

**GENERAL SYNOD****Crown Nominations Commission****Report for General Synod****Summary**

This paper provides a report on the business of the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) September 2017 to May 2020 under Standing Order 136 (4). Members can find more detailed background on the work of the Commission and an overview of activity during the period of service of current members on the [Church of England website](#).

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1. This paper provides a report on the business of the Crown Nominations Commission (September 2017 to May 2020) and is provided to the General Synod under Standing Order 136(4).
2. General information on the following can be found on the [CNC page on the Church of England website](#):
  - Membership of the Crown Nominations Commission
  - Vacant Sees considered and nominations made
  - Background information on the operation of the Crown Nominations Commission including Standing Orders and General Synod reports.
3. It is intended that this website will be kept up to date on an ongoing basis so that information is more readily available.
4. This report provides
  - An update on key process developments over the tri-ennium
  - A report on issues of diversity
  - General reflections from the central members

**Update on key process developments**

5. Since “Discerning in Obedience: A Theological Review of the Crown Nominations Commission” (GS 2080) went to Synod in 2018, a number of developments have been implemented in the way in which CNC processes are undertaken. Process changes include:
  - the introduction of Diocesan briefings for candidates prior to interview;
  - a liturgical commissioning of each CNC as it begins its work;
  - increased engagement in the diocese early on in the vacancy process; and
  - the introduction of a communications group overseeing the announcement of a new bishop.

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6. Other elements have been introduced to CNC appointment processes to ensure that safeguarding is a key element in the assessment of candidates:
  - the introduction of a safeguarding scenario at interview; and
  - the involvement of the National Safeguarding Team (NST) in reviewing candidates who are longlisted for interview.
  
7. The use of psychometric testing for interview candidates has also been introduced.
  
8. The work of the Commission was also subject to changes made to its Standing Orders. The following Standing Order Changes were carried by General Synod:
  - the disqualification of CNC Members from the CNC for their own diocese (carried February 2019);
  - the appointment of a Lay Chair for the York CNC process by the Prime Minister after consultation with persons the Prime Minister saw fit (carried February 2019);
  - in the case of an archiepiscopal vacancy, the election of a serving or retired bishop to be a voting member of the Commission from the Province to which an archiepiscopal appointment is being made (carried February 2019);
  - the nomination of a deputy for CNC Members who are disqualified from serving as a member of the Commission for their own diocese, by the Chair of the House of Clergy or Laity (as per others who cannot serve. carried February 2019);
  - the submission of one name (rather than two) to the Prime Minister, subject to the support of two thirds of the voting members of the Commission in a secret ballot (carried July 2019); and
  - the possibility to agree on a second name if the CNC so wish, also subject to the support of two thirds of the voting members of the Commission in a secret ballot as a reserve candidate (carried July 2019).

**Diversity Issues**

9. Following the recommendations of “Talent and Calling: A Review of the Law and Practice Regarding Appointments to the Offices of Suffragan Bishop, Dean, Archdeacon and Residentiary Canon” (GS 1650), all candidates are asked to complete a confidential diversity monitoring questionnaire. This data enables reporting on the number of candidates from different ethnicities, church traditions and how many candidates are disabled. Statistics for all longlisted, shortlisted and nominated candidates are set out below.
  
10. *GS Misc 2044* summarises key points of the Equality Act of 2010 which those involved in the process of nominating bishops need to keep in mind in their deliberations and when considering, or interviewing, candidates. It also provides guidance on the provision for churches and other religious

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organisations to apply requirements with regards to divorces and remarriage, and civil partnerships if such requirements can be justified on the basis of the religious convictions of a significant number of the religion's followers. No such requirements have ever been imposed by the CNC.

11. With regard to the diversity of membership of the CNC, central members are 50% female. UK BAME representatives have served as replacement members for central members on three occasions but there are no permanent UK BAME central members. We do not have any information relating to disabilities. In addition, during this period, none of the diocesan representatives identified as UK-BAME, one individual declared themselves to have a disability, and 48.1% were women.
12. We do not monitor membership by Church Tradition and in line with some of the ongoing discussions in the CNC Elections Review Group this will be discussed further at a Central Members meeting. We will also explore whether more detailed monitoring of issues such as whether someone is in parochial or sector ministry would be appropriate.

### General Reflections from the central members

Central members would like to draw out a number of themes in relation to their work

13. **The impact of the report Discerning in Obedience** – this report has prompted process change (as set out above) but more importantly has stimulated reflection on the theme of discernment. The picture of the selection process as one which provides “clues”, a way of building up evidence, has been a very helpful one. We remind ourselves at the beginning of each CNC of paragraph 2.5

*“In order to reach a discernment, then, it is essential not to try to know the end from the beginning. If CNC members approach their meeting with the names of preferred candidates already fixed in their minds, they are likely to miss seeing what God intends them to see. Their horizon will be determined by their prejudgement”.*

14. **Leadership in the mission context** – as we prepared this paper, the nature of episcopal leadership has been brought into sharp focus by COVID-19 and the need for the wisdom and skills to lead the Church in rapidly changing and uncertain circumstances. The role of the Diocesan Bishop in leading the Church in evangelism is a key theme for us (Dave Male, Director of Evangelism, attended one of our recent meetings) as does the role of the Bishop as interpreter, theologian and teacher in the public square. We are alert to the fact that the Bishop has a key role in motivating the whole people of God in their witness and service and engaging the 67% of adults in the UK who know a practising Christian into a more active relationship with Gospel and Church.

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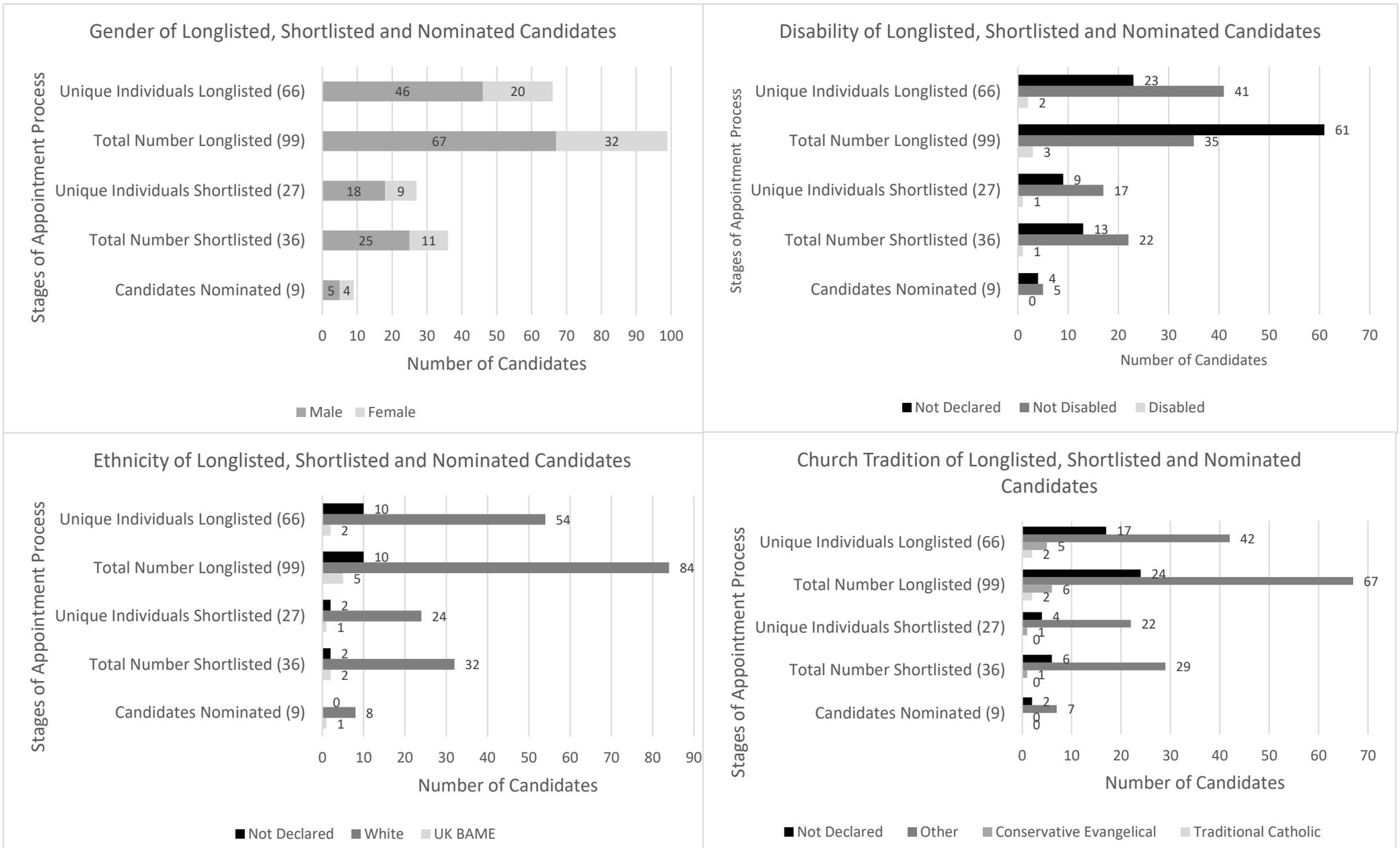
15. **The diversity of the episcopate** – over the period of our service we have been involved in the nomination of 9 bishops of whom 44% were women (4) and one was UK BAME (11%). We note that UK BAME clergy are 10% of the Strategic Leadership Development Programme and would wish to underline the importance of this and other development work (e.g. the Wilfrid Wood programme run by London Diocese, appointment of BAME clergy to posts which provide wider leadership experience). We are aware of our continuing responsibility in this area and also to those who are disabled. With regard to diversity of Church Tradition, we continue to explore the Five Guiding Principles and Mutual Flourishing and are committed to discussion of the report from the Implementation and Dialogue Group.

**Ongoing business**

16. At the time of writing the CNC process for Chelmsford has commenced. The first meeting on the Vacancy in See Committee was held in the first week of the lockdown in March. The first meeting of the CNC will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> October and thus far all meetings and consultations have been conducted over Zoom. Many thanks are owed to the Vacancy in See Committee of the Diocese. If issues emerge which mean that it is not feasible to progress the nomination process, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chair of the Vacancy in See Committee would consult on possible delay.

Justin Cantuar  
October 2020

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The 'Total Number Long/Shortlisted' bars show the total number of times candidates were long/shortlisted for all vacancies between 2017-2020. The 'Unique Individuals Long/Shortlisted' bars represent the number of people who have appeared on these lists in this time period, recognising that some people have been considered for more than one vacancy.