

GENERAL SYNOD

Summary of decisions by the House of Bishops and Delegated Committees

The Standing Committee of the House of Bishops has agreed that the Summary of Decisions of the House of Bishops for the General Synod will also include a summary of decisions reached by all committees of the House. Accordingly, these are appended below.

House of Bishops May 2017

A meeting of the House of Bishops was held at Bishophorpe Palace on **21 – 22 May 2018**. Those matters reported below were taken in Committee of the whole House, under SO 14.

1. The House offered its thanks and congratulations to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Michael Curry of the Episcopal Church for their part in the recent wedding of HRH the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.
2. The House heard a presentation from the Bishop of Ely, the Chief Education Officer and the Director of the Archbishop of York's Youth Trust on on current and future initiatives on ministry amongst younger people.
3. The House received an update from the Chief Executive of the Lambeth Conference Company and the Adviser on World Mission Policy on preparations for the 2020 Lambeth Conference, the theme of which will be "God's Church for God's World". the House of Bishops agreed to appoint Diocesan Co-ordinators to work with national church staff on planning hospitality for Anglican Primates attending the event.
4. The House endorsed the final report of the Cathedrals Working Group, agreed that it should be published in the summer and debated at the July 2018 General Synod.
5. The House discussed the report from the Working Group on the Seal of the Confessional. They requested that this report be discussed in Bishops' regional groups over the summer and autumn.
6. The House heard a series of updates from episcopal representatives on other bodies, including the Archbishops' Council, Church Commissioners, the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) and the House of Bishops Delegation Committee (HBDC). The House agreed to request the House of Bishops Standing Committee to explore further options for handling business through delegated Committees of the House.
8. The House heard an update on the establishment of the various groups working on the Episcopal Teaching Document and an update on the work of the Pastoral Advisory Group.
9. The House heard an update on planning for future ministerial needs from the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and the Director of Ministry.
10. The House discussed Safeguarding matters emerging from the recent hearings of the Independent Inquiry into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). The House approved the resources from the Liturgical Commission on "Towards a Safer Church".

11. The House approved the Revised Terms of Reference for the House of Bishops Delegation Committee (HBDC) and the Terms of Reference for the Co-Ordinating Group and Thematic Working Groups on the Episcopal Teaching Document.

House of Bishops Delegation Committee (HBDC), February 2018

A meeting of the House of Bishops Delegation Committee was held on **28 February 2018**. The following matters were discussed:

12. The Delegation Committee agreed some revisions to its Terms of Reference to incorporate a Five-Member call-back rule and enhanced reporting requirements to General Synod and the House of Bishops.
13. The Delegation Committee took note of an update from the Confessional Review Group on progress made with their report.
14. The Delegation Committee took note of work on revising guidance for using the Affirmation of Baptismal Faith.
15. The Delegation Committee took note of work on collating liturgical resources for Safeguarding.
16. The Delegation Committee took note of the preparation by the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee (RACSC) of draft guidance on the national recording of Clergy with Permission to Officiate and requested some changes which would be communicated to the RACSC.
17. The Delegation Committee took note of actions being taken to prepare the Church for the GDPR legislation coming into force.
18. The Delegation Committee received an update on the ongoing work to prepare guidance for all parts of the Church on complying with Subject Access Requests.

House of Bishops Delegation Committee (HBDC), May 2018

A further meeting of the House of Bishops Delegation Committee was held on **30 May 2018**. The following matters were discussed:

19. The HBDC considered the wider operation of episcopal meetings and the HBDC's particular role in this area. They requested the Bishop of Lambeth to convey their ideas to the June meeting of the House of Bishops Standing Committee (HBSC).
20. The HBDC discussed the process for the handling of informal complaints. They agreed that further work was required in this area and requested an update at their November meeting.
21. The HBDC agreed the guidance from the Liturgical Commission prepared for services of affirmation of baptismal faith and requested that this go forward for final approval at the December House of Bishops.
22. The HBDC approved the on-going work on the creation of a National Clergy Register and requested the Church Commissioners, Archbishops' Council, Crockfords and RACSC to work together on how this information is best managed.
23. The HBDC approved new policy for granting clergy Permission to Officiate (PTO). They agreed that the House's existing Safeguarding guidance should be reviewed to ensure that it reflected those parts of the policy on granting PTO that

were concerned with safeguarding matters, with any changes to the House's safeguarding guidance that were identified as being necessary to be referred to the NSSG.

24. The HBDC noted the new guidelines on the handling of Clergy Personal files. They requested that the guidelines apply to all clergy files and that the changes should be introduced on a phased basis.
25. The Committee endorsed the proposal to review Part II of the Lambeth and Bishopthorpe Register, including a review of the legal basis for the continued processing of the personal data.
26. The Committee agreed with the proposal to place clergy personal files for deceased clergy in a central repository. The Committee took the view that the on-going responsibility for the files should continue with the bishop of the diocese from whom they are deposited. The Committee asked for clarification at a later stage on how the project was being implemented and funded.

House of Bishops Standing Committee (HBSC), March 2018

A meeting of **House of Bishops Standing Committee** was held on **14 March 2018**. The following matters were discussed:

27. The Standing Committee considered a number of **Safeguarding** matters, including the Independent Reviews from Dame Moira Gibb and Lord Carlile QC, additional staffing for Safeguarding work and the main points emerging from the first set of hearings of the Independent Inquiry into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). The Standing Committee considered the draft report from the Confessional Review Group and agreed that this should go forward to the May House for further consideration.
28. The Standing Committee looked ahead to the planning of the agenda for the May House of Bishops and considered in particular the proposed items on Future Ministry, Ministry amongst Children and Young People, and Church Planting.
29. The Secretary General gave an update on the Working Group on BAME issues and promised that a fuller report would feature on the agenda of the December House.
30. The Clerk to the Synod updated the Standing Committee on the use of Committees of the House for the handling of many items of business. The Standing Committee agreed that in the interests of transparency and accountability reports from Committees of the House would be circulated with papers for future meetings of the General Synod and House of Bishops.
31. The Standing Committee considered possible alternative venues for future Bishops' meetings. They heard a short preview from the Clerk of items which were likely to feature on the July Synod agenda.
32. The Standing Committee heard a progress update on the work on preparing the Teaching Document. They agreed it would be helpful to hold a workshop on the Teaching Document as one of a number of workshops on policy issues in the margins of Synod.
33. The Standing Committee heard a short update from the Archbishop of Canterbury on Anglican Communion matters and the emerging plans for the 2020 Lambeth Conference.

34. The Standing Committee received a short update on the final stages of preparation of the report from the Cathedral Working Group. The BISHOP OF COVENTRY updated the Standing Committee on the on-going engagement on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. The Standing Committee agreed to appoint the Rt Revd Alastair Magowan, Bishop of Ludlow to the Fees Advisory Commission.

National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG)

The National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) met on **24 April 2018**.

35. The NSSG considered the key themes arising from the recent IICSA public hearings on the Chichester case study.

36. The NSSG approved a number of pieces of practice guidance on behalf of the House. The first of these was "Practice Guidance on Safer Environment and Culture (A guide to Safer Working Practices and Activities)". The second was guidance on "Responding to concerns or allegations related to children and vulnerable adults". A third was guidance on Permission to Officiate. The fourth was practice guidance on "Serious Incident Reporting to the Charity Commission".

37. The NSSG accepted the recommendations made in the Independent report of the review of the Past Cases Review 2007 – 2009 and agreed that this would be published following meetings of the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council.

38. The NSSG agreed the draft motion on Safeguarding to be debated at the General Synod in July 2018.

39. The NSSG approved the terms of reference for the Anglican Methodist Safeguarding Group.

Development and Appointments Group (DAG)

The Development & Appointments Group met on **10 January 2018**.

40. The DAG agreed to extend the invitation to the April Diocesan/Suffragan Module to other learning communities subject to available spaces.

41. The DAG agreed that participants in Cohort 2 of the Strategic Leadership Development Plan (SLDP) should be invited to have a "mid-programme review" conversation with an episcopal member of DAG between July and September 2018. They agreed that the conversations would take the same format as for Cohort 1 in 2017.

42. DAG agreed not to begin a fourth cohort of the SLDP during the 2017-19 Triennium in order to give time for a review of the whole programme to take place later in 2018.

43. The DAG agreed not to schedule any "Learning Communities Learning Together" events in 2018, but to plan for these in 2019.

44. The DAG agreed to new contractual arrangements for bishops' healthcare.

45. The DAG agreed to discuss the recommendations of the "Discerning in obedience" review of the Crown Nominations Commission at their next meeting following the debate at the February General Synod.

46. The DAG agreed with the recommendation from the Turning Up the Volume (TUTV) group to invite a further seven dioceses to participate in the facilitated conversations in their bishops' staff teams, and that the themes emerging from the feedback of these conversations be shared more widely.
47. The DAG made a number of decisions regarding its own governance, including the possibility of co-opting members.
48. The DAG considered the report evaluating the impact of the Nurturing Senior Leadership Programmes, and agreed to consider how the themes from the evaluation could be shared beyond DAG in order to maximise the benefit from the data, and how this information might inform the bid for the next triennium. DAG agreed to discuss this at their residential meeting in May 2018.

Advisory Council for Relations between Bishops and Religious Communities (ACRBRC)

49. The ACRBRC has summarized its work from January 2017 to March 2018 as follows:
 50. Establishment of a working group reviewing the language of traditional monastic terminology for titles and vows, reporting to the Council in July 2018.
 51. Revision of the Handbook of the Religious Life. This is awaiting finalization following the proposed provision for religious communities in the Canons of the Church of England.
 52. The Council granted Acknowledgement to the Communities of Lee Abbey, following their satisfactory completion of the process Towards Acknowledgement. They are now working with the Order of the Mustard Seed on their request for Acknowledgement. They continue to work with other new types of communities seeking help and support, including the Tree of Life Community being established by the diocese in Leicester, the Community of St Birinus in Winchester diocese and the Evangelists of the Cross.
 53. The Council runs regular events for Episcopal Visitors to religious communities, most recently in February 2018. They are working on advice for Visitors of Acknowledged Communities.
 54. The Council offered advice and support about the request from Sister Carol Elizabeth SSM to make her life profession in the Society of St Margaret at Walsingham.
 55. The Council continues to liaise with the Leaders of the Communities to ensure that religious communities are up to date with their implementation of House of Bishops Safeguarding policies and training.
 56. The Council is working on advice for Visitors of the Acknowledged Communities in their Handbook.

William Nye, LVO
 Secretary to the House of Bishops
 Church House
 Westminster SW1P 3AZ
 June 2018

Published by the General Synod of the Church of England
 © The Archbishops' Council 2018