

## GENERAL SYNOD

### ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES SINCE NOVEMBER 2012

1. The Archbishops' Council presents this report on its activities since the November 2012 Group of Sessions in accordance with the requirements of the National Institutions Measure 1998.
2. The Council is chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury or, in his absence, the Archbishop of York and has met once since its last report was prepared – on 27-28 November 2012 and on 16 January, 20 March and 29-30 May this year.

#### STRATEGY

##### *Challenges for the new Quinquennium*

3. Much of the Council's work in its divisions and focus at meetings is now on the themes identified for the new quinquennium: Going for Growth, the Common Good and Re-Imagining Ministry. The Council, with the House of Bishops, has taken stock of progress and submitted a report for debate at the July Synod (GS 1895).
4. The Archbishops' Council has recently undertaken a review of the statistics it gathers and the uses to which parishes, dioceses and other users wish to put them. In addition to the data gathered on clergy numbers, attendance and so on, the Council will now also be gathering figures for children's and youth participation outside Sunday services and on joiners and leavers.
5. GS Misc 995 identified releasing energy by simplifying the Church's internal structures and processes as a way of achieving numerical and spiritual growth. The Council endorsed in November proposals concerning the operation of the faculty system. Related changes to the Rules will be before the Synod in July (GS 1887). Changes which require legislation will be before the Synod for first consideration in November.
6. The Council has concluded negotiations with Durham University for validation of degrees offered by theological training colleges and courses and the development of a common suite of awards. The new arrangements will be in place for the 2014-15 academic year and it is hoped that savings might be realised over time in the Vote 1 budget.
7. Significant work on mapping and developing the Council's resourcing of lay ministry and discipleship has begun and it is anticipated that there will be a debate on this work at Synod in July next year.
8. The Council has approved the work plans and the funding (from legacies) for the next four years for the work on the Beginnings and Bereavement projects.
9. The Council has received a presentation from the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC). The presentation acknowledged how far the Church had come over the last 25 years and considered a range of issues that Minority Ethnic people continue to face. CMEAC is preparing a detailed work plan for addressing some of these issues.

##### *Fresh Expressions*

10. The Council reviewed the development of the fresh expressions movement and considered the future of national support for the movement after the end of the present phase of work in April 2014. It has agreed to include an annual provision of £40K p.a.

from the Vote 3 budget (alongside grants to the Anglican Communion Office, the national and international Ecumenical Instruments and CUF).

### ***Spending plans for the period 2014-2016***

11. A joint Task Group from the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners has made a preliminary report to the Archbishops' Council on how the funds made available to the Council by the Church Commissioners should be applied in the period 2014-2016 in order to help achieve the Council's objectives to support mission and growth in the local church. Further work will be completed over the summer for final decision in the autumn. In the meantime, the Council has set allocations to the dioceses for 2014 at the same level as for 2013.

### **THE FINANCIAL SITUATION**

12. The Council has received updates at each meeting on the financial situation around the dioceses. It has agreed in principle to support the expansion of the Parish Giving Scheme developed by Gloucester and adopted by two other dioceses so that it can be scaled up as a resource available to all dioceses.

### ***Clergy pensions***

13. The Council received a report in May from the Pensions Board on its recent triennial valuation of the Clergy Pension Scheme. This confirmed that there would be no need to revisit benefits but that some increase in contribution rates would be needed. The Council welcomed the consultation the Board is now to have with the dioceses.

### **GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT**

14. The Council discussed a number of current legislative and other public affairs issues of particular relevance to the Church.

### **GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING**

15. The Council has considered the outcome of work arising from two motions carried by the Synod. In relation to the Bath & Wells DSM on job sharing for the clergy, the Council accepted the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee's advice that existing legislation provided sufficient flexibility within current definitions of clergy as officeholders (rather than employees).

16. In respect of the PMM from Christopher Hobbs on the PCC (Powers) Measure 1956, the Council agreed to bring to Synod in due course amending legislation to remove the role of the diocese in relation to some types of transaction.

17. The Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and the Pensions Board have agreed the establishment of a shared services company as a new NCI to provide shared services to the NCIs.

18. The Council has approved its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2012, circulated to the Synod as GS 1913. The Council's budget for 2014 has also been circulated to the Synod for approval as GS 1900. The proposed overall increase in the apportionment of 0.9% is again well within the parameters agreed for the five-year financial strategy (GS 1731).

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14 June 2013