

Scope & Remit of Independent Review for Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney

Context

The Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney, the Rt Revd Anne Dyer, reports turbulence and discontent in the diocese from the time of the Episcopal vacancy. She was consecrated on 1st March 2018. At Bishop Anne's request, the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church wishes to commission an independent review of this situation. Even though appointed by the College, this review will be fully independent and the College will accept the report of the independent reviewer (or review team, as applicable). It is unclear who all the other parties to this review will be: part of the exercise will be to obtain statements from a range of respondents in the diocese.

Scope of Review

Timescale of events to be reviewed: the last four years, beginning from the date of Episcopal vacancy on 1 November 2016.

Statements are to be requested on complaints/problems and also general references to culture, conduct and events in the diocese. Complaints/problems may refer to actions by bishop(s) or other ordained or lay members of the diocese.

Questions to be answered with respect to complaints /problems:

- a) What events or actions took place – facts, dates, details?
- b) What is the nature of the specific complaint from these events or actions – detail of loss/injury/intolerable situation?
- c) What course of action did the respondent take immediately as a result?
- d) Why does the respondent think the problem arose: perceived motivation or interpretation?
- e) What outcome is sought from the respondent?

General references to conduct and events in the diocese (by others as well as the Bishop) should be addressed, with examples as evidence. This might include:

- a) The respondent's perception of the culture of and relationships within the diocese.
- b) Perceptions of styles of leadership in charges and the diocese.
- c) Relationship between diocese and province during this time period.

Timescale for review itself: this will become apparent as the process takes place. It is anticipated that the review will start on 5 April 2021. Submissions will be sought with a deadline of one month from the start of the review/call for submissions.

Remit of Reviewer/Review Team

Carry out the above review, with investigative team and/or administrative support as required, by requesting written submissions covering the above areas of the scope of the review. Gather the submissions and interview selected respondents (either particular cases of interest or representative cases where similar patterns emerge). Interview key Diocesan

post holders (e.g. Bishop, Diocesan officers) or Provincial officials (e.g. other bishops, General Synod Office staff) to amplify and explore responses and analysis of the submissions.

Write a report summarising the respondents' statements and other interview results without attribution of the submitted statements. The report will present the view of the reviewer as to the reasons underlying the events and actions and their interpretation. The report will be submitted to the College of Bishops in the first instance, with an undertaking that it will be passed unchanged to other involved bodies (e.g. the Standing Committees of the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney Diocese and of the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church etc.) and made public to ensure transparency and independence.

Confidentiality

Statements provided to the reviewer must carry the respondent's name and contact details, but these will be kept confidential to the reviewer/review team and will not be reproduced in the report to the College of Bishops, or made available for general circulation, without permission.

12 March 2021