

## **WHOLE CHURCH MISSION AND MINISTRY POLICY**

### **‘Next Steps’ Report 2013**

#### **1. Introduction**

In 2011, General Synod welcomed the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy brought forward by the Mission and Ministry Board. The Policy affirmed the primacy of mission in the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church and sought to encourage the further development of policy in a ‘whole church’ manner, recognising that different parts of the Church are separately responsible for aspects of policy and funding in the area of mission and ministry. Integral to the policy has been the recognition that dioceses are the focus for mission with diocesan bishops acting as leaders in mission. The Whole Church Policy, consequently, spans the entirety of missional activity on the part of both province and dioceses.

Following acceptance of the policy by General Synod, the Mission and Ministry Board established a ‘Next Steps’ Group in order to carry forward the work at provincial level. The Next Steps Group comprises the Primus in his capacity as Convener of the Mission and Ministry Board (Convener), the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson (Bishop of Argyll and the Isles), the Rev Canon Dr Alison Peden (Provincial Director of Ordinands), the Very Rev Ian Barcroft (Convener, Church in Society Committee), Dr Peter Smart (Convener, Ministry Development Committee) and the Rev Canon Alison Simpson (former member of the Mission and Ministry Board). The Group is serviced by the Secretary General.

Since General Synod 2012, the Group has met twice but has also commissioned work from a number of others. During the course of its work, the Group continues to be encouraged by news about mission and ministry initiatives within dioceses representative of the Whole Church approach.

During the year, the Next Steps Group has identified areas in which further working together and networking could usefully be encouraged. A report is given below on work which has been undertaken as well as proposals for further developments. In proposing the establishment of new networks, it is important to emphasise that it is hoped that such networks would operate on a ‘light touch’ basis without imposing significant burdens of infrastructure. In particular it is not envisaged that the creation of networks will simply add a layer of committees to existing structures. No particular paradigm of how such networks might operate is prescribed, for example, some might only gather annually – it would be for each network to determine for itself its own means of working. Also, through its representative on the Information and Communication Board, the Mission and Ministry Board has been pleased to learn of the developments currently under consideration within the Information and Communication Board and the potential these will offer for greater interactive communication in enabling enable greater inter-diocesan working.

#### **2. Vocations Strategy and Data Gathering**

The Group is grateful to Dr Christine Shepherd who was commissioned to undertake a limited data gathering exercise in relation to ordained ministry statistics. Statistics were collated to identify possible future retirement patterns, recognising always that precise dates of retirement cannot be accurately predicted because they depend, at least in part, on the clergy in question.

A vocations website is being constructed which will be linked to the Provincial website (and later re-incorporated into it when the latter is renewed). This will provide a guide to the discernment process for vocations to ministry and relevant documents and resources, as well as news and upcoming events.

Vocations Sunday took place on 21<sup>st</sup> April, and resources were circulated to congregations to help with its observance as an opportunity to encourage vocation in its many different aspects.

Discussions of training patterns that might attract, support and resource younger ordinands are ongoing within the context of the Ministry Council Report on TISEC.

Following on from the intention to encourage the vocation of younger ordinands, the Next Steps Group has also been pleased to learn of one ordinand in training at Theological College in England who will return to Scotland to undertake a curacy commencing later in 2013.

### **3. Patterns of Ministry**

The report presented to General Synod 2012 recognised the need to develop consistent patterns of ministry capable of application across the province. The underlying purpose is to ensure a coherency of patterns across the province as a whole which in turn allow for the development of consistent policy for funding.

The College of Bishops has, during the past year, discussed the various models of ordained ministry evident across the province and has agreed around a stated number of models which comprise both traditional forms of ministry as well as emerging forms. In summary, these are “traditional” incumbency, incumbency on part-time or NSM basis, linked or joint incumbency, “interim” or other transitional ministries, house for duty/holiday duty and chaplaincy. The College is also aware of the ongoing work being undertaken in relation to the permanent diaconate.

In addition to ordained ministry, the College has also agreed an initial list of certain lay ministries, namely eucharistic assistant, pastoral assistant and worship leader around which the role of TISEC as ‘generic trainer’ can be developed in providing a degree of ‘quality assurance’ for training delivered in dioceses. These three categories of ministry are not intended as an exhaustive list but rather can be used to ‘road test’ the role of TISEC in this way. During the year a sample exercise was undertaken by TISEC in considering training materials produced in the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway for the training of worship leaders. A useful joint discussion between TISEC and the diocese resulted in a helpful critique of certain aspects of the training which will be of benefit not only to that diocese but also holds the potential for application in other situations also.

### **4. TISEC**

Separate reports are available to Synod regarding significant developments during the year within TISEC, the York St John University revalidation and the Church of England Ministry Council Inspection being of particular note.

With specific reference to the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy, the Mission and Ministry Board has been encouraged by the developments, referred to above, involving the exploration of a 'quality assurer' role for TISEC. There is now potential for TISEC acting as a 'kitemarker' of courses developed and delivered by dioceses. This will allow dioceses to continue to act as primary provider and deliverer allowing local context to be taken account of, whilst at the same time assuring the basic quality of content and educational method. This in turn also provides the opportunity for such materials to be shared more broadly in the province with that basic guarantee of quality. Exactly how this is taken forward will depend upon the working thought of the implications of the Ministry Council Inspection Report.

## **5. Continuing Ministerial Development**

As reported to General Synod 2012, the Next Steps Group commissioned a scoping exercise in relation to Continuing Ministerial Development. This was carried out by the Rev Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson to whom the Group expresses its gratitude. The purpose of the exercise was to gain a comprehensive picture of current CMD provision in the dioceses, to elicit an impression of particular diocesan strengths and current inter-diocesan cooperation and to list suggestions for improved delivery or better use of resources in future.

The very fact of engaging in the scoping exercise effected some of the change that those tasked with responsibility for CMD in dioceses would like to see happening and issues identified for future consideration included: increased communication, networking and cooperation between dioceses; greater systematisation of processes; joint provision of transitional ministry courses (ie addressing transitions in the life of service of a clergy person); greater cohesion between CMD and diocesan mission policies; an audit of talents (creating a database of those sharing similar interests in different dioceses and encouraging better usage of talents beyond diocesan level); reinforcement of the expectation that CMD 4+ would be undertaken; the inclusion of a staff resource within TISEC's role as generic trainer with specific responsibility for liaising with dioceses in the area of CMD.

It is expected that work currently being undertaken by the Information and Communication Board will enable increased communication between dioceses in the area of CMD as in relation to many other areas and the Board is excited by the possibilities which this may offer.

The Mission and Ministry Board is keen to encourage greater networking between dioceses and, therefore, proposes the establishment of a CMD network with the following remit:-

**Composition:** at least one representative from each diocese having responsibility for or direct involvement in the oversight of CMD 1-3 and CMD 4+ for clergy and lay readers

**Purpose:** to act as a forum for: –

- the sharing of information by each diocese of the organisation, content and delivery of CMD in the diocese
- the development and sharing of best practice in relation to CMD
- the exchange of relevant materials in relation to CMD
- the working towards of greater harmonisation across dioceses of standardised benchmarks and outcomes for CMD

- the exploring, and where thought fit, the establishing of inter-diocesan collaboration in relation to the delivery of CMD

**Reporting:** diocesan representatives to report back to their respective dioceses, as required; annual reporting to the Ministry Development Committee of relevant matters dealt with in the network during the previous 12 months and with provision for that Committee to give input to the network.

## **6. Scoping Exercise in Education for Discipleship and Lay Ministries**

A scoping exercise in relation to education for discipleship and lay ministries was commissioned from Ms Alison Clark and the Next Steps Group expresses its thanks to her.

The subject matter of this scoping exercise was, by virtue of the subject matter, significantly broader than the CMD one referred to above.

In relation to recognised lay ministries, it identified a lack of clarity in relation to the use of terminology. It is hoped that the work initiated by the College of Bishops in relation to core lay ministries referred to above will be helpful in achieving a degree of commonality across dioceses.

The scoping report identified the current level of training and ongoing development offered within dioceses for recognised lay ministries authorised by the bishop. It also considered both congregational and community roles undertaken by lay people and similarly examined the nature of training offered at either local or diocesan level and whether some lay learning or 'Education for Discipleship' was a pre-requisite for individuals undertaking specific roles. Not surprisingly, the responses varied across dioceses. Provision of training vestry and administration roles was reported on and given common canonical and legal requirements, this was identified as an area which would particularly benefit from the sharing of resources.

The report also identified the current state of play in relation to education for discipleship. Already a degree of inter-diocesan cooperation is evident. For example, the 'Compass' course developed in the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, which offers a basic grounding in what it means to be a Christian and an Episcopalian, is also being rolled out within the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles.

The scoping exercise itself was found beneficial by the diocesan representatives who participated in it since it offered the opportunity for a review of practice and prompted discussion within dioceses. Whilst the scoping exercise represented a modest beginning, it was clear that there is considerable interest across dioceses in the ongoing collation and updating of recommended resources.

The Mission and Ministry Board, therefore, proposes the establishment of an inter-diocesan network for education for discipleship and lay ministries with the following remit:-

**Composition:** at least one representative from each diocese having responsibility for or direct involvement in the oversight of education for Christian discipleship and lay ministries

**Purpose:** to act as a forum for: –

- the sharing of information by each diocese of the organisation, content and delivery of education for discipleship and lay ministries in the diocese
- the development and sharing of best practice in relation to education for discipleship and lay ministries
- the exchange of relevant materials in relation to education for discipleship and lay ministries with particular emphasis on materials which have been “kitemarked” by TISEC
- the exploring, and where thought fit, the establishing of inter-diocesan collaboration in relation to the delivery of education for discipleship and lay ministries

**Reporting:** diocesan representatives to report back to their respective dioceses, as required; annual reporting to the Ministry Development Committee of relevant matters dealt with in the network during the previous 12 months and with provision for that Committee to give input to the network.

It is envisaged that this network might subsume the existing Provincial Lay Learning Group.

## **7. Mission Action Planning**

Another area which the next steps group is aware of as giving considerable potential for inter-diocesan collaboration is that of mission action planning.

It considers that there would be benefit in supporting the work undertaken in individual dioceses by creating an inter-diocesan network for Mission Action Planning and, therefore, proposes the establishment of a network with the following remit: –

**Composition:** at least one representative from each diocese having responsibility for or direct involvement in the oversight of Mission Action Planning

**Purpose:** to act as a forum for: –

- the sharing of information by each diocese of the organisation, content and delivery of mission action planning in the diocese
- the development and sharing of best practice in relation to mission action planning
- the exchange of relevant materials in relation to mission action planning
- the exploring, and where thought fit, the establishing of inter-diocesan collaboration in relation to the delivery of mission action planning

**Reporting:** diocesan representatives to report back to their respective dioceses, as required; annual reporting to the Home Mission Committee of relevant matters dealt with in the network during the previous 12 months and with provision for that Committee to give input to the network.

Indeed it is possible that the Home Mission Committee might actually act as the Mission Action Planning Network.

## **8. Finance**

As reported to General Synod 2012, consideration has been given as to the financial relationship between province and dioceses and whether that could be altered to reflect the shift in missional energy from province to dioceses as recognised within the Whole Church Policy. Such a shift would place dioceses in a position of more direct control and responsibility in relation to their use of provincial funds within a framework of accountability to the province and in which diocese would agree to undertake of a specified range of functions and activities.

During the year, discussion was taken place within the conveners of the Standing Committee and Finance Committee and also within meetings of Standing Committee, the College of Bishops and the Mission and Ministry Board and there appeared to be general acceptance that a move in this direction was to be encouraged.

Since matters of finance and, in particular, the provision of provincial funds to dioceses, do not fall exclusively within the purview of the Mission and Ministry Board, the Board was of the view that the provincial Standing Committee would be the appropriate body to establish a working group to undertake further consideration and consultation in this area and make specific proposals. At present, the largest elements of provincial funding to dioceses come from the Grants for Ministry Fund and also from the Ministry Development Fund for the financing of dispersed TISEC. The recommendations of the Ministry Council inspection report on TISEC are likely to mean that previous assumptions regarding a possible combining of Grants for Ministry and dispersed TISEC funding into some form of block grant to dioceses will need to be re-evaluated.

The Board therefore, proposes, that the Standing Committee be invited to establish a Whole Church Finance Working Group with the following remit:-

- to consider, in the light of the development of the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy, the provision of provincial funds to dioceses with a view to enabling strategic mission and ministry planning and resourcing within dioceses in the context of a framework for accountability by dioceses and undertaking of an agreed range of activities; and
- to make recommendations accordingly.

It is envisaged that such a group would as part of its work:-

- consider the creation of “block” grant provision to replace current provincial funding through the Grants for Ministry Fund and such other categories of provincial grants to dioceses as the Group considered appropriate.
- consider the best means of provision for the funding of curate placements and full time ordinand training.

## **9. Ecumenical Cooperation**

It is important that the development of the Whole Church Policy should not take place in isolation from developments in other denominations. The Next Steps Group was pleased to note from the reports it received that there is some evidence of ecumenical collaboration and

this is much to be encouraged. It is a feature which ought to be explored further if Synod accepts the proposals for the establishment of networks as proposed above.

## **10. Conclusion**

The Mission and Ministry Board intends to continue its work in bringing shape and cohesion to the implementation of Whole Church practice across the province. The Board recognises that much good work is already underway in the dioceses but equally recognises the need for some additional 'light touch' infrastructure to support and extend the benefit of such work on a whole church basis. Specific motions are included on the Synod agenda to give effect to some of the proposals referred to above. It seems likely that the proposals outlined above would move the Mission and Ministry Board to reviewing its own structures so as to ensure that those structures best serve the needs of the Church. Any such review would need to take cognisance of, and be consistent with, any governance changes affecting TISEC and the Ministry Development Committee which might arise out of the TISEC Ministry Council inspection report referred to above.

+David

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