

Annex G

Copies of the representations



Rex Andrew

From: James Bremridge
Sent: 28 May 2019 21:1
To: Rex Andrew
Cc: James Bremridge; David Scott
Subject: Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 – Diocese of Portsmouth, Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St Nicholas in the Castle, Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport; and Newport St John.

Attachments: Letter from PCC to Church Commissioners.pdf; Newport Minster Objections to CC.pdf; Appendix One - Portsmouth Diocese 9 October 2018.pdf; Appendix Two - Bishop's Review of Minster, November 2016.pdf; Appendix Three - Parish Consultation Template v4.pptx; Appendix Four - Notes_of_Newport_Informal_Public_Consultation.pdf; Appendix Five - Portsmouth Diocese 6 Dec 2018.pdf; Appendix Six - Portsmouth Diocese 1st Feb 2019.pdf

Dear Mr Andrew,

Please find attached an objection from the PCC of Newport Minster in respect of Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 – Diocese of Portsmouth, Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St Nicholas in the Castle, Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport; and Newport St John.

Yours sincerely

James Bremridge & David Scott

Newport Minster
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FAO Rex Andrew
The Church Commissioners
Church House
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London
SW1P 3AZ

Tuesday, 28th May 2019

Dear Sir

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 – Diocese of Portsmouth, Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St Nicholas in the Castle, Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport; and Newport St John.

We are writing on behalf of the Parochial Church Council of Newport Minster further to your letter of 12th April 2019.

The Parochial Church Council wishes to strongly object to the proposed Mission and Pastoral Measure and has outlined its objections in the attached documents

Yours faithfully

David Scott
PCC Secretary
Newport Minster

James Bremridge
PCC Member
Newport Minster

IN THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS
PASTORAL & PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE

BETWEEN

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWPORT MINSTER

- and -

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWPORT MINSTER WRITTEN SUBMISSION

INTRODUCTION

1. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Newport Minster **strongly objects** to the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 draft scheme of Portsmouth Diocese in respect of the Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St Nicholas in the Castle, Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport; and Newport St John.
2. The Diocese of Portsmouth announced a consultation into a proposed reorganisation of the Newport parishes at 6.40pm on 9th October 2018, by email.
3. The announcement included the arrangements for an open meeting at All Saints Church, Ryde, on Monday 15th October from 7.30pm for the Deanery to be fully informed and an opportunity to discuss the plans.
4. Also on the 9th October 2018 an announcement was made on the Diocese of Portsmouth Website - Appendix One. It should be noted that this has been edited and added to on several occasions.
5. On Wednesday 10th October 2018 the PCC Secretary attempted to contact as many of the congregation as possible to alert them to the short notice consultation.
6. On Sunday 14th October 2018 the congregation of Newport Minster were given formal notice of the public consultation taking place the next day.

7. The PCC of Newport Minster has met with representatives of the Diocese and made representations at every stage of the process since.

MINSTER REVIEW AND CONSULTATION

8. The parish church of Sts Thomas, Newport was designated a Minster in 2008.
9. Bishop Christopher undertook a consultation and initiated a review into the role of Newport Minster in January 2016.
10. In November 2016 Bishop Christopher released his 'Proposals following the Newport Minster Review and Consultation 2016' - Appendix Two
11. Bishop Christopher's proposals include:
 - a. '..the Minster's distinctive role must be better articulated and its service more effectively offered,..'
 - b. 'Regularly hosting Confirmation and other episcopal services requires the commitment of the Minster to be active in supporting enquirers (through Alpha or Emasus or some other programme) and drawing people into deeper discipleship.'
 - c. '..prepare as a matter of priority for a regular pattern of daily public prayer, increasingly involving clergy, Readers and others across the Island.
 - d. '.. the Minster will be the focal point for my ministry on the Island.'
 - e. '..the Minster should be a place of gathering together and for sending out God's people into the whole Island community.'
 - f. 'I do not propose any change in the Minster's parish status.'
 - g. 'I do not propose that the accumulated shortfall is written-off but I invite the PCC to liaise with the deanery and diocese about support for addressing this.'
 - h. '..the Archdeacon consider urgently the feasibility of separating the St John's parish from the plurality with Sts Thomas'
 - i. '..internal reordering of the church will be essential to realising the enhanced role of the Minster.'
12. Newport Minster has hosted annual deanery confirmation services as well as the recent Installation of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight.
13. The Minster has instigated two daily acts of worship, often led by laity as well as offering regular Family and Taizé services. It has started offering an Alpha course as well as a Gospel Choir in addition to the Minster Choir.

14. The PCC has actively reduced its accumulated shortfall from over £78,000 to less than £30,000, while raising £450,000 towards the initial restoration of the Minster. The work having been successfully carried out.
15. The PCC of Newport Minster supported by the Friends of Newport Minster have been successful in raising in excess of £260,000 to fully develop proposals to finish restoring the Minster as well as internal reordering the church.
16. Additional funding of £1,000,000 has been secured to fund the actual restoration and internal reordering of the church. This allows us to bid for a further £1,000,000 from the National Heritage Lottery Fund.
17. The important work of restoring the Minster and the particular stage that has been reached has not been carefully considered. The Minster needs stability in the next 18 months.
18. Should that stability be compromised, it is highly likely due to the funding streams and the nature of the application processes and governance structures that the restoration of Newport Minster will be compromised together with the future mission of the Minster.
19. Newport Minster has established a growing social media presence that reaches a younger audience and has directly resulted in attendance at services and events.

CHURCHMANSHIP

20. The Mission and Pastoral Measure Code of Practice states that:
‘Where representations raise the issue of differences in churchmanship between benefices or parishes which it is proposed to amalgamate, the Commissioners will wish to know what the differences are and what steps are to be taken - so far as is practicable - to ensure the maintenance of the traditions; or what alternative places of worship, with a similar tradition, are within easy reach.’
21. The churchmanship of St Pauls is conservative evangelical with a distinctive love of Israel.
22. The churchmanship of St John’s is evangelical and low church.
23. The churchmanship of Carisbrooke is liberal catholic.

24. The churchmanship of Newport Minster is liberal catholic and inclusive, with an intrinsic need to be flexible to adapt according to the community and civic events held there.
25. Joining any churches with the Newport Minister with its distinctive role ignores the unique pastoral history and the theological outlook of each church
26. Despite being raised in the consultation process no steps have been outlined by the Diocese concerning the practicality of maintaining the traditions.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

27. As outlined in the introduction the process was rushed at times.
28. No reasonable person or body would consider one days notice of a public consultation meeting adequate and does not follow the good practice demonstrated by the Church Commissioners and required by the Code of Practice.
29. Some subsequent meetings were also called at relatively short notice and took place on 'deadline days'.
30. The first consultation meeting took place at All Saints Ryde. If the traffic is clear, this is approximately 30 minutes by car from Newport. Returning by public transport would have been difficult if not impossible.
31. No consideration appears to have been given to those would want to attend from further afield. Members of the congregation of Newport Minster include those who come from Freshwater, Totland and Yarmouth - 45 to 60 mins by car to Ryde.
32. The timing of the meeting (7.30pm) meant those with young families and / or other responsibilities would have struggled to attend in Newport.
33. The Archdeacon of Portsdown made the comment 'You're lovely but I am probably the youngest person here to be really frank.' As well as inflaming a charged atmosphere, it was factually inaccurate and must be considered in the light of point 31.
34. Despite being an organisation charged with proclaiming the Gospel, at the first consultation meeting, people were unable to hear and unable to see as well as not being accessible for those with visual and hearing impairments.

35. The initial consultation included a presentation that very much emphasised a Team Ministry approach across one benefice.
36. The presentation also emphasised the extra investment (£1,500,000) the restructuring would bring.
37. The presentation and notes also outlined a 'strict' timetable to meet funding requirements, but made no mention of possibly extending the timescales or the possibility that the consultation may not be submitted to the Church Commissioners. This led to a belief that there was a predetermined outcome at the very beginning of the consultation process.
38. A recording of the meeting includes the question 'Can you tell us what the benefits of changing the boundaries and everything? Why can't we do this new work with the boundaries we've got?'
39. The response from the Diocesan representative was, 'In terms of the bid that we are doing, one of the things we in our discussions with the Church Commissioners they are very clear that they are not just going to give us more money to add on to existing structures. So when in Newport where we currently have got four parishes that run four PCCs and four sets of accounts and four lots of administrative systems, that uses up a lot of resources. So by combining those areas together we actually save a lot of work, effort and distraction by doing that kind of way, and that enables us to show to the Church Commissioners that we are taking our side seriously and they then will give us hopefully some more money.'
40. The notes of the meeting published by the Diocese show the response to the question (in 37): 'Not just more money to add on to existing buildings/structures – combining parishes aims to save work and effort to release ministers for mission.'
41. There are recordings available of the consultation meeting that have not been used by the Diocese to present the meeting accurately.
42. Newport Minster submitted a number of carefully crafted submissions and proposals from both the PCC and Parochial Church meetings. No formal acknowledgment of the proposals and whether they had actually been considered and why they had been rejected was ever received.

43. The timescales outlined and stuck to except at the end of the informal consultation were too tight for the staff to collate all the information and the DPMC to adequately consider and understand all the submissions and adequately engage in the due diligence and governance required of a Trustee.

TYPES OF MINISTRY

44. All presentations, meetings and discussions emphasised team ministries. There were no acknowledgements or descriptions of alternatives by the Diocese, despite every PCC raising Group Ministry as their preferred way forward as they wished to retain two churchwardens and control of their finances.
45. When a team ministry option was suggested that would allow the individual PCCs to retain their two Churchwardens and control of their finances by another PCC, the representatives of the Diocese failed to explain proposals at General Synod would remove that option until it had happened.
46. Despite group ministry being suggested at the informal stage of the consultation as the preferred way forward by all PCCs, the differences between a team and group ministry had to be explained to DPMC at their final meeting to consider the proposals as even during the formal consultation DPMC members did not understand the differences.
47. It was proposed in the consultation phase that a Group Ministry be explored either informally or formally to work out the many issues before a Team Ministry was proposed.
48. The Archdeacon of Portsdown is clear in her written replies that Team Ministries have a mixed experience in the wider church where some flourish, but many do not. No evidence has been provided to show that a Group Ministry or Team Ministry will provide for the better cure of souls in this case.
49. A Team Ministry needs the support of all of the churches involved to flourish and the current situation is there are only two churches in favour.
50. The Minster community has been widely canvassed and is unanimously opposed to entering into a Team Ministry.

FLAWED EVIDENCE BASE

51. The Archdeacon of Portsdown in response to written questions admitted that that the Diocese had relied on figures and information from the Church Commissioners and not actually visited parishes to establish facts.
52. The presentation of one piece of statistical information, a 22% decline in the Minster congregation over 12 years, as a basis for pastoral reorganisation is deficient in that it fails to understand the context of the changes in the residential community in the centre of Newport and the changing nature of the Minster congregation.
53. The 10.30am service is growing. In 2011 attendance at Choral Matins was typically 30 and the sung traditional language Eucharist on the other Sundays slightly more. Today an average Sunday morning is 55 adults and three children, on a good day 65 with a regular worshipping community of over 90. This increases to over 500 for community and civic events.
54. The average age of the congregation at the Minster is substantially lower than 10 years ago. It is a younger (but not young!) community that has enabled mission developments such as the daily Coffee Shop to flourish.
55. A congregational away day, including the presence of the Diocesan Mission Development Officer, saw 43 members of the 45 present, declaring themselves to be new members in the last 5 years.
56. The Minster currently has one candidate exploring a vocation to the priesthood, one Lay Reader, 2 Occasional Preachers and 2 Lay Pastoral assistants. The Minster has 16 people who actively contribute to leading Sunday worship and a choir of 18. It has a brass section of 8. It attracts the support of visiting choirs and other organisations.
57. The Taize service held monthly is lay organised and led and continues to grow.
58. The Gospel choir recently started (after Easter), aimed at further developing another strand of worship, already has 12 regular attenders and grows every week.
59. The contact with those who use our coffee shop has resulted in a rise in occasional attendance at church and is now starting to show regular attendance.

60. Portsmouth Cathedral music outreach this year involving the Minster Director of Music to develop work with children and young people to extend beyond the initial program, has already engaged with two further schools above and beyond the five that used Newport Minster for their Christmas celebrations.
61. The traditional congregation was drawn from shop keepers living above their shops. Although this community no longer exists adult church attendance is similar to 2001 and growing.
62. The Minster has established a Eucharistic tradition based upon a liberal and inclusive theology where quality preaching rooted in scripture and the centrality of a sacramental life is valued.
63. The weekday ministry of the Minster to those in need, of prayer, tourism and hospitality is of significant proportions. There are increasing numbers of special services linked to different sections of the Island community. The footfall is in excess of 28,000 individuals per year, consuming approximately 6,000 votive prayer candles per year.
64. In 2018 our Christmas congregations rose by 25%.
65. We attribute rising numbers to mission initiatives, revised liturgy, LYCIG and social media.
66. Evidence presented from the Archdeacon of Portsdown suggests a significantly low percentage of the community attending an Anglican parish church.
67. There are 20 worshipping communities including the major centres for most denominations and it is likely that there is more than average "competition" for worshippers.
68. Given the national average of 5% of the population attending church, then the Minster becomes average. The Minster community acknowledges more progress needs to be made and is working hard to remove a historic community held belief that people are not welcome or even worthy enough to come to church.
69. The proposal involving a pioneer minister talks about social priorities including a food bank, debt counselling and a good neighbour scheme. Newport Churches Together is an agreed agent for social outreach and evangelism including people of all age ranges including parents and toddlers, youth work and school work.

70. Activities include the management of the Food Bank distribution, debt counselling, housing the homeless, a night shelter, providing fresh bread daily and cheap meals daily as well as supporting Youth for Christ and Revive Newport.
71. In addition to the worship events that might usually be expected, it has recently worked with Christ the King College to provide an initiative for mental health and young people.
72. We are fully engaged with these ecumenical initiatives and share in this with St Paul's Church, Barton. The more developed and coordinated approach to ecumenism has still some way to develop to fully include the whole Anglican community.
73. In Newport Churches Together we celebrate our diversity that allows each partner church to focus upon its strengths and gain support from others churches. While it is freely acknowledged that more work is needed there is evidence to show substantial progress.

STAFFING

74. The current staffing for clergy is 1 Newport Minster, 0.3 St Johns (about to go into interregnum), 1 Carisbrooke and 0.5 St Pauls (interregnum of five years). This is equivalent to 2.8 full time equivalents.
75. In addition to full time equivalent clergy of 2.8, Newport Minster has the equivalent of a full time administrator, St Johns has a part time administrator (0.4). Taking the full time equivalent to 4.2. Additionally Newport Minster and St John's have readers, one of whom will be lost if the draft proposal goes through.
76. The presentations say that there would be increase staffing levels from 2.8 to 5 full time equivalent across the (new) parish with a mixture of clergy, pioneering and operations staff.
77. The draft scheme says the cure of souls in that area will be shared by the incumbent of the new benefice whose office shall be that of rector in the team ministry and two other ministers each of whom shall have the title of vicar and a state equal to that of an incumbent of a benefice. This is only three posts.
78. The draft proposals for an investment of £1,500,000 over five years will only increase the full time equivalent staffing by 0.8 of which 0.2 will be clergy, but does not take account of the loss of one reader.

79. The draft proposals make no allowance for the need to continue the daily pattern of worship that has now been established as well as continue with providing the community and civic services that are routinely expected of the Minster (as outlined in the Minster Review and Consultation), whilst providing for the requirements of those wishing to see clergy regularly at the other churches.

DISPOSSESSION

80. The PCC noted that:

4.12 The vast majority of dispossessions resulting from pastoral reorganisation schemes will be "technical dispossessions" as it will usually be intended to appoint the person(s) concerned to comparable offices in the new benefices created by the reorganisation as a consequential provision of the scheme and they will therefore not be entitled to compensation. However, amendment of their licenses or statements of particulars to take account of their different responsibilities may be necessary.

4.13 The consent of anyone who would be dispossessed ("technically or otherwise) is not required to the scheme, but it is desirable that the bishop or his representative should contact him or her at an early stage to explain the consequences of the scheme. It is rare for dispossessions giving rise to compensation to arise but where it is unavoidable, detailed advice on the payment of compensation is provided

81. It is with concern that we note that office holders were warned of the possibility of dispossession before any consultation and note that the assurances of the measure were not communicated.
82. The raising of dispossession before any consultation process had begun suggests a predetermined outcome.

PLACES OF RESIDENCE

83. The proposed parsonage house of the benefice of Newport (The Vicarage) as the place of residence of the rector is not fit for purpose:
- 1) The downstairs toilet vents into the conservatory which adjoins the living room.
 - 2) Though adequately insulated against heat loss it has little noise insulation such that almost all conversations can be heard anywhere in the building.

- 3) Due to the location of the Parish Offices, the design of the one way systems in Newport can mean that what should be a two minute journey regularly takes over half an hour.
- 4) The living room has no independent means of fresh air ventilation.

MEDIATION

84. All four benefices have different views. It was suggested that mediation be used as a way forward but this has not been adopted.
85. The code of practice makes it clear that If proposals are disputed at the consultation stage, the DMPC should consider the possibility of using mediation to resolve the dispute before moving to the next stage in the Mission and Pastoral Measure process.

BAD FAITH

86. The proposed reorganisation does not adequately take into account the review and consultation of Newport Minster by the Bishop of Portsmouth.
87. The presentations at the consultations combined reorganisation and funding which is not solely concerned with the cure of souls as required by the Mission and Pastoral Measure.
88. Putting Pastoral Reorganisation alongside a bid for new investment in developing mission in Newport caused confusion because the Church Commissioners guidelines for attracting this investment do not specify pastoral reorganisation as a prerequisite for attracting new funds.
89. The new staffing proposals hardly adds any full time equivalent posts to what is already there. After the proposed five year funding from the Church Commissioners runs out, there is no clear proposal as how these new post/roles will be supported.
90. Rather than coming to the benefices with a blank sheet of paper or the question of how could we do this better, carefully crafted presentations and media releases had been prepared together with strict timetables, which have led to accusations of predetermined outcomes.
91. The Gaulby Judgement makes it clear that, 'the organisation of the diocese into parishes is for the ease and benefit of the people and not the incumbent' and therefore by implication the Diocese of Portsmouth as well.

92. The justification for a pastoral scheme must be for the better cure of souls with due regard to the furtherance of the mission of the Church of England. Not for the securing of mission finance from the Church Commissioners.
93. The failure to communicate the assurances of the Mission and Pastoral Measure to those being dispossessed shows that the Diocese may have followed the "letter of the law" but they did not have regard to the higher ethical and moral standard that is required of the church.
94. There must be adequate evidence of any factors taken into consideration in a proposed reorganisation. The failure to adequately and fully establish and record the facts before consideration of the proposed reorganisation must call into question the evidence base for a successful reorganisation.

CONCLUSION

95. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Newport Minster strongly objects to the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 draft scheme of Portsmouth Diocese in respect of the Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St Nicholas in the Castle, Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport; and Newport St John, primarily on the grounds of:
- a. The proposed scheme is not solely concerned with the cure of souls.
 - b. The evidence base for the proposed scheme is flawed.
 - c. The proposed scheme puts at risk the restoration and mission of Newport Minster.
 - d. The proposed scheme and consultation has not outlined the practicalities of maintaining the different traditions of the churches.
96. The PCC therefore asks the Church Commissioners to reject the proposed scheme at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix One	Diocese Website Announcement 9th October 2018
Appendix Two	The Bishop of Portsmouth - Proposals following the Newport Minster Review and Consultation 2016
Appendix Three	Parish Consultation Presentation
Appendix Four	Diocese Notes from Informal Consultation
Appendix Five	Diocese Website Announcement 6th December 2018
Appendix Six	Diocese Website Announcement 1st February 2019

Multi-million pound investment to help our mission and ministry

CATEGORY

live | pray | serve

DATE

9 Oct. 2018


SHARE

○



OUR diocese aims to launch an ambitious multi-million pound project to help the work of the Church of England have a bigger spiritual impact in this region.

It wants to invest £9.1m into parishes over the next five years to stimulate spiritual and numerical growth and to help worshippers to engage better with their local communities. It's hoped more than half of this money will come from the national Church.



The plans are part of the diocese's live | pray | serve strategy which aims to make new disciples, to grow our church communities, to equip worshippers for lifelong learning, and to help to transform our society.

The strategy includes the creation of multiple new congregations and working in brand new ways to serve those who we have traditionally been poor at engaging with – younger people, those in urban areas, and people on brand new housing developments. It involves both planting new churches and a network of pioneer ministers who can think in innovative ways.

The latest strand of that strategy involves reorganising some of our parishes in order to free up some resources and is based on similar transformation models elsewhere in the Church of England.

Parishes in the urban areas of Havant, Gosport and the Isle of Wight have been identified as places where renewed investment could have the maximum impact – for instance, where a one per cent increase in the percentage of people in those areas who go to church equates to 200-300 new worshippers. The idea is to redeploy people, finances and buildings, so that God can use them in new ways.

If approved, the £9.1m project would include:

PORTSMOUTH:

- investing £3m over the next five years to support new Church of England initiatives in the city of Portsmouth;
- creating infrastructure to support the growing, new congregations at Harbour Church and St Margaret's Church in Eastney, both of which have outgrown existing resources since their creation in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

- new pioneer ministers working in inner-city Portsmouth and Paulsgrove, focussed on working with the local communities.

HAVANT

- investing £1.4m over the next five years into the Church of England's ministry in the Leigh Park estates (around double what the diocese currently spends);
- increasing the staffing levels from three posts to five, with a mix of clergy, pioneering and operations staff;
- merging the three existing parishes of Leigh Park, Warren Park and West Leigh to become one parish covering all the estates;
- investing in updating building resources to ensure they can be better used by local communities.

ISLE OF WIGHT

- investing £1.5m over the next five years into the Church of England's ministry in Newport;
- increasing the number of staff from the current 2.8 posts (full-time equivalent) to 5 posts, with a mix of clergy and non-clergy;
- merging the four existing parishes in Newport to become one parish of Newport (with the rural part of the parish of Carisbrooke merged with Arreton and Gatcombe);
- a range of new initiatives that will serve a greater number of people in the Newport area.

GOSPORT

- investing £1.9m over the next five years into the Church of England's ministry in Gosport;
- increasing the number of staff from four posts to six, including operations support to maximise community use of the church buildings;

- merging the parishes of Rowner and Bridgemaury; and merging the parishes of Elson, Forton, Christ Church and Holy Trinity;
- planting at least two new congregations in the town.

It is hoped the project will be funded over the next five years by £3.75m in reallocation of existing resources, £450,000 from diocesan reserves and £4.9m from the national Church. The diocese is applying for this £4.9m from the Church Commissioners, as part of their national Renewal and Reform programme. We'll hear whether we have secured that external funding by Christmas.

Bishop Christopher said: "These are ambitious plans and have been developed from a number of detailed studies that we have undertaken in these areas. This isn't about saving money or reducing what we do, in fact we are increasing our investment in all of these areas and we want to make sure that we have the biggest impact with the resources that we already have.

"We are aware of the faithful, committed work of many of our clergy and parishes over decades and centuries, and thank God for it. Equally, we know that our church services, activities and events are often only reaching a small percentage of the local community and we need to find better ways to reach the vast majority of people living in these places.

"Our experience so far with a variety of church plants and pioneering ministers is that innovative approaches do work. Brand new congregations are flourishing and pioneer ministers have found ways to bring the gospel to those who might never attend a church service. This project aims to expand that work, partly by reallocating resources, and partly with significant new investment."

We have held three public meetings to discuss the plans with those in the affected parishes. The period of consultation will continue for six months before our Bishop's Council is asked to approve specific plans to reorganise parishes. The final decision is taken by the Church Commissioners.

Public meetings

You can download the presentations from each of the three public meetings about this initiative below. There were also notes taken at each meeting, which will be used by our Bishop's Council as they consider whether to approve or alter these proposals:

Portsmouth Diocese Resourcing Growth

Parish Public Consultation



Welcome

- Timescales for this evening
- Everyone is welcome to have their say, and there will also be further opportunities
- We are keen to hear what you like about our general proposals, any concerns you might have, and anything we've not thought of so far

Opening Prayer

Father, we seek the guidance of your Holy Spirit
as we reflect on the future.

Give us vision, hope, and responsibility.

Help us as we imagine and as we plan,
as we speak and as we listen,

to honour your name,

to advance your kingdom,
and to carry out your will.

Amen.

Agenda

- Why are we changing?
- What might we be changing?
- When might we be changing?

Why are we changing?

- We are exploring new patterns of ministry in churches across the diocese, not just in this deanery.
- There are some areas of the diocese where, despite the best efforts of clergy and congregations, relatively few people go to church.
- At this time we have the opportunity to apply for additional funds to support new growth projects. In order to be eligible for these funds we also need to release money from our existing budgets and invest in mission.

Why are we changing?

We have learned that . . .

- Working with more children and families leads to growth
- When churches relate to local needs – eg debt, food poverty, housing, carers, loneliness – then they can also help people grow in faith
- People who have never gone to church before are unlikely to join in with what we currently do, but some will come if we provide new, accessible, child-friendly worship



Why are we changing?

We have learned that...

- Planting new churches with a fresh approach – eg Harbour Church in Portsmouth city – can rapidly reach many people who wouldn't otherwise go to church
- Any new initiative works best with a whole team approach, not just a lone individual
- Any new resourcing initiative needs help and support from surrounding churches, deanery, diocese, and can give support and resources back to others in turn as it grows

Why are we changing here?

- We want to create an environment in Newport where:
 - all of the churches can flourish and grow
 - we can be wise stewards of all of the resources that we have
 - the church buildings can be better used by the local community
 - the churches can have a bigger impact on some of the issues which are faced in this area
 - churches here can be a resource and support to other churches on the island

Why are we changing here?

- We want to free up people, finances, administrative burdens and buildings from solely maintaining the existing church in order to be able to support new projects, opportunities and communities.

What might we be changing?

- The town of Newport is currently made up of four separate parishes
- The four parishes are currently supported by 2.8 FTE of clergy staff

What might we be changing?

We want to:

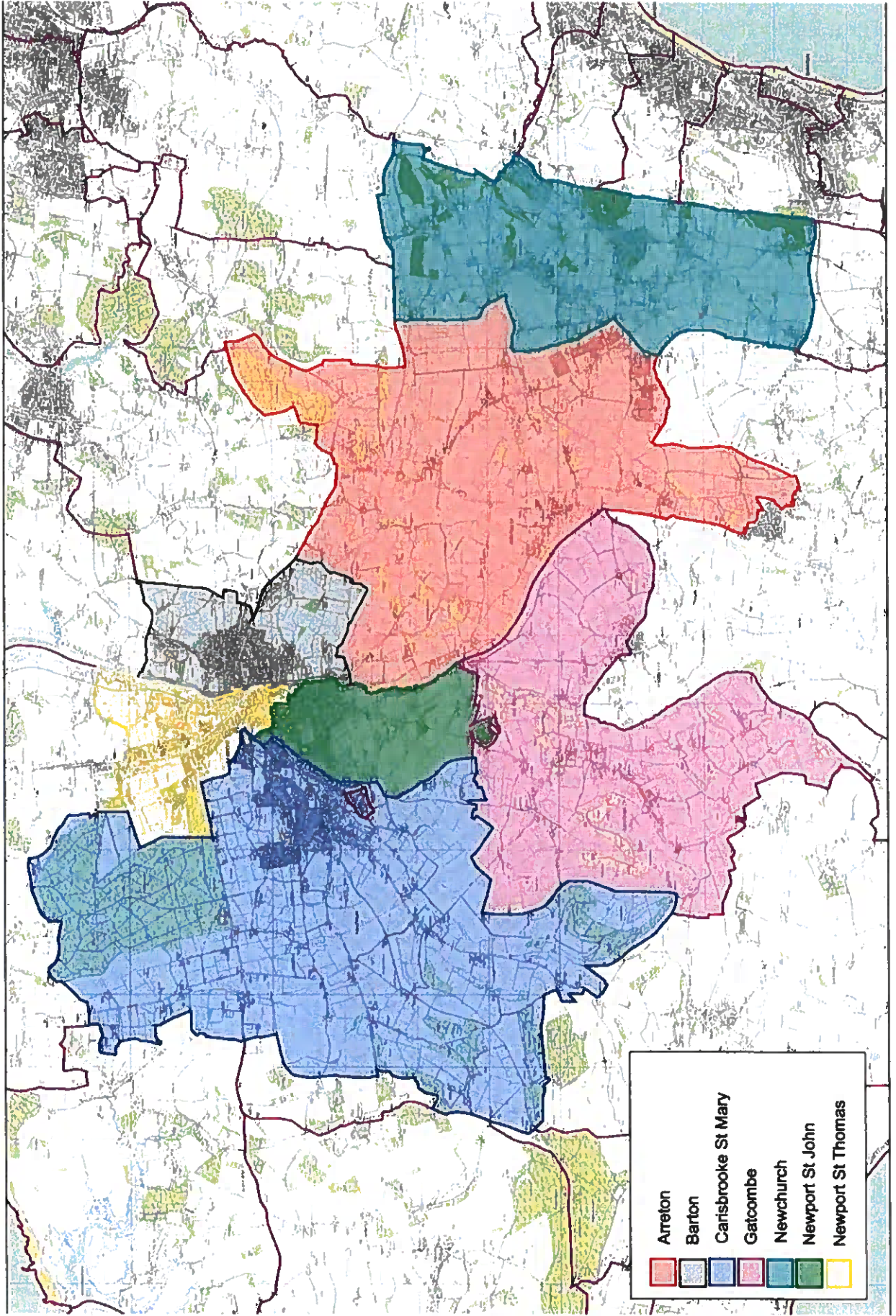
- Create one parish that covers all of the town of Newport
- Increase the staffing levels from 2.8 to 5 FTE across the parish, with a mixture of clergy, pioneering and operations staff
- Invest in updating building resources to ensure the buildings can be better used by local communities
- Create an intern programme to help young people on the island explore their vocation

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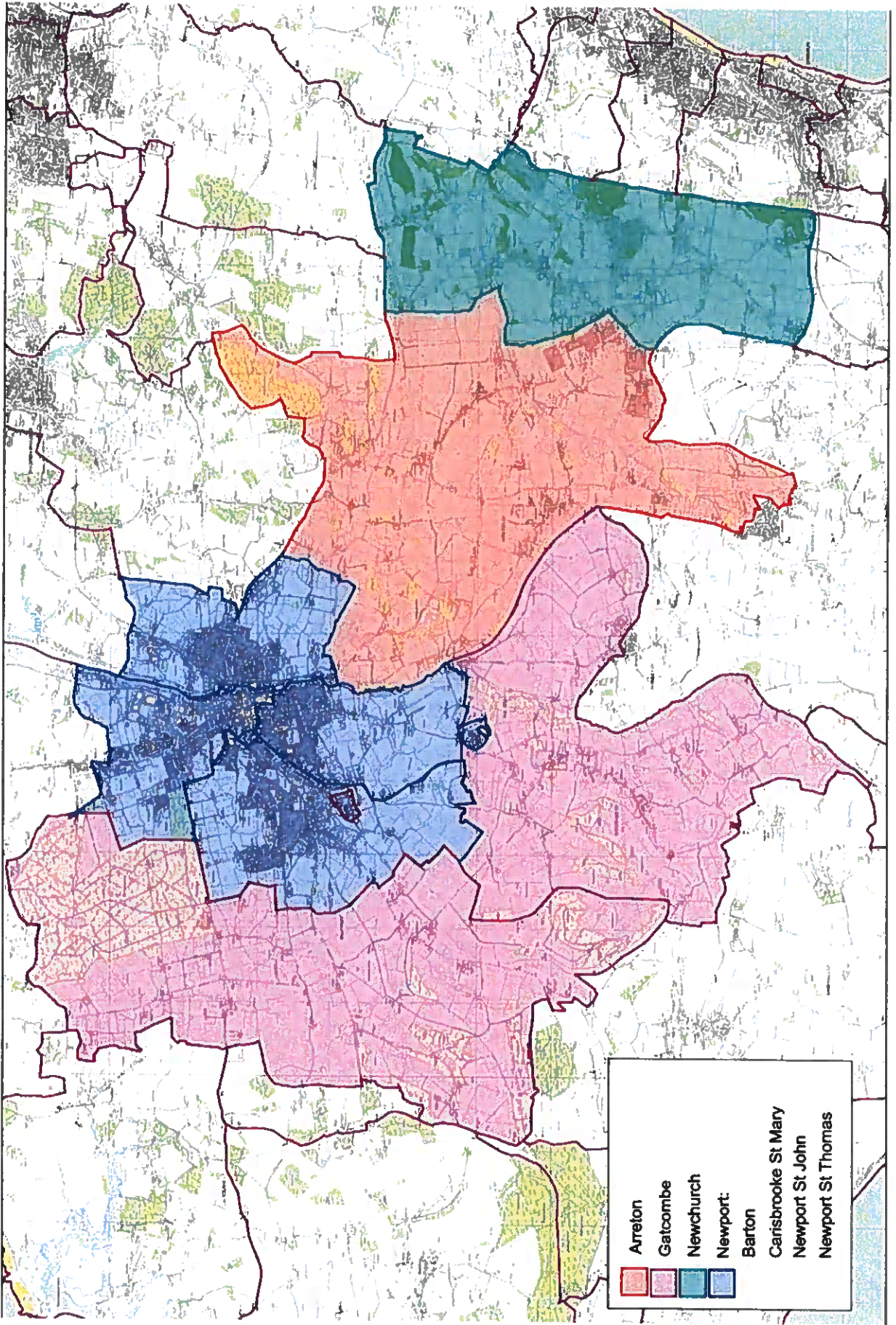
What might we be changing?

- We are considering taking out the town part of Carisbrooke from the rural part of the parish of Carisbrooke and the parish of Gatcombe.
- We would aim to combine the remaining rural part with the parishes of **Arreton and Newchurch**.
- This would make one parish that covers all of the area south of Newport.
- We would create one full time post to serve these parishes replacing the two part-time roles currently in place.

What might we be changing?



What might we be changing?



What might we be changing?

- Including existing resources we aim to spend over £1.5 million over the next five years on ministry in Newport.

What are we being consulted about?

- Although we are keen to hear your views on our proposals for new ministry in Newport town, what we need to consult you about – first informally and then formally, when more definite plans are in place – is basically this:

Should we create one new town parish which combines the existing parishes or parts of parishes in Newport; and one new rural parish where the remaining parts join with Newchurch and Arretton?

What are we being consulted about?

- But we would like also to hear your views on the kinds of ministry that you think we should prioritize in Newport in the future and how we might best do that:

Time for small groups

Focus:

1. *What do you like about the plans that we have outlined so far?*
2. *Does anything concern you?*
3. *What have we not considered that we might need to look at further?*

**PLEASE USE THE STICKIES TO RECORD
YOUR IDEAS**

Brief feedback

When might we be changing?

We are currently entering the *informal* consultation part of the process.

w/c **Monday 15 Oct** - Public Consultation Meetings

Friday 19 Oct - Letters sent to Legally Interested Parties plus anyone else who asks for them

When might we be changing?

Friday 30 November - closing date for written responses

Wednesday 5 December - information and any scheme changes presented to the Bishop's Council

When might we be changing?

Following this we will have a *formal* consultation process lasting eight weeks:

Friday 7 December 2018 – formal consultation documents sent

Friday 1 Feb 2019 - closing date for written responses

Monday 11 March 2019 – final scheme presented to the Bishop’s Council

Friday 15 March 2019 – Bishop Christopher to send final schemes to Church Commissioners Pastoral Division

When might we be changing?

When the scheme has been received by the Church Commissioners Pastoral Division they will review and evaluate it, also looking at comments from this and other parts of the consultation process. They will make a decision in either May or July 2019.

The scheme could be made as early as 1 June 2019 and could come into effect on 1 December 2019.

Between these two dates we would look to recruit to new and vacant positions with the aim of people starting in new roles by 1 January 2020.



How we will communicate and how people can communicate with us?

We will continue to put information on the diocesan website and on our own social media. We will send emails to parish clergy and officers.

As well as the formal letters which are sent to interested parties, we are keen to hear from anyone who has a view.

You can email our deputy diocesan secretary: jenny.hollingsworth@portsmouth.anglican.org

You can write to us at The Diocese of Portsmouth, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth, PO2 8HB.



Closing prayer

Lord God, you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.

Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Bishop of Portsmouth's
PROPOSALS FOLLOWING THE NEWPORT MINSTER
REVIEW AND CONSULTATION 2016**

Background

After long uncertainty about the role of the parish church of Sts Thomas, Newport since its designation in 2008 as Newport Minster I invited the Dean of Norwich, The Very Revd Jane Hedges, and Canon Peter Leonard, Chancellor of our Cathedral, at the request of the Vicar, The Revd Kevin Arkell, and Church Council (PCC) and with the support of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, to conduct a Review and report to me. After receiving written evidence and undertaking consultation in person in January 2016 I widely published their Review earlier this year and invited responses. I am grateful to the 20 individuals and groups who responded in writing and for the discussion at Deanery Synod in September. This consultation greatly assisted me in deepening, and sometimes challenging, the evidence and recommendations made by the Reviewers and informing my Proposals. I am grateful to the Vicar and Minster PCC, to Dean Jane, Canon Peter and Archdeacon Peter, and to all those who have contributed to this process.

The responsibility for the Proposals that follow is mine, informed by these people and the helpful process. My principal proposals are highlighted in bold type.

In recent years much has been achieved in the phased restoration programme to secure the fabric of the Minster and in the setting of parish finances on a firmer basis. I congratulate those involved the hard graft this has involved. Now is the time to build on that work.

The task before us all is to transform what have often been nebulous rhetoric, hopes and aspirations into practical and effective service of the Gospel and the people of the Island, resident, business or holidaying. This will require building on good existing relationships, involving many more people, sitting lightly to inherited assumptions, freeing our minds and flexibly using buildings for creative (and sometimes risky) initiatives.

Newport Minster

I confirm at the outset **my commitment to leading and supporting the ministry of Newport Minster** in the diocese and particularly in the mission of the Gospel in the Isle of Wight. Some have called for Sts Thomas' to revert to its former status. **I do not propose a change of status but it is clear that the Minster's distinctive role must be better articulated and its service more effectively offered**, and not defined by what it is not or what it might be likened to. To describe it as quasi- or pro-Cathedral, or not a parish church, or by reference to Minsters in other settings is unhelpfully to categorise its ministry, though it must relate in a particular way to other parishes and our cathedral, and learn where appropriate from elsewhere. These proposals and my articulation of its role, in action as well as in word, are intended to develop its work as the Minster Church in Newport on the Isle of Wight, enhancing its service to its parish and also complementing the ministry of Island parishes and chaplaincies. **Mutual enrichment and collaboration in Christian mission, witness and service must be our shared intention.**



The proposals are demanding, as were the reflections of the Reviewers, calling each of us both to step up – for instance in offering time and expertise to the Minster’s ministry – and also to step back – for instance in allowing others to exercise ministry or leadership. The Church on the Island, and more especially the Gospel and our service of the people of the Island and diocese, will be better served by clarity of role and common commitment.

Strategic Role

The Minster must be more clearly the focus of my episcopal ministry on the Island. I will continue to hold Confirmation services in the Cathedral and in deaneries but I would expect to preside at an annual Confirmation service at the Minster. These and other occasions will be episcopal rather than parish occasions and I invite Sts Thomas’ PCC to offer hospitality and flexibility for these services. **Regularly hosting Confirmation and other episcopal services requires the commitment of the Minster to be active in supporting enquirers (through Alpha or Emmaus or some other programme) and drawing people into deeper discipleship.**

A central role for the Minster as the focus, resource or hub for Island ministry requires the involvement of many people and especially of those charged with Christian leadership. **The place of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight in facilitating the Minster’s centrality should be clear not only by a designated stall/seat in the Minster church but also by an expectation of consultation** about initiatives and decisions being considered by the Vicar and PCC and a standing invitation to attend PCC.

Newport Minster at the heart of Island Christianity, just as Newport is the hub of Island life and communications, will require generosity and involvement on the part of many people. To fulfil this aspiration the Vicar and PCC (with the Archdeacon, Area Dean, and Island licensed ministers) should **prepare as a matter of priority for a regular pattern of daily public prayer, increasingly involving clergy, Readers and others from across the Island.** This is a fundamental priority. I ask the Area Dean to consider the need for seasonal volunteer chaplains and coordinate training and provision. These, along with my episcopal teaching ministry and the involvement of the archdeacon, are an essential spiritual prerequisite to the wider Island role of the Minster.

I propose that **the Minster will be the focal point for my ministry on the Island** and I intend to seek opportunities, beginning in Lent and/or Holy Week 2017, to base spiritual teaching and episcopal ministry at the Minster as well as to continue to minister in every parish and chaplaincy.

As occasion warrants **the Minster should be a place for gathering together and for sending out God’s people into the whole Island community.** It will be a place for teaching and learning, for hospitality, nourishment, encouragement and an exemplar of our shared ministry and mission as we Live, Pray and Serve on the Island and in the Diocese of Portsmouth. As the Minster learns more about the nature of this ministry - and changes - so parishes will also need to understand their role in enabling a more collaborative Church than it has been until now. The Archdeacon may consider that Visitations would normally be located at the Minster. All Island parishes and clergy, along with others where appropriate from the diocese, will not only be welcome at all Minster occasions but invited to, and included in them.

Governance

I do not propose any change in the Minster's parish status. That the parish is predominantly commercial and retail rather than residential does not of itself indicate that its ministry would be enhanced by extra-parochial status. Rather it indicates that its local ministry should, like in every parish, be informed by the needs and circumstances of those it seeks to serve. I consider it important that the effective local ministry of the Minster should not be dissimilar to that of the other Island and diocesan parishes. Responsibility for the administration of the parish and Minster Church will remain with the Vicar and PCC.

I acknowledge the outstanding Parish Share historic shortfall, which the Minster PCC is gradually reducing, and the significant progress over the last five years in returning the annual accounts to break-even with full meeting of Parish Share request. **I do not propose that the accumulated shortfall is written-off but I invite the PCC to liaise with the deanery and diocese about support for addressing this.** The Vicar and PCC must engage proactively with the Vitality Focus Review process.

A Council should be formed to further and support the work of the Minster Church, spiritual, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, reviewing and advising on the direction and oversight of that work. It will recognise that the Minster is more than a parish church and its advisory role should, in particular, consider proposals submitted by the Vicar and PCC in connection with the general direction and mission of the Minster and give advice on them, and receive and consider the annual budget, the annual report and audited accounts of the PCC. The Minster Council Chair will be appointed by the Bishop and membership will include, following further consideration about responsibilities and constitution, the Archdeacon, Area Dean, Lay Chair, the Vicar and some PCC members, with representatives from each of the Island Clusters of parishes, the Bishop's Council and the Cathedral Chapter, along with stakeholders from the wider Island community. The Council will report annually to the Bishop.

Alongside these formal advisory responsibilities the Council will be well placed with its wide membership to consider how the Minster might respond to our shared vocation to evangelism, service and witness which arise from the five marks of mission.¹

I propose that to reflect the dignity of a Minster the Vicar's Licence should specifically refer to Sts Thomas' as the Minster Church and that s/he be assigned a seat/stall in Portsmouth Cathedral.

Though nationally there are instances where Minsters or greater churches are parts of multi parish benefices I recognise that the present arrangement with St John's are not conducive to confident Christian ministry. I propose that **the Archdeacon consider urgently the feasibility of separating St John's parish from the plurality with Sts Thomas'.** This would free both parishes to concentrate on the effective outreach and wider ministry opportunities that are clearly noted in the Review. This will require the usual consultation and consideration which accompanies pastoral reorganisation.

¹ The Five Marks of Mission

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth



Ministry

I ask the Vicar and PCC to give urgent and priority consideration to areas of outreach, evangelism, service and witness within the parish they serve, in each case considering with others whether they themselves are best placed to lead, resource or partner with other parishes and denominations, the cathedral or diocese. Given its resourcing potential for the Island Christian community, **the Minster should expect the Diocese and Bishop to support its discernment of outreach and service ministry through the provision of expert and experienced practitioners and consultants.** In particular further attention and energy needs to be given to:

- retail and commercial town centre chaplaincy
- education and schools' ministry, including Minster trails and workshops
- pioneer ministries and initiatives
- lay, clergy and other vocational promotional discernment
- social enterprise and entrepreneurship
- engaging culture and the arts
- enriching the quality of worship and initiating new congregations
- cultivating mission intentionality
- reordering of the interior of the church

I further request that the Vicar and PCC consult with appropriate diocesan and Island office holders, always with the agreement of the archdeacon, about any other ministry decisions which may have implication for the deanery and diocese given the role of Sts Thomas' as Minster.

Building

The fabric appeal and restoration, with the increasingly effective work of the Friends of the Minster, has enabled considerable progress to be made in securing the Minster's fabric for the coming decades. The phasing has inevitably restricted **internal reordering of the church which will be essential to realising the enhanced role of the Minster** in the town, on the Island and in diocese. To be fully available for episcopal, deanery and ecumenical gatherings the church's furnishings and layout need to be more flexible and more welcoming for worship of varying styles and for events of different types.

I propose that the PCC consider this again as a matter of priority. With the advice of an external consultant I **propose implementation of short term low cost changes that would aid flexibility for worship and other occasions.** In addition further work needs to be put in hand with the architect, the archdeacon and Diocesan Advisory Committee, a liturgical consultant, along with Island stakeholders, about creating space, technical provision and resource for the wide range of use which Christian ministry in Newport and on the Island needs.

After their successful fundraising for the fabric appeal, I **invite the Friends to consider how in the future they might continue to support the ministry of the Minster,** perhaps by supporting its educational or hospitality ministry as well as offering important social opportunities for the many who wish to be part of the Minster's potentially wide reach and ministry on and beyond the Island.

Accountability

The Minster, like every parish, is accountable through the annual Archdeacon's Visitation and, reflecting its particular role, the Minster Council. **I shall conduct an episcopal Visitation in the summer of 2018 to review progress in furthering these Proposals.**

I pray for the flourishing of the ministry for mission of Newport Minster, Sts Thomas, as it serves its parish, people, and the Isle of Wight community.

Christopher Portsmouth:

November 2016

Consultation notes: Newport, Isle of Wight

The archdeacon welcomed people to the meeting and introduced the diocesan team who were to give input during the evening. The archdeacon explained the structure of the evening, its aim, and the process for consultation. Members of the diocesan team then each presented different parts of the evening, and responded to questions.

The aim of the evening was to consult about plans for pastoral reorganisation, i.e. about how we organize our parishes and ministry roles. The wider aim was to help churches plan and adapt for ministry which cares for our existing congregations, but which also help to reach new people and grow as a church.

In terms of process, this was the beginning of a six month process of consultation. There would be a number of opportunities for everyone to engage both formally and informally within this process. The process was being driven by a desire to increase impact within the affected areas and to reach more people with the love of God. It was not being driven by costs savings, closing churches or by choosing only to manage decline.

[There were a number of interruptions during this section and for the rest of the evening's consultation. The note taker for the evening recorded to the best of her ability the key points that were being made, but this was not always possible as people sometimes spoke over each other and interrupted the speakers. Not every interruption is recorded. Where the same point was made multiple times, it is recorded once. Many people did not speak at all. Some people spoke privately to members of the diocesan team during and after the presentation and their contributions are not recorded unless they gave permission for that to happen. Everyone was assured that they could telephone, email, or write to the diocesan office and that their views would be collected and taken seriously during the process of consultation.]

The presentation continued:

Why are we changing?

- We are exploring new patterns of ministry in churches across the diocese, not just in this deanery.
- There are some areas of the diocese where, despite the best efforts of clergy and congregations, relatively few people go to church.
- At this time we have the opportunity to apply for additional funds to support new growth projects. In order to be eligible for these funds we also need to release money from our existing budgets and invest in mission.

We have learned that:

- Working with more children and families leads to growth;
- When churches relate to local needs – e.g. debt, food poverty, housing, carers, loneliness – then they can also help people grow in faith;
- It is significantly more likely that we will attract those who have never gone to church before by also providing new, accessible, child-friendly worship services;
- Planting new churches with a fresh approach – e.g. Leesland Neighbourhood Church in Gosport and Harbour Church in Portsmouth city – can rapidly reach many people who wouldn't otherwise go to church;
- Any new initiative works best with a whole team approach, not just a lone individual;

- 
- Any new resourcing initiative needs help and support from surrounding churches, deanery, diocese, and can give support and resources back to others in turn as it grows.

Why are we changing in these particular parishes?

- We want to create an environment here where:
 - all of the churches can flourish and grow;
 - we can be wise stewards of all of the resources that we have;
 - the church buildings can be better used by the local community;
 - the churches can have a bigger impact on some of the issues which are faced in this area;
 - churches here can be a resource and support to other churches in the Newport deanery.

We want to free people from the burdens of finances, administration, and buildings so that rather than only maintaining the existing church they will also be able to support new projects, opportunities, and communities

What might we be changing?

- The town of Newport is currently made up of four separate parishes.
- The four parishes are currently supported by 2.8 FTE of clergy staff.

We want to:

- Create one parish that covers all of the town of Newport;
- Increase the staffing levels from 2.8 to 5 FTE across the parish, with a mixture of clergy, pioneering and operations staff;
- Invest in updating building resources to ensure the buildings can be better used by local communities;
- Create an intern programme to help young people on the island explore their vocation.

Maps were shown, with affected areas in different colours

What might we do differently?

- Over the coming weeks we are going to be talking to local churches and community groups about what this investment could look like. We will want to hear your views.
- At the moment we don't know exactly what this will look like but possible ideas include:
 - a church plant focussed on younger people;
 - more children's and families ministry;
 - social outreach – foodbanks, debt support, carers?;



- operational support for buildings, finance, and administration.
- Including existing resources we aim to spend over £1.5 million over the next five years on ministry in Newport.
- This is approximately double what we currently spend.

- We want everyone to know the fullness of life that comes from faith in Jesus Christ.
- We want our churches to grow so that they are sustainable and can reach more people.
- We believe that by combining all three parishes together and having a coordinated plan for ministry, we could help these things to happen.

What are we consulting on?

- Although we are keen to hear your views on our proposals for new ministry in Newport town, what we need to consult you about – first informally and then formally, when more definite plans are in place – is basically this:

Should we create one new town parish which combines the existing parishes or parts of parishes in Newport; and one new rural parish where the remaining parts join with Newchurch and Arreton?

General discussion:

- What is the potential impact on the deanery?
Not looking at closing churches but purely about altering parish boundaries.
- It is difficult to tell the difference between rural and urban parts of Carisbrooke.
Explained where the more populated areas on the map are.
- What will the staffing levels look like for new parts of Newport?
Combination of clergy and pioneer ministers. It is hoped that additional administrators will take away some of the administrative parts of work from clergy.
- Where did the parish lines on map come from?
Mostly existing boundaries. Urban and rural line in Newport is a proposed division. Local information on the demographics in Newport was consulted.
- What is the benefit of changing boundaries?
Not just more money to add on to existing buildings/structures – combining parishes aims to save work and effort to release ministers for mission.
- You talk about increased administration – West Wight was promised an administrator two years ago and this has not happened.
Objections to the pastoral scheme has meant that the scheme is currently sitting with Church Commissioners awaiting their conclusion. Administrator will be decided depending on the outcome.
- (Clive Todd) Also in relation to the administrator in West Wight – when will the appointment take place? We have been told there will be a delay until summer 2019. Is it possible to release funds from the Diocese now?
To be looked into but not this evening. Joanne promised to look into. This proposal is for external not existing funding. The proposed scheme is aiming towards opportunities for better mission, ministry and coordination and to bring the gospel afresh to a younger generation.

- (Kevin Arkell) Clergy jobs will be lost – no groundwork has been done prior to the consultation.
Clergy who might be affected were visited individually and therefore had information beforehand. They were given fair warning out of courtesy.

Participants were provided with sticky notes to record their ideas, working in small groups

1. *What do you like about the plans that we have outlined so far?*
2. *What concerns you?*
3. *What have we not considered that we might need to look at further?*

[The diocesan team asked people to write on the sticky notes so that the voices of people who did not want to speak in the public meeting could also be heard. Many people did use the sticky notes, others chose not to, and instead engaged 1:1 with the diocesan team or talked to each other.

There was a time of feedback and the following points were made/questions were asked during this time, or had been made during the presentation earlier and were then picked up in the feedback. Questions were answered where possible (and recorded below) and points were taken and recorded.

Group Discussion:

The audience were reassured that this is only the beginning of the consultation period.

Like – Applaud attempt to manage positively change that is inevitable in the long term.
Exciting if it works.

Concern – Message coming over wrongly and parishes not reassured.

Feels like flushing the chain – we don't all want to be the same. Is this God's plan?

There are new estates with around 5000 people without a church. People with disabilities will have difficulty getting to church.

Things to consider:

- There will be difficulties in getting congregations of diverse traditions to work together.
- How would a boundary change lead to growth?
- How will primary schools fit in?
- Have we got the money?
- Newport needs a group ministry not a team ministry.
- Have you considered an ecumenical approach rather than team?
- Vicars could be made redundant then have to apply for their jobs again. This has upset a lot of people.
Have tried to aim at fairness – church law means that if parishes are restructured the roles of clergy within it no longer exist – there will, however, be more roles to apply for.
- Broken trust.
Tried to find a way of sharing with as many people as possible.
- You have to carry people with you – is all money going into people or buildings, accommodation, etc.?
Look at other parishes – you have already created a large benefice and travel is difficult.
Open to ideas from other parishes. Majority of money is going to people, not really buildings.
- Large rural parish – how will it be run and administered? Travel issues considered? Pastoral and school visits difficult. Why has there been no pre-consultation? All parishes are ancient with their own identities – why change? Must be tactful and gradual.

- Harbour Church – geared around student population. Could students be catered for in a similar way? *What is right in one context is not always appropriate in another. Harbour has helped other churches grow in the surrounding area. It has allowed a Mission focus and young people have been asked what they want.*
- Have you approached Youth for Christ? – *Not yet.* You don't know what is already here or not here. We want to bring people to Christ. *Trying to take away administration that stops people going out to bring people to Christ. We are not reinventing the wheel. We want to work with what we have. We want to support people who currently feel unsupported and some of whom are at their wits end.*
- We are already doing Live Pray Serve. If we don't change God will move on and do something different.
- God must be at the centre.
- Exploring vocation – questioning whether Portsmouth will nurture vocation. Get the people bit right. *Want to see vocation grow – nothing we are trying to do is against that. Prepared to come back to discuss all issues with clergy and other groups.*

The sticky notes were collected so that their feedback could be recorded.

The timetable for the consultation was outlined:

We are currently entering the *informal* consultation part of the process.

w/c **Monday 15th October**: Public Consultation Meetings

Friday 19th October: Informal letters sent to Legally Interested Parties plus anyone else who asks for them

Friday 30th November: closing date for written responses

Wednesday 5th December: statements of view and any scheme changes presented to the Bishop's Council

Following this we will have a *formal* consultation process lasting eight weeks [extended beyond the usual 4-6 weeks as it falls over the Christmas holidays]

Friday 7th December 2018: formal consultation letter and draft proposals sent to legally interested parties

Friday 1st February 2019: closing date for written responses

Monday 11th March 2019: statements of view and final draft proposals presented to the Bishop's Council

Friday 15th March 2019: Bishop Christopher to send draft scheme to Church Commissioners Pastoral Division

When the scheme has been received by the Church Commissioners Pastoral Division they will review and evaluate it. It will then be published. If there are representations the Church Commissioners will look at comments from this and other parts of the consultation process. They will make a decision in either May or July 2019.

The scheme could be made as early as 1 June 2019 and could come into effect on 1 December 2019.

Between these two dates we would look to recruit to new and vacant positions with the aim of people starting in new roles by 1 January 2020.



How we will communicate and how people can communicate with us?

We will continue to put information on the diocesan website and on our own social media. We will send emails to parish clergy and officers.

As well as the formal letters which are sent to interested parties, we are keen to hear from anyone who has a view.

You can email the deputy diocesan secretary: jenny.hollingsworth@portsmouth.anglican.org

You can write to us at The Diocese of Portsmouth, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth, PO2 8HB.

The meeting closed with a prayer.

New timetable for parish reorganisation plans

CATEGORY

live | pray | serve

DATE

6 Dec. 2018

SHARE

○



THE Bishop and Bishop's Council have altered their timetable to decide on potential parish reorganisation – because of the huge amount of feedback they have received.

Our Bishop's Council was due to consider the possible reorganisation of parishes in Havant, Gosport and the Isle of Wight at their meeting last night (Dec 5).

But Bishop Christopher suggested that members needed more time to consider the responses they've received via public meetings, their visits to PCCs, emails and petitions. Their final visits to individual parishes only happened on November 30, giving them little time to read through all the responses before their meeting (*pictured above: copies of the paperwork Bishop's Council members were sent*).

Many members of the Bishop's Council had approached the meeting feeling the same as the bishop. Members therefore warmly welcomed the bishop's suggestion and voted unanimously to delay making any further decisions until the New Year, in order to read through all of those responses and to take them seriously.

Bishop Christopher told the meeting: "We are an apostolic Church – one holy, catholic and apostolic, as weekly we proclaim. So we are sent out with the good news. Of course we welcome people in and invite them to come to our community and to our church buildings, but our vocation is also to be sent.

"These consultations are about changing our structures to help both that invitation to come in and also our calling to go out. They are about a mixed economy church; about the familiar that we know and have, and initiatives that we do not yet take.

"They are not numbers-driven but gospel-driven; money is not the motivation but mission. So the energy we bring is:

- to enhance, not replace, what is already offered in outreach, witness and service;
- to increase paid ministry, lay and ordained in and from our buildings, and is not a back-door way to close them;

- to rejuvenate engagement in new ways, not just doing more of the same.

“Our responsibility - mine and yours - is to attempt as much as we can to draw others into friendship with Jesus. We have been trying very hard to grow members of our congregations in confident faith so that each of us can play our part in making contacts and disciples.

“We have also in this diocese learned and seen that we can do other things as well, taking initiatives to make a difference. That is why Bishop’s Council has since March been moving towards a decision we soon need to make about turnaround ministry in some parts of the diocese, enabling both existing and new ministry to flourish.

“As Christ’s Church in this diocese we are called to be faithful to the faith we have received and to share it afresh in each generation. That responsibility and privilege requires our commitment and our vision.

“However, the documents that we have before us are substantial. I’m not therefore proposing that we reach a decision today. We need longer to examine them, to pray and to consider our response. The feedback we have received deserves to be taken seriously.”

The original proposal was to invest £9.1m over the next five years into parishes in Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport and the Isle of Wight to help the Church of England reach more people with the gospel. More than half this money could come from the national Church. The proposal has since expanded to become a £9.65m project.

It is part of the diocese’s live | pray | serve strategy which aims to make new disciples, to grow our church communities, to equip worshippers for lifelong learning, and to help to transform our society.

The proposal could involve reorganising parishes in Leigh Park, Warren Park and West Leigh, parts of Gosport, and in Newport on the Isle of Wight to help the Church engage with the local community in new ways, using learning from existing programmes in our own parishes and projects from other dioceses..

As well as three public meetings at the start of the consultation process, Bishop's Council members have attended 30 meetings with individual PCCs and groups of clergy in the affected areas over the past six weeks. Hundreds of emails and many letters have also been received, as well as petitions. Every single response has been sent to every member of Bishop's Council to consider. The Bishop's Council will now meet in January to consider the proposed reorganisation further. If they agree draft proposals then, there will be an eight-week period of formal consultation throughout February and March. And a special meeting of Bishop's Council dedicated to these proposals will be organised in April. If they are agreed then, there is a further consultation process with the Church Commissioners, following which a decision will be made. The original proposal involved the creation of teams of clergy and lay people who could work in new ways to engage with local communities. This could involve the creation of multiple new congregations, new pioneer ministers, and work to revamp our church buildings. The idea was that the project would be funded by £3.75m in reallocation of existing resources, up to £1m from diocesan reserves, and £4.9m from the national Church. The diocese is applying for this £4.9m from the Church Commissioners as part of their national Renewal and Reform programme. The bid to the national Church has now been split into two parts. We'll hear by Christmas whether we've secured

funding for the first part – money which could be spent to create infrastructure for new church plants and new pioneer ministers in Portsmouth.



Bishop's Council's reorganisation plans announced

CATEGORY

live | pray | serve

DATE

1 Feb. 2019

SHARE



The Bishop's Council has approved plans for an initiative designed to increase the spiritual impact of the Church of England across south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The plan includes extra investment in parishes so that £9.65m is spent in parts of Portsmouth, Gosport, Newport and the Leigh Park estates. The aim is to inspire more people to become disciples of Christ through innovative new ways of creating congregations.



The diocese would create new teams of ministers – clergy and lay people – who could plant new congregations, inspire discipleship, bring the good news of Jesus to those who don't yet go to church, and ensure effective use of all our buildings in those areas – as well as maintaining traditional worship.

The initiative also includes proposals to reorganise parishes in those areas, which would release funding to put alongside around £4.9m that our diocese hopes will come from the central Church of England.

The original proposals have been modified since they were first unveiled in the autumn, to reflect the huge amount of feedback that our Bishop's Council received during its informal consultation process.

The members of our Bishop's Council are clergy and lay people who are elected by worshippers from each area of our diocese. Since October, they have sifted through hundreds of emails, letters and petitions, hosted public meetings and held around 30 other meetings with individual clergy and PCCs.

The Bishop's Council delayed making a decision at its previous meeting in December, to give members time to read all the responses they had received.

The proposals agreed at their meeting on January 28 therefore include fresh ideas, including some that have been suggested during the consultation process by those living and worshipping in our parishes.

In **Gosport**, the original proposals to bring together certain parishes have been replaced by a new arrangement, suggested by members of church councils in Gosport. It would involve the parishes of Bridgemaury, Elson and Rowner coming together in a new team ministry, with a team rector and a church-planting team vicar. It would also

involve merging the parishes of Forton, Christ Church and Holy Trinity, to form another team ministry, with a team rector and a church-planting team vicar.

The church council of St John's, Forton, have asked if their church building could be transformed into a 'mission hub', which would serve the whole of Gosport. It would therefore cease to be a separate parish and regular Sunday worship would end – to enable worshippers to find new ways to share the Christian faith with residents across the whole town.

On the **Isle of Wight**, the original proposals for certain parishes to work together were also altered and replaced by a new arrangement, which came out of consultations with individual churches.

It would involve the parishes of Newport Minster, St John's Newport, Carisbrooke and Barton forming one new team ministry, with a team rector, a team vicar, and church-planting team vicar – those three clergy would also be responsible for the parish of Gatcombe.

The more rural parishes of Arreton and Newchurch have been removed from the reorganisation plans, in recognition that their circumstances are different.

And in **Havant**, the proposal is that the parishes of Leigh Park, Warren Park and West Leigh form a team ministry with a team rector and church-planting team vicar.

The Bishop's Council considered the responses from many members of the churches and community that were opposed to this idea, and also considered the responses from all three church councils. Although all three PCCs had reservations and wanted to retain their current clergy, they could see the advantages of working more closely together to reduce administration and free up time and energy.

In Gosport, Newport and the Leigh Park estates, the new investment would involve appointing new pioneer ministers, operations managers, youth ministers and others to work alongside traditional parish clergy. It would be partly up to worshippers themselves to work out the ultimate shape of the teams in each new parish.

If these proposals are approved, the creation of these team ministries means that the existing clergy roles would no longer exist. The current clergy in all three areas can apply for the new posts.

Those directly affected by these proposals will now be able to give their responses during an eight-week period of formal consultation before Bishop's Council makes its final recommendation in April. If approved, there is then another formal consultation process with the Church

Commissioners, after which a final decision will be made.

Bishop Christopher said: "The aim is to revitalise the work of the Church of England within our diocese, to inspire greater spiritual depth, ensure a bigger impact on society and to enlarge our congregations. We'll do that through traditional parish ministry alongside more innovative ways of doing church.

"We believe these plans will give us the foundation to do that. We're keen to continue to work alongside individual churches to work out what kind of issues people face in those areas, and what kind of ministers we should be appointing to help local people to embrace the Christian faith. That could look very different in each place."

The diocese originally applied for £4.9m in Strategic Development Funding from the national Church of England, to contribute towards this £9.65m initiative to revitalise church life across the diocese.

On the advice of the national C of E, its bid was split into two parts. This first phase, for projects in the city of **Portsmouth**, has already been successful. A total of £2.18m has been allocated to spend on projects in the city.

They include:

- the repair and refurbishment of St Margaret's Church in Southsea, to be the base for a growing congregation planted from nearby St Jude's Church, and a network of social enterprises;
- the employment of two pioneer ministers at St Luke's Church in Southsea to support its work with teenagers and young adults; and
- the consolidation of work by Harbour Church in Portsmouth in its two new congregations, within St George's Church, Portsea, and St Alban's Church, Copnor.

The second phase, which includes extra funding for these new initiatives in the Leigh Park estates, Newport and Gosport, will be submitted to the national Church of England in spring 2019.



Rex Andrew

From: Vicar <Vicar@newportminster.org>
Sent: 28 May 2019 14:41
To: Rex Andrew
Subject: Mission & Pastoral Measure 2011: Newport & Carisbrooke Benefices
Attachments: Newport Minster Review Proposals.docx; Letter to the Church Commissioners May 2019.docx

Dear Mr Andrew

Please find attached my representation against the draft scheme together with the Bishop's proposals following an external review of Newport Minster. I particularly mention this in my representation.

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this email.

Kind regards

Kevin

Rev'd Canon Kevin Arkell
Vicar of Newport

Tel: 01983 821961
Mobile: 07971 800083

**The Bishop of Portsmouth's
PROPOSALS FOLLOWING THE NEWPORT MINSTER
REVIEW AND CONSULTATION 2016**

Background

After long uncertainty about the role of the parish church of Sts Thomas, Newport since its designation in 2008 as Newport Minster I invited the Dean of Norwich, The Very Revd Jane Hedges, and Canon Peter Leonard, Chancellor of our Cathedral, at the request of the Vicar, The Revd Kevin Arkell, and Church Council (PCC) and with the support of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, to conduct a Review and report to me. After receiving written evidence and undertaking consultation in person in January 2016 I widely published their Review earlier this year and invited responses. I am grateful to the 20 individuals and groups who responded in writing and for the discussion at Deanery Synod in September. This consultation greatly assisted me in deepening, and sometimes challenging, the evidence and recommendations made by the Reviewers and informing my Proposals. I am grateful to the Vicar and Minster PCC, to Dean Jane, Canon Peter and Archdeacon Peter, and to all those who have contributed to this process.


The responsibility for the Proposals that follow is mine, informed by these people and the helpful process. My principal proposals are highlighted in bold type.

In recent years much has been achieved in the phased restoration programme to secure the fabric of the Minster and in the setting of parish finances on a firmer basis. I congratulate those involved the hard graft this has involved. Now is the time to build on that work.

The task before us all is to transform what have often been nebulous rhetoric, hopes and aspirations into practical and effective service of the Gospel and the people of the Island, resident, business or holidaying. This will require building on good existing relationships, involving many more people, sitting lightly to inherited assumptions, freeing our minds and flexibly using buildings for creative (and sometimes risky) initiatives.

Newport Minster

I confirm at the outset **my commitment to leading and supporting the ministry of Newport Minster** in the diocese and particularly in the mission of the Gospel in the Isle of Wight. Some have called for Sts Thomas' to revert to its former status. **I do not propose a change of status but it is clear that the Minster's distinctive role must be better articulated and its service more effectively offered**, and not defined by what it is not or what it might be likened to. To describe it as quasi- or pro-Cathedral, or not a parish church, or by reference to Minsters in other settings is unhelpfully to categorise its ministry, though it must relate in a particular way to other parishes and our cathedral, and learn where appropriate from elsewhere. These proposals and my articulation of its role, in action as well as in word, are intended to develop its work as the Minster Church in Newport on the Isle of Wight, enhancing its service to its parish and also complementing the ministry of island parishes and chaplaincies. **Mutual enrichment and collaboration in Christian mission, witness and service must be our shared intention.**



The proposals are demanding, as were the reflections of the Reviewers, calling each of us both to step up – for instance in offering time and expertise to the Minster’s ministry – and also to step back – for instance in allowing others to exercise ministry or leadership. The Church on the Island, and more especially the Gospel and our service of the people of the Island and diocese, will be better served by clarity of role and common commitment.

Strategic Role

The Minster must be more clearly the focus of my episcopal ministry on the Island. I will continue to hold Confirmation services in the Cathedral and in deaneries but I would expect to preside at an annual Confirmation service at the Minster. These and other occasions will be episcopal rather than parish occasions and I invite Sts Thomas’ PCC to offer hospitality and flexibility for these services. **Regularly hosting Confirmation and other episcopal services requires the commitment of the Minster to be active in supporting enquirers (through Alpha or Emmaus or some other programme) and drawing people into deeper discipleship.**

A central role for the Minster as the focus, resource or hub for Island ministry requires the involvement of many people and especially of those charged with Christian leadership. **The place of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight in facilitating the Minster’s centrality should be clear not only by a designated stall/seat in the Minster church but also by an expectation of consultation about initiatives and decisions being considered by the Vicar and PCC and a standing invitation to attend PCC.**

Newport Minster at the heart of Island Christianity, just as Newport is the hub of Island life and communications, will require generosity and involvement on the part of many people. To fulfil this aspiration the Vicar and PCC (with the Archdeacon, Area Dean, and Island licensed ministers) should **prepare as a matter of priority for a regular pattern of daily public prayer, increasingly involving clergy, Readers and others from across the Island.** This is a fundamental priority. I ask the Area Dean to consider the need for seasonal volunteer chaplains and coordinate training and provision. These, along with my episcopal teaching ministry and the involvement of the archdeacon, are an essential spiritual prerequisite to the wider Island role of the Minster.

I propose that **the Minster will be the focal point for my ministry on the Island** and I intend to seek opportunities, beginning in Lent and/or Holy Week 2017, to base spiritual teaching and episcopal ministry at the Minster as well as to continue to minister in every parish and chaplaincy.

As occasion warrants **the Minster should be a place for gathering together and for sending out God’s people into the whole Island community.** It will be a place for teaching and learning, for hospitality, nourishment, encouragement and an exemplar of our shared ministry and mission as we Live, Pray and Serve on the Island and in the Diocese of Portsmouth. As the Minster learns more about the nature of this ministry - and changes - so parishes will also need to understand their role in enabling a more collaborative Church than it has been until now. The Archdeacon may consider that Visitations would normally be located at the Minster. All Island parishes and clergy, along with others where appropriate from the diocese, will not only be welcome at all Minster occasions but invited to, and included in them.

Governance

I do not propose any change in the Minster's parish status. That the parish is predominantly commercial and retail rather than residential does not of itself indicate that its ministry would be enhanced by extra-parochial status. Rather it indicates that its local ministry should, like in every parish, be informed by the needs and circumstances of those it seeks to serve. I consider it important that the effective local ministry of the Minster should not be dissimilar to that of the other Island and diocesan parishes. Responsibility for the administration of the parish and Minster Church will remain with the Vicar and PCC.

I acknowledge the outstanding Parish Share historic shortfall, which the Minster PCC is gradually reducing, and the significant progress over the last five years in returning the annual accounts to break-even with full meeting of Parish Share request. **I do not propose that the accumulated shortfall is written-off but I invite the PCC to liaise with the deanery and diocese about support for addressing this.** The Vicar and PCC must engage proactively with the Vitality Focus Review process.

A Council should be formed to further and support the work of the Minster Church, spiritual, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, reviewing and advising on the direction and oversight of that work. It will recognise that the Minster is more than a parish church and its advisory role should, in particular, consider proposals submitted by the Vicar and PCC in connection with the general direction and mission of the Minster and give advice on them, and receive and consider the annual budget, the annual report and audited accounts of the PCC. The Minster Council Chair will be appointed by the Bishop and membership will include, following further consideration about responsibilities and constitution, the Archdeacon, Area Dean, Lay Chair, the Vicar and some PCC members, with representatives from each of the Island Clusters of parishes, the Bishop's Council and the Cathedral Chapter, along with stakeholders from the wider Island community. The Council will report annually to the Bishop.

Alongside these formal advisory responsibilities the Council will be well placed with its wide membership to consider how the Minster might respond to our shared vocation to evangelism, service and witness which arise from the five marks of mission.¹

I propose that to reflect the dignity of a Minster the Vicar's Licence should specifically refer to Sts Thomas' as the Minster Church and that s/he be assigned a seat/stall in Portsmouth Cathedral.

Though nationally there are instances where Minsters or greater churches are parts of multi parish benefices I recognise that the present arrangement with St John's are not conducive to confident Christian ministry. I propose that **the Archdeacon consider urgently the feasibility of separating St John's parish from the plurality with Sts Thomas'.** This would free both parishes to concentrate on the effective outreach and wider ministry opportunities that are clearly noted in the Review. This will require the usual consultation and consideration which accompanies pastoral reorganisation.

¹ The Five Marks of Mission

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Ministry

I ask the Vicar and PCC to give urgent and priority consideration to areas of outreach, evangelism, service and witness within the parish they serve, in each case considering with others whether they themselves are best placed to lead, resource or partner with other parishes and denominations, the cathedral or diocese. Given its resourcing potential for the Island Christian community, the Minster should expect the Diocese and Bishop to support its discernment of outreach and service ministry through the provision of expert and experienced practitioners and consultants. In particular further attention and energy needs to be given to:

- retail and commercial town centre chaplaincy
- education and schools' ministry, including Minster trails and workshops
- pioneer ministries and initiatives
- lay, clergy and other vocational promotional discernment
- social enterprise and entrepreneurship
- engaging culture and the arts
- enriching the quality of worship and initiating new congregations
- cultivating mission intentionality
- reordering of the interior of the church

I further request that the Vicar and PCC consult with appropriate diocesan and Island office holders, always with the agreement of the archdeacon, about any other ministry decisions which may have implication for the deanery and diocese given the role of Sts Thomas' as Minster.

Building

The fabric appeal and restoration, with the increasingly effective work of the Friends of the Minster, has enabled considerable progress to be made in securing the Minster's fabric for the coming decades. The phasing has inevitably restricted **internal reordering of the church which will be essential to realising the enhanced role of the Minster** in the town, on the Island and in diocese. To be fully available for episcopal, deanery and ecumenical gatherings the church's furnishings and layout need to be more flexible and more welcoming for worship of varying styles and for events of different types.

I propose that the PCC consider this again as a matter of priority. With the advice of an external consultant I **propose implementation of short term low cost changes that would aid flexibility for worship and other occasions**. In addition further work needs to be put in hand with the architect, the archdeacon and Diocesan Advisory Committee, a liturgical consultant, along with Island stakeholders, about creating space, technical provision and resource for the wide range of use which Christian ministry in Newport and on the Island needs.

After their successful fundraising for the fabric appeal, I **invite the Friends to consider how in the future they might continue to support the ministry of the Minster**, perhaps by supporting its educational or hospitality ministry as well as offering important social opportunities for the many who wish to be part of the Minster's potentially wide reach and ministry on and beyond the Island.

Accountability

The Minster, like every parish, is accountable through the annual Archdeacon's Visitation and, reflecting its particular role, the Minster Council. **I shall conduct an episcopal Visitation in the summer of 2018 to review progress in furthering these Proposals.**

I pray for the flourishing of the ministry for mission of Newport Minster, Sts Thomas, as it serves its parish, people, and the Isle of Wight community.

Christopher Portsmouth:

November 2016

Re: Proposed Pastoral Reorganisation of Anglican Church in Newport, Diocese of Portsmouth: Representation from the Vicar of Newport

I write to state my **strong objections** to these proposals which will look at both the process of consultation and the actual proposal in respect of pastoral reorganisation. I will make particular reference to the flagrant breaches to the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 Code of Recommended Practice – Volume 1 – Pastoral Reorganisation amended in 2018. I will also present an argument that the Diocese of Portsmouth is acting irrationally and illogically where proposals will harm the mission of the church and are likely to waste Church Commissioners grants.

In respect of the Mission and Pastoral Measure Code of Recommended practice my objections are:

- The proposal for reorganisation was pre-judged to be that of a Team Ministry in contravention of par 2.38 of the Code of Practice. My challenge is detailed in Appendix 1.
- The Gaulby Judgement in par 2.13 of the Code of Practice has been disregarded. Appendix 2 details the evidence.
- The dispossession of clergy regulation par 4.12 have been breached. Appendix 3 details the evidence.
- The Diocesan proposal is illogical and irrational in that it contradicts its own recommendations in respect of Newport Minster. It has failed to consider the circumstances of the Newport Minster restoration and renewal appeal. It seeks to present pastoral reorganisation as mission led but in fact this proposal will harm the ministry of the church and is likely to waste commissioner's money. Appendix 4 details the evidence.
- The Diocese refused my offer of mediation as set out in par 2.39 and 2.40. Appendix 5 details the evidence
- The Diocese has shown bad faith in respect of the churches in Newport. Appendix 6 details the evidence

My objections are summed up in that the Diocese decided on a course of action to bring a Team Ministry to Newport with no sound grounds for doing so, they contravened the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Measure and are behaving in a manner that is clearly detrimental to the cure of souls and the Mission of the church and is likely to waste money.

Appendix 1: The proposed re-organisation was predetermined.

Consultation about proposals for Pastoral Reorganisation, whether informal or formal, presuppose accessible meetings called at reasonable notice. On Tuesday 9th October 2018 I received an email communicating the decision of the Bishop's Council that puts together pastoral reorganisation and the possibility of the Church Commissioners Strategic Development Fund allocation of a grant. I copy below the email:

Bishop's Council on Monday evening agreed draft plans for mission initiatives in parts of the diocese. These involve reorganisation of some parishes and reallocation of existing stipends into new posts along with investment from diocesan reserves and a substantial sum for which we are applying to the Church Commissioners Strategic Development Fund. In total this amounts to a significant investment and increase in our commitment to mission and outreach. The aim is to increase engagement with local communities and to stimulate numerical and spiritual growth.

The plans, draft at this stage and for consultation over the coming months, involve urban areas of Havant, Gosport and the Isle of Wight where there will be open meetings next week, starting the informal consultation period. Clergy serving in parishes where reorganisation is being considered were made aware in advance at individual face to face meetings with my senior colleagues last week.

The meeting was called for Monday 16th October 2018 at All Saints Church, Ryde. As this was an open meeting most members of the congregation received just one days' notice of the meeting, at the main Sunday morning service. This is unreasonable. Furthermore, a meeting for Newport parishioners and some from rural parishes no longer in the proposed scheme to be held in Ryde means travelling over 7 miles when there are many suitable venues within Newport. The implication drawn was this was lip service to a predetermined plan.

The venue itself has a poor P.A system and so speakers were difficult to hear, and the power point presentation could not be seen by many.

The presentation was clear – a proposal for a Team Ministry. There was no discussion of other possibilities. This set in motion a series of meetings that were channelled towards a predetermined outcome.

While at subsequent meetings with parishes I heard assurances that the outcome was not predetermined the basis of meetings was to hear parish views and these focussed on Team Ministry and with it the enquiries and concerns people would have about money, representation, pastoral care etc.

At a formal consultation meeting in February 2019 the possibility of a Group ministry was raised with members of the Bishop's Council but at least one member simply had no ideas of what we were talking about and this meant there was no meaningful listening or discussion.

Similarly, all consultation meetings, both formal and informal, were about a proposed Team Ministry and there was no discussion about alternatives, nor any understanding of the parishes involved. At the initial informal meeting the Archdeacon of Portsdown was clear that she had no knowledge of the parishes and had never been to them and that the basis of her thinking was based upon October statistical returns. On 24th February I sent a report by email to the Archdeacon of Portsdown about the life of the Minster and the need to look at other statistics but received no reply. It does not appear to have informed the thinking. A copy of this email is enclosed. It is at the end of this Appendix.

Within the local churches a number of people from different parishes had a variety of interesting proposals. They included a different union of parishes, the focus of the Minster to be about the Town Centre and its wider role, the need to build into any planning the major increase in housing proposed etc None of these proposals had any impact and at best they were simply redirected to the business of the building of a Team after approval. There was no doubt of a predetermined outcome in that other outcomes were not properly considered including the wisdom of doing nothing until the local housing plans were more fully known.

Email report to the Archdeacon of Portsdown: The object to better inform her about Newport Minster.

Newport Minster: A report

Indicators: Numerical returns from the October head count and the annual financial return are indicators of decline. A statistician on the PCC is clear that figures are

indicative and not definitive. They should lead to enquiry rather than decisions. What follows is an analysis of the life of the Minster.

Worshipping life: The Minster is emerging from a very elderly and insular congregation entrenched in the traditional liturgy of Morning Prayer and Traditional language Holy Communion to one that is younger, mission orientated and grounded in the liberal catholic life of the Parish Eucharist.

The evidence is easily found. One candidate in the process of vocation discernment hoping to be ordained. Two authorised occasional preachers, two LPA's. Around 30 people involved in contributing to worship from planning services to reading lessons. Andrew Hargreaves was present at a parish day where around 50 people attended to build a vision for the future and 43 were new members in the last 6 years.

Christmas 2018 saw a jump in attendance by 25% and we attribute this to our social media.

The Minster is a venue for large occasional services. It hosts an annual Law Service, a Civic Service, a Town Memorial Service and the County Remembrance Parade. In addition to the regular occasional services it is reaching out to the community. This year it held a service for the Pride movement and for Age UK Celebrating Age. It continues to receive requests from secular organisations to participate in its life.

Music: The Minster has a quality Director of Music who was recently invited to apply to be Director at All Souls

Langham Place. 2 months ago, found him doing the piano solo at the O2 arena with an audience of 2000. It also has a deputy who previously served as Organist.

A choir of 5 loyal members now transformed to 18 that do credible music with an anthem each Sunday. A stronger choral tradition since the early 1990's.

A Taize service once a month that attracts up to 20 people and is in its early days.

A Gospel Choir due to start after Easter with a view to having a Gospel Service.


Having tried unsuccessfully to form a children's choir a mission partnership has been established with Portsmouth Cathedral to try and use their outreach work and the Minsters Director of Music to establish work with young people.

Prayer: The Minster is open daily and usually has 3-4 people taking part in the Daily Offices and this can rise to 6. Many visitors leave request for prayer and these form the heart of parish prayers at the Sunday Sung Eucharist.

Visitors: A footfall of 28,000 annually from those seeking help, prayer, history, or good coffee. Open 6 morning a week but need to grow the volunteer base to extend opening times safely.

Usual worshipping community: To understand this there needs to be an understanding of the change to Newport and to public transport. They adult worshipping numbers at the main service are broadly similar to those since 2001.

However, much of this community came from individual shop



owners who lived above the shops with their families. This community no longer exists. These families brought their children and with the exodus of resident families saw the decline in children's ministry. In 2011 an elderly congregation were unable to sustain a poor Sunday School of 7 children in the parish centre and it struggled before subsequently closing.

The age profile of the congregation is reducing and now starts in their 20's going through all ages, although yet to be the really mixed age community to which it aspires. The congregation now comes from many parts of the Island but a solid nucleus living within Newport. Many come for the quality of music, the newer liturgy or because of our weekday ministry. The shopping centre and industrial estate remain areas for outreach.

The decline in numbers relates to the reduction of public transport that killed a declining 8am service of BCP Holy Communion. Similarly, poor music and sparse attendance made Choral Evensong impossible. An experiment to revive Choral Evensong did not work although some elderly people said they would value it but actually never attended.

Social Media:

The Minster is active in Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Instagram reveals high usage by men in the age profile of 25-34 while in Face Book it is women of this age profile. Daily postings are made, and we have amongst the largest following on the Island. The Diocese tell us they have nothing to teach us about this media that is not already done.

Finance:

The Minster accumulated a debt by c2009 when the PCC and the Friends of Newport Minster worked in partnership to renovate the Minster, a grade I listed building on the "at risk" register. Both committees were assured by the Vicar and the Fund raising employee that money to secure proposed work was in place and it was not. This led to a debt of £75,000 to both the Diocese and a private individual. That debt now stands below £29,000 and is less than one years share. During the present incumbency all year on year share has been paid.

It has been disappointing not to reduce the debt to under £10,000 and this was caused by the recent need to immediately replace the church boiler at a cost of £26,000.

The parish has started PSG, it has had stewardship teaching over 6 years but there is still more to be done. The challenges are large but the Minsters recent record gives grounds for hope.

The Special Church Meeting of the Minster declared its intention to work towards full sustainable viability while recognizing the challenge ahead.

I have noted the Diocesan challenge for the town to be financially sustainable. This needs sharing rather than simply being an indicator for change.

Buildings: Since 2011 the Minster has raised and delivered c£450,000 of repairs. Much of this in partnership with the

Friends of Newport Minster but many smaller projects tackled successfully by the PCC.

To finish the project, including the reordering of the interior around £2.3 million is needed. There is evidence to suggest considerable progress.

Mission: The program this year is:

An ecumenical faith sharing weekly series of addresses aimed for the whole Island. Andrew Hargreaves will be speaking as will the Abbot of Quarr Abbey.

An Alpha course after Easter and we are grateful to Andrew Hargreaves providing training for this.

An autumn course using the LYCIG material.

The music already mentioned including the Gospel Choir and the partnership work with the cathedral.

Conclusion:

The evidence of worship, music, prayer, social media, finance and age profile suggests a congregation being revitalised and not declining. However, this is being done at a pace the traditional community of the Island finds quick where as I find it slow. So probably it is about right.

There are good indicators to suggest that further resourcing could foster a major boost in for mission. However, I would caution about main land optimism! This County Town, in a largely rural community, attracts the major worshipping centres for most denominations as well as those more informal gatherings. We estimate 20 worshipping communities and using the average church attendance across

the country at 5% the Minster appears to be around average by calculation.

The Minster Congregation are taught that only the best is good enough for God and the Mission Programme is evidence of this determination. It is the new membership with more diverse gifts and a greater vision that makes this work possible.

The task is now how to enfold this enthusiasm for the future bringing the hope and joy of the gospel. The Minster community is ready to change and to develop but as yet, they and I understand other Newport parishes, have yet to capture a vision that suggest a Team Ministry is the way forward.

My recent motion at Deanery Synod to reject proposed changes was not about a recipe for doing nothing but was asking for a more considered approach that will capture the enthusiasm of the local churches.

I fear that the mood I hear is that these current proposals, if enacted, will lead to many people leaving our churches, several long interregnums and I cannot believe this is the mind of Christ for his people.

I am wondering if a middle ground can be found that will enable new funding and a transition to the future. I noticed mention of an informal team in Portsmouth. My own PCC favour a group ministry but I do not think this is set in tablets of stone.

Appendix 2: The Gaulby Judgement

An extract from the Gaubly judgement says: (my italics)

The Judicial Committee concluded that use of the then Pastoral Measure was appropriate in this case.

The following points emerge from the judgement:

- The need to have regard to the traditions, needs and characteristics of individual parishes in a proposed pastoral reorganisation can include consideration of 'interpersonal factors';*
- Such consideration can include the relationships between parishes, between parishioners, or between clergy as well as the ability of particular incumbents to contribute to the better cure of souls;*
- The organisation of the diocese into parishes is for the ease and benefit of the people and not the incumbent;*
- The justification for a pastoral scheme must be the better cure of souls (with due regard to the furtherance of the mission of the Church of England); if the sole or dominant purpose of a scheme was to punish an incumbent or deprive him or her of office solely to remedy a breakdown in the relationship with his or her parishioners, it could not be upheld;*
- There must be adequate evidence of any factors taken into consideration in a proposed reorganisation; any bad faith would invalidate a proposed scheme.*

The admission from the Archdeacon of Portsdown and her team about the lack of knowledge of the Newport parishes flouts the first point raised from my quote – that is the need to have regard to the needs, traditions and characteristics of parishes.

A pastoral scheme is for the better cure of souls and yet no regard has been made to the vision and circumstances of any particular parish. For example, you will have received strong opposition from St Paul's Church, Barton to this proposal. I have heard at Deanery Pastoral Committee, from the former Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, the efforts made to fill a longstanding interregnum. Equally, I have heard a very different version of events from the Church Wardens of St Paul's Church, Barton. I am forced to conclude that this is a pastoral breakdown between the Bishop and the parish. I do not believe that pastoral reorganisation is appropriate until this matter is resolved and any proposal falls within the Gaulby judgement.

The justification for a pastoral scheme has to be for the better cure of souls. The Diocese has confused pastoral reorganisation with the desire to attract funding for 5 years from the Church Commissioners.

Pastoral Reorganisation is for the long term and not for just 5 years. It has failed to address the need for the better cure of souls except to talk about what extra funding might mean. However, the presentations made show no knowledge of the Newport parishes. The Diocese talks about "Pioneer Ministers" – it always talks in plural terms – actively promotes church planting, youth ministry and social outreach. In Newport there are 16 recognisable churches spanning the major denominations as you would expect in a County Town and possibly 4 other non-denominational small groups of worshipping Christians. The Leaders of Churches Together in Newport are clear that we have more than enough churches. The assumption was made that we do not engage in youth work. "Revive Newport" is an ecumenical mission based charity working with young people. "You Tube" powerfully witnesses to this work. One of the Trustees is a local Anglican priest in charge of St John's Church, Newport.

Similarly, the proposal at consultation meetings also centred upon social outreach and mentioned items such as establishing a food bank. Once again, the Diocese simply had not bothered to see what was in existence. There is a well established food bank supported by all of the churches with distribution from the Pentecostal church. The churches work together and provide a night shelter, fresh bread daily for those in need, a mental health out reach project for young people – the Minster's particular contribution has been to provide

almshouse accommodation for homeless young people and daily hot drinks and cake for those in need.

The conclusion is hard to escape of a scheme for pastoral reorganisation based without an understanding of local churches; their needs, traditions and characteristics or the work that is being undertaken nor sadly for the better cure of souls.

Appendix 3: Dispossession of Clergy

At a meeting to which I was summoned on the 2nd October 2018 Archdeacon Grenfell met me together with an HR officer. I was give no notice of the item under discussion nor the right to bring a Trade Union or similar official. I was informed of the proposed pastoral reorganisation and that my job was at risk. Specifically, I was told that I was free to apply for any vacancies in the Diocese arising from pastoral reorganisation, but no guarantees were made about my future. I understand that 10 clergy were subject to a similar meeting and all of us were left under the impression that dispossession was a likley outcome.

In contrast par 4.12 of the Code of Practice says:

4.12 The vast majority of dispossessions resulting from pastoral reorganisation schemes will be “technical dispossessions” as it will usually be intended to appoint the person(s) concerned to comparable offices in the new benefices created by the reorganisation as a consequential provision of the scheme and they will therefore not be entitled to compensation. However, amendment of their licenses or statements of particulars to take account of their different responsibilities may be necessary

No mention was made of a “technical” dispossession and this caused unnecessary distress for many clergy including myself.

Par 4.13 says: It is rare for dispossessions giving rise to compensation to arise but where it is unavoidable, detailed advice on the payment of compensation is provided in Appendix 1.6.

All clergy were advised of potential compensation but I, and as I understand from others, - no one alerted to the fact that dispossession should be rare.

Sadly, I was left with the conclusion that I was being manoeuvred out of a free hold incumbency where no regard has been paid to the Code of Practice.

Letters of sympathy and offers of counselling were given but I found these letters simply untenable as they came from those who were disregarding the Code of Practice.

Appendix 4: The Diocesan proposal is illogical and irrational

In 2016 the Bishop published a response to an external review of Newport Minster. The external review was established to give Newport Minster proper focus and direction so that it might serve the whole Island and the Diocese as well as being the Town Centre and Civic Church of Newport.

The Bishop writes::

Though nationally there are instances where Minsters or greater churches are parts of multi parish benefices I recognise that the present arrangement with St John's are not conducive to confident Christian ministry. I propose that the Archdeacon consider urgently the feasibility of separating St John's parish from the plurality with Sts Thomas'. This would free both parishes to concentrate on the effective outreach and wider ministry opportunities that are clearly noted in the Review. This will require the usual consultation and consideration which accompanies pastoral reorganisation.

The present proposal is irrational because it contradicts the recommendations of 2016. A full copy of the Bishop's recommendations are attached. In particular, it looks at the position where I and my predecessors were both Vicar of Newport Minster and St John's Church, Newport in plurality. The clergy who have held this post have all felt that this was not a useful partnership for mission and the current proposal, while different, do still seek to replicate in part a partnership that was not fruitful over many years.

The Review is clear in what it requires and challenges the Minster to achieve. Much of this is being delivered and it would be irrational and contradictory to suggest that after less than 3 years there should be further change. My email to the Archdeacon of Portsdown on 24th February 2018 was to better inform her and the Diocese. I note there has been no reply. Since that email and in support of its contents I can confirm, daily prayer is the heart of the Minster's life, an Alpha course is being delivered, a gospel choir has been formed, an ecumenical lent course delivered. I am now in a position because of our

Heritage Lottery Fund grant to further develop our mission work through musical engagement in the wider community. As I write I am putting in place an additional post for our Director of Music funded on the basis of one day's work a week. In that the Minster is delivering the challenges given to it I submit it would be irrational to change the present ministerial arrangement and position of the Minster in relation to other parishes within the proposal for pastoral reorganisation.

The Diocese in its proposals has imply failed to understand or engage in the Renewal and Restoration Appeal for Newport Minster. The post that I hold was vacant for around 3 years and simply could not be filled. It was the direct approach of the then Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, the Venerable Caroline Baston, that elicited my application and subsequent appointment. A major part of the post was always to vigorously pursue the appeal that would not only remove Newport Minster, a Grade I listed building, from the "At Risk" register of English Heritage it was also to revitalise its life and inherent to this thinking was the complete re-ordering of the interior of the Minster. Since my appointment a further c£450,000 has been raised and spent on urgent fabric repairs and a modest start has been made on the interior. It has also secured a private donor who will provide match funding up to £1 million.

In November 2018 Newport Minster was awarded a further grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund (recently renamed National Lottery Heritage Fund) in the face of stiff competition. In a time when there is significantly less grant money available from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Newport Minster was one of 4 applications out of 20 applications to be given a first round pass for full funding of its proposals. We have now started a project of c£260,000 employing a team including Architect, Design teams, Acoustic Engineers, Quantity Surveyor etc – so that by September 2020 we can bid for a final sum to put in place a project of c£2.5 million to complete this work. Part of this plan involves 2 posts for mission in Music and Education. This is a critical time in the life of Newport Minster and a proposal for pastoral reorganisation that threatens the post of the Vicar is simply irrational. It points to the complete inexperience of a team who have simply no idea of the level of involvement needed and the expertise to ensure a major building project of great significance is brought to fruition and that will provide a centre for mission that is fit for purpose.

A major factor in the awarding of grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund is risk; that is an assessment is made at how much risk is involved in grant aiding

a project such as failure to complete a project, failure to cost effectively etc. Newport Minster is effective in gaining funding because its leadership is known to deliver high quality applications that deliver. At this stage it would be illogical to destabilise this leadership.

My argument is simply that pastoral reorganisation will adversely affect the cure of souls and be detrimental for the mission of the church. Newport Minster stands as the most significant church of the Island in that it serves the whole Island and several times a year serves the Island for major events. Recently it hosted the Collation and Installation of the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight and will also lead events such as the Jazz Eucharist as part of the Island Jazz Festival, a Pride Service for the LGBT community, the Law Service for the judiciary and the Remembrance day service and parade that attracts around 2000 people. Having been charged to deliver a particular ministry, the proposal for further reorganisation has bewildered and upset the congregation.

This approach to further reorganisation brings the church into disrepute where its strategy appears to be muddled, out of touch with local people and conveys a picture of an ivory tower where Diocesan officials simply lack understanding of the local church. I was told by an officer, at the end of the informal stage of consultation, that the level of objection was greater than had ever been experienced. While some modifications of the scheme were made the strategy remained.


In my questions to the Archdeacon of Portsdown, the following correspondence appears:

Strategy:

Question: I notice the preference for Team Ministries in pastoral reorganisation. What experience of the church or research exists to suggest that this is the best way forward?

Answer: The Church of England Research and Statistics does not have any current research on the effect of team ministries per se within English parishes. There is some research about group ministries and the effect of increasing the numbers of churches that any one incumbent oversees, but that is not relevant to the Newport situation. There are examples of team ministries where attendance numbers are increasing and where numbers are decreasing

The point I make, as a former Team Rector, is that Team ministries need the enthusiasm and commitment of the local people to flourish. There are good examples of flourishing team ministries across the country but also many



where they have simply not worked. I contend that the present proposal is likely not to work and be detrimental to the cure of souls because it has simply not sought to gather and enthuse local congregations. Even where there is little opposition, local people are clear that there is no enthusiasm. This top down approach to pastoral reorganisation simply fails to recognise that it is local people who would need to make it work.

It is irrational to suggest that a Diocese can impose a structure on a local church community without its consent as a tool for mission and the better cure of souls.

Appendix 5: The Diocese refused mediation.

The Bishop's Council of the Diocese of Portsmouth is also the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. I accepted the right and opportunity to speak and was surprised at how some members of the meeting were ill prepared for their task.

The DMPC is called to advise the Bishop and to do this they are seeking to recommend to the Bishop a course of action that is embedded in legislation. This presupposes that the body assembled are conversant with legislation in advance of hearing from speakers. It is with this knowledge that members of the DMPC are able to not only listen but to discern the right questions to ask. It is inadequate to suggest that they can be advised after hearing from speakers.

In my case I suggested that they should consider a Group Ministry and from a question it was clear that some members did not understand the difference between a Group Ministry and a Team Ministry. I also suggested that as this proposal was controversial that mediation should be used. I was disturbed to find from a question that a member of the DMPC simply did not know the specific availability of mediation in the Code of Practice. A further question arose about how long this process might take and I stand by my answer that within 6 months a meeting of local churches with 2 members of the DMPC and a new member of the Bishop's Senior Staff should be able to reach a resolution.

I was saddened that this request was denied especially as it is specifically written for occasions where proposals are controversial.

Appendix 6: The Diocese showed bad faith.

While I understand that I am not an employee I do think the Diocese has failed in its duty to me as a Freehold Incumbent. In my initial meeting with the Archdeacon of Portsdown, I was alerted to a change in legislation that allowed for Pastoral Reorganisation when a Freehold Incumbent held office. I note that the Diocese has been diligent in telling those on Common Tenure about their conditions of office and I would expect to be treated in the same way and certainly not to discover it in this manner.

The Diocese gives an inaccurate impression through their media of the real strength of feeling against this proposal. Only after challenge were notes of the meeting in Ryde published and they failed to reflect the mood and substance of the meeting. A recording of this meeting was made, and I understand it is available for the Church Commissioners.

Part of the Archdeacon of Portsdown's role in leading a meeting is to ensure that people are not misled. She attempted, at the Ryde meeting, to sway the participants by asserting that she was probably the youngest person present. She was wrong and caused serious concern to several people significantly younger than her.

The Diocese has a duty to understand its communities and to represent facts fairly in discussion. They have maintained the present staffing of Newport is 2.8 posts and they would seek to increase this to 5 through a grant from the Church Commissioners. They have misrepresented pastoral reorganisation by putting a grant application for new funding in the heart of the discussion.

They have been clear that the key factor in applying for pastoral reorganisation is to access grant funds for mission. The published regulations do not suggest that grants are only made after pastoral reorganisation. I am alerted by a new colleague in the Diocese that this was not the practice of another Diocese where grant money from the same source had been allocated.

The Diocese has produced and presented presentations, media releases and strict timetables based around funding applications for grants to the Church Commissioners. They have failed to start with an open mind or a blank piece of paper from which opportunities and challenges can be discussed. It is hard to escape the conclusion of a predetermined outcome.

Pastoral reorganisation is more than 5 years and strategy needs to be for the long term. Great emphasis has been made in the possible employment of an administrator or operations manager to free the clergy from the burden of administration. Newport currently employs over 1 full time post (in 3 part time positions) in administration. I note St Paul's Barton are in an interregnum

and manage all administration voluntarily. The proposal for grant funding risks simply replacing existing good work, wasting Church Commissioners money and not achieving the desire to release clergy from administration for mission.

The actual staffing level of Newport is 4.2 posts of which 2.8 are clergy. The Diocese are presenting an offer of new funding based upon inadequate knowledge and misrepresent the reality of staffing in Newport. The proposal to release clergy time from administration is demonstrably false.

I note the Gaulby judgement is specific in its judgement that bad faith invalidates a scheme.

C/o

Rex Andrew – Pastoral
The Church of England – Church Commissioners
Church House
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3AZ

12 May 2019

Dear Mr Andrew,

Your ref: NB29/3/RA

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 – Diocese of Portsmouth

Benefices of Barton; Carisbrooke; St. Nicholas in the Castle; Carisbrooke; Gatcombe; Newport and Newport St. John

We are writing to you as St. Paul's PCC to formally make representation and object against the proposed pastoral reorganisation by Rt Revd. Bishop Christopher Foster and the Portsmouth Diocese.

The principal reason for our rejection of the proposed scheme is that after prayerful consideration and attempting to work with the Diocese on improvements in Newport, we do not consider the plan to be in line with God's will for either Newport or St Paul's church family and parish in that it severely threatens damage to our flourishing and growing congregation. We have listed our specific objections below in more detail, but consider that before reading them you may find it helpful to understand the background to ours and Newport's specific situation.

St Paul's has been in vacancy for four and a half years and despite not having any Priest appointed for temporary pastoral oversight and leadership during the interregnum, the congregation and church family has continued to flourish, spiritually as well as numerically. Sadly during such a long interregnum St Paul's has received very little support from the Diocese, and at times we have felt that senior clergy do not appear to have been acting in the church's best interest.

St. Paul's, like many other Anglican congregations, is distinctive in its evangelical theological convictions, its position in the C of E community and on the Island. We take an active part in 'Churches working together in Newport' and have excellent relations with the other non-anglican congregations in the town.

Despite a number of missed opportunities for an appointment, the fellowship was highly encouraged last summer (2018) when agreement was made with our overseeing Archdeacon and Area Dean to connect our halftime parish post to a halftime pioneer post covering the town of Newport for which funding was already available (£100,000). We sincerely believe that this would have been an excellent way forward with extensive missional opportunities for both St. Paul's and the town. The church and PCC would have been fully behind making this proposal happen and provided full support for the person appointed.



Despite these encouraging promises, within a very short time we discovered that the Diocese in fact had other plans. Something had gone seriously wrong, and an exceptional opportunity with strong congregational backing has now been lost.

Unfortunately how the proposed scheme was presented and how Diocesan representatives and senior clergy have conducted themselves, has already caused a lack of trust in the integrity of the Diocesan people concerned, and it is reasonable to fear that the proposal will cause long term damage to the mission and ministry of an Anglican Church's parish which has huge potential.

A letter was sent to Bishop Christopher in October 2018 requesting a discussion about the vacancy with himself and our Patron (See attached letter 1). That letter was ignored, just as with previous requests we had made to meet and pray. Our contributions thus far in this process have been ignored with very little or no reason given as to why.

St Paul's is currently withholding Parish Share for 2019 - with the initial aim of securing a meeting to discuss a reduction due to the length of vacancy. Our request for a meeting was rejected by the Diocese and no reduction in Parish Share was permitted.

It is distressing that the diocese did not appear to act with due notice at the start of the informal process, less than a week's notice of the first meeting is not right, let alone fair. To then publicly pull out of an already agreed proposal, agreed in the summer of 2018, has caused much distrust of the various Diocesan officers (lay and ordained). However we entered the informal process wanting to come from a positive position supporting the aims given (please see attached letter 2). Sadly our proposals were ignored without any due reason or response being given and this Pastoral measure was pushed, if not bulldozed, ahead with very little change and therefore in much of the same form despite the so-called consultation.

The sense of realisation that despite how much effort or work we put into engaging with the process and Diocese it appears that decisions had already been made a "fait accompli!"

This situation has now been exacerbated by a contentious decision made by Bishop Christopher to appoint an Archdeacon to the Island who is an advocate and campaigner for an aggressive LGBT agenda. Because of this appointment it is extremely unlikely that any genuine orthodox evangelical priest would consider taking up a position in Newport, nor even on the Island. Such a situation will mean that St. Paul's as it currently is, will be prevented from flourishing. Our profile (please see attached 3) makes our position very clear and we will be unable to work within a team where a team rector or overseeing clergy do not meet the needs or theological convictions of the majority of the congregation.

Subsequently and after much prayer, fasting and seeking the Lord during the formal consultation we asked the Diocese that we be removed from the process (please see attached letter 4).

Sadly this was rejected by default, without us receiving the courtesy of any feedback, the opportunity for debate or due reason.

The result of this is that sadly the congregation is now voting with their pockets. During the interregnum over the last four years because we wanted to honour the Lord, St. Paul's has paid a total of £96,000 (i.e. full share) in parish share. Members of the congregation are now actively opening bank accounts and putting their tithes and offerings aside until the situation is satisfactorily resolved or there is a more positive alternative way forward as a congregation. Currently our income is on average £1,800 down each month, taking gift aid into account we predict that by the end of the year we will be £20,000 - £25,000 below our budgeted income for the year which will most likely mean that St. Paul's will have a 'Viability Focus Meeting' at the end of 2019.

It is most disheartening that because of Diocesan plans in attempting to grow the church in Newport, and also the approach taken by Diocesan personnel, the church having one of the largest congregations in the town finds itself in this situation. We believe that any pastoral measure along the lines proposed will cause significant damage to a flourishing vibrant congregation.

Surely the motive of such a pastoral measure should be to grow all four Anglican churches in Newport, not to effectively snuff out the largest or push out from the C of E those many people who hold to an orthodox evangelical position within the Anglican Church.

To gauge the views of St Paul's congregation we held a meeting at which we took a number of indicative votes. Not a single person was in favour of the Diocesan scheme being proposed, 9 people abstained and the rest (some 50+) voted for 'something else'! A significant number were found to be considering whether they would still have a place within the C of E beyond 2019. Around 60 adults and children stayed behind after a service for that meeting.

So it is with great sadness that we send this letter formally making representation and objecting against the proposed plan on the following grounds.

1. Firstly and most importantly after prayer, fasting and seeking the Lord as a congregation we do not believe this scheme is the Lord's will for Newport or the St. Paul's family.
2. This proposed scheme is already causing long term damage to a flourishing and growing Anglican church in Newport.
3. The Diocese failed to act reasonably or fairly since the start of the informal consultation in October 2018 (and possibly illegally?) by not giving adequate notice of the initial formal meeting.
4. At our meeting of the congregation, not a single person was in favour of the proposed scheme, so introducing this scheme will not only be against the heartfelt will of St. Paul's congregation, but will also most likely result in a significant portion of the congregation leaving the Church of England.
5. We had the impression from the Diocese that the release of funds from the Church Commissioners for mission in Newport was conditional upon this reorganisation. We now believe this may not be the case.
6. The Rt Revd. Christopher Foster has not made any provision under the proposed pastoral scheme for orthodox evangelical parishes.
7. The Church of England made a promise to all of its congregations that it would engage all in 'mutual flourishing'. The consequence of this Pastoral Measure is that St. Paul's would be left without the opportunity to appoint an incumbent with the gifts and charisms that our community needs to flourish, indeed those which have made us what we are. As a result of this plan we have lost confidence in the Diocese of Portsmouth to deliver on the national church's promise of 'mutual flourishing'. We therefore have no choice but to reject the Pastoral Measure. (PCC minute – Feb 2019)
8. As a church at St. Paul's, we are committed to the authority of scripture and the ethical values of the orthodox Christian tradition. Therefore it is with great sadness and very reluctantly we have come to the conclusion that we have lost confidence in both the Bishop's judgement and his future strategy for the Isle of Wight and the wider Diocese.

Thank you for your consideration of this and we would welcome an opportunity to speak to the Commissioners should a hearing be held.

We would be grateful if you could kindly confirm receipt of this letter and email.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely



On behalf of members of the St. Paul's PCC listed below;

Andrew Day - Churchwarden and PCC Chair
Ian Pugh - Churchwarden and Vice-Chair
Penny McCoy - PCC Treasurer
Kevin McCoy – Deanery Synod Rep.
Liz Clack – Verger
Rev Dr Dennis Lloyd – Clergy Support
Josephine Hinson – DBS Validator
Kathy Pugh – Newport CofE Governor
Michele Pepperrell – First Aid Officer
Paul Pepperrell – Health & Safety Officer
Kirsty Le Floe – PCC Minutes Secretary
Kate Concannon – Safeguarding Officer
Dianne Clark – Deanery Synod Rep.
Elizabeth Day - PCC Secretary