes to produce statistical information, which – useful as it is – can be very difficult to provide (particularly in areas where the population is transient), has any thought been given to providing parishes with cloud based software to record attendance and, if so, when might it be made available? If that is not a possibility can consideration be given to what other assistance can be offered to help parishes manage and provide statistical information?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The Research and Statistics team of the National Church Institutions are keen to work with parishes to make collection of statistics easier and more reliable. They would be pleased to consider proposals for improving systems and processes.

NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q49 What arrangements, if any, are in place to ensure that the existing proportion of schools nationally that are Church of England schools is maintained, following the recent changes in the process for creating new schools, including the involvement of regional school commissioners, each of whose remit, by definition, covers only part of the country?

The Bishop of Ely to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A Free Schools are the key element in the Government's plan for new school provision. 500 Free Schools are promised during this Parliament and the Church of England Office is working with dioceses to ensure that we maintain our proportion of them, with a particular emphasis on increasing our secondary provision. The Education Office has retained a specialist consultant to assist dioceses in the delivery of this target and he has identified priority areas, potential projects and is actively supporting diocesan bids. He is working with the DfE and New Schools Network to bring a national perspective to what is often a regional decision. He is also training other bid writers who can, in turn, provide this support to diocesan education teams. We are committed to supporting dioceses in this way but in order to secure our proportion it is vital that all dioceses are proactive in developing proposals for Free Schools.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q50 Although the Government is no longer proposing to turn all existing schools into academies, the commitment to opening 500 new 'free' schools by 2020 remains in place. Very few bids for new church schools are succeeding, despite the Church of England's record of providing excellent education. Given the high cost of each bid (£30,000) what proposals does the Church of England have for resourcing this invaluable provision to the nation?

The Bishop of Ely to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A I refer to my answer to Question 49. The level of resource required to submit a bid for a Free School is considerable. The National Society is funding the provision of consultancy advice to dioceses. Part of the consultant's role is to identify areas where bids are most likely to be successful so as to avoid wasting precious resource. Co-ordinating and sharing intelligence across the network of dioceses will help this bidding process but we recognise that other providers have access to significant funds which can make comprehensive and professional bids more compelling. We do not think that the future of the educational offer in a community should be determined by the quality of marketing or the amount of money spent on a bid, but dioceses need, as a matter of priority, to consider how to use their existing assets to ensure that they continue to enhance their provision as this is a unique opportunity to develop new schools.

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The Revd Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

- Q51** Given the benefits of Christians working together for the common good within our increasingly multi-cultural society, how will the Council
- (a) Chart the emergence of the many new, often small and independent, ethnic church groups that are forming within our communities?
 - (b) Find ways at national level of attracting these groups into good relationships with the Established Church?

The Bishop of Truro to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

- A**
- (a) In 2015, we published an analysis of Christian demography according to ethnicity in England by region and by local authority (available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/work-other-churches/resources/christian-demography-in-england.aspx>). We are engaged with Research and Statistics to find ways of gathering data on this subject. Churches Together in England publishes an online black and multi-cultural directory, which is immensely valuable in locating particular congregations.
 - (b) In partnership with the ACO and Lambeth Palace, we are building networks with Anglican ethno-linguistic chaplaincies and congregations, which relate to their wider diaspora communities. We engage with a growing diversity of churches through Churches Together in England. We have published guidelines about extending hospitality to independent, ethno-linguistic

congregations. We are working on guidelines for bishops about relating to such congregations, and are in discussion with the Simplification Task Group regarding amendment to the Church of England Ecumenical Relations Measure (1988) that could assist in this matter.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q52 In the most recent whole year for which records are available, what is the breakdown of those recommended for training at Bishops' Advisory Panels as single/married/in a civil partnership?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A Information about the marital status of candidates for ordination is part of their personal file. It is gathered for the purpose of establishing their status in relation to Canon C4, in case a faculty is required for those who have married again after divorce.

Personal data of this kind must be kept confidentially and can only be used for the purposes for which it was provided. It is not collected for the purposes of monitoring the outcome of the selection process or public accountability. We cannot, therefore, make this information available.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q53 This year a Bishops' Advisory Panel was held for male candidates only. How often is such a panel held and why?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A All the Bishops' Advisory Panels (BAPs) in 2016 included both female and male candidates. Until 2015 one Panel per year was for male candidates only in order to allow BAP Advisers to serve who are opposed to the ordination of women and feel unable to be involved in the selection of women candidates. The Ministry Council will reflect on what future provision should be made in the light of the Five Guiding Principles.

Dr Michael Todd (Truro) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q54 What provision is made within the Initial Training of clergy to develop skills in working with people having dementia as well as their carers, bearing in mind the very considerable work being done in several dioceses, especially Carlisle, Lichfield and Truro?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A I am not aware of any specific provision in initial clergy training but that does not mean that there is none. The curriculum in all of the theological education institutions (TEIs) includes general pastoral training which addresses the situation of all age groups and a range of conditions. I am very aware of the rising significance and incidence of dementia in society, and of implications of this for both those who live with it and their carers. The importance of this condition for the pastoral and mission work of the church is clear and I am grateful to be informed of the excellent work being done in the dioceses. I will bring this question to the notice of TEI Principals and remind them of the increasing importance of this area of skill in training, and encourage them to draw on the resources of dioceses and other agencies.

The Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh (Universities & TEIs) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q55 In light of the ministry statistics published at the beginning of June, and the subsequent press coverage, what steps are being taken to prepare possible candidates for leadership roles as part of ongoing professional development at all stages of ministry?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A In order to fulfil the formational criteria on “leadership, collaboration and community”, training is given in colleges and courses on biblical and theological perspectives on leadership, authority, responsibility and power in leadership as well as developing skills in collaborative team leadership. Formation is achieved through specific leadership modules, ongoing church contexts and supervision in reflective practice which enables students to reflect on their own leadership styles which is key to transition at ordination/licensing where that reflection in the course of practical work is essential. National CMD policy strongly advocates provision of professional development at transition points throughout ministry. This includes explicit leadership development programmes, and leadership development in for example first incumbents’ courses and new post consultations. The national CMD Panel resources diocesan officers by assisting in convening a national learning community of ‘leadership development practitioners’ meeting annually to encourage professional development.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q56 What progress is being made with ensuring that experience of methods of effective and practical evangelism is made central to the initial and continuing training of lay and ordained ministers (especially those on residential courses), so that the telling of the Good News of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ to those who are ‘harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd’ (Matthew 9.36 –TNIV) becomes embedded in the culture of the whole Church?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A Theological Education Institutions, for example in their Annual Self Evaluation, show a firm commitment to forming lay and ordained ministers in all five marks of mission. Among both colleges and courses, there are examples of good practice in nurturing students in practical skills of faith sharing, often through the Common Awards module on Mission and Evangelism but also through wider placement and church attachments. Priorities for continuing ministerial education in this area are a matter for individual dioceses but I am aware of several where the priority of evangelism is being met through shared training for the whole people of God, recognising the key role of lay and ordained ministers. The formation criteria for initial ministerial education refer specifically to practical evangelism. Ministry Division staff are in discussion with the Evangelism Task Group and the Archbishop’s Missioner on how to make practical evangelism more central to both selection and training.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q57 The “statistics for ministry” published on 2 June show a continuing decline in the number of stipendiary clergy, which is due to accelerate in the next ten years because a quarter of stipendiary clergy are already over 60 and approaching retirement. In addition to increasing vocations in England, what attention and encouragement is being given to recruitment from other parts of the Anglican Communion and to increasing the age of retirement; and, if not, why not?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A I agree with the assumption of the question that increasing vocations to ministry should be accompanied by an intelligent approach to deployment of those already ordained. I can assure the Synod that future deployment work will have this in mind. The statutory retirement age for parochial clergy has recently been considered. Current arrangements were found to provide sufficient flexibility for clergy to continue in stipendiary ministry beyond the age of 70 to meet

current and likely future requirements. Advertisements for posts are available on the web, bringing applications from ministers from other parts of the Communion. These applications can present difficulties under the Immigration Rules. Problems are also encountered where those from outside the UK train here and then seek to remain to undertake title posts. An approach is being made to the Home Office to establish a better understanding and improve outcomes from applications.

The Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q58 The “statistics for ministry” published on 2 June show a continuing decline in the number of stipendiary clergy, which is due to accelerate in the next ten years because a quarter of stipendiary clergy are already over 60. Furthermore, detailed statistics show significant variation in diocesan age profiles: in some dioceses the proportion over 60 is as high as 40%. The Secretary General notes in his blog <http://cofecomms.tumblr.com/post/145510056717/renewal-and-reform-why-vocations-are-important> “individual dioceses cannot all maintain their numbers of stipendiary clergy while the total national number goes on falling. If some dioceses do maintain or increase numbers, then for others the fall in numbers will end up being much faster.” In light of these realities, what steps are being taken to encourage realistic, strategic and fair deployment of stipendiary clergy among dioceses, or is it effectively a matter of dioceses competing to attract and retain clergy?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A I recognise that since the national system for allocation of stipendiary clergy was ended in 2014, there is no central mechanism for distributing clergy across the dioceses, though that system was becoming increasingly unsuccessful in achieving its ends. In place of it, dioceses are encouraged to develop their own strategies for mission, ministry and deployment, including vocational work to bring forward within a diocese the range of ministries required locally as well as contributing to the national pool of clergy. The longer term solution to deployment is for dioceses to be more active in seeking ordinands, which the new RME funding arrangements encourage. In the meantime, a national vacancies service is being developed to ensure that opportunities are placed before clergy. The Ministry Council will monitor and report to dioceses on deployment to support their planning and will keep the House of Bishops informed to encourage mutual support between dioceses.

Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q Are there any statistics available regarding the retention rate of clergy in parish ministry (e.g. what percentage of those who enter parish ministry are still in it five, ten, fifteen, twenty years later) and if so, do the statistics confirm or refute the perception that an increasing number of clergy are choosing to move from parish ministry into sector ministries?

The Bishop of Oxford to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A Out of a total of 7661 clergy in stipendiary posts in dioceses, in 2015 299 left for reasons other than retirement. These were replaced with 194 clergy moving from non-stipended posts. Of the 299 leavers, 20 moved into diocesan posts and 51 into chaplaincy posts. The number of paid chaplaincy posts declined from 1190 in 2012 to 1170 in 2015. Therefore those taking paid chaplaincy posts are probably filling existing vacancies rather than new posts. Of the 299 clergy who left in 2015, 105 moved into other parochial work, some of whom were paid locally in parishes. Of the 194 joining stipendiary ministry, 115 came from sector ministry or similar roles. The statistics suggest that there is not an increasing number of clergy leaving parochial ministry for sector roles but rather that some clergy move into sector ministry and then return to parochial posts. They also suggest a very high retention rate in parochial ministry, both in stipendiary and similar parochial roles.

REMUNERATION & CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q60 What advice is the Pensions Board giving to clergy greatly concerned by reports that the new stamp duty surcharge, introduced in April, is costing clergy, as well as others, thousands of pounds more in tax for the home that will become their main residence when they retire?

Mr Mark Emerton to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A The 3% surcharge to Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) applies to a purchase of an additional residential property (buy-to-let or second home). Clergy who already own their own property (other than their own parsonage) will be subject to the SDLT surcharge in respect of the purchase of an additional property, as others would.

The understanding of Pensions Board Housing and RACSC is that the SDLT surcharge is not intended to apply to the purchase of a retirement house by clergy living in a parsonage (which they

technically own as an incumbent) or residence provided to them by virtue of their office. We will be talking to the Government to secure clarification of the position.

The Pensions Board cannot offer advice to individuals and any clergyperson concerned about the impact of SDLT should speak to a qualified independent financial advisor (IFA). Any calls to the Board's helpline will be appropriately signposted.