

**GENERAL SYNOD****“Discerning in Obedience: A Theological Review of the Crown Nominations Commission”****Introduction**

1. Members will recall that the Archbishops commissioned a review of the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) in the Autumn of 2016. The review group, led by Professor Oliver O’Donovan, concluded its work in the Autumn of 2017.
2. The Archbishops are most grateful to all who served on the group and to those who shared their views. The House of Bishops discussed the report at its meeting in December 2017 and very much welcomed it. They noted that its depth of reflection is a reminder of the significance of the discernment processes undertaken by the Crown Nominations Commission, and indeed other appointment processes within the Church.
3. The Business Committee has scheduled an hour-and-a-half for this report. As Professor O’Donovan is not currently a member of General Synod, he will make a presentation and respond to questions and this will be followed by a “take note” debate.

**Background**

4. The Archbishops commissioned a review of the Crown Nominations Commission(CNC) in the autumn of 2016. The work was led by the Revd Professor Oliver O’Donovan.
5. The full membership of the group was:
  - The Revd Professor Sarah Coakley - Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge;
  - Professor Tom Greggs - Marischal Professor of Divinity, University of Aberdeen;
  - The Most Reverend Josiah Idowu-Fearon - Secretary General of the Anglican Communion;
  - The Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow - Professor of Christian History and Theology, University of Exeter;
  - The Revd Professor Oliver O’Donovan FBA (chair) - Emeritus Professor of Christian Ethics, University of Edinburgh, Honorary Professor of Divinity, University of St Andrews;
  - Father Thomas Seville CR - Faith and Order Commission;
  - The Revd Dr Jennifer Strawbridge - Associate Professor of New Testament Studies, University of Oxford;
  - The Revd Canon Dr James Walters - Chaplain and Senior Lecturer, London School of Economics.
6. The Terms of Reference of the Group were as follows:
  - To provide the members of the Commission (central and diocesan) with a theological framework within which to discharge their responsibilities as they nominate bishops;
  - To enable the Commission to understand the nomination of diocesan bishops within the context of the wider church of God, in particular: the national responsibilities; the role of the Church of England within the Anglican Communion; and the wider Church catholic;

- To enable the Commission to understand the nomination of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York within the same context;
  - To articulate any particular responsibilities of the Archbishops in relation to shaping the nature of the episcopate and the leadership of the Church; and
  - To draw out the merits and disadvantages of the different ways of choosing bishops within the Anglican Communion.
7. Members will recall that early reflections on the theological underpinning of the work of the CNC and on the role of central members were shared with General Synod in July 2017 in the context of the elections to the Central Membership of the CNC.
8. A copy of the report is set out in GS Misc 1171.
9. The report needs to be considered in the wider context of a number of other CNC related items
- The “Review of Nomination to the See of Sheffield and Related Concerns”: Report by the Independent Reviewer (September 2017);
  - A Diocesan Synod Motion for consideration by General Synod from Oxford Diocese “That this Synod invite the Archbishops to initiate a review into the role of the Crown Nominations Commission, including consideration of alternative methods of appointment for diocesan bishops.” (April 2016);
  - A motion from the Canterbury Diocesan Synod “That this Synod (i.e. the Canterbury Diocesan Synod) requests the Archbishops’ Council to bring to the General Synod the necessary changes to its Standing Orders and the Vacancy in See Regulation to:
    - Extend the functions of the Crown Nominations Commission so that its duty to consider any vacancy in a diocesan bishopric include the See of Dover. The See of Canterbury will always need to be voting with the majority who chose the new Bishop of Dover;
    - Reduce the number of members elected by the Vacancy in See Committee to the Commission when it is to consider a vacancy in the See of Canterbury from six to three” (November 2015)
10. Members will note that these items raise issues which relate to the effective operation of the current mechanism for the nomination of Diocesan Bishops as well as seeking the exploration of possibilities in relation to the longer term.

### **Progressing the reflections and recommendations**

11. It is proposed to progress work through a number of existing bodies. In addition, the Archbishops will, in consultation with the Appointments Committee, establish a small oversight group to monitor the progress on the discussion and implementation of recommendations. This group will report back to General Synod, starting in July. This structure will allow improvements to current processes to progress whilst proposals requiring wider consideration can be addressed over a longer timescale. In addition, the theological reflections set out in the report will provide the underpinning for the longer-term work.

12. Archbishops and Central Members to

- Review proposals about changes to the culture and operation of the CNC and Vacancy in See Process not requiring Standing Order changes and which can be introduced on an ongoing basis. This will enable the introduction of some of the recommendations over the next few months - indeed some are already in place; and
- Report to General Synod in July 2017 following the meeting of central members in March 2017.

13. The Secretary General of the Archbishops Council to be invited to

- Liaise with the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Canterbury in relation to exploring proposals in relation to the nomination to the See of Canterbury following which the Archbishops Council to develop recommendations for consideration by General Synod for this See (and also for the See of Dover) and to report back to General Synod when this work is completed.

14. The Appointments Committee to be invited to set up a working group to

- Review the process for election of Central Members to the Crown Nominations Commission and diocesan representatives to the Vacancy in See Committee to report to General Synod in 2019.

15. The House of Bishops, through the Development and Appointments Group, to be invited to

- Reflect on the nature of episcopacy in the light of Section 3 of the report “Discerning in Obedience: A Theological Review of the Crown Nominations Commission”, learning from the Leadership Programmes they have participated in and aspirations as set out in nominations processes; and
- Reflect on the purpose, nature and management of the Strategic Development Programme and Episcopal Lists.

16. The Standing Orders Committee to be invited to

- Consider the proposed changes to Standing Orders following consultation with the central members of the Crown Nominations Commission. Changes would be progressed and discussed through General Synod in the normal way.

### **General Synod**

17. It is hoped that the discussion at General Synod will enable a considered reflection on the theological issues set out in the report. In addition, it is likely that themes will emerge during the debate which the groups mentioned above will need to consider as they progress their work.

The Most Revd Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury  
The Most Revd Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York  
January 2018

## GENERAL SYNOD

## DISCERNING IN OBEDIENCE: A THEOLOGICAL REVIEW OF THE CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION (CNC)

	Reflections/Conclusions	Proposals	Method of implementation
<b>Discernment</b>	<p>Discernment involves a step of faith enabling us to conceive something that might not yet be visible (2.4)</p> <p>Crucial work is done by discussion(6.5), the bishop could be someone not previously thought of (2.5) and the call of God is proved by a convergence of the judgement of the nominators and the personal vocation of the nominee (2.11)</p>	<p>A prayer invoking the multiple gifts of the Spirit (such as the <i>Veni Creator</i>) could be used at the convening of a CNC, or at the election of its members by General Synod or the Vacancy in See (VIS) Committee (2.1) as the Chair seeks to encourage exploratory discerning discussion in the spirit.</p>	<p>Archbishops and central members of the CNC to consider this</p> <p>Include in VIS Guidelines</p>
<b>Representation</b>	<p>There are many different perspectives that need to have balanced representation at every stage throughout the process (2.10)</p> <p>To represent others is to be trusted by those who share an angle of vision and to commend that vision to those who have other angles you represent (5.7)</p> <p>The election of central members should ensure the representation of the wider Church not merely Synod 'party' groups (5.9)</p> <p>Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council needs to exercise great care over the election of the VIS Committee (5.17)</p>	<p>Review the method used for the election of central members by General Synod (5.10), e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Election held in full synod rather than by post</li> <li>- Candidates stand for election as pairs, with a principal and an alternate (could be devised on a cross-party basis or in a way to represent other concerns)</li> </ul> <p>VIS Committee should hold a minuted discussion of what is needed for good representation of the diocese (5.12)</p>	<p>Appointments Committee to appoint a group of Synod members to review the General Synod Elections processes</p> <p>Include in (VIS) Guidelines</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<b>Diocesan Members of CNC</b>	The central diocesan administration should not be the only voice heard among the diocese members (5.13)	<p>Suffragan/Area Bishops should not serve as diocesan members (5.14)</p> <p>There should be equal balance of clergy and laity among diocesan members (as among central members) (5.13)</p>	<p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process following consultation with the central members of the CNC</p> <p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee as above</p>
	<p>Effective diocesan participation requires careful preparation of elected members for the task (5.11)</p> <p>Changing the number of diocesan representatives is not the right way to address the imbalance in presenting local and national concerns to the CNC (5.18)</p>	<p>More preparatory work should be undertaken by diocesan members, and VIS committees should begin preparing before the vacancy occurs (5.15)</p> <p>Preparatory materials should have a stronger national &amp; international context, and the themes be integrated more fully with the diocesan profiles (5.16)</p>	<p>Archbishops and central members of the CNC to consider this. Appointments' Secretaries have already started to implement this following the Review of Sheffield</p> <p>Archbishops to consider this and recommendations incorporated in the VIS Guidelines</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<p><b>Nature of episcopacy in the context of the wider Church of God</b></p>	<p>A community with much life will have many leaders but has just one bishop to help the leaders work together (3.2)</p> <p>The unity fostered by the Bishop is a sign of the hope that all will share in Jesus' call to mutual love and spiritual union (3.3)</p> <p>The bishop's role is not a "dual role" but rather a "communicative" or "connectional role" The language of "dual role" sets the diocesan and central members against each other as defending different interests (3.7)</p> <p>The Bishop should model a mature life of faithfulness that will represent the transforming power of the Gospel to those who know nothing about it (3.9)</p>		<p>Each CNC to explore this at outset of discernment process</p> <p>Revise VIS Guidelines and each CNC to ensure these are held together in their discernment</p> <p>Each CNC to explore this at outset of discernment process</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<b>Teaching and theology</b>	<p>A bishop needs to be an articulate interpreter of the apostolic tradition (3.4)</p> <p>To give the Church a voice in the wider public sphere is one of the most important evangelistic functions of the bishop (3.5)</p> <p>All questions that come to the episcopate have some doctrinal features (3.10)</p> <p>The episcopate is responsible for guarding the church's tradition of teaching (3.10)</p> <p>"Theology is not a store of knowledge that a particular person has, but an air we all need to keep breathing" (3.12)</p> <p>There need in principle be not tension between spiritual and administrative qualifications (3.15)</p> <p>Would like to see more higher theological degrees in the HOB (3.13)</p>	<p>The CNC should consider different interview styles and techniques as a way to explore the theological capacity of candidates.</p> <p>The CNC should strongly consider whether – and how well – a candidate has acquired a theological culture (3.13)</p>	<p>Archbishops, central members and each CNC to consider these</p> <p>Archbishops, central members and each CNC to note</p>

	Reflections/Conclusions	Proposals	Method of implementation
<b>Archiepiscopal CNCs</b>	<p>Diocesan representation on the CNC for Canterbury is out of proportion (5.19)</p>	<p>The appointment of the Lay Chair for York should rest with the Prime Minister (as it does for Canterbury) (5.21)</p> <p>On the CNC for York, the ABC should continue to have a position <i>ex officio</i>, and the whole HOB should elect a bishop from the Northern Province for the other episcopal position (5.20)</p> <p>The whole HOB should elect two bishops to serve on the CNC for Canterbury – one from each province (5.20)</p> <p>Diocesan representation for Canterbury should be reduced to one lay and one clerical member (5.19)</p>	<p>The Prime Minister to be consulted and to be considered by the Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process</p> <p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process following consultation with the central members of the CNC</p> <p>To be considered by the Standing Orders Committee as above once the Archbishops Council have completed work on the Canterbury CNC process</p> <p>To be considered by the Standing Orders Committee as above once the Archbishops Council have completed work on the Canterbury CNC process</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<b>Leadership training and development</b>	<p>Be alert to the dangers of secular models of leadership but deeper thought on the nature of Christian leadership will assist Church in getting past conceptions of institutional seniority (3.16 and 17)</p> <p>In leadership training the theological engagement needs to be as fresh as other engagements (4.2)</p>	<p>There need to be clear terms of reference for developing and using the 'episcopal readiness' lists (4.4)</p> <p>The HOB should have collective responsibility for the lists, which should be broadly-based and also kept at a distance from the running of the SLDP (4.6)</p>	<p>House of Bishops through the Development and Appointments Group (DAG) to consider all of the following points</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<b>Role of the Archbishops in the CNC</b>	<p>As presidents of the HOB, the Archbishops exercise the spiritual responsibility of the bishops to uphold the succession of apostolic ministry (5.2).</p> <p>The spiritual authority of the Archbishop has weight especially in clarifying the principles on which bishops are chosen and appointed in the Church of Christ. (5.4). The CNC is to reach a particular nomination for this time and place (5.4).</p> <p>Explicit strengthening of the authority of the chair.</p>	<p>The Archbishops should make a formal statement jointly that on the evidence presented to the CNC all candidates under consideration are eligible for consecration in accordance with the teaching of the church and any guidance given by the House of Bishops, and so eligible for membership of the House of Bishops (5.5).</p> <p>Expand SO 141(1) to give the Chair authority to settle procedural matters not determined by the Standing Orders (5.3)</p> <p>Abrogate SO 141(8) which weakens the authority of the Lay Chair in the matter of a casting vote (5.3)</p>	<p>Archbishops and central members of the CNC to consider how to progress this</p> <p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process</p> <p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process</p>

	<b>Reflections/Conclusions</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Method of implementation</b>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<p>Excessive secrecy can undermine the confidence and trust it hopes to build (2.14)</p> <p>There is a distinction between secrecy and confidentiality (2.14)</p> <p>The atmosphere of secrecy around CNC proceedings should be relaxed (6.3)</p>	<p>Invite candidates and Commission to share in the Eucharist and a common meal (6.3)</p> <p>Remove the requirement for secret voting (6.7)</p>	<p>Archbishops and central members to consider</p> <p>Refer to Standing Orders Committee to progress through synodical process following consultations with the CNC central members</p> <p>Archbishops and central members of the CNC to consider in relation to current practice at the first meeting</p>
<b>Trust</b>	<p>The moral success of the process requires a climate of mutual trust and confidence (7.11)</p> <p>If the candidates are to have trust in the CNC, members of the CNC must also have trust in one another (2.13)</p>		<p>All those involved in the discernment process to be aware of, and explore implications of this</p>



RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW OF NOMINATION TO THE SEE OF SHEFFIELD AND RELATED CONCERNS: REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWER – SUMMARY OF CNC RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Paragraph	Recommendation	
112	Ensure that VIS Committees are aware of the provision of the House of Bishops' Declaration	VIS Guidelines already updated
114	How are the views of the Diocese facilitated and reflected in CNC processes	Archbishops and central members to consider this
114 (a)	Production of a simple guide to the Vacancy in See and CNC Processes	Archbishops' and Prime Minister Secretary for Appointments (ASA and PMSA) to develop this
114(d)	Improved training and preparation for Diocesan representatives on the CNC	ASA and PMAS have started attending more VIS meetings and have set up a briefing meeting for Diocesan CNC reps once they have received paperwork. This needs to continue to be developed.
115	The system through which diocesan representatives are elected could repay further consideration	To be referred to the working group on voting arrangements
116	The arrangements for central members serving on the CNC for their own diocese to be reviewed	Previous central members have already supported this. To be referred to the Standing Orders Committee following consultation with current central members of CNC and to progress through synodical process

118	Concerns are expressed about the election of central members to the CNC	To be referred to the working group on voting arrangements
119	Concerns are expressed about the system of voting in the CNC noting that abstentions are not counted as in General Synod and that there may be an undue impact on female candidates	To be considered by the Standing Orders Committee and to progress through synodical process following consultation with current central members of CNC
119	Concerns are expressed about the openness of discussion and voting. See recommendation in <i>'Discerning in Obedience, A Theological Review of the Crown Nominations Commission'</i> about the removal of the secret ballot	To be considered by the Standing Orders Committee as above. Culture of discussion to be considered by each CNC
121	The question is posed whether members should be selecting their "future boss". See recommendation in <i>'Discerning in Obedience, A Theological Review of the Crown Nominations Commission'</i>	To be considered by the Standing Orders Committee as above
124	The degree of confidentiality surrounding the CNC proceedings is questioned	Secretary General to review the confidentiality surrounding the announcement Archbishops and central members of the CNC to explore the wider issues