



# Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 review

## Frequently asked questions

### What is the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (MPM)?

The Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (MPM)<sup>1</sup> provides a regulatory framework which enables the Church of England to support the provision of local worship, mission and ministry across all of England, and to adapt that provision as circumstances change over time.

The changes can be to pastoral provision (the geography of parish, deanery etc.), to ministry provision (the clergy and others working in an area), and to building provision (including the closure and disposal of church buildings which are no longer needed for regular public worship). It's a change process based on consultation. Draft proposals are published and if there is consensus they go ahead, but if people object the Church Commissioners' Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee (MPCPC)<sup>2</sup> make a final decision.

### Why do we need this MPM process?

The governance of the Church of England is a complex and disaggregated system and the various parties involved are independent of each other. Those parties include the Parochial Church Councils and congregations, parish clergy, the diocesan team and patrons. In addition, as the CoE is an established church individuals have common law and legal rights in relation to the parish (e.g. in relation to marriage and burial). If the church is going to make changes to local worship, mission and ministry then all these parties have to be part of the conversation and the development of proposals in order to ensure a fair and inclusive approach. The MPM provides the processes to facilitate those conversations.

### Why is the legislation being reviewed?

In 2020 the Church Commissioners were asked to lead a review by the Archbishop's Council as part of a wider programme of legislative reform to ensure that the Church's legal structures support the Church's mission effectively.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 and Code of Practice | The Church of England](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Mission, Pastoral & Church Property Committee | The Church of England](#)

## **How has the review been taken forward?**

The review has lasted 3 years and has consisted of an extensive programme of engagement and consultation with a wide range of partners and a technical review of the legislation has also been completed in parallel. The focus has been on identifying the areas where there is consensus, both on the need for change and sufficient agreement on what that change could look like.

## **What is happening at the July session of General Synod?**

The Commissioners are presenting their draft proposals for General Synod to debate<sup>3</sup>. If Synod approve the proposals then draft legislation for a new Measure will be brought forward in 2024.

## **What are the main recommendations?**

The overarching recommendation of the review is that the existing MPM should be replaced with a new suite of legislation; a new primary measure and secondary legislation. The review also found that two kinds of change were required: (1) an increased emphasis on a pastoral approach which builds trust and (2) a refreshed legal architecture which enables the Measure to be updated and modernised, and which also facilitates the pastoral approach advocated.

More specifically:

- a) The proposals are aligned with the Church's desire to be simpler, humbler and bolder.
- b) The general duty in the MPM would stay the same with its focus on furthering the mission of the Church and the better provision of the cure of souls.
- c) There is an emphasis on good conversation and a pastoral approach to the processes.
- d) There are changes to the legal framework to increase transparency and accountability but also to make the system easier to understand and communicate.
- e) The consultation processes would be streamlined and modernised, but a broad right to make written submissions in relation to proposals has been retained.

---

<sup>3</sup> [Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 | The Church of England](#)

## How would a new Measure increase transparency and accountability?

The paper includes the following proposals for changes to the legal architecture of the Measure which would increase transparency and accountability:

- The general duty of the Measure stays the same, but a set of **shared pastoral outcomes** would be agreed nationally to sit beneath the broad duty to give greater clarity about the factors the Church Commissioners take into account when reaching their decisions. For example whether draft proposals would improve parish sustainability.
- New, more thematic, **statutory guidance** would replace the existing Code of Practice and provide better and clearer guidance about how the Measure should be used in a more user-friendly manner. This would help all parties to understand how to manage change well, and how the specific processes should be operated.
- Diocesan teams would be asked to produce **Mission and Pastoral Measure Frameworks** in consultation with diocesan and deanery synods. These frameworks will be critical as they will set out the diocesan approach to the functions under the Measure and that will improve transparency and accountability which will help grow trust in the processes. The Commissioners would develop a template to ensure consistency of approach.
- The **legal instruments** (schemes and orders) which are currently used for the different changes required would be re-engineered to make them simpler to use and easier to understand, with the emphasis being placed on the matter (i.e the change required) rather than the instrument itself. This would make the system more transparent and the processes more proportionate.

## CONSULTATION AND APPEAL

### Have rights to consultation been retained?

Yes – a broad right to consultation and to make written submissions has been retained in relation to scheme matters (the more complex legal issues) and particularly in relation to the parish. Changes have been suggested for order matters, which are less complex and generally relate to decisions around church administration. However, sensitive order matters (e.g. changes to benefices) would still be considered by the Commissioners.

### Would the consultation processes be streamlined?

The consultation process required will depend on the matter, so more significant issues will require more consultation. However, the whole process will be simpler as there will only be one stage of formal consultation instead of two. (The two-stage process is repetitive).

### **Would the consultation processes be modernised?**

Yes – there will be much greater use of more modern electronic methods of working and greater use of websites and social media for communications.

### **Has the role of the Church Commissioners' Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee been retained?**

Yes – the role of the committee and its main functions would remain unchanged. It would continue to consider contested decisions and hold hearings as required. The committee processes would be modernised with a scheme of delegation to allow sub-committees to make decisions in certain matters.

### **Has the right of appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council been retained?**

Yes – the right is retained in relation to schemes and matters which affect the parish and church buildings.

## **MISSION AND MINISTRY**

### **What changes have been suggested to mission and ministry?**

Review points have been recommended for pluralities and Bishop's Mission Orders.

### **What changes have been suggested in relation to patronage?**

A change of terminology has been recommended – instead of 'suspension' being used in relation to presentation to a benefice, the term 'pause' would be used. It has also been recommended that suspension should not normally be longer than a single period of 5 years. In addition, there is also a recommendation that in some cases the requirement for a patron's written consent in certain matters should be replaced with a right to make a representation (written submission) for or against a draft proposal.

### **What changes have been proposed in relation to sequestration?**

A change of terminology has been recommended and a new MPM would make provision to allow Diocesan Parsonage Boards to act on parsonage property matters when there is a priest-in-charge in a benefice or period of vacancy.

## **CHURCH BUILDINGS**

### **What does the review say about church buildings?**

The review makes recommendations to place more strategic emphasis on the issue of church buildings, which are usually highly listed, and that pastoral schemes should be more explicit about how changes will help clergy and volunteers to look after their buildings in a more sustainable way.

More specifically, the Commissioners set out some ideas for changes to the processes relating to church buildings, but more work needs to be done with church and wider partners to finalise the recommendations, as part of its consensus building approach. The paper sets out the direction of travel in relation to policy thinking in this area.

## **NATIONAL SUPPORT**

### **Would there be national changes to support the implementation of the review?**

Yes – as part of implementing a new Measure and arrangements there would be a formal transition programme and national improvements to data systems, training and communications.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For more information on the review see the dedicated web page:

[Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 | The Church of England](#)

If you have further queries please e-mail [mpm2011review@churchofengland.org](mailto:mpm2011review@churchofengland.org).