

St Albans Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee

Pastoral re-organisation principles 2018

Endorsed by the Bishop's Council on 15 July 2019

Introduction

This paper sets out the principles which the Bishop's Council and Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee follow, in recommending formal pastoral re-organisation in benefices and parishes in the Diocese of St Albans.

1. Pastoral re-organisation is based on the principles set out in the Mission & Pastoral Measure 2011 and the DMPC Mission Action Plan. It is undertaken to make better provision for the cure of souls in a particular place or part of the benefice, taking into account the needs and traditions of the place concerned and the wider needs of the Diocese in terms of deployment, mission planning and financial viability.
2. In assessing how to allocate the available stipendiary ministry resources fairly and sustainably, a range of factors is considered. In particular, the *Diocesan Deployment Formula* assesses the notional comparative workload across all the benefices and parishes in the diocese and allocates a Deployment Indicator (DI) to each parish and benefice, based on the number of church buildings, the church membership figure and population figures including expected growth from new housing. The DI lies around the diocesan average, currently 114 for one full-time stipendiary post (rising to 119 in 2021). The *Parish Share Scheme* allocates the costs of ministry in a framework of mutual support. However, even for parishes that are net receivers under the Parish Share Scheme, the cost of stipendiary ministry cannot always be afforded. It is important for parishes to be financially sustainable, so that individual parishes can focus on worship and mission and so that diocesan finances are sustainable.
3. There is a need to make savings in the diocesan budget over the next 3 years by reducing the number of stipendiary clergy posts by 2 per year. Posts are likely to be reduced by pastoral re-organisation in
 - a. **benefices and parishes with both a low Deployment Indicator (DI) and a Parish Share shortfall**
 - b. **benefices and parishes with both a high DI and a significant Parish Share shortfall.**
4. Changes to make better provision for the cure of souls in a particular benefice or part of the diocese or to reduce/reallocate stipendiary ministry may be effected by (i) changing the staffing level within an existing benefice; (ii) deploying a fixed-term or interim minister; or (iii) making structural changes by formal pastoral re-organisation. In many cases, it will be appropriate to make changes to staffing provision or implement proposals for pastoral re-organisation when posts become vacant.
5. In some cases, change can be made at a vacancy by making new ministry provision - options i) or ii) above - e.g. Interim (turn-around) Ministry; new leadership; new links with other parishes and benefices. In some cases this will help in identifying proposals for formal pastoral re-organisation to provide a new sustainable structure.

6. In deaneries identified as having scope for pastoral re-organisation to reduce posts, the Rural/Area Dean and the deanery mission & pastoral committee will be asked to review or to make a new deanery [MAP or separate] pastoral plan, focusing on options for pastoral re-organisation following these principles.

7. Where changes are to be made by formal pastoral re-organisation, this may include a reduction in posts affecting a current post-holder. The compensation provisions for all ministers in receipt of remuneration (stipend and/or housing) were changed by ecclesiastical legislation in 2018. In cases where re-organisation would otherwise be postponed indefinitely, the new provisions on clergy compensation enable appropriate re-organisation to be implemented when it is needed. Where proposed pastoral re-organisation would affect current post-holders, the Diocesan Registrar has advised that the appropriate Suffragan Bishop should hold a consultation meeting with affected clergy *before* any decision is taken by the DMPC to consult on those proposals. The Bishop should provide the clergy with a reasoned decision about which posts are earmarked to be retained or lost.