

GENERAL SYNOD

Transforming Effectiveness – An Introduction and Update

Summary

The Transforming Effectiveness Workstream of the Emerging Church Programme asks what the local Church needs to flourish, and then asks what of that can only or best happen nationally, what should happen at diocesan, regional, network or other levels, and what should not happen at all. It began with a wide ranging consultation across the Church and is in the process of seeking to provide recommendations in three areas: Simpler NCI's, Simpler Support for Dioceses and Worshipping Communities and a Humbler and Simpler Church.

This stream of work flows from the Vision and Strategy workstream, and the Governance workstream.

What is Transforming Effectiveness?

Transforming Effectiveness is one element of the work under the umbrella of the Emerging Church of England. The purpose is to realign the operating model of the National Church Institutions to enable the Church of England to better serve God's mission. First, this is about identifying what the local Church, in whatever form, needs to flourish, and then asking what of that can only happen nationally, what should happen at diocesan, regional or other levels, and what should not happen at all. Secondly, this involves identifying what is needed for the Church of England in her national and international role.

This workstream flows from, and has been informed by, the Vision and Strategy workstream and the Governance workstream. While the Governance stream is undertaking a consultation exercise at the moment, the Transforming Effectiveness work, especially on the joining up and realigning of work within the NCIs, is seeking to establish effective functional areas that could operate together within whatever the final governance model is determined to be.

Scoping Exercise

At the start of the work, a scoping exercise was carried out to listen to input from people across the Church – asking for inputs into the core questions. In September and October 2020, we carried out

1. In-depth structured conversations with 13 dioceses, involving the diocesan bishop, diocesan secretary and other diocesan officers.
2. Discussion with 120 people in breakout groups at the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum in October (Diocesan Secretaries, Chairs of Boards of Finance, and Finance directors).
3. 12 focus groups, including parish clergy, fresh expressions leaders, chaplains, cathedral deans and chapter clerks, archdeacons and diocesan lay chairs.

4. Exploratory analysis of network organisations, Church agencies and organisations, other denominations, dioceses in other parts of the Anglican Communion, and non-church bodies such as the Co-op and Citizens Advice.
5. Scoping discussions with Chief Officers of the NCIs.
6. Scoping discussions with NCI Staff with independent observers for exploration, building on work of the Archbishops' Council Comprehensive Budget Review, to identify areas of opportunity for joining up.
7. Baselineing of NCI functions, staffing and costs.

This wide-ranging listening and consultation exercise led to a series of insights and reflections and areas for further exploration.

What is the Underlying Theology?

Through this scoping phase a series of theological themes emerged that have informed the work as we have gone forward. These themes are:

- The Church is God's gift in Christ through the Holy Spirit for the salvation of the world and the healing of all creation, and as such does not "depend" on us.
- The Church is the Body of Christ, a dynamic and generative whole, with every 'part' bearing the likeness of Christ, and interconnected so that change in one affects the whole.
- God calls us to be the Church, takes who we are and what we have in gifts and resources, and by grace multiplies and transforms them for mission.
- The diversity of people whom God calls to be the Church is a gift of God to be fully embraced.

What are the guiding principles?

The scoping phase also shaped for us a number of guiding principles to guide our approach and decision-making.

- Interrogate everything against two questions: Does this enable the flourishing of the local church and/or does this make the Church of England more coherent and effective in its national role?
- Relationships and their quality are key, including trust and confidence.
- Distribute and locate functions for greatest effectiveness, e.g. identify things that only need to be done once, and in one place, for the sake of the whole.
- Clarity of functions, priorities and accountability is essential across the Church.
- Each national function should have a single team and single governance and accountability structure.
- Being humbler means creating a servant and listening ethos across the whole church, including the 'national'.
- Harness the power of sharing knowledge and discerning the right expertise wherever it exists and facilitate networked learning across the Church.
- Support functions are to be designed to support the developing mixed ecology of Church.
- Solutions encourage innovation and change over time.

- Look to be more efficient across the whole Church and not just move costs.

What are the key areas of findings that Transforming Effectiveness Identified?

Cultural Changes

Trust: We need as a Church to have a real conversation about trust, between entities and individuals across the Church. This is the single biggest cause of duplication we observed (I don't trust x to do it well...so I will create my own) – within dioceses, between bishops' offices and dioceses, between NCIs and between dioceses, and within NCIs.

Hierarchy and deference between people and different parts of the Church contribute to ineffectiveness, error and duplication and needs to be let go.

The presence and spread of expertise across the networks, formal and informal, must be enabled and affirmed, so that we can learn from one another across the Church.

Transforming Service: The national functions need to embody a listening, servant heartedness, a disposition that we would wish to embrace across the life of the Church.

Specific proposals were made to do further discovery in the following areas:

Implement simpler NCIs, which means:

- Joining-Up functions across the NCIs: Buildings, Ministry/People, Data, Growth, Public Face and Children and Young People
- Identifying savings following Governance Workstream's work
- Improving and streamlining processes across NCIs

Implement simpler support for dioceses and worshipping communities

The second set of proposals from the TE recommendations is to implement simpler support for dioceses and worshipping communities. This was informed by the extensive feedback from dioceses, churches and cathedrals in late 2020 around processes, services, products and activities that could more effectively be done once (or two-three times) rather than being done in every diocese and cathedral or across our network of worshipping communities.

Work on this has involved in-depth conversations and surveys from May-June 2021 with a large group of people from across the Church, seeking to identify where the most impact could be had. This has included workshops with members of General Synod, a range of dioceses, cathedrals, the inter-diocesan finance forum, NCIs colleagues, and other networks. This has identified priority areas to start work on immediately and a medium-longer term plan.

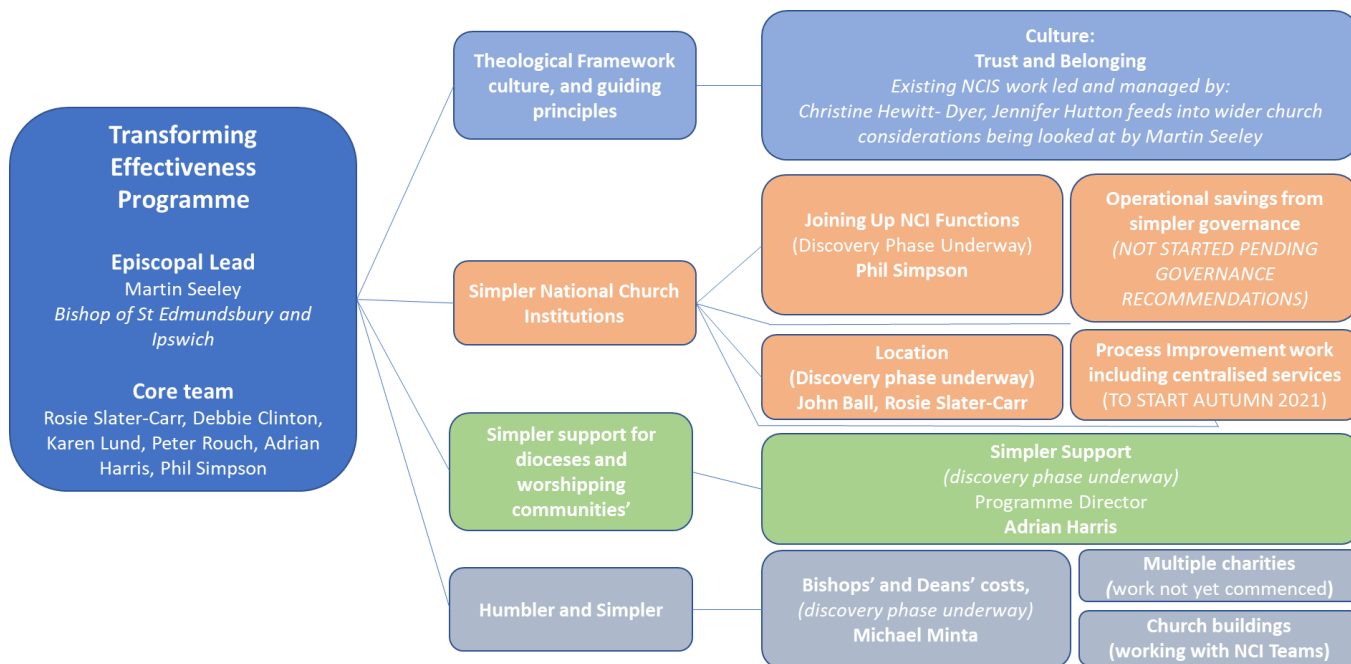
Humbler and Simpler – additional areas to be addressed with other bodies

Commission a review of Bishops and Dean's costs, including staff, housing and training, exemplifying a "humbler" Church, targeting a 10% reduction

The burden of “being a charity” e.g., GDPR, compliance admin, church officers etc., is increasing. It is viewed as already unsustainable in many locations, and becoming so in many others. Investigate alternative models.

Reviewing our use of Buildings at a National Level – working with existing Buildings teams.

Transforming Effectiveness Programme



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