

GENERAL SYNOD

July 2021

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LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

LITURGICAL COMMISSION

The Revd Canon Robert Cotton (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

Q1 At a time when many parish clergy are finding the predominantly male language for God in Common Worship to be increasingly uncomfortable and limited, what is the Liturgical Commission doing to help us more readily find and use gender-inclusive authorised worship material?

The Bishop of Exeter to reply as Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

A The Commission recently spent some months working on a document entitled ‘*God, Language, and Worship*’ which set out some basic theological and practical considerations in this area, taking the view that the language we use about God can help (or hinder) us as we grow in our apprehension of the mystery of God. We look forward to working with the Faith and Order Commission in the near future on a more wide-ranging study of these areas (mindful that questions of inclusivity need to be broader than gender, including for example race-, disability- and age-appropriateness). We would hope to include in the completed resource examples of good practice and references to material which might be helpful.

As members will know, the Commission cannot engage in drafting or re-drafting of authorized liturgical texts without an invitation from the House of Bishops and the appropriate synodical processes.

Mrs Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle) to ask the Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

Q2 At a recent Safeguarding Leadership training session we engaged with scripture in regard to the role of the Church and safeguarding. It was suggested that the C of E ought to review the Common Worship liturgy through a safeguarding lens, from the viewpoint of those who suffer or have suffered abuse – in all its forms. For example, how it might feel to those who have suffered abuse to hear ‘The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit’. Could consideration be given to a review/changes in liturgy through the lens of safeguarding, to be as inclusive and harm-preventing as possible?

The Bishop of Exeter to reply as Chair of the Liturgical Commission:

A The Liturgical Commission encourages ministers to take the time to choose the texts used in public worship with care and sensitivity in all situations. *Common Worship* and the *Book of Common Prayer* provide a wide range of options from which to choose, and the 'default' in any given setting may not always be pastorally appropriate.

In May 2018, the Commission published, and the House of Bishops commended '*Towards a Safer Church: some liturgical resources*', to make specific provision for a variety of pastoral circumstances in relation to safeguarding.

In common with the passage mentioned in the question (drawn from Psalm 51) much of the language and imagery in our liturgy is drawn directly from Scripture. Any review or re-consideration of authorized liturgical material would need to be at the invitation of the House of Bishops and be undertaken through the proper synodical channels.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q3 Can the Commissioners provide the Synod with the following figures relating to bishops' costs in a table with a comparison also showing the answers given to question 16 in February 2015 and whether costs have increased or decreased:

- the average cost of diocesan bishops' housing;
- the average cost of suffragan bishops' housing;
- the average annual cost for the ongoing maintenance of bishops' houses;
- the number of bishops living in houses with more than 6 bedrooms;
- the number of bishops with chauffeurs, and the cost of providing them;
- the number of bishops with a gardener;
- the annual cost of bishops' private club members; and
- the average annual amounts given to bishops for expenses or hospitality, paid by the Commissioners?

Dr Eve Poole to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A This question has not been asked since 2015 so we are grateful for its timeliness: in the light of Transforming Effectiveness, we are currently working with bishops to review episcopal costs, so we invite members of Synod to contact the Secretary of the Bishops and Cathedrals Committee with any views they may have on this subject. Under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 the Commissioners are required to provide a house for a diocesan bishop which is “reasonably suitable for the purpose”. The Church Commissioners also pay their stipends and support their ministry as per the requirements of the Episcopal Endowments and Stipends Measure 1943.

Bishops’ expenses are effectively delegated through the block grant process, so individual queries would need to be taken up with bishops directly.

We have provided a table comparing the answers from 2015 and 2020 in response to the specific requests.

The Revd Prebendary Simon Cawdell (Hereford) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q4 Under the Church Property Measure 2018 (CPM) s.16(2)(b) a DBF must keep the Commissioners informed of ‘matters concerning transactions affecting the diocesan glebe land’. The CPM s.21(4)(c) requires a DBF on selling glebe to be satisfied that ‘having considered the report [of a qualified surveyor], ... that the terms of the proposed transaction are the best that can be reasonably obtained for the diocese.’. This provision reflects the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity Commission’s advice to trustees, ‘you must decide you are satisfied that the proposed terms are the best that can reasonably be obtained in the circumstances of the disposal.’CC28 2012. As also did the judgment in *Harries v The Church Commissioners for England* [1992] 1 WLR 1241 concerning the duties of charity trustees when optimising investments. Where a DBF is not required to provide an element of affordable housing under local planning regulations are the Commissioners:

- (a) aware of the pressures that some dioceses are under to provide glebe at less than open market price for affordable homes?
- (b) able to support such dioceses by publicly explaining the legal requirements of the CPM?

Dr Eve Poole to reply as Third Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Commissioners do not now routinely require DBFs to provide details of particular glebe land transactions. DBFs do refer cases to the Commissioners under CPM 2018 (s.21) where connected parties are involved, or where the advice of the agent has not been obtained, or where the DBF does not plan to follow the advice for a particular reason – which could mean a disposal at below market value.

No cases have come to the Commissioners requiring consent under s.21 in recent years. However, we are aware anecdotally of the pressure on disposals more generally. Glebe lands must be held, managed, and dealt with for the benefit of the diocesan stipends fund. The Commissioners provide advice and guidance on disposals, but dioceses must take their own legal advice in relation to any transactions. The manual was reviewed and updated in autumn 2020. See:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/parish-reorganisation-and-closed-church-buildings/parsonages-and-glebe-guidance-and-forms>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Parsonages%20and%20Glebe%20Diocesan%20Manual%20June%202020.pdf>

The Revd Anne Brown (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q5 Natural England assesses land designated as a SSSI with the objective that all SSSIs might achieve ‘favourable condition status’ (a status designating healthy habitats and features and appropriate management for conservation). Currently, 38% of SSSIs in England are assessed as being in ‘favourable’ condition by Natural England. What proportion of SSSI units owned by the Church Commissioners are currently assessed as in favourable condition by Natural England, and what is the sum of their area?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners' natural capital baseline results are based on the position in December 2019. At that date, land in the Commissioners' ownership included approximately 2,094 acres of SSSI, 948 acres (i.e. 45%) of which were in a 'favourable' condition.

At present, the majority of SSSIs form part of tenanted holdings where management decisions and activities are decided by our tenants.

We are developing a process for annual carbon and natural capital reporting to assist with our natural capital and net zero strategy and our ongoing stewardship of these areas.

The Revd Anne Brown (Truro) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q6 In February 2021, Natural England released a report on Chichester Harbour SSSI, which called for the restoration of at least 257 hectares of saltmarsh.

Given that the Church Commissioners own saltmarsh within this harbour, some of which has been assessed as of unfavourable condition, what is the Church Commissioners' strategy for managing and restoring their parts of this site of global significance?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The small area of saltmarsh within the Commissioners' ownership is encompassed in strips along the shoreline and contained within two secure farming tenancies where our tenants currently have management control. Both farms are currently in existing environmental stewardship agreements and we are supporting our tenants to look at new schemes that may come available when full details are made available by DEFRA.

The Commissioners will be encouraging tenants that farm within the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to consider opportunities for restoration and improvement, including seeking financial support through the 'Funding for Farmers in Protected Landscapes' scheme which was launched at the beginning of July. It is hoped that, with annual funding of £125,000 capable of being accessed, this will assist with saltmarsh protection.

The Revd Canon Jeffrey West (Oxford) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q7 What are the NIBs doing to respond to the concerns expressed by Bishop Luke Pato in the Diocese of Namibia, who has called for ReconAfrica to halt the drilling for oil in the Kavango Basin, a key biodiversity area which is home to the largest remaining population of African elephants and 400 species of birds?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A As the Commissioners do not have a shareholding in ReconAfrica, we do not have any investor rights to speak to management in the same way as for companies in which we are invested. We focus our engagement efforts on our holdings, where we have more leverage and a greater chance of positive impact.

We are collaborating with other major international investors and NGOs to develop a global biodiversity engagement programme, pushing companies to understand, tackle and report on their biodiversity impacts. The energy sector will be among those targeted, and key habitats and regions of natural capital loss will be identified and prioritised.

Our direct exposure to the energy sector was just 0.5% of the entire portfolio as of year-end 2020, with further divestments expected at the end of 2021.

The Revd Dr Mark Bratton (Coventry) to ask the Church

Commissioners:

Q8 The Church of England is a partner on the three-year Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare project (2018–2021). Its Policy Framework was published in November 2020 and recommends that churches should shift away from animal farming systems that provide poor opportunities for flourishing to support those rated better (such as RSPCA Assured) or best available (such as Organic). What plans do the Church Commissioners have to collaborate with their land agents to ensure that future tenancy agreements incorporate these recommendations?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Church Commissioners' rural portfolio is a let portfolio with almost all farms tenanted. While tenants enjoy certain autonomy over their farming practices, through modern farm business tenancies they are obliged to comply with any acts of parliament which relate to animal husbandry and any local bye laws.

Those tenants who are claiming subsidy through the basic payment scheme are also obliged to comply with the cross-compliance regulations, some of which relate to animal husbandry.

Several tenants will belong to various recognised farm assurance schemes including the Red Tractor Scheme, Leaf and the Soil Association.

During tender processes for new lettings, our agents scrutinise potential tenants' farming practices and those which do not meet our expectations around animal welfare are not taken forward.

The Revd Dr Mark Bratton (Coventry) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q9 Given the findings of the International Energy Agency (IEA) report in May that there should be no new investments in oil, gas and coal from this year for the world to limit global average temperature rises to 1.5C and reach net zero emissions by 2050, how are the NIBs ensuring that oil and gas companies in which they have investments stop their exploration and extraction of new fossil fuel reserves this year?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Exploration and extraction plans are key topics in the Commissioners' engagement with oil and gas companies, and asking companies to react to the IEA's net zero scenario has been central to every recent engagement we have had in the sector. The alignment of capital expenditure with the energy transition is a vital part of any robust net zero plan, and is included in the recently published Climate Action 100+ Net Zero Benchmark, which informs our engagements. We have also supported shareholder resolutions calling for companies to assess the impact of the scenario on their strategies and finances.

The NIBs' climate performance hurdles for 2021 focus on energy companies' alignment with global governments' emissions reduction commitments - those that are not aligned will be at risk of divestment. In practice, companies with plans to expand capacity in a way that is not consistent with the energy transition will find it difficult to pass this hurdle.

The Revd Dr Anderson Jeremiah (Universities & TElS) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q10 The Climate Change Committee has recommended that all social homes should meet an EPC rating of C by 2028. Bearing in mind the Church's own net zero targets, what proportion of existing Church Commissioner-owned commercial and residential properties have an Energy Performance grade C or above, and what steps are being taken to improve those which fall below this standard?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Of the residential and commercial portfolio properties, where the Commissioners are responsible for procuring an EPC, 33% are rated at 'C' or above.

The Commissioners will undertake the works necessary to raise the EPC rating to, at least, the minimum standard required for letting when the property becomes vacant (in almost all cases, this has led to securing a 'C' or better rating) and progress across the portfolios is reviewed regularly.

As a high proportion of commercial and residential properties are listed buildings (around 40%), works to improve energy performance can be constrained by the need to avoid altering the appearance or character of the building and we continue to work with other asset owners sharing knowledge and best practice.

Dr John Appleby (Newcastle) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q11 Following the election of three new directors onto the Board of ExxonMobil, what criteria or 'climate hurdles' are the Church Commissioners using this year to decide whether the company has taken sufficient steps towards alignment with the Paris Agreement by 2023?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We are pleased with the impact our activist approach has achieved so far, gaining three of the board seats for directors with a clear mandate from investors to lead the company in the energy transition.

We are engaging with the new directors to understand their plans and timeline for urgently reviewing Exxon's approach and implementing a robust and ambitious transition strategy. These conversations will help us assess the likelihood of Exxon aligning with our climate standards and the Paris Agreement.

The new directors will need time and support to implement the sweeping transformation required but our 2023 timeline is very clear and will be reiterated to the reconstituted board. The NIBs reserve the right to make divestments outside of the annual hurdles they have implemented, should a company fail to show sufficient ambition or progress despite engagement.

Mrs Enid Barron (London) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q12 Once the natural capital assessment of the Commissioners' 92,000-acre rural portfolio has been completed, what percentage of the portfolio will be designated for protecting and enhancing nature, including forestry land, strategic land, and other land holdings?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A Within the rural portfolio at the end of 2019 over 10,000 acres (or 10.8%) of the portfolio is subject to an environmental designation such as SSSIs, AONBs, Special Protection Areas and National Parks. An additional 6,000 acres are identified as Priority Habitats.

Results of the natural capital assessment are being analysed to better understand the current position of our portfolios. All the land holdings will be reviewed to understand where improvements to enhance nature can be encouraged amongst tenants and implemented.

Across the development land portfolio, new planning applications are typically seeking to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain across development sites, in line with the requirements we would anticipate in the light of the Environment Bill.

Additionally, the 92,700-acre Timberland portfolio provides commercial forestry exposure in the UK, US and Ireland. Independent, third-party certification ensures the sustainable management of these forests. For instance, at least 20% of the area within our UK forests are managed with biodiversity as the primary objective.

Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q13 The *Coming Home* report recommends that the Church Commissioners set an example to other landowners by favouring developments that align with the Housing Commission's five core values, the first of which is sustainability. Given that the Church Commissioners have emphasised the importance of reducing emissions in the real economy, how will they ensure that emissions related to the new homes that they plan to develop on their land comply with their own net zero targets?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Commissioners' real estate team is working closely with its development partners to determine the means by which our developments can assist the transition to net zero emissions on new homes. It is expected that this target will be met via numerous means, including the implementation of higher building regulations (such as the Part L regulations and the Future Homes Standard, when they are brought in) and the development of energy strategies across individual sites.

This work will be influenced and informed by the Environmental, Social & Governance Framework which is currently being prepared for our development land portfolio and which will help identify areas where the portfolio can be most impactful in addressing the need to reduce emissions.

The Revd Dr Anderson Jeremiah (Universities & TElS) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q14 I welcome the establishment of a sub-group to carry out research into the Transatlantic Chattel Slavery and Commissioners' funds, as it was mentioned in the Church Commissioner's annual report and reported publicly. Could the commissioners share to the General Synod, firstly, who is leading this research group and the constituent

membership of this group, and, secondly, will this research only look into “the Queen Anne’s Bounty and Ecclesiastical Commissioners’ Funds” or all other possible investment funds that benefited from Transatlantic Slave Trade?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A We are grateful to hear this positive feedback from a member of Synod on this initiative, which was established following a review by the Audit & Risk Committee.

The sub-group is made up of the following members of the Church Commissioners’ Board: The Bishop of Birmingham, the Dean of Ely, the Reverend Stephen Trott, Alan Smith, Jay Greene, Poppy Allonby and Suzanne Avery. They are supported by NCI staff including the Commissioners’ Chief Executive and the Director of Library & Archives.

We have also engaged independent accountants to undertake forensic research. This particular project is focused on the Church Commissioners’ predecessor bodies as they were the origin of the fund now managed by the Church Commissioners.

Investment funds of other bodies are not within our remit, but we intend to share our findings once the research has been completed and would hope that this may also be of benefit to other endowment funds.

The Revd Barry Hill (Leicester) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q15 Mindful General Synod has a relationship with – but not control of – Church Commissioners’ finances, are there plans for conversations between the NCIs about how the deferral from this Group of Sessions of the motion on Generosity and Diocesan Finances gives opportunity for the debate and motion also to take into account the significant and sustained real terms increase in Church Commissioner assets over recent years?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A As noted in GS Misc 1296, the Mutuality in Finances Group was established to explore options for greater generosity between dioceses. It did not examine assets held by parishes, cathedrals or the NCIs.

The Commissioners manage the Church's endowment fund to support the mission and ministry of the Church of England across the country in perpetuity. Advised by our actuaries, the Commissioners evaluate the maximum sustainable level of funding which can be provided. We are in the process of distributing £930m in this triennium (2020-22) – more than one tenth of the fund's most recent valuation.

The next triennial actuarial review of the endowment takes place early next year and will determine the sums we can make available for distribution in 2023-25. This will take into account the latest available information including the recent strong performance, the value of the fund at the end of 2021, and future return expectations.

The process to establish a Triennium Funding Working Group to make recommendations on how the funding should be distributed to support the Church's mission and ministry is underway. Membership will be drawn from the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council, as well as the Church Commissioners.

The Revd Barry Hill (Leicester) to ask the Church Commissioners:

Q16 As we give thanks to God for the 10.7% increase in the Church Commissioners' investment value during 2020, up to a record £9.2 billion, the almost £250m they have invested in the local church, especially those most in financial need and in areas of strategic priorities, mindful some, but very far from all, parish reserves have also grown significantly over the past five years, and that increased subsidy should never be used to avoid the changes to which God calls us; how do we discern when it is time to stop building bigger barns?

Loretta Minghella to reply as First Church Estates Commissioner:

A The Commissioners aim to distribute the maximum funding for mission and ministry that can be maintained in real terms into the future. This balances the needs of the current and future beneficiaries: the task of a permanent endowment.

The value of the fund is one of several factors that determine the level of distributions deemed affordable over the long term.

Assumptions for the target future growth rate for the main distribution categories, future investment returns and pensioners' longevity must also be considered.

For 2020-22, in addition to clergy pensions, core in perpetuity expenditure, and time limited expenditure, we were glad to make available additional distributions of £50m p.a. to support a range of priority areas. Our most recent actuarial advice is that it is reasonable to plan for additional distributions to be maintained at current levels for the rest of this triennium and the next.

The total distribution for the current triennium is expected to be £930m including these additional distributions, with a similar overall sum anticipated for the next triennium as well.

PENSIONS BOARD

The Ven Malcolm Chamberlain (Sheffield) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q17 What is the current level of investments held by the Church of England Pensions Board in renewable energy, clean technologies and other climate solutions; what percentage of the total Pensions Board's investments do they represent; and what steps are being taken to increase these investments, as requested by the motion passed at General Synod in July 2018 (item 11)?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A The Board holds approximately £125 million in renewable, clean, or climate solutions across asset classes, which represents 4.1% of the overall portfolio. This represents a significant 'tilt' relative to our holdings in oil and gas which total £8.9m, approximately 0.3% of the overall portfolio. The Board has made a series of investment

decisions and commitments that will further increase our 'green revenue' exposure over time. These include our allocation to the FTSE TPI Climate Transition Index, which features a strategic positive weighting to climate solutions, and commitments to private equity mandates with a focus on sustainability and impactful investments, including clean technology.

The Revd Canon Jeffrey West (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q18 Following the recent Dutch court ruling that Shell must reduce its global carbon emissions by 45% by 2030 compared with 2019 levels, what more is the Pensions Board asking Shell to do to be aligned with the Paris Agreement by 2023, as required by the 2018 General Synod resolution?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A We made a clear public statement at the Shell AGM that outlined the Board's expectations of the remaining steps the company needs to take. This statement was published on the Church of England website and reported in various media. We explicitly stated our expectation that absolute emissions targets are required for 2030 in line with the Climate Action 100+ Net Zero Company Benchmark. We also asked the company to reassess its targets following the publication of the International Energy Agency 1.5 degree scenario that was published on the morning of the Shell AGM. As set out in the AGM statement we have been very clear about the need to take the remaining steps by the 2023 deadline as required by the 2018 Synod resolution.

The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q19 Given that 30% of shareholders concerned about the climate crisis voted for the *Follow This* resolution at Shell's AGM, what reasons did the Pensions Board have for not supporting this resolution?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A The Pensions Board is also deeply concerned about the climate crisis and co-leads a \$54 trillion global collaborative engagement with Royal Dutch Shell. Along with the majority of shareholders, we did not vote for the *Follow This* resolution, although we have done so in the past. We believed that the resolution was unnecessary on this

occasion in light of having secured agreement for Shell to be the first oil and gas company to put an Energy Transition Plan to an AGM vote. We also secured agreement that there would be an annual vote on the company's delivery against that plan. We remain confident that engagement with Shell is delivering tangible results. The Board also made a clear statement at the AGM about the remaining steps we require the company to meet in line with our 2023 commitment to Synod. If they do not meet these, we will disinvest our holding.

Dr John Appleby (Newcastle) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q20 What advice did the NIBs give to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his response to the letter sent to him by 41 civil society organisations in Nigeria expressing grave concerns about Shell's climate and energy plan and its activities in the Niger Delta?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A The letter in response to the Nigeria civil society organisations was written by one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's senior advisers during the Archbishop's study leave, and was clearly signed as such. She discussed the response with various colleagues from the National Church Institutions, including the Pension Board.

The Revd Canon Patricia Hawkins (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the Pensions Board:

Q21 Are there any criteria, and if so what are they, to determine whether a member of the clergy pension scheme, obliged by circumstances to take early retirement, might be exempt from the reduction of their pension in respect of years of service already accrued?

Mr Clive Mather to reply as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board:

A The Church of England Funded Pension Scheme is administered according to the Rules set by Synod. There is no reduction in benefits where the Pensions Board accepts an application for retirement due to ill-health or where a Responsible Body agrees to meet the full cost of augmenting a pension to offset the reduction if a member retires before Normal Pension Age.

The test for ill-health retirement is that the member is

- unable to perform the duties of his or her office or doing any other remunerated work, and

- that the underlying cause of ill health is likely to be permanent.

The Pensions Board considers medical advice to help determine whether the member meets these tests.

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

Dr Paul Buckingham (Peterborough) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q22 In May and in June the Education Office has issued guidance in relation to the constitutional options for Diocesan Boards of Education under the new Measure. The Office advises that it is for each diocese to make its own choice between the options. The May guidance says - 'which of these structures may be the most appropriate for ...each diocese will be a matter for each diocese to decide'. The June guidance is emphatic that 'this guidance only applies to a DBE which is a committee of the Board of Finance.'. There is thus at present no advice to dioceses about the prior stage - that of choosing which option to adopt.

Clause 18 of the Measure provides for the issue of guidance by the Archbishops' Council. Will the Archbishops' Council use its power under Clause 18 and issue guidance to dioceses on how to choose between the options for how their DBE is constituted? And, if not, on what basis has it decided not to do so?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Archbishops' Council guidance under s.18 of the DBE Measure 2021 is guidance to which the DBE, DBF, bishop and Diocesan Synod must each have due regard as a matter of law and so must follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. General guidance highlighting the benefits and risks of incorporated and unincorporated DBEs has been provided, with clear guidance being given that if the unincorporated structure is selected legal advice must be taken to mitigate the inherent risks. However, it is not considered that s.18 Guidance is appropriate here as, if it was to provide that one structure was the most appropriate, or was not

generally considered appropriate, a diocese would need to have cogent reasons not to select or to select that structure for its DBE. This could be seen as undermining the choices available in law given to dioceses by the 2021 Measure.

Miss Sophie Mitchell (CEYC) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q23 Given the emphasis on 'younger and more diverse' in the new national strategy, what provisions are being put into place by the National Church and Dioceses to ensure that there are Children and Youth Advisers who can provide specialist support for parishes?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The emphasis on 'younger' echoes the culture change that 'Growing Faith' has been calling for and requires purposeful and well-resourced implementation at national, diocesan and parish/school level. This will involve the strategic engagement of senior staff, and also the appropriate levels of resource being focused on a variety of posts to reflect the intention to place young people instinctively at the heart of the Church of England's mission.

Children and Youth Advisers are clearly part of this ecology but should not be seen as solely responsible for implementing this change. Growing Faith calls for a much wider and deeper engagement at all levels both within diocesan teams, and also in wider appointments at parish/school – including clergy and school leadership/teacher appointments and also including Chaplaincy, Youth Worker, Children's/Family Worker posts.

Ms Debra Walker (Liverpool) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q24 What progress has been made to release funding for the appointment of Racial Justice Officers around the Dioceses as directed in the report 'From Lament to Action'?

The Archbishop of York to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Archbishops' Council has concluded that it cannot support this recommendation in this formulation at this time, given the need to reduce costs in diocesan and national administration. The Council understands the rationale for this recommendation and will do more work on how best to support racial justice across the country through a network of officers who would be suited to different contexts. The Council will look at whether and how this might be supported in a different way as part of looking at funding priorities for the next triennium.

The Revd Mike Smith (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q25 Has the Archbishops' Council had opportunity to read the Sheldon Hub Report on the impact of CDM proceedings on clergy "I was handed over to the dogs" or the heart-rending account given in the Church Times of 18 June 2021 by Mrs Sue Overend of the impact on her and her husband of the handling of a particular CDM complaint? If so, would they be prepared to offer an apology on behalf of the Church to those suffering such experiences?

The Archbishop of York to reply as President of the Archbishops' Council:

A I am aware of the Report and am very grateful to the Sheldon Hub and to all those who have contributed to it. I can only imagine how painful it must be to tell the story again of so many difficult situations. I am extremely sorry for all the wrong that has been done and am committed to ensuring we work together to do better. I hope the debates and discussions we are having in this Synod on these matters will assist us all in moving forward.

Dr Andrew Bell (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q26 Please can Synod be provided with an update on progress against the priorities set out for the Archbishops' Council's Evangelism and Discipleship Team, as set out in GS2118 and welcomed by Synod in February 2019?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply on behalf of the Archbishops' Council

A The Team have worked hard on developing the six priorities in order to 'motivate our million' regular worshippers to pray, articulate their faith and live it out in the whole of their lives. Good work has been made on all priorities despite Covid. This includes resources produced by the Team on Everyday Witness and Everyday Faith which are vital to our priorities. 'Thy Kingdom Come' is now integrated into the Team to emphasise the importance of prayer and the Greenhouse Project is resourcing teams across many dioceses to develop new fresh expressions of church. The pandemic has impacted some of our plans but our series of regular Webinars for church leaders across a wide range of our priorities has meant we have connected with, informed and resourced over 6000 leaders during the last year.

It is also worth noting how closely these priorities align with the Church's Vision and Strategy.

Miss Sophie Mitchell (CEYC) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q27 This year, the Young Christian Climate Network are organising a 1,000+ mile relay pilgrimage from the G7 in Cornwall to COP26 in Glasgow. Does the Archbishops' Council support YCCN's call for fair climate finance and belief that no country should go into debt because of climate justice, and will the Council call upon the Government to reinstate the foreign aid budget to pre-COVID levels and to advocate for and support fair international financing of climate induced loss and damages?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply on behalf of the Archbishops' Council

A The Environmental Working Group of the Archbishops' Council is working in partnership with other faith organisations calling for action at COP26, especially for a global green and just recovery from the pandemic. Finance is key to this, and to the principle of climate justice. Through the Climate Sunday initiative, we are asking churches and individuals to sign the Climate Coalition declaration (see <https://thetimeisnow.uk/declaration?partner=106>) calling for increasing support to those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate

change. Through the Make COP Count coalition (see <https://makecopcount.org/>) we are calling for new and additional sources of finance for climate-related loss and damage. YCCN are doing an amazing job highlighting this issue and the EWG is supporting their relay and commends it to others to do the same. Both Archbishops have made repeated calls on the Government to reverse the cut in overseas development aid.

Canon Linda Ali (York) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops'

Council:

Q28 Has the Church of England contributed to the Covax Global Immunisation Programme under WHO? If so, how much? If not, are we expecting to contribute to this essential exercise to protect the world's most needy communities?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops'

Council:

A A meeting, convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the start of this year, brought together Faith Leaders, NGOs and Government, and resulted in the formulation of the 'VaccinAid' Campaign. This campaign, coordinated by UNICEF UK, enables individuals, parishes and groups to donate to the COVAX Immunisation Programme. It aims to help fund almost two billion Covid-19 vaccines for health workers and the most high risk and vulnerable people around the globe with its message 'Give the World a Shot'. The Church of England has played a pivotal role in establishing the campaign and, through its members and parishes, it continues to support its development. By the end of June 2021, VaccinAid was estimated to have raised in excess of £3,630,000.

The Ven Pete Spiers (Liverpool) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q29 What national support and advice is available from the Church of England's Digital Team to support churches who want to carry on using digital platforms to connect with their community and to reach new people especially when many churches are beginning to meet in person once again?

Mr James Cary to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Since March 2020 the Digital Team has adapted its training programme to meet the unique challenges churches are facing. More than 9,000 attendees have joined webinars on topics such as how to live stream, staying connected online and online giving.

The digital team has also worked with the Evangelism and Discipleship team and the Diocese of Exeter to produce a Step-by-step guide to online and onsite services, available on the Church of England website at cofe.io/ServicesGuide. This thorough resource combines missional and digital wisdom to inspire and inform churches planning for the post-Covid online world.

The AChurchNearYou.com resource hub continues to offer churches free resources for online and onsite: free images, customisable graphics and five new hymns each week for use in services. More than a million of these hymns have been downloaded so far.

The national online services continue to support churches as an alternative to producing their own online service.

The Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q30 Prior to March 2020 there were some churches that had no digital presence at all. The pandemic has pushed all of us to develop our online and digital presence and the national Digital Team have been a great help with this as have local Diocesan officers such as Eve Powers in my own diocese of Manchester. What progress has the Digital Team made with training for parishes and how many churches are now considered to have moved from little or no digital presence to a good digital presence?

Mr James Cary to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Digital team began training churches to use digital platforms to grow their worshipping communities and keep in touch with their congregations in 2017, training 1,000 each year.

Since March 2020, more than 9,000 attendees have joined a digital webinar. Webinars were scheduled daily during the first lockdown

and have adapted as guidelines changed. There has been an increase in demand for strategy and advanced skills, indicating a maturing of the local church's digital presence. Many of these webinars are developed in partnership with diocesan communication teams.

Weekly Digital Labs blogs on the CofE website – seen more than 200,000 times in 2020 – sit alongside the webinars to equip churches.

AChurchNearYou.com saw its busiest year in 2020, with more than 77 million page views. The number of editors has increased by more than 10,000 since March 2020 to just under 30,000, suggesting more churches are using this tool to promote both online and onsite services.

The Revd Canon Martyn Taylor (Lincoln) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q31 We hear much about mixed ecology: what support is the central Church giving to help parishes to offer online worship?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Since the pandemic began, churches have shown incredible enthusiasm for finding digital solutions to changing guidelines – AChurchNearYou.com now lists more than 30,000 live-streamed and pre-recorded services.

To help with the hybrid approach to worship, the national Digital Team is increasing support for clergy, staff and volunteers through blogs, webinars and conferences.

The June 2021 Digital Labs conference saw more than 400 church leaders gather to explore mixed ecology and how to plan for online and onsite worship. The conference featured sessions on Vision and Strategy, how to encourage online giving and the theology of online ministry, alongside practical workshops.

Since March 2020, the Digital Team's regular webinars to upskill churches and cathedrals have been attended more than 9,000 times.

The Church of England website has more than 20 blogs with practical help, and a Step-by-step guide to online and onsite worship aims to make planning for the post-covid world simpler.

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q32 Of the c.£167.7m allocated to projects by the Strategic Investment Board from 2014-20, what proportion have been assigned to supporting churches, whether new or established, belonging to or associated with the Church Revitalisation Trust (as identified by their own website)?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Strategic Development Funding, to which this question relates, is awarded to dioceses. It is the decision of dioceses which churches, activities and networks they support, in line with their strategies.

We do not routinely capture data on the proportion of funding directed to particular networks. Most projects will work with a number of different parishes and Fresh Expressions of Church (e.g. across a town). Our broad estimate is that 10% of projects are solely focused on Church Revitalisation Trust churches; another 20% include a Church Revitalisation Trust church as one of a number being supported.

The Revd Andrew Yates (Truro) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q33 In the light of SLDP PROJECT (Group 7) which reviewed the dioceses' allocation of the Lowest Income Communities Fund (LICF), what progress has been made in ensuring that the allocation of LICF is reaching the low income communities and in ensuring that the way the funding is spent is through consultation among lowest income communities themselves?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Since its creation in 2017, the purpose of the Lowest Income Communities Funding has been to redirect funds to low income areas, and the national church has worked with dioceses to ensure this happens as swiftly as possible while minimising disruption to ministry.

Year on year, the amount that can be verified as reaching low income communities has increased, even during the pandemic, and

the SIB has sought assurances from every diocese that the funds will all be distributed to low income communities by the end of the triennium.

How funding is spent locally is a matter for dioceses, and it is hoped that all deployment and resourcing decisions involve local consultation. We have seen examples of this through diocesan reporting.

Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q34 The Giving Strategy is a major investment. What progress has been made and, given that giving income in parishes is vital to enable the payment of Parish Share to dioceses; what range is there in the levels of Parish Share receipts by dioceses, and what can be done to assist those dioceses with lower Parish Share receipts?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A In the first eighteen months of the National Giving Strategy:

- 23 dioceses have received funding for new giving advisors;
- over 2,300 churches have set up online giving accounts;
- pilots on contactless giving have begun (Carlisle and Southwark dioceses)
- an online will writing pilot has begun (Manchester and Winchester dioceses).
- over 1,000 churches have attended webinars on giving,
- the findings of the first Anglican giving survey have been widely shared.
- new parish resources to encourage giving have been produced
- the giving team have also delivered clergy training in twelve dioceses and one theological college.

In 2020 average parish share receipts were 7% less than in 2019. In 2020 on average parish share represented 66% of dioceses' incomes, ranging from 36% to 93%.

To assist dioceses with lower Parish Share receipts, last year sustainability grants of £14.9m were made to 24 dioceses. £20m of these funds remain available for distribution in 2021.

The Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q35 Has consideration been given to the provision of financial resources to dioceses and/or parishes to assist them in the financial challenge of meeting the 2030 net-zero target set by this Synod?

Canon Dr John Spence to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The whole Church will need to devote financial and other resources to achieving Synod's net zero carbon target, and there are no easy answers to this, but it is being worked towards.

The Archbishops' Council's 2021 and 2022 budgets include additional resources for work on the environment, enabling:

- An update of the environmental section of the online grants directory, to be published soon.
- A scoping exercise to assess what sources of income exist which could be approached nationally, in order to benefit dioceses and churches, and how this should best be approached. Budget has been allocated for ongoing fundraising.
- Commissioning of training webinars on environmental fundraising. (www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/webinars-getting-net-zero-carbon)
- Creation of a small 'diocesan projects fund', open for applications from Diocesan Environment Officers, to support local projects with potential national benefit.

The provision of financial resources for this work beyond 2022, alongside other priorities, will be considered as part of the exercise to develop spending plans for 2023-25.

The Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q36 Will the Archbishops' Council please publish a complete breakdown of the figures for clergy at a national level, broken down by the particular characteristics (age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity etc) now gathered by the Church of England People System?

Ms Jay Greene (Winchester) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q37 Knowing the importance of good statistics, please may members of this General Synod have a full breakdown of figures from the new national database for clergy, giving statistics for all characteristics?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A With permission I will answer questions 36 and 37 together.

The People System can provide this data in an anonymised state, and we hope to have some initial figures towards the end of the year, but we are not yet in a position to release such a report now. First, the Archbishops' Council would need to consider whether to publish the data sets that are not currently published, noting that the data was optional for people to fill in and will, therefore, be incomplete. Then there would be steps that must be taken to ensure the report is built correctly, undertake quality assurance on the output to ensure the data are accurate and correct, and format the report so that it is presented appropriately to assure anonymity.

The Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q38 What is the reason for the problems with the National Clergy Register, whereby a number of clergy, including those serving in the Channel Islands, are not shown as being authorised for ministry? What are the plans for resolving the problems? Has the purpose of the Register, which is greater clarity on which clergy are authorised for ministry, been compromised by the initial problems?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A Bringing together blocks of overlapping clergy data – owned and managed in different ways – has been complex. After six rounds of validating data with dioceses we knew the information in the People System, which feeds the National Clergy Register, would not be perfect when we opened it up. We relied on dioceses and clergy to inform us about changes; thanks to further data feedback we have now made significant strides towards accurate, up-to-date

information on all active clergy. The People System and Register are major achievements which will make a lasting positive difference to Church life and meet our safeguarding commitments. We hope the initial problems have not compromised the overall project, but we recognise all major IT projects face significant hurdles, despite detailed governance, planning and resourcing. The Channel Islands changed dioceses during the project: Salisbury Diocese needed more time validating the data, which is about to be uploaded.

The Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Universities & TEIs) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q39 What discussion has taken place on Council concerning the Resourcing Ministerial Formation process, and what detailed consideration of the different financial models is planned before proposals are brought to the General Synod for discussion and approval?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

A The Resourcing Ministerial Formation review is being carried out by the Ministry Council who have discussed it at each of their meetings since February 2019, with only one exception.

The Archbishops' Council discussed a brief report indicating a direction of travel for priorities, TEI sector structures and funding in December 2020, and in March 2021 a fuller report including some draft initial proposals developing from this. Archbishops' Council members also received papers from the most recent round of consultation with dioceses and TEIs together with an invitation to participate or comment. Detailed work is now underway on understanding the implications of proposed funding models that have developed through the consultation process. These are intended to lead to a more sustainable, accessible and less competitive TEI sector, including incorporating formation for some lay ministries. Proposals will then be shared in further consultations with the sector and with dioceses and discussed by the Archbishops' Council.

Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury) to ask the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Q40 Given that the target set by General Synod in 2015 to increase the number of people entering training for ordination by 50% (against 2013 levels) by 2020 and sustain that level annually looks unlikely to be met on the basis of the most recent Ministry Statistics, what plans has the Archbishop's Council to consult with dioceses about the number of candidates needed going forward?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Archbishops' Council:

A In 2013 there were 288 ordinations to stipendiary ministry. In 2021, we anticipate there will be around 410 – an increase of 42% which is to be celebrated. We are grateful to diocesan vocations teams for their partnership in this outcome and we thank God for his provision. The size of the stipendiary clergy cohort has currently stabilised at around 7,600 – a key objective of Renewal and Reform.

We are aware that ordinations to self-supporting ministry have remained fairly stable over the same period and some in depth research is currently taking place to help us understand this situation more clearly.

The National Ministry Team consults regularly with dioceses on these matters. During the period of the pandemic, these consultations have intensified as we seek to understand both the current picture and longer-term plans. The situation is dynamic and diocesan teams are working hard to establish their local response to uncertain conditions – we are grateful to them for this work as we collate the national picture.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q41 Can the House of Bishops confirm that the Church of England does not oppose so-called “conversion therapy” for those struggling with gender dysphoria and who willingly seek such therapy?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. The House of Bishops confirms that ‘Conversion therapy’ is not intended to prevent people from seeking help when they are experiencing gender dysphoria. The Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (2015) which was endorsed by General Synod, clearly states that banning conversion therapy “is not intended to discourage clients with conflicted feelings around sexuality seeking help. Psychological therapists routinely work with people who are struggling with inner conflict. ‘For people who are unhappy about their sexual orientation [...] there may be grounds for exploring therapeutic options to help them live more comfortably with it, reduce their distress and reach a greater degree of self-acceptance.’” The 2017 Memorandum extends this caveat to include persons seeking help in relation to gender identity.

Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q42 Participating in the LLF Course and reading the LLF book, I was struck by the fact that there is no reasoned case made out, or set of reasons set out, in support of changes to the Church’s current position on issues of human sexuality. The nearest one gets to grounds for change are the exposition of readings of Scripture on pages 283-294 of the LLF book and more briefly on pages 48-49 of the Course, and the paper from Walter Moberly in the LLF library looking at “How should Christians read and use those passages of Scripture which speak of same-sex issues?” Nowhere in LLF is it said that the Church should change its position in X way for Y reasons. I have been led to understand that a deliberate decision was made not to set out systematically the case for and against

maintaining the status quo. If a decision is made at the conclusion of the process either to maintain or change the Church's current position, this will not be following a reasoned case having been put forward in LLF for doing so because no such reasoned case exists. How is it proposed that this lacuna will be filled to enable individuals, parishes, Deaneries, Dioceses and General Synod to make an informed and reasoned decision?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The purpose of the LLF resources is to enable the whole Church to enlarge and deepen their Christian understanding of what it means to be human and to set questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage in that context. This means gaining deeper insight into why we reach different conclusions about particular questions. The responses and insights of all who have engaged with the materials will be gathered nationally as part of a prayerful discernment that is informed by the resources, and the learning and reflections of the whole people of God. Whatever decisions are reached will draw on the LLF resources and the insights gained in the Church-wide process of learning together to offer a reasoned case which we pray, by God's grace, the Church will have arrived at together.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q43 Given the significant distress that Debbie Hayton's film in session 5 of the LLF materials has caused those trans people who have inadvertently been subjected to it, what steps are being taken to protect other trans people from being traumatised by it?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. Given the diversity of followers of Jesus Christ portrayed in the LLF resources, many people are likely to find one or more of the films in the LLF Course deeply uncomfortable, if not distressing. That is why the LLF resources include a range of ways to help groups and their leaders to take responsibility for engaging with the materials and with each other in as safe and brave a way as possible, modelling loving pastoral care. These include the

reflections on the Pastoral Principles, guidance notes for leaders (which draw attention to the need to be alert to the potential impact of the story films), as well as facilitation training specifically geared to situations when participants might be powerfully affected by an element of the resources and/or a perspective with which they disagree.

Dr Mike Lawes (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q44 The LLF consultative programme demands meaningful engagement with our church communities and, acknowledging the nuance and sensitivity associated with conversations around the materials, in person meetings are hugely preferable to remote meetings. In view of the difficulties encountered by Diocesan implementation groups in engaging parishes and deaneries and rolling out the LLF initiative, due to social distancing and public health measures; would the Next Steps Group agree that it would be preferable extend the window for feedback, once all social distancing measures have been lifted, for a period of at least 6 months to allow local groups to give sufficient time for consideration of the materials and constructive feedback?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question about the timeframe for Church-wide engagement with LLF. This view has also been expressed at the many *Living in Love and Faith* events across the dioceses and at the regular meetings with LLF Advocates. At the same time, there have been reports of many groups having positive experiences of engaging with the resources online over the past six months. The Next Steps Group is listening to this feedback and considering how it might best be addressed. There is a need to avoid lengthening the timeframe within which a way forward will be reached, while honouring churchgoers' desire to engage well with the resources at a time that is both possible and fruitful.

Mr Jon Walker (Leicester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q45 Given that the House of Bishops has what many perceive to be a relatively poor record when addressing matters of human sexuality (especially the report that Synod declined to note, and other pastoral pronouncements that seemed at best ill-judged); what reassurance can you provide that a process that is led by a group comprised only of Bishops and where the same House of Bishops dominates the next steps will be more attuned to and aligned with the leading of the Spirit across the whole Church, and the call for love, justice and inclusion to prevail over expediency?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. *Living in Love and Faith* is one of the most far-reaching processes that the Church of England has conducted in recent history. It is based on the belief that the Spirit speaks through Scripture and the reflections of the whole people of God. Every churchgoer is invited to use the LLF resources together with others and to feed back to the Church their learning, experience, insights and reflections. These are gathered by means of a questionnaire, as well as through the opportunity to offer a creative response. This material is being independently gathered by colleagues with expertise in quantitative and qualitative research and analysis. The findings of this 'Listening to the Whole Church' process will be made publicly available as they become part of the discernment and decision-making processes that will be led by the bishops together with members of General Synod.

Dr Angus Goudie (Durham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q46 In view of the recent resolutions and discussions at the Methodist Conference, (final votes awaited until after the question deadline), will the LLF Next Steps Group be in dialogue with their Methodist counterparts, possibly along with the Next Stages Covenant Group?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. Even before the recent decision at the Methodist Conference to make it possible to conduct same-sex marriages, the Next Steps had begun to formulate plans for engagement with our ecumenical partner Churches in relation to

Living in Love and Faith. Dialogue specifically with the Methodist Church will take place at various levels for different purposes, including in relation to Local Ecumenical Partnerships and the work of the Next Stages Covenant Group. The LLF Next Steps Group will ensure that their work is joined up with these developments. Exactly what this means in detail is still to be worked out.

Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q47 Following the Bishop of London's *Via Media* article "Texts of Terror: are we helping or harming?"; what steps will the House of Bishops take to ensure that clergy and the Church as a whole are helping, not harming, LGBT Christians?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. The Pastoral Principles and the other resources and activities that underpin the Church's engagement with the *Living in Love and Faith*, are designed to help clergy and all who participate in the LLF process to become more pastorally sensitive, self-aware, welcoming and loving in our relationships with LGBT Christians. Some dioceses are taking up the 'Pastoral Principles Course' that was released earlier this year and many dioceses are rolling out their own facilitation training as a result of participating in the national programme – in which over 300 people have already taken part.

The hope is that these activities and resources – alongside learning together using the LLF resources – will be formatively transformative at all levels of the Church: among Synod members and Bishops, in dioceses, deaneries and local church communities.

Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q48 In view of the success of the Covid-19 vaccines in the UK, what representations has the Church of England made to the Government for the restoration of full freedom of worship in the UK as soon as possible?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England continues to discuss all relevant aspects of the pandemic with the Government, primarily through the Places of Worship Taskforce and related channels. We have stressed the need for government guidance to reflect current scientific and medical advice while taking fully into account all aspects of Article 9 of the Human Rights Act (1998). We are encouraged by the success of the vaccine programme and hope that responsibility for conducting public worship will, once again, soon become a matter for the religious bodies concerned and not the Government.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q49 In the light of the decisions of the Scottish and Welsh Governments to permit congregational singing from the beginning of June, will the House of Bishops redouble their efforts to persuade the UK Government to change its guidance in the same way, and then amend the Church of England's guidance accordingly?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England has been in continual contact with the Government, principally through the Places of Worship Taskforce and related channels. We have stressed the role of singing in public worship and have emphasised the importance of the resumption of congregational singing as soon as it is prudent to do so, as has been the case in those parts of Scotland and Wales where the incidence of the coronavirus is low. Church guidance will be amended to reflect any change in Government guidance which we hope will be in the near future.

Dr Mike Lawes (Rochester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q50 In the light of GS 2192 Response to Covid-19 and our resolution to “celebrate the role of churches in building mental and spiritual resilience to face the crisis”, how have our church leadership responded at a national level to peoples’ anxiety, grief and deep spiritual questioning in the context of the pandemic?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A As a Church nationally we have held webinars on loss and remembering and participate with other churches in the Loss and HOPE initiative. We resourced churches to take part in the National Day of Reflection and have published resources to support individuals, families and churches during the pandemic to pray about the issues that concern them.

Mr Mike Stallybrass (York) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q51 Last year, a document ‘Covid-19 Safer Churches’ was produced, which gave very helpful and clear guidelines over how to plan safe distancing in churches, including safe distancing during services when people need to move about. On making enquiries about the lack of visibility of this document early this year, I was told that “we have been working with the company that produced the document you highlight to produce an updated version”. Has that update been completed, and how can the latest version of that document be found?

I note that the current Parish Risk Assessment template contains a link that is clearly designed to take one to that document, but which actually takes one to the generic CofE Covid Documents web-page. That page then has no links to either the original, or to any updated version of that excellent guidance document.

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The National Church Institutions worked with a specialist architecture and design company, IF_DO, who were awarded government funding to create a series of Covid-19 safer spaces guides. The initial guide was published along with CofE guidance, and we are very glad many found it helpful.

The guide was updated in February 2021 following changes in regulations and is available online. I am grateful to have the broken link pointed out; this has now been corrected. The NCIs are considering if a future version would be useful, to aid Covid safe measures after current restrictions come to an end. As with all Covid guidance adoption is a matter for individual parishes but I hope this work will continue to be useful in managing our spaces safely.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q52 Has the House considered, and, if not, will it consider, instituting an independently-chaired inquiry into the Church of England's response to the pandemic over the past eighteen months, with a view to learning lessons from the past and applying these in the future as and when they may become necessary?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A While not encompassing the whole of the Church of England a high-level review by the independent National Church Institutions Risk and Assurance function of the work by the group set up by the House in response to the pandemic, the Recovery Group, has been undertaken. The draft report has been issued to the Regional Conveners for the House to consideration and review. The scope of this review was limited to the Recovery Group but did consider its impact in terms of the wider Church of England.

The Revd Peter Breckwoldt (Salisbury) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q53 When is there to be a review of the National Church's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic covering the work of the Bishops, Church House, Cathedrals, Dioceses, local churches, and the Church of England's recovery group, so as attain the lessons can be learnt and how we can improve and develop our response to be more effective in holding out the Gospel? And how might such a report be debated by General Synod to strengthen the wider Church in her mission and ministry of supporting and encouraging the Nation in a time of crisis?

The Bishop of London to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The National Church Institutions Risk and Assurance function has conducted a high-level independent review of the work undertaken by the Recovery Group. The draft report has been issued to the Recovery Group for consideration and review. The scope of this review was limited to the Recovery Group, but did consider its impact in terms of the wider Church of England.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q54 Paper GS Misc 1291 reports (para 7) that the House of Bishops, at its meeting on 20 April 2021 “agreed to the establishment of a Working Group on the Administration of Holy Communion.” In answer to a question from me (Q38) at the April 2021 group of sessions, the Bishop of Lichfield, replying on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops, stated, “The House of Bishops is actively considering the shape of the theological and liturgical study that it intends to carry out in respect of Holy Communion” (Questions Notice Paper, April 2021, page 25) and, in answer to a supplementary question, he said, “We hope that the House of Bishops Working Group should be completed at the latest by the end of 2022.”

Noting that there is no reference to the working group or the study in (a) paragraphs 8-12 of GS Misc 1291, summarising decisions of the House of Bishops during its meeting on 17-18 May 2021, or (b) the press release following the House of Bishops meeting on 24 June 2021 and published on the Church of England website; can Synod please be given a progress report, including (i) the membership of the Working Group; (ii) its terms of reference, and (iii) the timetable for its work?

The Bishop of Lichfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Details of the membership of the Working Group and its terms of reference have been provided.

Once the Working Group has met formally, probably at the end of the summer, it will be possible to give more details of its programme of work.

The Revd Prebendary Karl Freeman (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q55 Simpler, bolder, humbler. Given our new streamlined thinking, might the House of Bishops concede that, in the light of a likely long wait until confidence in the common communion cup returns, a temporary measure should be made now, allowing the use of individual cups until the fear of COVID19 infection is no longer an issue?

The Bishop of Lichfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A To assist those who object conscientiously to receiving Holy Communion in one kind alone, last year the Archbishops commended a procedure for receiving Communion in both kinds by simultaneous administration. This guidance was promulgated in December to all the clergy of the Church of England.

The legal advice to the House of Bishops is that individual cups cannot lawfully be used at a celebration of Holy Communion in the Church of England. In this light, the capacity to permit the use of individual cups, even for a temporary or emergency period, is not available to individual bishops, nor to the House of Bishops collectively. If the House determined that it was appropriate to make individual cups permanently lawful, it could bring appropriate legislative and liturgical business to the General Synod, but while the Synod meets remotely Article 7 business may not be debated.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q56 In recognition of the key role played by parishes throughout the pandemic, will the House of Bishops' Working Group, referred to in answers to Questions at the April meeting of General Synod, actively engage with what is actually happening at parish level in terms of distributing the wine at Holy Communion and report back to members of General Synod, not just the House of Bishops?

The Bishop of Lichfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Chair and Secretary of the Working Group have been gathering information and engaging actively with parochial practice in venues where parish voices were well represented, notably in the seminars in the Diocese of Lichfield's *Bread of Life* teaching series and in discussions in other dioceses where varied responses to the sacraments at parish level have been well documented.

The Working Group, having been constituted by the House of Bishops, will report back to that body in the first instance.

Dr Andrew Bell (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q57 In order to reduce deaths of unborn children and for the sake of vulnerable women who are left without support and counselling, will the Church of England make its voice heard and press for the prompt ending of DIY home abortion “pills by post”?

Mrs Kathy Playle (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q58 Will the Church of England make representations to the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Department of Health to end pills by post abortion, as promised when the Covid 19 restrictions are lifted (currently expected to be 19th July) to seek to end this extreme lack of care to women and further precipitating the tragedy of the death of unborn children?

The Bishop of Carlisle to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A With permission I will answer questions 57 and 58 together.

Through the Mission and Public Affairs Council, the Church of England made a submission to the Government’s consultation on this issue in February of this year. We stressed our conviction that the practice should end when the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 expires. In particular, we emphasised the physical, psychological and social risks involved, especially for vulnerable women. The Government has not published its response to this consultation, but we will continue to make our case both within Parliament and elsewhere.

Mrs Kathy Playle (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q59 Will the Bishops make their voices heard to protect the weak and the vulnerable in the current public debate about euthanasia and assisted suicide?

The Bishop of Carlisle to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Church of England has consistently opposed any change in the current law on assisted suicide. In February 2012, the General Synod passed a motion affirming the intrinsic value of every human life and expressing its support for the current law on assisted suicide

as a means of contributing to a just and compassionate society in which vulnerable people are protected. Bishops, through public statements and contributions to debates in the House of Lords, have defended and promoted this stance and will continue to do so in the ongoing debate.

Ms Debbie Buggs (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q60 Since the launch of the C4 Safeguarding Training for Senior Leaders course, how many people have been required do the course because of the office they hold, and how many have actually completed the course (or its equivalent under “Framework 2021” published on 23 April 2021)?

The Bishop of Huddersfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The 2021 version of the Senior Leadership Pathway launched on 4 May 2021. We expect to deliver this to senior staff teams across all dioceses, cathedrals, religious communities, theological educational institutions, provincial palaces and senior chaplains to the Armed Forces over the next 12 – 18 months. In total this amounts to approximately 1,200 people or 140 cohort groups.

To date five cohorts (46 people) have completed the pathway sessions and are now working on the post-course evaluation.

A further twenty-four cohorts (approximately 200 people) are part way through the pathway.

All cohorts will have completed the pathway by December 2022.

Mrs Kathryn Tucker (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q61 The Communications team at Church House told the BBC in May 2021 that the Makin Review into the abuses perpetrated by the late John Smyth and the alleged cover up thereof was still due to be published in “mid-Summer”. Given the additional information that has subsequently been reported, is this still the current projected date for the delivery of the Report?

The Bishop of Huddersfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The BBC reported what is currently on the website which states 'completion will be mid-summer at the earliest'. Due to the ongoing high volume of information coming into the reviewers, following the recent publication of various statements and findings relating to Smyth, the deadline for completion and then publication following checks, is expected to be later. For the survivors of the appalling abuse it is vital this review is done thoroughly but also within a defined timeframe. The NST hopes to confirm more detailed timings this month.

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q62 Can you confirm that the NST expects all dioceses and TEIs to deliver the new Leadership module as it is, without modification or omission, and what action is being taken where dioceses or TEIs are refusing to do so?

The Bishop of Huddersfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Yes, that is the expectation. Where it is known that there are issues with implementation the NST are working with church bodies to assist in working these through – by offering to co-deliver sessions for example. It is expected that all Church bodies will be fully compliant with the requirements of the Learning and Development Framework by January 2022. All dioceses are reporting that as of September 2021 they will be fully compliant with the requirements of the Leadership Pathway.

Canon Addy Lazz-Onyenobi (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q63 What is the Church of England saying and doing about the current situation in Nigeria, with regards to the killings of innocent people, in particular, Christians and burning of churches, and the increase in kidnapping of bishops, clergy, and students from their boarding schools?

The Bishop of Guildford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A It is a matter of concern to everyone that the religious freedom conditions in Nigeria remain poor, with a marked deterioration over the last year in both state and societal perpetuated violations. As the Rt Revd Edmund Akanya, the Bishop of Kebbi, explained to the Diocese of Guildford's Diocesan Synod on 30 June 2021 the situation across the country remains critical. As set out in *The Church – An Advocate for Freedom of Religion or Belief (GS 2197)* the MPA Division is working with African Parliamentarians for Human Rights, and other such bodies, to help build the capacity of parliamentarians across Africa, including in Nigeria, to hold accountable those who perpetuate such violent acts. Several Lords Spiritual are active members of the All Party Parliamentary Group for International Religious Freedom which has prioritised Nigeria as a country of particular concern in recent years.

Mrs Enid Barron (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q64 What is the current state of play on the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT); in particular:

- how many churches have supplied 2020 figures for the EFT;
- what does an analysis of this information reveal so far; and
- what progress has been made in developing the tool's use for other buildings?

The Bishop of Norwich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The EFT is open April-August 2021 for 2020 data collection. Currently 2,000 churches have submitted their data. This is 1,000 more submissions than at the same point during the 2019 data collection.

Data collected by the EFT for 2020 will be reported in Autumn 2021.

The Energy Toolkit, the collective instruments by which other buildings of the Church of England can measure their energy usage, is in development. It will cover cathedrals, schools, TElS, offices, clergy housing, and work-related travel.

Representatives of Dioceses and of the different building types have been consulted, to understand their requirements and identify

existing measurement tools. It is anticipated that the toolkit will open for testing and piloting 2020 data for all other buildings in Autumn 2021.

The analysis of last year's EFT results can be read here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/about-our-environment/energy-footprint-tool>

The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q65 What processes are in place to check national digital communications for their theological coherence and intelligibility?

The Bishop of Manchester to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The services, prayers and other worship content shared by the Church of England via our national social media channels pass through a thorough process, involving ordained members of NCI staff and other specialists, while also seeking to reflect the diversity of worship across the Church of England.

Content in the case of services is initiated and provided by clergy and other contributors taking part and is then produced and shared by the Communications Team.

These processes are regularly reviewed and strengthened to ensure that what is shared reflects what we believe as a Church. While our processes are not always failsafe, we are committed to learning lessons given the growing and dynamic scale of digital outreach.

Ms Josile Munro (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q66 Is any central church guidance being developed on how a) to catalogue the built environment and contested heritage relating to the transatlantic slave trade in Churches, cathedrals and other associated buildings; and b) what action to take following the cataloguing, given that dioceses are beginning to work on this, and that this is a workstream of the Racial Justice Commission?

The Bishop of Bristol to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division published guidance for parishes and cathedrals on contested heritage [Contested Heritage | The Church of England](#). This includes resources for parishes and cathedrals to use when considering how a piece of material culture relating to the transatlantic slave trade impacts on a church or cathedral's ability to be a place of welcome and solace to all, and how this can best be addressed.

The guidance is written to help parishes and cathedrals who wish or need to engage with this issue with research, how to assess the significance of objects, and assessing the need for change.

Decisions on what action to take is down to each parish – there is no national policy.

A sub-committee of the Church Buildings Council is being formed to provide further support for parishes and cathedrals. This sub-committee will liaise with the Racial Justice Commission on its workstream on slavery.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q67 What plans does he and the House of Bishops have to mark and celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 recognising both her long and loyal service, and also that Her Majesty is Supreme Governor of The Church of England, and if he will make a statement?

The Bishop of Worcester to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Liturgical Commission, alongside colleagues in the Archbishops' Council, have begun work on plans to mark and celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. The House of Bishops will give some time to considering plans in the autumn.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q68 Is any consideration being given by the Governance Review Group to how the General Synod might become Simpler, Bolder and Humbler?

The Bishop of Leeds to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Governance Review Group's work has mainly focused on the current structure of the National Church Institutions (NCIs) as set out in the 1998 National Institutions Measure. The Review Group has not focused on Synodical governance, but it is expected that our recommendations will include a recommendation that further work should be done to review this in the near future.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q69 Given (a) the concern of the House of Bishops for greater transparency and accountability, and (b) the importance for the whole Church of England of the issues involved, will the House please publish to all General Synod members the information referred to in the press release issued following the House of Bishops meeting on 24 June 2021, namely (i) the "series of proposals for delivering new ways of working and cost savings for the National Church institutions (NCIs)" and (ii) the "analysis of dioceses' financial situation in the wake of the pandemic" presented to the House by the Deputy Director of Finance for the NCIs?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The proposals for delivering new ways of working and cost savings for the National Church Institutions cannot be shared at present due to the sensitive implications for employees of the NCIs. The principles on which these proposals are based are contained in paper GS 2224.

The paper on diocesan finances drew on information provided by dioceses in confidence given its provisional and / or forward-looking nature and so is not suited for wider publication in its current form. Having said that, I understand that John Spence will share information on parish share receipts since the start of 2020 in his presentation on the Archbishops' Council's budget tomorrow.

Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q70 Can the House of Bishops confirm that there is nothing which Revd Dr Bernard Randall said in his Trent College sermon, as published in the Mail on Sunday on Sunday 8th May 2021 that falls outside the doctrine and teaching of the Church of England.

The Bishop of Hereford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Assuming that the text published in the media is an accurate version of the sermon as delivered, I can certainly confirm that it does not fall outside the doctrine and teaching of the Church of England.

The Revd Canon John Dunnnett (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q71 It has been widely reported that a school chaplain has been subject to disciplinary action by his employer and reported by them to the police for setting out the Church of England's doctrine of marriage, and explaining that it is both permissible and lawful for people to believe in it. What support might he, and others who find themselves in a similar position, expect to receive from the House of Bishops, both in terms of personal pastoral encouragement, and public statements of support?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A I am aware of these reports. As the full case, to be presented to the Employment Tribunal, is not yet in the public realm, it is premature to comment further at this time. In answer to another question, I have stated that the text of the sermon, as reproduced in the media, does indeed represent views which are permissible and lawful to believe in. It is not clear, however, that the case turns on the doctrinal content of the sermon.

In terms of support for the individual concerned, I am assured that the diocesan bishop has made suitable pastoral support available. Details of pastoral support in an individual context, and speculation about support that might be offered when the full facts are known, are not matters to discuss on the floor of Synod.

The Revd Peter Breckwoldt (Salisbury) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q72 The appointment of Bishops is an important ministry and work in the life of the National Church. When a Bishop has been in post (say after 6/18months); what appraisal and evaluation is undertaken to ensure that he/she is matching up to the profile drawn up by the diocese prior to their appointment? When has it been necessary to take action to help and support a Bishop to ensure that they are equipped and trained for their ministry and work so as to deliver against the profile produced? Who provides that support?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Following early discussions with the archbishop of the province on appointment, new diocesan bishops meet with them again about 18 months later for a formal MDR. The Charge, based on the profile from the CNC, is key to this discussion as is 360 feedback. Diocesan bishops are responsible for the arrangements for their suffragans.

All bishops take part in a range of induction activities including standard and tailored briefing and development modules in addition to the ongoing development programme arranged by the Archbishops' Advisers for Appointments and Development. Each Diocesan Bishop is offered a transition coach.

Where specific needs are identified, the Senior Leadership Development team is available to support bishops to identify appropriate development options.

Mr Graham Caskie (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q73 In reference to the wearing of a stole or scarf with robes, what are the obligations and restrictions on what an ordinand can and cannot wear at his or her ordination as a Deacon or Priest?

Ms Debbie Buggs (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q74 During the recent ordinations it has become apparent that different dioceses have binding dress requirements of ordinands. Would the Chair of the Liturgical Commission please outline the national Church policy on this matter, particularly around whether it is acceptable to wear a scarf rather than stole as was previously the case?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A With permission I will answer Questions 73 and 74 together. Matters relating to the form of clerical dress to be worn at ordinations are the concern of the relevant Diocesan Bishop having regard to paragraph 1 of Canon B 8 (no particular doctrinal significance attached to diversities of vesture) and the applicable rubrics.

The Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q75 Given the Archbishops' stated desire that we should eliminate the 'culture of deference' within the Church, what plans has the House of Bishops made to remove the title 'Lord Bishop' and other such honorific expressions?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Following Resolution 41 of the Lambeth Conference of 1968, which recommended that the bishops 'as leaders and representatives of a servant Church, should radically examine the honours paid to them in the course of divine worship, in titles and customary address, and in style of living', the then Archbishop of Canterbury announced a simplified form of address for the clergy of the Church of England which recommended using "archbishop" and "bishop" as forms of address in place of "Your Grace" and "My Lord". Since that time, general usage has followed that recommendation. Older forms are now almost wholly confined to certain legal documents issued by the Crown. While the House has not considered the specific question, I would expect it to take a similar view to that taken in 1968. Many of us are quite happy to be addressed simply by our Christian names.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q76 For those CDM cases which can only be considered following completion of action within the Criminal Justice System, what are the predominant factors underlying the time subsequently taken to complete the CDM process?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A There are two routes for disciplinary action following proceedings that have concluded in the Criminal Justice System. Where a respondent has been convicted of any offence, other than a summary only offence, and/or receives a sentence of imprisonment (whether implemented immediately or not), the bishop may remove from office and/or prohibit the respondent (whether for life or for a limited period) without a formal allegation of misconduct being instituted under the CDM. Alternatively, where criminal proceedings end on any other basis than that set out above, a formal allegation of misconduct under the CDM may be instituted, taking into account where relevant the guidance set out in paragraph 167 of the Code of Practice. Thereafter proceedings continue in accordance with the statutory time limits as set out within the Measure and Rules.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q77 In seeking to develop a more workable and arguably more humane replacement to the existing Clergy Discipline Measure, has the House identified any lessons that the General Synod and others involved in the development and implementation of church legislation might usefully learn from the way in which the existing Measure was developed and implemented?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The working group has considered carefully how the Clergy Discipline Measure was developed and then implemented both locally and nationally. The group particularly recognised the lack of a separate track to determine low-level complaints and the need to properly resource training, early investigation and oversight of the system. Additionally, it is clear to the working group that the current Measure is too inflexible in responding to changes in accepted practice, particularly in relation to survivors, but also to the Church's understanding of what constitutes misconduct. The implementation group will consider how best to approach these issues.

The Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q78 Is the House aware of who will be succeeding the Bishop to the Armed Forces in the role of steering the CDM proposals through the Synodical process after his retirement this summer? If not, could Synod please be informed of the process by which this is to be decided?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The proposed next step for this work is the formation of an implementation group. The House of Bishops will consider who the most appropriate chair of that body will be, taking into account the nature and intricacy of the work involved.

The Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q79 What thought has been given beyond para 9 of GS 2219 to the membership of the Implementation Group there referred to?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The membership of the implementation group will include those with the necessary expertise to continue the work carried out by the working group, including the process of formulating legislative proposals, taking into account the need for a range of diverse voices.

The Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q80 What thought has the CDM working group given to measures that can be taken against people found to be making frivolous or malicious complaints against members of the clergy, sometimes on a recurring basis?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The working group has considered the issue of frivolous or malicious (also known as 'vexatious') allegations of misconduct. The amendments to the CDM Code of Practice approved by Synod in April 2021 include new guidance (paragraph 144) on dismissing

vexatious allegations. Further, the suggestion of the working group is that the proposed Clergy Conduct Measure (GS 2219) provides the bishop with the power to summarily dismiss such allegations. The implementation group will further this work and consider proposals for the use of formal steps to prevent persist complainants from bringing repeated allegations. GS Misc 1285 proposes the formation of a group to review the issue of lay misconduct.

The Revd Canon Leah Vasey-Saunders (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q81 The Working Group's Progress Report in Dec 2020 recognised the difference between more serious complaints and less serious complaints suggesting that only the more serious complaints would be dealt with by a method that "may look similar to what currently exists" (para 20). In April we approved a new CDM Code of Practice to try and ensure that only serious misconduct was dealt with under the current Measure. Why has the Working Group now stepped back from all this and proposed that anything that might be categorised as misconduct, even if not serious misconduct, is dealt with in a manner very similar to the present system?

The Bishop to the Armed Forces to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A There has been no change in the working group's proposals. The December 2020 progress report identified the need to separate out into separate tracks complaints which constituted 'misconduct' and complaints which fell short of that, for example arising out of pastoral breakdown or other less-serious issues. The group's proposals in GS 2219 carry this forward by designating the first category as 'allegations of misconduct' and the second as 'complaints'. The implementation group will carry out the work of clearly defining these terms, but there is no proposal to change the current position that allegations of misconduct will only be for serious matters.

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q82 The Primate of Hong Kong has recently called on churches in the UK to welcome Hong Kong residents moving to the UK under the visa scheme announced by the government in response to the new

national security laws. However there are reports of many, especially students, not included in our Government's provisions seeking asylum as they flee arrest after demonstrations against those laws. Will the Bishops consider pressing HM Government to expedite their asylum cases as soon as possible to allow them to continue their education and resume their lives?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A I share the anxieties outlined in the question. There are serious concerns about the Government's approach, including the lack of detail for any plans for integration, and concerns about the eligibility and status of those born after 1997. The Lords Spiritual have raised these, and related, questions in Parliament. We are working with ecumenical campaigns around the issue, and we will continue to press on this matter over the coming months, including in relation to the forthcoming Borders Bill.

Ms Josile Munro (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q83 One of the workstreams of the Racial Justice Commission concerns using theological concepts to drive curriculum design that promotes equality and racial justice. Will this development cover pan key stages one to four and is there any discussion with Government (Department for Education) to enable the issues of race and equality to be included in examinations?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Work is already underway which will support curriculum design across all Key Stages, including Key Stage 5. The resource will also be useful for those planning curricula in FE and HE, as the theological concepts will be applicable there as well. The intention is not to design actual curriculum resources for schools, but to provide some of the underpinning theological concepts and examples to support educational leaders' own detailed subject-specific planning. We continue to work closely with the Department for Education on policy issues, including examinations, whilst recognising that oversight of this lies with Ofqual.

Mr Graham Caskie (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q84 Has the House of Bishops expressed a view, and, if not, will it consider expressing a view, on whether probity in private life (including marital fidelity) should be expected of those serving in public office?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House has not expressed a collective view on this matter, not least because we believe that all people are called by God to live virtuously. Human frailty is a theological and a practical reality and we know that marital fidelity may be a manifestation of relationship problems that cannot always be laid solely at the door of an individual. People in public office often have their failings exposed publicly, but, looked at pastorally which is how the Church should approach the matter, it would be rash to leap to judgement simply on the basis of media reports. Adultery is always a sin, and as forgiven sinners, our prayers and thoughts should turn to those injured by infidelity and to pray for wisdom and contrition from those who have offended.

Mr Clive Scowen (London) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q85 Will the House of Bishops now reaffirm their prayerful sympathy and support for spouses, children and wider families who are left devastated when middle aged men have “a bit of a fling”, and reaffirm their confidence in the benefits of life-long marriage and the grace which God provides to those who seek it to keep their marriage vows?

The Bishop of Durham to reply on behalf of the House of Bishops

A The Church has never ceased to affirm the benefits of life-long marriage and to trust in the grace of God to console those caught in marital strife and support those who seek to sustain their vows. This is inseparable from the gospel of compassion toward repentant sinners. Adultery is not the sole province of middle-aged men and there are many spouses of both sexes who have been given the strength by God to forgive and to preserve their marriages. Nevertheless, marriages fail for many reasons and adultery is not the only way to break faith. We have been wary of the concept of “no fault” divorce precisely because divorce always involves falling short

of marital ideals. We all fall short in some way or another, and public and blatant fault by one partner never gives a full picture of a marriage's fruits or its failings.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q86 Would the House of Bishops confirm their support in principle of the belief that at the beginning God made humans male and female?

The Bishop of Fulham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House of Bishops recognises the action of God in creation, narrated in Genesis 1 as making human beings in God's image, male and female. The House of Bishops rejoices in this focus on the inclusion of all humanity, across their many differences, as being made in the image of God, with equal dignity and worth. The House of Bishops also recognises the need to learn from science, and that science has shown that biological sex cannot be deemed to be entirely binary at all times. This in no way undermines the truth of the biblical accounts of creation.

Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q87 Can the House of Bishops please ensure that public statements from Church of England Bishops about adultery address the sin, repentance and forgiveness of God first and foremost rather than making any other comment which undermines the solemn nature of wedding vows and marriage?

The Bishop of Fulham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The House of Bishops affirms the dignity and solemnity of marriage and the vital importance of faithfulness in relationships. It also recognises the deep pain caused to all involved when relationships breakdown, particularly for children. The House encourages a gracious and humble approach in specific pastoral situations, in line with the words of Jesus in John 8.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q88 With reference to Recommendation 4 of GS 2225 please can you advise the Synod of the timescale for gathering examples of good practice and practical experience in order to produce the revised guidance on the operation of the settlement and on how parishes may petition for extended episcopal oversight?

The Bishop of Fulham to reply on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

A After Synod, it is expected that the proposed Standing Commission will be established and will start its work. As part of this, it will need to set out its work plan which would include timescales for deliverables.

One of the first pieces of work for the Commission will be to review the recommendations from GS 2225 and to look at where and how these can be delivered. It will engage with different bodies as appropriate to do this.

In terms of recommendation 4, this will be an iterative process, as there are always new examples of good practice and experience. The Commission will be seeking and disseminating good practice on a regular basis, and will be looking to improve guidance in light of this.

Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q89 Under the Five Guiding Principles how should we respond to those in episcopal authority who openly reject others within the Church of England who, on grounds of theological conviction, are unable to receive the ministry of women bishops or priests, and thereby cause significant pastoral damage to their mutual flourishing?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Central to the 2014 House of Bishops Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests (GS Misc 1076) are the Five Guiding Principles. All members of the House of Bishops, and indeed all clergy, are required to work within the Five Guiding Principles. In situations where it is considered that this is not the case, a complaint may be submitted to the Independent Reviewer who will look into it and

make a report with recommendations if required. The Implementation and Dialogue Group has also made recommendations to the House of Bishops on the continuing implementation of the Five Guiding Principles and a Standing Commission will be set up following this Synod to aid this work.

Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q90 Part of the vision for the 2020's is that we will be sent out to build God's Kingdom in the world. Will there be teaching and resources created to help us see where God's Kingdom is already beginning to take shape so we can join in? Also what we need to look out for to recognise the Kingdom for ourselves, e.g. the characteristics?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Two strands of resources are in preparation to promote being missionary disciples as Kingdom citizens. The Everyday Faith digital platform will carry reflections for 'faith at work' – shaping a kingdom focus and suggesting practical ways of engaging in God's mission at work and with others in community transformation. Additionally, materials affirming calling to various social vocations is being developed. These materials will be used to continue to broaden and equip a wider notion of vocations as Kingdom Callings. They will be available Autumn 2021.

Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q91 In the light of the recognition afforded to the Revd Bassi Mirzania by the Archbishop of Canterbury – the Alphege Award for Evangelism and Witness – for her tireless and exceptional service as founding Chaplain to the Persian/Iranian community in Great Britain for more than 20 years, would you now be willing to revisit the decision not to appoint a successor?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Revd Mirzania's legacy has been deeply valued by the Church. It's clear that Persian/Iranian heritage Christians now constitute a substantial and vibrant part of the Church of England in so many of our towns and cities. The launch of the Persian-language eucharistic liturgy at Wakefield Cathedral in 2019 is just one indicator of the strength of the Persian diaspora integrated within the Church of

England. It is exciting to witness, too, the emergence of significant numbers of Persian/Iranian heritage leaders, who have grown in number among both the clergy and laity and created a significant network to share resources and support emerging ministries across the country, supported and encouraged by the ministry of Bishop Guli and others.

Exploring how these ministries could be better supported will be a part of the racial justice work ahead of us, and I am excited to see how this will bless the Church.

Mr Joseph Diwakar (Ex Officio) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q92 In the light of its remit 'To review recommendations made in previous Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) reports, noting actions taken or omitted, and to identify previous recommendations which could be implemented swiftly', which of the actions proposed in *From Lament to Action* comprise those which have been previously recommended, which are new, and what reflection was given as to why any previous recommendations were not implemented?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Archbishops' Antiracism Taskforce was asked to do this and the introduction and priority areas section of the *From Lament to Action* report does confirm that they considered previous reports and their recommendations. The report as published does not contain an analysis along the lines asked about.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q93 How will the Bishop of Liverpool be sanctioned for delivering a speech against the Church of England's teaching on marriage, as reported in *The Guardian* (26/06/21) in which he said he wants "to see a gender-neutral marriage canon, such as they have in the [US] Episcopal church or in the Scottish Episcopal church"?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops

A Thank you for your question. As you know, there are disagreements within the Church of England about its teaching on marriage. These disagreements also exist among the bishops, and acknowledging this publicly is not a disciplinary matter. Paragraph 25 of the House of Bishops statement [House of Bishops Pastoral Guidance on Same Sex Marriage](#) states, ‘clergy are able to argue for a change in its teaching on marriage and human sexuality, while at the same time being required to fashion their lives with that teaching’.

The *Living in Love and Faith* resources were produced to help the whole Church to learn together about these and other questions relating to a Christian understanding of what it means to be human. Their purpose is to help us better understand why we reach different conclusions about some questions – while also gaining a deeper appreciation of our common ground. The hope is that the very way we – the whole Church, including the bishops – explore these questions together will deepen our love for one another and will be a testimony to the presence of Christ in our midst.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q94 Are bishops expected to uphold the Church’s teaching on marriage in their media appearances?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A Thank you for your question. I refer you to my answer to your previous question.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford) to ask the Chair of the House of Bishops:

Q95 Recognising that membership of the Church of England has been dropping particularly during COVID-19 and the fact that under his leadership, he wishes to see our Church becoming leaner, humbler and bolder, has he and the House of Bishops yet considered merging Dioceses and reducing the number of both Diocesan and Suffragan Bishops and if he will make a statement?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Chair of the House of Bishops:

A The Archbishop of Canterbury and I have commissioned work to be done concerning a variety of matters relating to episcopal ministry. The Emerging Church Steering Group will also ensure it considers wider issues as part of its remit relating to structures. There is also now in place a new Chair of the Dioceses Commission who is in communication with the Archbishops about wider matters.

SECRETARY GENERAL

The Revd Canon Dr Lisa Battye (Manchester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q96 Given that the Clergy Discipline Commission does not collect data in relation to the existence of financial settlements or non-disclosure agreements connected with the operation of the CDM (ref. response of Dr Jamie Harrison to Question 71, April 2021 General Synod); please will a relevant officer advise Synod how such payments are accounted for and where such data can be accessed, particularly in relation to unusually large sums?

Mrs Gill de Berry (Salisbury) to ask the Secretary General:

Q97 Are the details of NDAs collated centrally or by individual Dioceses? How many have been signed by clergy in the past five years?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A With permission I will answer questions 96 and 97 together.

Any such agreements will be within the knowledge of the bodies or office holders who are parties to them. We would not expect, and cannot require, information about such agreements to be provided to the National Church Institutions and are not therefore able to assist in the way these questions suggest.

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans) to ask the Secretary General:

Q98 In recent years we have seen the Church make increasing use of Public Relations Companies rather than the Church's in-house communications officers. IICSA have been strongly critical of what they have termed reputation management. However, such usage has not been confined to safeguarding issues. Would the Secretary General help Synod understand the reasons that govern a decision to use a PR company?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The National Church does not have a PR agency. The overwhelming bulk of publicity, media relations, content production, publishing and digital marketing work is carried out by Communications staff in Church House. This includes safeguarding communications.

From time to time a specialist digital agency assists with key tasks – for example providing additional support responding to the volume of social media traffic at peak times or working on materials for campaigns. Given the large increase in output from the department especially since the pandemic, it also occasionally uses freelancers for specialist tasks - for example filmmakers or graphic designers to produce some print and digital resources. These are often for one-off projects.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q99 The September 2018 Fact Sheet of types of abuse adopted and published by the Church of England recognises inter alia a category of abuse known as "Organisational and Institutional Abuse": given the multiple layers and, breadth of parties potentially caught within such a definition, to whom should such a complaint be initially addressed to avoid difficulties of conflict of interest from the outset?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The 2018 Types of Abuse Fact Sheet statutory definition quoted from the Care Act 2015 refers specifically to "*Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home*". This means it is very unlikely to apply in a church context.

However, organisational bullying or harassment may occur, and unless there is reason to believe this is a safeguarding matter, in which case it should be raised with the DSA, this would be dealt with through the HR process of the institution concerned.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester) to ask the Secretary General:

Q100 Does the Church have any mechanism to ensure that the misleading of Bishops through documents submitted under the CDM process is thoroughly and independently investigated?

Mr William Nye to reply as Secretary General:

A The Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 sets out the process that must be followed in relation to allegations of misconduct against bishops, priests and deacons. The first part of that process involves the bishop considering an allegation in the light of a report prepared by the diocesan registrar. If a question were to arise about a document that had been submitted with the allegation, it would be for the bishop, advised by the registrar, to consider what might be required in terms of investigation.

CLERK TO THE SYNOD

Miss Emily McDonald (CEYC) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q101 Considering the Church of England's commitment (as stated in its vision and strategy) to growing the Church younger and more diverse, could Synod please be updated regarding the arrangements being made to ensure the representation of under 25-year olds in the next quinquennium?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A The number of under 25-year olds in the membership of General Synod is ultimately decided by the electors of the Houses of Clergy and Laity. Work has been done to encourage younger people to stand for election to General Synod in the form of the recently-launched #StandForSynod campaign. This campaign forms a key part of the Church of England's vision of becoming a younger and more diverse Church. The advertising and information

#StandForSynod campaign includes a 90-second film, a short explanatory animation, and a dedicated webpage, which may be viewed at www.churchofengland.org/synodelections.

These materials are being shared online, across our social media channels, and with Chaplaincy networks, Cathedral Groups, HE groups and other networks – as part of the drive to engage younger audiences to stand.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford) to ask the Clerk to the Synod:

Q102 On what basis are questions that highlight the shortcomings of the Church of England ruled out of order?

Dr Jacqui Philips to reply as Clerk to the Synod:

A A member will be informed that a question submitted to the Clerk is out of order if the question does not comply with the following requirements as to the content of questions contained in Standing Order 113:

- (1) A question to the Chair of a body referred to in SO 112 must relate to the business of that body.
- (2) A question to the Secretary General must relate to his or her duties.
- (3) A question to the Clerk must relate to his or her duties.
- (4) A question or supplementary question must not—
 - (a) contain argument or imputation, or
 - (b) ask for an expression of opinion, including on a question of law, or for the solution of a hypothetical problem.

The fact that a question draws attention to shortcomings of the Church of England is not a consideration.

NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL

Mrs Chris Fry (Winchester) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q103 What was the nature of Stonewall's involvement in *Valuing All God's Children* and has that involvement continued with the Church of England Education Office on issues of policy and guidance?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A The Department for Education contracted with Stonewall to support schools in developing guidelines on preventing homophobic bullying and they were the conduit for Government funding in this area.

Given the recognition that our report was so well received within the education sector, we availed ourselves of the Stonewall/DfE conduit to fund the printing and distribution of our second edition.

Valuing All God's Children was first published in 2014 with a Second Edition produced in 2017 and updated in 2019.

As part of the process of writing it we consulted with a wide variety of organisations, including Stonewall, but Stonewall as a matter of clarification is not involved in the Church of England Education Office development of policy and guidance on any issue.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q104 In the light of the widespread withdrawal of many organisations (including the Equality and Human Rights Commission) from Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme, and the finding by an independent report commissioned by the University of Essex that Stonewall gave the University incorrect and potentially illegal advice on transgender issues; how is the use of material supplied by Stonewall being reviewed within the Church of England Education Office, and what public comment is planned?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A In producing our resource for the prevention of homophobic and transphobic bullying (*Valuing All God's Children, Second Edition*) we referenced the *Stonewall School Report (2017)* as it was the leading report on the extent of homophobic bullying in schools, but our report does not include advice from Stonewall on transgender issues.

Valuing All God's Children will be updated in the light of developing thinking in this area, not least through connecting to the rich resources of *Living in Love and Faith*.

Mrs Chris Fry (Winchester) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q105 How is the Church of England Education Office applying Department for Education guidance on carefully vetting organisations that come

into schools to provide teaching assistance and guidance on policies, particularly with reference to the use of the organisation Stonewall which is widely used in Church of England schools for anti-bullying lessons?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A It is for schools to decide which resources they use and which organisations they want to work with, not least because schools operate in a variety of different contexts. Schools have both the expertise and knowledge that makes them best placed to make these decisions.

Schools can use the DfE's recently published implementation guidance and must consider the [statutory guidance](#), which sets out clear advice on choosing resources. The Church of England Charter sets out helpful guidance for schools in this area.

Schools are aware of their duties in relation to political impartiality and must exercise their own judgement reasonably, in line with their legal responsibilities, in the selection of providers and resources to be used.

Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q106 What support is available from the National Society Council for employees who find themselves in a disciplinary procedure in their workplace after expressing the teaching of the Church that sexual intercourse properly belongs within marriage exclusively, and marriage is of a man and a woman?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A The objects of the National Society are "the promotion, encouragement and support of education in accordance with the principles of the Church of England, in England and in Wales and in any other part of the world where the Church of England or churches in communion with it may be at work." It is not the role of the National Society to provide support or advice to individual employees of other organisations and such individuals are advised to take their own legal advice and seek pastoral support as appropriate.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the National Society Council:

Q107 Given the recent Report which described sexual exploitation in schools (mostly directed at girls through social media) as 'normative', what action is the National Society taking or planning to take to ensure that Church of England Schools and Colleges are able effectively to address these issues so that Church of England Schools and Colleges are healthy and safe places for all their students. And what level of priority and urgency is the National Society taking towards these issues?

The Bishop of Durham to reply as Chair of the National Society Council:

A The Ofsted report makes for sobering reading and underlines why good Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is so important in schools. Sexual harassment is abhorrent, and nobody should have to normalise it, let alone a child, and we will continue our work to eradicate it in schools. The issue is one for the whole of society to address but schools need to play their part too, and this is why the National Society supported the Government's introduction of better and compulsory RSHE. Our Charter sets out how schools should ensure that their RSHE curriculum protects, informs and nurtures all pupils, and the change in legislation will mean that all schools have to address this as a matter of urgency.

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TEs) to ask the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

Q108 What discussion has the Council for Christian Unity had in terms of the ecumenical impact of the non-pandemic related decision in 2020 to limit consecrations in the Church of England to only three consecrating bishops, not only in terms of participation of bishops from the Anglican Communion but in particular to the ecumenical impact on relations with the Old Catholics, the Mar Thoma Church of South India, and Porvoo Churches?

The Bishop of Chichester to reply as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity:

- A** The Council for Christian Unity has not had these discussions so far. A review of arrangements for consecrations is currently taking place and will take ecumenical aspects into consideration.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

The Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

- Q109** Please can we have a breakdown of the number of disabled people (those who have declared a disability) who have been accepted for training in the last three years, and of those who have approached a DDO but who have not been recommended for training?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

- A** We only hold data on those who come through the national discernment process so are not able to comment on those who approach a DDO but who do not come to BAP. For 2018, 2019 and 2020, (the 2021 season is currently ongoing) the national outcomes were as follows:

2018:30 candidates declared a disability.

26 were recommended to train for ordination and 4 were not.

2019:39 candidates declared a disability.

33 were recommended to train for ordination and 6 were not.

2020:36 candidates declared a disability.

33 were recommended to train for ordination and 3 were not.

Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

- Q110** Given the strategic significance of the Everyday Faith project and the priority of equipping lay people to live out their faith, what discussion has taken place within Ministry Council about how much of this theological equipping should be delivered and resourced on a local level, and how much should be from or supported by national church resources?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The Ministry Council has worked closely with the Setting God's People Free programme and the work of promoting Everyday Faith across Dioceses. The Council has discussed the shared work undertaken across National church teams which is engaging with TEIs and Dioceses to shape formation and training that equips ordained and lay ministers to 'enable everyday faith'. Experience from the implementation of SGPF highlights that locally and contextually developed resources and training have the most impact. The project has grown a national network of disciple enablers is in place to share and develop approaches that are seen to be beneficial. This includes resources and training for individuals and churches. Investment is being made at a national level to provide a digital platform for Everyday Faith – which will include reflection materials and practical advice developed by national church teams, diocese and partner agencies. A refreshed Church Support Hub is also in development to provide practical resources for local leaders.

The Revd Canon Dr James Walters (Universities & TEIs) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q111 Given that Vote 1 is one of the most significant budget items which members of Synod are invited to review and approve, what plans has Ministry Council agreed to ensure that Synod members will be fully involved and consulted before any material changes are made as to how this budget is spent?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A When the Ministry Council began the review of the RME funding model (as it had committed to Synod that it would do after three years), it did so with the intention of ensuring that the TEI sector and dioceses were actively involved in developing proposals for theological education that would lead to a sector that is more sustainable and accessible, and less competitive. Planning for this had always recognised that any significant changes would need the

approval of Synod. As noted in the answer to Question 113, there have been a series of consultations to date and further consultations with dioceses, TEIs, the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council are expected leading to a presentation to Synod for consideration, possibly in November, at which some initial decisions may be sought before final decisions in a subsequent Synod.

The Revd Canon Dr James Walters (Universities & TEIs) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q112 What discussion has taken place within Ministry Council concerning the strategic significance of ensuring that all three training models – full-time residential, full-time non-residential and part-time – remain viable for the resourcing the Church's mission, and how has this discussion informed the planning of the Resourcing Ministerial Formation process?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A The Ministry Council has consistently affirmed the value of all three modes of training. Early in the Resourcing Ministerial Formation process, the Council agreed a vision statement following discussion by the College of Bishops in which it was explicit that the church should expect all three modes to continue to be available in the future since each will offer the best formational environment for certain ordinands. One of the goals of the Resourcing Ministerial Formation process is to ensure that the church's financial arrangements for ministerial formation align with its strategic objectives, now also including the outcomes of the Vision and Strategy process led by the Archbishop of York. The RMF Review Group is considering how it might be possible in a context of financial constraint nevertheless to give the TEIs serving the church greater financial security than now, when they can be significantly affected by annual fluctuations in ordinand numbers.

The Revd Dr Philip Plyming (Universities & TElS) to ask the Chair of the Ministry Council:

Q113 What consultation has already taken place concerning the Resourcing Ministerial Formation review, and what consultation with the whole Synod is planned before any formal proposals are brought forward for consideration by the Synod?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich to reply as Chair of the Ministry Council:

A In 2020 there was broad consultation with dioceses and TElS, initially inviting written responses (33 received) and then in an online event (more than 80 in attendance). In 2021 there was initially a further written consultation on a proposed direction of travel shaped by the earlier process (39 responses) then online events with 120 in attendance. There have been focus groups to hear the view of participants representing perspectives otherwise underrepresented in the consultation, and a meeting with some Ordinands Association representatives. There has also been discussion at the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council. A considerable amount of feedback has been received and further work will now be done before further consultations with stakeholders including dioceses, TElS, the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council. This will lead to a presentation to Synod for consideration, possibly as early as November, at which some initial decisions may be sought before final decisions in a subsequent Synod.

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Revd Charles Read (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Q114 Can you confirm that currently HMRC does not allow stipendiary clergy to claim membership of a Trades Union as something for which they can claim tax relief and, if so, is the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee doing anything to negotiate a change of policy here?

The Bishop of Hereford to reply as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A It is the stated policy of HMRC that “subscriptions to trade unions and other comparable bodies are not deductible under Section 336 ITEPA 2003, even where membership is required by the employer” (see HMRC Employment Income Manual 32885 – <https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/employment-income-manual/eim32885>). The expense is not incurred in the performance of the duties and nor is it necessarily incurred which are two of the tests for the availability of tax deductions.

In view of this, it is difficult to see on what grounds we could argue for clergy to be treated differently from others here.

MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) to ask the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Q115 What action has the Mission and Public Affairs Council taken to support and join in the calls from many quarters on Her Majesty’s Government to bring forward urgently effective action by social media companies to implement robust age-verification procedures for access to pornographic material online?

Mr Mark Sheard to reply as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

A The MPA Council has not directly considered this matter. We do not normally join organised lobbying alliances where we cannot control the circumstances in which the church’s name may be used. However, MPA staff have been at the heart of the major project of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group studying the ethics of Big Tech, including social media companies, and basing the work on substantial theological foundations. This work will be a major resource for the whole Church to inform our engagement with the wide range of ethical issues raised by contemporary technological developments and focussed strongly on protecting the vulnerable. Age-related bars on social media raise questions about the boundary between proper controls and censorship which require a firm grasp of the particular ethical issues raised by social media technology and are not wholly comparable to analogue media.

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

The Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Appointments Committee:

Q116 How is the Legal Advisory Commission constituted; and what steps have been taken to ensure its membership includes a wide range of theological opinion in the Church of England, so that its advice is not open to the charge of partisan bias?

Canon Margaret Swinson to reply as Chair of the Appointments Committee:

A Details of the constitution of the Commission are set out in GS 1829 – see [Microsoft Word - GS 1829.doc \(churchofengland.org\)](#).

The Committee will, as with any body to which it appoints, seek an appropriate degree of diversity commensurate with the skills and relevant experience needed to carry out the responsibilities of the relevant body. In this case the Commission is required to give authoritative independent legal opinions; and that consideration would have been a prime consideration in determining its membership.

The Revd Mike Smith (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Appointments Committee:

Q117 What role will the Committee anticipate having in agreeing the membership of the Implementation Group taking forward the replacement of CDM? What place might there be for non-Synod members who can bring appropriate expertise to bear?

Canon Margaret Swinson to reply as Chair of the Appointments Committee:

A The Committee would be happy to advise on the membership of such a group in the event of a proposal being put to it. As would normally be the case, it would consider appropriate diversity of membership in the light of the particular needs of the group in question. This might well include non-Synod members (as was the case recently with the groups concerning clergy well-being).

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q118 For each Group of Sessions in the current and preceding quinquennia, how many diocesan synod motions were debated, and how many were held over for later consideration?

Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A For the Quinquennium 2010 – 2015:

- Nine Diocesan Synod Motions were debated.
- Seven Diocesan Synod Motions were held over for the new Quinquennium. Three of these concerned the Anglican Communion Covenant.

For the Sextennium 2015 – 2021:

- Ten Diocesan Synod Motions were debated.
- Thirteen have been held over until the new Quinquennium. One concerns the Anglican Communion Covenant.

During the pandemic the Synod has had to meet on a remote basis using Zoom. In order to keep the agendas as short and as manageable as possible given the constraints of Zoom, the Business Committee has postponed taking non-time critical business, including Diocesan Synod Motions. We hope to start scheduling DSMs on the Agenda once the Synod is able to meet in person again.

Mr Mike Stallybrass (York) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q119 Although PCCs are sometimes employers, and on some other occasions may discuss what, in terms of the Freedom of Information Act should be classified as Reserved Business, there are currently no provisions for Reserved Business in the Church Representation Rules [CRR].

Reserved Business covers agenda items which are deemed to involve, and are likely to generate information in the resulting minutes, which ought to be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. This includes personal data about any named or identifiable living person, and in particular includes sensitive employment-related information about individuals, and sensitive information about the health, welfare or personal lives of

individuals. Recent legal changes, which now require PCC consent for an incumbent to remain in post beyond the age of 70, have highlighted the lack of provision for Reserved Business as a potential problem.

Unfortunately, the CRR have two clauses [M28(2) and M28(3)] which can effectively force the publication of such details. Clause M28(2) states “If one-fifth of the members of the PCC present and voting on a resolution so require, the minutes must record the name of each member voting for the resolution and the name of each member voting against”. Thus this clause, in particular, has the potential to be used to bully and intimidate PCC members in the context of sensitive personnel discussions.

Can the Business Committee please give an assurance that this anomaly, embedded in the new CRR, will be addressed as a matter of urgency?

Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A Rule M28(2) provides for the recording in a PCC’s minutes of the names of those voting for and against a particular resolution if one-fifth of the members so require. That does not mean that the names or the voting figures must be *published*. The PCC can decide that certain minutes are confidential under rule M82(6), with the result that those minutes are accessible only to members of the PCC and a very limited list of other persons. Unlike other PCC minutes, they are not accessible to persons whose names are on the church electoral roll but who are not members of the PCC. If Mr Stallybrass is concerned that the existing provisions as to confidentiality are inadequate, the Business Committee would be glad to hear from him.

Ms Christina Baron (Bath & Wells) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q120 Given that the motion Liturgies for same-sex couples received the signatures of a hundred members before the motion on the Five Guiding Principles, why was the latter tabled for debate at this group of sessions when the former has yet to be debated?

Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A Although it is a convention that Private Members Motions (PMMs) which achieve 100 or more signatures are considered for inclusion on the Synod Agenda there is no legal requirement for the Business Committee to do so. In considering which PMMs to schedule, the Business Committee is mindful of the wider context and other on-going initiatives. In this case, the Business Committee decided to delay the scheduling of Ms Baron's motion on the Agenda until after the "Living in Love and Faith" initiative had presented its final report to General Synod.

Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q121 Will the Business Committee give consideration to how the effectiveness of Questions could be improved, and in particular to how it could be ensured that all questions were actually answered, and none were parried or avoided?

Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A The Business Committee regularly reviews the format and handling of Synod Question Time and has done so after each group of sessions held remotely, passing its feedback onto the Panel of Chairs. The introduction of a Speakers List at the April and July remote meetings of Synod was a result of this feedback. The Business Committee consistently asks those answering questions and the staff serving them to ensure that they are well prepared to give full and frank answers to the questions and to any supplementary questions posed. Inevitably, given the number of questions posed and the limited time available on the Agenda to answer them, not all questions on the Questions Notice paper are reached at any Group of Sessions.

Mr Stephen Hogg (Leeds) to ask the Chair of the Business Committee:

Q122 What research has the Committee done

- to measure the mental health, well-being and physical demands of Zoom Synods,
- to gauge the opinion of Members about meeting by Zoom.

If such research has been done, what are the conclusions?

Canon Robert Hammond to reply as Chair of the Business Committee:

A The Business Committee is well aware of the strain that meeting by Zoom places on Synod members. We very reluctantly concluded that the Synod had to meet on a remote basis in July due to the ongoing Government restrictions which made an in-person meeting impossible.

The Synod Office did issue a questionnaire to members in late May to assess their individual willingness to attend a physical meeting at York University, but we have not done any specific health assessment exercise of the kind you describe.

In planning the July meeting, the Business Committee has done its best to build in break periods and re-organise the business in order to make the remote meeting as manageable as possible given the constraints we are all having to work under.

CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION

Mrs Kathryn Tucker (Bath and Wells) to ask the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Q123 What written and publicly available procedures are in place for scrutinising and verifying candidates' CV's before presenting them to the Crown Nominations Commission?

The Archbishop of York to reply as Vice-Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission:

A Members of the Commission are provided with a wealth of information for each potential candidate including

- CV (structured template);
- personal statement; and
- references from a candidate's diocesan bishop and three other people.

Members are provided with online access to Crockford's Clerical Directory to enable them to research candidate biographies. The Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments (ASA) invites members of the CNC to raise questions on candidates so that additional information can be sought if necessary. Her department also receives confirmation of ordination and authorisation for ministry through the

Clergy Current Status Letter (CCSL). During the interviews, candidates are asked to share examples from their current and former roles, which help the Commission to better understand the candidates' prior experience.

FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:

Q124 Given that next year, spring 2022, is the 800th anniversary of the 1222 Synod of Oxford, the 'Magna Carta' of English canon law, which implemented some of the most egregious anti-Semitic decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council, such as the law that Jews wear a badge of shame to isolate them from the Christian public around them, laws which heightened antisemitic feeling and led to the first nationwide expulsion of all Jews from England in 1290; have these foundational canon laws ever been formally repented of in the intervening centuries? In light of rapidly worsening antisemitism in the UK in recent months, might the 800th anniversary next year be an opportune moment for the Church of England to consider making a formal break with these historic prejudices as a gesture of solidarity with our Jewish neighbours, England's oldest ethnic minority? Has the Archbishop's office received a letter and research paper on the topic of this octocentenary, and are there any plans to appoint suitable individuals to investigate these matters further with a view to conducting a fitting service of corporate repentance?

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester) to ask the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:

Q125 Following the excellent Faith and Order Commission publication *God's Unfailing Word* which includes the Archbishop of Canterbury's introduction, advising that "Christian communities may wish to consider whether there could be suitable opportunities in their public worship to focus and express repentance for Christian involvement in fostering antisemitism", particularly noting the traumatic history of Jewish-Christian relations in our own country, and in view of the

positive responses to Lisa Battye's questions of General Synod February 2020; are there any plans for a national service of repentance for historical Christian anti-Semitic legislation, led by the Church of England and potentially alongside the Catholic Church in England? And would there be interest in proposals for such a national and corporate act of repentance, so that we are seen to follow through on our words?

The Bishop of Lichfield to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission:

A With permission I will answer both of Mr Vince's questions together.

The Archbishop's office has indeed received a letter proposing a service that might offer an act of repentance at the 800th anniversary of the Synod of Oxford and its antisemitic laws. I note the proposal and the significance of this in the context of the 2019 Faith and Order Commission document on Christian-Jewish relations, *God's Unfailing Word*. We are exploring the idea of such a service to be planned in conjunction with the Council of Christians and Jews, as well as the potential for a liturgical resource that might be offered to local churches to model an appropriate symbolic repentance.

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q126 What mechanism is in place for the Legal Advisory Commission to reconsider or withdraw its previous advice, like its contentious opinion concerning individual cups at holy communion?

The Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (ex officio) (Dean of the Arches and Auditor) to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A The Commission is able to reconsider, and if it considers it appropriate to do so, revise opinions previously issued by it. It might do so, for example, if the applicable law were to change or if a relevant statute or authority had not previously come to its attention. It does not consider that there is any need to revise or withdraw the advice referred to in the question.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q127 What are the grounds on which the Legal Advisory Commission decides whether or not to ‘star’ its opinions for publication?

The Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (ex officio) (Dean of the Arches and Auditor) to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A The Commission considers a number of factors. They include whether the opinion is intended to be for the general assistance of members of the Church of England or has been produced at the request of a particular body to address a particular point that is of concern to that body. It is the Commission’s policy not to engage publicly in disputed questions, as its role is to give ‘authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions’. Its decision whether to star an opinion for publication will take account of that policy.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q128 Given that the Church of England webpage Legal Opinions and other guidance (<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/legal-services/legal-opinions-and-other-guidance>, accessed 28 June 2021) says that “The Legal Advisory Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England exists to give advice on non-contentious legal matters of general interest to the Church ...”, could the full terms of reference for the Legal Advisory Commission be made publicly available, in particular who determines what legal matters are “non-contentious”, and what are the grounds on which such a determination is made?

The Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (ex officio) (Dean of the Arches and Auditor) to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A The constitution of the Legal Advisory Commission is available online at https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/gs%201829_July11.pdf.

It is the Commission’s policy not to engage publicly in contentious matters, as its role is to give ‘authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions’. The Commission necessarily decides whether a matter is contentious for the purposes of its policy.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford) to ask the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Q129 Would the Legal Advisory Commission please agree to providing General Synod with a legal advice which responds to the legal opinion of six barristers, including members of General Synod, which challenges the LAC's advice to the House of Bishops against allowing the use of individual cups?

The Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (ex officio) (Dean of the Arches and Auditor) to reply on behalf of the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:

A It is the Commission's policy not to engage publicly in disputed questions, as its role is to give 'authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions'. The Commission does not, therefore, issue responses to other legal opinions. It nevertheless takes account of legal opinions which are brought to its attention if it considers that they raise points that merit further consideration and revises its published opinions if it considers it necessary to do so. The Commission did not consider that the opinion referred to in the question affected the substance of the advice it had previously given in its published opinion.