

GENERAL SYNOD

Summary of Decisions by the House of Bishops and Delegated Committees

This Summary of Decisions includes a summary of decisions made by the House of Bishops and by all Committees of the House.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS (HOB)

House of Bishops, 7 July 2018, York University.

A meeting of the House of Bishops took place in the margins of the July General Synod for the purpose of a Reference under Article 7 of the Synod's Constitution. Those matters reported below were taken in Committee of the whole House under SO 14.

1. The Proposed Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the House of Bishops Delegation Committee (HB(18)17) were approved under the Deemed Procedure.
2. The Bishop of Peterborough moved motion 1 on the Agenda as follows:

'That subject to the requirements of the Standing Orders of the Synod concerning reference of the business to the Convocations and to the House of Laity, the draft Ecumenical Relations Measure be returned to the Synod in the form approved by the House for consideration on the Final Approval Stage.'

3. The House approved Item 1 unanimously.
4. The Bishop of Peterborough then moved item 2 on the Agenda as follows:

'That subject to the requirements of the Standing Orders of the Synod concerning reference of the business to the Convocations and to the House of Laity, draft Amending Canon No. 38 be returned to the Synod in the form approved by the House for consideration on the Final Approval Stage.'

5. Item 2 was agreed unanimously.
6. The Bishop of Portsmouth then moved Item 3 on the Agenda as follows:

That subject to the requirements of the Standing Orders of the Synod concerning reference of the business to the Convocations and to the House of Laity, the draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure be returned to the Synod in the form approved by the House for consideration on the Final Approval Stage.'

7. Item 3 was agreed unanimously.

House of Bishops 10 – 12 December 2018, Lambeth Palace, London

The matters reported below were taken in Committee of the whole House under SO 14.

8. The House agreed proposals for spending priorities for the Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council for the period 2020 – 2022.

9. The House endorsed proposals from the Ministry Council regarding a new Discernment Framework and the process for testing out these changes. The House requested that a substantive paper be brought back to its meeting in May 2019 in order for it to consider whether to adopt the framework and the new BAP processes.
10. The House endorsed the vision set out in a paper on “Growing Faith” from the Director of Education concerning mission with children and young people and committed to taking forward the actions set out at diocesan level.
11. The House took note of an update from the Bishop of Burnley on Estates Evangelism and invited the Bishop to report back on progress made at a future meeting.
12. The House received a paper on Legislative Reform from the Bishop of Willesden and agreed to recommend to the Archbishops’ Council that a joint Legislative Reform Working Group be established to take forward the work identified by the Scoping Group.
13. The House took note of an update from the Bishop of Blackburn as Chair of the House of Bishops Delegation Committee regarding the planned publication of new guidance for parishes planning services to help transgender people mark their transition.
14. The House considered a report from the Confessional Working Group. They requested more work should be done on the proposals on training and diocesan advisers prior to further consideration at the May 2019 House of Bishops.
15. The House requested the Bishop of Leeds and the Bishop in Europe to work with the Archbishops to agree a statement on Brexit to go out in the name of the Archbishops over the following days.
16. The House agreed to the establishment of an informal sub-group (to include the Bishop of Leeds and the Bishop in Europe) to take forward further work on behalf of the House on Brexit, issuing further statements as appropriate.
17. The House endorsed the course of action presented to them by the Secretary to the House of Bishops regarding the approach, structures and legislative framework for Safeguarding at national level.
18. The House considered a paper from the Secretary to the House of Bishops on its relations with other governance bodies. The House requested that the Secretary General work with the Bishop at Lambeth to re-draft the paper ahead of some further discussion with the Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners.
19. The House agreed that a sub-group of Bishops should be established to look at bishops’ collective leadership roles, prior to engagement with other governance bodies on governance structures.
20. The House considered a paper from the Development and Appointments Group regarding expressions of interests in vacancies from the Episcopal ‘pool’. The House agreed to request the DAG to take the new proposals forward on a pilot basis for either a two-year period or a minimum of 10 vacancies.
21. The House took note of a report from the Bishop of Coventry regarding the progress of the preparation of the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) resources. The Bishop of Coventry agreed to give further consideration to the handling of the

transition from the drafting of the LLF resources to the next stage of reception of those resources and any possible decisions prompted by them.

22. The House commended the Pastoral Principles prepared by the Pastoral Advisory Group (PAG) for use in in dioceses.
23. The House approved some amendments to Terms of Reference of the Advisory Council on Bishops and Religious Communities (ACRBRC) under its procedure for Deemed Approval.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS STANDING COMMITTEE (HBSC)

House of Bishops Standing Committee, 13 June 2018, Church House, Westminster, London

24. The following decisions were taken:
25. The Standing Committee requested the its Terms of Reference for the House of Bishops Standing Committee (HBSC) be reviewed by staff and a new draft to be produced for consideration by the Standing Committee and the House in due course.
26. The Standing Committee considered the operation and oversight of the House, the College and Bishops' regional groups and delegated Committees of the House and requested the Secretary to the House of Bishops, the Bishop at Lambeth and the Archbishops' Chiefs of Staff to undertake further discussion on the operation and working relationships of these various bodies.
27. The Standing Committee considered a paper from the Church Commissioners on Bishops' office costs and see houses. They requested the Secretary to the House of Bishops to refer the paper for consideration by Bishops' regional meetings prior to returning to the House for discussion at a later date.
28. The Standing Committee requested the Secretary to the House of Bishops to look into arrangements for improving the joint working between the Archbishops' Council, Church Commissioners and the House of Bishops Standing Committee.
29. The Standing Committee agreed to extend the dates for the December 2018 meeting of the House of Bishops to 1230 hrs on Wednesday 12 December.
30. The Standing Committee agreed the new Guidelines for classification of House of Bishops papers and those of its Delegated Committees and requested that these new guidelines be communicated to the House, the College, and all those preparing papers for the House and its Delegated Committees.

House of Bishops Standing Committee, 19 November 2018, Church House, Westminster, London

31. The following decisions were taken:
32. The Standing Committee requested that the Bishop at Lambeth, the Chief of Staff to the Archbishop of York and the Secretary of the House of Bishops work together to develop plans for the greater coordination of Bishops' regional meetings.
33. The Standing Committee requested that a new version of its Terms of Reference be drafted to reflect a coordinating function for Bishops' meetings and that this

should return to its March 2019 meeting for discussion and approval prior to going forward to the May 2019 House of Bishops for discussion and agreement.

34. The Standing Committee agreed that the 21 January 2019 College of Bishops contingency date should be used for discussions in regional bishops' meetings on Future Ministry in order to prepare for a broader discussion at the May House.
35. The Standing Committee took note of the dates of the July 2019 IICSA hearings and the fact that they were due to take place during the same fortnight as the July 2019 General Synod. The Standing Committee requested the Secretary General and the Clerk to carry out a planning exercise to manage staffing and workloads across the two events, minimising the need for any staff to be involved with both events.
36. The Standing Committee considered a number of draft papers on items for the December House of Bishops and approved them with some amendments before approving the agenda of the December 2018 House of Bishops.
37. The Standing Committee approved the following matters using its Deemed Procedure:
 - Template for reports from Delegated Committees
 - Authority for Approving Translations of Common Worship
 - Approval of a new member of the Advisory Council for Relations between Bishops and Religious Communities (ACRBRC)
 - Approval rights for Common Worship Translations: Request for a transfer to the Delegation Committee

HOUSE OF BISHOPS DELEGATION COMMITTEE (HBDC)

House of Bishops Delegation Committee, 10 July 2018 at York University

38. A meeting of the House of Bishops Delegation Committee took place in the margins of the July General Synod at York University. The following decisions were taken:
39. The Delegation Committee requested that the timing of their meetings in 2019 and 2020 be re-visited in order to allow greater coordination between the Delegation Committee and the Standing Committee.
40. The Delegation Committee took note of the revisions to its Terms of Reference which had been approved by the House at its meeting on 8 July.
41. The Delegation Committee took note of progress made on preparing the draft Guidance for the Affirmation of Baptismal Faith by those having undergone gender transition, which had been prepared by the Liturgical Commission. They agreed that this would return to them in final form for a decision at their November meeting.
42. The Delegation Committee considered further amendments to guidance with regards to national policy for granting clergy Permission to Officiate (PTO). The Delegation Committee agreed the revised guidance, subject to a small number of amendments and requested that it be published during July and disseminated widely around Bishops, their staff and advisers in the dioceses. The Delegation

Committee nominated the Bishop of Portsmouth to be the spokesperson for the guidance, working with the Communications Office.

House of Bishops Delegation Committee, 8 November 2018, Church House, Westminster, London.

43. The following decisions were taken:
44. The Delegation Committee approved the final version of the Pastoral Guidance for Affirmation of Baptismal Faith for those having undergone gender transition. They agreed that this decision would be communicated to all members of the House of Bishops, and also in the usual Report of Decisions submitted by the Delegation Committee to the December House.
45. The Delegation Committee agreed the plans with regards to the publication of the Guidance on the Church of England website.
46. The Delegation Committee approved some translations of Common Worship liturgical materials for use by Persian-speaking congregations.
47. They requested that the Standing Committee be asked to agree to the amendment of Canon B 42.3 to give the powers for approving translations to the House of Bishops or any of its Delegated Committees in the future.
48. The Delegation Committee agreed that the 2016 – 2017 statistics on clergy marriage breakdown be shared with the Broken Rites group as in previous years.
49. The Delegation Committee approved the draft Ecumenical Relations Code of Practice with some amendments and requested that it be laid before Synod in February 2019, subject to the Measure having received Royal Assent at the end of December 2018. The Committee requested that a clear explanation be provided in the accompanying information for Synod on how the Guidance should be used and the intentions behind it.
50. The Standing Committee approved with some amendments a draft paper from the Bishop of Willesden on Legislative Reform and requested that this go forward to the December House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council for further consideration.

NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STEERING GROUP (NSSG)

National Safeguarding Steering Group, 12 July 2018, Lambeth Palace, London

51. The following decisions were made:
52. The NSSG requested staff to develop proposals for the future development of a mediation process between members of staff, clergy and survivors
53. The NSSG agreed to the proposals to carry out a further Past Cases Review of the period from 2008 to the present and requested staff to look at funding options.
54. The NSSG agreed that an episcopal member of the NSSG would chair the working group overseeing the new Past Cases Review
55. The NSSG received the final Overview Report from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) of the Independent Diocesan Safeguarding Audits. They

agreed that the SCIE report and a parallel research report from survivors would be published in September 2018.

56. The NSSG agreed further amendments to the Safer Recruitment policy and practice guidance.
57. The NSSG requested staff to write to Bishops to request that they ensure that Safeguarding information was visible on all Parish websites.
58. The NSSG requested staff to do further analysis of diocesan Safeguarding annual data returns.

National Safeguarding Steering Group, 12 November 2018, Lambeth Palace, London

59. The following decisions were made:
60. The NSSG took note of the proposals from the Secretary General for a new Safeguarding team structure.
61. The NSSG noted that the publication of the SCIE overview report would now take place in January 2019 and agreed that this should be accompanied by an action plan from the NST with proposed responses to the SCIE considerations.
62. The NSSG noted the progress made on the Safe Spaces project. They agreed the proposal for the Survivor Reference Group to develop a survivor-led strategic framework for survivor engagement in the Church.
63. The NSSG agreed a number of actions to ensure compliance by dioceses, Theological Education Institutions (TEI's), religious communities and cathedrals in order to comply with the Charity Commission's Serious Incident Reporting requirements.
64. The NSSG agreed to the proposals for the establishment of a Safeguarding Complaints handling Ombudsman and requested staff to draft a Scheme and take these actions forward
65. The NSSG agreed to suspend the roll-out of Safeguarding Progress Reviews following the independent diocesan audits in favour of prioritising work to develop nationally agreed safeguarding standards with a particular focus on local implementation
66. The NSSG took note of the recommendations for the national Church arising from a Lessons Learned Review in the Diocese of Birmingham and requested the NST to take these forward as part of on-going initiatives.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPOINTMENTS GROUP (DAG)

Development and Appointments Group, 23-24 May 2018

67. The following decisions were made:
68. DAG agreed that an individual whose appointment as a bishop has been announced could be invited to join the bishops' programme before they were in post if the individual wishes to do so.
69. DAG confirmed that their remit did not include the development and training of residentiary canons

70. DAG agreed to remind diocesan bishops of the importance of having regular communication with those clergy in their diocese participating in the Senior Leadership Development Programme (SLDP).
71. DAG agreed to hold a “Learning Communities Learning Together” event with L. Gregory Jones in November 2018.
72. DAG agreed to initiate a pilot scheme, across one or both provinces, enabling individuals on episcopal readiness lists to express their interest in being considered for certain suffragan vacancies.
73. It was agreed that DAG should link in with the Implementation and Dialogue Group in relation to providing development for those taking up senior appointments on the outworking of the House of Bishops Five Guiding Principles on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests
74. DAG agreed to approach two individuals to be co-opted as members of DAG, to serve for a two-year period.
75. DAG discussed the retention of paperwork relating to appointments, development programmes, and MDRs in light of the new GDPR regulations and clergy Blue File guidance.

Development and Appointments Group, 28 September 2018

76. The following decisions were made:
77. DAG agreed a timeframe for when members should step down from the group following the introduction of the membership terms in the recently agreed terms of reference.
78. DAG noted that the Crown Nominations Commission is working with the National Safeguarding Team to develop guidance on how to address any safeguarding issues arising during nomination processes and contributed to contributing to this work as it evolved.
79. DAG members agreed to attend a meeting of the Implementation & Dialogue Group to discuss senior appointments in relation to mutual flourishing and the Five Guiding Principles.

ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELATIONS BETWEEN BISHOPS AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES (ACRBRC)

Advisory Council for Relations between Bishops and Religious Communities, 4 July 2018

80. The following decisions were made:
81. The ACRBRC to request the Lambeth Conference design group for a fringe event for Bishops’ Visitors at the forthcoming Lambeth Conference;
82. The ACRBRC agreed plans for further training for Visitors including Safeguarding training for retired Visitors
83. The ACRBRC approved the request for acknowledgement by the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis and the Community of the Order of the Mustard Seed

84. The ACRBRC considered guidance and advice to be given to other religious communities seeking acknowledgement who had not yet reached the threshold for acknowledgement.

Advisory Council for Relations between Bishops and Religious Communities, 15 November 2018, Church House, Westminster, London

85. The ACRBRC received further updates on religious communities seeking acknowledgement who had not yet reached the threshold for doing so.

86. The ACRBRC responded to two communities asking for Acknowledgement.

87. The ACRBRC agreed to develop advice for Visitors to Acknowledged Communities and requested its Secretary to consult with some existing Episcopal Visitors.

88. The ACRBRC agreed some amendments to its Terms of Reference to go forward to the December House of Bishops for approval

89. The ACRBRC discussed how its members could contribute to the formulation of aspects of the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) resources.

William Nye LVO
Secretary to the House of Bishops
January 2019