

Questions and Answers Arising from the Consultation Document



In the Consultation document the Task And Finish Group said that it would respond to any questions submitted by grouping similar questions together. We have attempted to do this under the following headings:

- Roles
- Implementation
- Resourcing
- Training
- Funding
- Miscellaneous

This document complements the report analysing the responses to the consultation.

The consultation document put forward a preferred option (scenario six: Reimagine ordained stipendiary ministry plus SSM's, and lay leadership deployed in a new model of ministry). This scenario is a broad framework and not a detailed plan which needs to be shaped by local consultation. We envisage that this will further inform and modify the plans as they take shape. For this reason some of the answers given in this document may change as the detailed plans develop.

Task and Finish Group. September 2019

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARISING FROM CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

| | Question | Answer |
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| | ROLES | |
| R1 | How will lines of accountability work and who will be responsible for the actions and directions each parish may take? | This is an excellent question, because it pushes beyond the present consultation to imagine the new models that will emerge. Because this is a genuine consultation, there is not yet a blueprint to answer the question neatly. However, we can say that the Oversight Minister of a Mission Area comprising more than one Parish will have delegated authority and cure of souls from the Bishop. S/he will then share and further delegate these responsibilities among a lay/ordained group of colleagues working as a Mission Area ministry team. Parishes within a Mission Area will continue to have PCCs who would exercise internal parish governance. However, to date there are no further details until the overall proposals have been consulted and approved. |
| R2 | Who will make decisions regarding disagreements and disputes in a Missional Area? | The Bishop has oversight of all the parishes and shares this with locally deployed clergy. This will not change and the Oversight Minister will have responsibility for the mission and ministry of their Mission Area. They will resolve disagreements and disputes which can't be resolved locally, and the existing support of Area Deans, Archdeacons and the Bishops will continue as it is now. |

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| R3 | If clergy are covering a wider area, is that practical given the geographical areas involved? | Many of our clergy already do this effectively now and so a good number of parishes already have a degree of oversight ministry. In the diocese only 48 out of 143 benefices have a single incumbent. Where there is a change clergy will not be expected to do everything they do now in each parish, but work differently. The ratio of stipendiary clergy to the population of a deanery has been used to allocate clergy to deaneries to ensure fairness. In rural areas and where the population is sparse this creates particular difficulties but many of these areas are already leading the way in modelling how to make oversight ministry work as they have been doing it for years. Mission Areas using a Minster style model, with clergy grouped together serving a number of churches from a central base have worked well in some diocese. |
| R4 | What does good Oversight leadership look like in this model? | The consultation document outlines the role of Oversight Ministers: as the Ordinal already supposes, they will nurture, develop, encourage and enable others. They will seek to mobilise the whole people of God for the whole mission of God: inspiring, teaching, organising and leading on strategy vision and mission in their Mission Area. (see page 7 of the document). However they will continue to be Priests rooted in a place. |
| R5 | If some churches have large numbers of lay leaders, will they be re-deployed between churches? | Many of our existing Lay Readers and other licenced and authorised lay leaders already exercise their ministries and provide cover in a number of churches to support the needs of their Mission Partnership and/or deanery, and sometimes further afield. We would like to see this trend continue, but of course, it depends on the circumstances of each individual and their context. Some of our Lay leaders may also wish to explore becoming Focal Ministers. |

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| R6 | Where, if at all, might interim or part-time stipends fit in, especially during transition or growth? | <p>Since the legislation was introduced to permit time-limited interim appointments under Common Tenure, we have made good use of the provision in several parishes and mission partnerships. Interim appointments can be made for a maximum of three years, and may be renewed only once (for up to a further three years). Beyond that, the post must either be made permanent or some other permanent provision needs to be made in the parish. The criteria for introducing an interim post are well defined as primarily a response to a particular pastoral need or missional opportunity. As we negotiate a period of significant transition across the diocese, it is possible that some interim posts will be created to provide focussed leadership in processes of change, leading to new patterns of more permanent appointments. Similarly, part-time posts, both lay and ordained, may provide some flexibility in spreading resources more widely, but we need to be cautious about using part-time posts to duck the need for change, as well as acknowledge that half-time posts are notoriously difficult to fill.</p> |
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| R7 | What would be the role of the Focal Minister? | <p>The proposed model takes seriously the need for every parish to have a clearly identified local leader. Much will depend on the context of each church and Mission Area. Some Focal Ministers will be individuals co-ordinating a church ministry team, in other places there may be several Focal Ministers with different gifts and areas of responsibilities working together as part of the church ministry team. They will always be working in teams with others including Church Wardens and any other licensed ministers like Lay Readers, worship leaders etc. and other lay volunteer leaders. Crucially the Focal Minister is not expected to shoulder all the responsibilities of a traditional vicar. They will provide a key point of contact in the church or congregation, especially in places where the Oversight Minister may not be present all the time. They will work under the oversight of the Oversight Minister who will include a Focal Minister from each church to be part of Mission Area Ministry Team.</p> <p>This is a new role in the Diocese of Sheffield, but not to the wider Anglican church, and we have drawn widely on the good experience of Liverpool and St David's diocese to begin a pilot projects in a few Mission Partnerships. We have much to learn and it will be important to do this together as we work out how this model will work on the ground in each Mission Area.</p> |
| R8 | How will Focal Leaders be appointed, trained and reviewed? | <p>The pilot project is addressing these questions. Selection will involve PCC's, the Archdeacon, and a discernment panel overseen by a Warden of Focal Ministers. All the usual safeguarding procedures will be followed. The training required will depend on the prior experience and learning of those selected; thus some may require more learning support than others for the role. Pathways will be as accessible as possible and include online as well as face-to-face sessions for a set number of units. The training is likely to be spread out over several months and less demanding and time consuming than the current School of Ministry. Candidates will be able to start the programme at a number of entry points in any one year. The programme will not be assessed, but participants will be expected to regularly reflect on and review their learning.</p> |

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| R9 | How long will a term of office for a Focal Leader be? | The Focal Minister will hold a Bishop's Letter of Appointment valid for three years. A further term may be appropriate following review. |
| R10 | How will the Focal Minister relate to existing church offices? | Each church should have a Focal Minister who has a co-ordinating role in the local ministry team, facilitating the working together of the existing church officers and other lay leaders. In collaboration and full co-operation the team will be sharing the local leadership, supporting and implementing the local Mission Action plan in line with the Diocesan Vision and Strategy. |
| R11 | How will appointments of Focal Ministers be managed if the patron is not the Bishop? | Focal ministry will need to emerge locally, as individuals are identified who demonstrate the godliness, character and gifts to be trained and locally accepted as "The Church's Man or Woman" in that community. This vocation would be approved and authorized by the Bishop. However, these Focal Ministers would not be Incumbents or Priests-in-charge. Their Parishes would remain technically in vacancy, unless united as a benefice with one or more others within their Mission Area. Patrons chiefly come into play when it is envisaged that an Incumbent Priest will be appointed. We work very closely with all our private Patrons, involving them, when possible, in decisions about parishes in their gift. We find them most supportive as we seek new ways in which ministry in these places can continue to be delivered. Many external Patrons also have an interest in livings elsewhere in the country, and are already familiar with the ministry challenges facing us today. |

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| R12 | What is the difference between the role of Church Wardens and Focal Leaders? | <p>Church growth writer Ven. Bob Jackson describes Focal Leaders as those who “lead the mission of the church and galvanise the ministry of all.” He calls for at least one focal minister in each church, not necessarily ordained or paid, trained “for mission rather than ecclesiastical promotion.” This is a new concept for most of us. Churchwardens, on the other hand, have existed since the 13th Century as lay officials, admitted to office by the Arch-deacon on behalf of the Bishop, after election by the Parish. They ensure good governance and provide a direct “lay” link with the Bishop, whose officers they are. Churchwardens support their incumbent or other pastoral leader, and share with him or her in key decision-making. Unlike the Focal Minister, the Churchwarden’s chief role is administrative rather than pastoral, and in every way ensuring that all is done in an orderly way to edify the congregation.</p> |
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| R13 | How is the new model meant to avoid burn out of laity and clergy? | <p>The proposed model of ministry must not be read in isolation of the wider diocesan strategy: Renewed, Released, Rejuvenated.</p> <p>The 'Released' strand of our strategy seeks to give confidence to all Christians to play their part in the whole mission of God, in line with the New Testament teaching of St. Paul and St. Peter. We are working with the Church of England's "Setting God's People Free" agenda to liberate all church members to use their gifts and opportunities to serve God in every day life – not only on Sundays and not only within the confines of Church life. There will be a new emphasis on the ways we minister when we are dispersed ('Monday to Saturday') as well as when we are gathered (at least traditionally, on Sundays). And when we are gathered, we are trying to encourage teams of people to share the load rather than relying a faithful few to carry unrealistic burdens.</p> <p>The 'Released' strand of our strategy is also a commitment to look at how we can release parishes as far as possible from ever increasing administration, compliance and building issues. We intend to increase the resources available at local level through our Strategic Development Funding bids for building support officers and additional stipendiary area deans to support parishes. We are also directing the work of our central services with ever clearer focus on how they can support and release parishes.</p> <p>As far as stipendiary clergy are concerned, we are hoping all will agree to role descriptions agreed by the individual concerned, the PCC and the Bishop, a key goal of which will be to clarify expectations and to ensure that our stipendiary clergy are not simply spread ever more thinly.</p> |
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| R14 | <p>What would be the role of the stipendiary Area Dean and the existing Area Deans?</p> | <p>If deaneries were to combine, there would be a large areas for Area Deans to cover, with fewer stipendiary priests, larger mission areas and ordained and lay teams carrying major responsibilities. These teams will need a lot of support especially to begin with, during an initial transition period; to add this to the role of existing Area Deans who are themselves leading parishes incumbent would be unreasonable.</p> <p>Roles have not yet been cast in stone; but we envisage that the stipendiary Area Deans will play an important role in helping parishes and deaneries manage the change. They will be transition enablers, helping people on the ground not only form the new Mission Areas, but helping them establish collaborative ways of working well together. They will also play an important role in mentoring, training and supporting the Oversight Ministers and other key leaders. They will regularly preach, lead worship and support new missional activities and the growth of new congregations around their deanery. Our current Area Deans will simply not have enough time to do this on their own.</p> <p>The existing Area Deans role will focus on existing duties, although there needs to be flexibility in how the two post holders work together, based on the needs of the deanery and the gifts of the post-holders. We will continue to work with the existing Area Deans as we design these roles.</p> |
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| R15 | What will be the role of the Buildings Support Officer be? | The Buildings and Operations Officers will be centrally employed but locally deployed so that all deaneries have their dedicated support for buildings and operational issues. They will help parishes manage all aspects of building maintenance, working with Churchwardens and PCC's. They will help parishes identify the best ways of working together in sharing resources and developing common systems to reduce the burden of central administration and compliance demands. Where appropriate they will explore a deanery approach to maximise the opportunities of occasional offices. |
| R16 | Is there a role for pioneer ministers or are they being phased out? | That depends on what is meant by pioneer ministers. In one sense, all ministers are now pioneers as we make our way into unknown territory. In another sense, planters of new congregations (especially in communities we do not engage well with at present), will have a vital role to play. But where there is pressure on the number of stipends we can afford, it is inevitable that priority will be given to ministries which make new disciples. |
| R17 | Will the selection and training of curates be changed to equip them for the new model? | Yes, definitely. We will need to prepare ordinands and curates for the roles we anticipate they may take on in the future. This will form part of the new Bishop of Doncaster's responsibilities when in post. |
| R18 | Will this divert lay people from their baptismal calling in work and family to run the church? | No, absolutely not. Please see response to question R13. |
| R19 | Can SSMs also be Oversight Ministers or will they be stipendiary clergy? | There is no reason why an SSM cannot be an Oversight Minister. However because of the time demands of this role we anticipate that the majority will be stipendiary clergy. Some of our SSM's may feel called to become Focal Ministers. SSM's will continue to play a key part in this model, so much so, that we are keen to recruit and train more SSM's. |
| R20 | Will we end up with too many evangelists and not enough pastors? | Many would argue that we currently have too few evangelists in the church. This role is not the exclusive domain of ordained clergy and we hope that the proposed model of ministry will encourage the flourishing of all of the ministry gifts in a greater number of Christians, lay and ordained. |

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| R21 | What will happen to clergy who see their vocation differently to that of Oversight Minister? | It has always to be remembered that clergy on Common Tenure or Freehold enjoy a remarkable degree of security in their role and cannot easily be required to adapt in ways which are not welcome to them. But although the language of oversight ministry may be new, the calling is there in the Ordinal: priests are called 'to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people'. Individual clergy who see their vocation differently will be able to have conversations with the Bishop's and senior staff about their concerns. Much depends on the good will of the clergy and the whole people of God as we seek as a diocesan family to face the challenges and opportunities together. |
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| | IMPLEMENTATION | |
| I1 | What thought is being given to resource planning beyond 2025? | National Church funding is allocated on a triennium basis with 2020-2022 recently confirmed in July 2019. We have a detailed 7 year Diocesan financial plan/forecast model running to 2026. Projections are updated annually ahead of November Diocesan Synod. |
| I2 | What succession planning has been considered? | The five year plan predicts that we will be able to afford only 75 stipendiary incumbents by 2025, unless we are drawing on our reserves. However 75 stipendiary incumbents is not our goal, and if Common Fund or other income sources increase, or costs reduce, we will be able to afford more. We will continue to recruit and ordain stipendiary and SSM clergy on a managed basis as part of this plan. The training programmes we are developing will help to train existing and new Focal Ministers and other lay leaders. The wider strategy with its emphasis on releasing all God's people into their vocations will, we hope, release more people into a calling as leaders in the church. In individual parishes, it will be part of the role of the Oversight Minister to help congregations consider the future, including the options for succession planning. |

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| 13 | If this proposal does not work out, what is Plan B? | <p>There is presently no plan B. Unless there is an unexpected reversal in the trends which have existed in this Diocese for at least 20 years, the result will continue to be year on year cuts in the number of stipendiary clergy which the Diocese can afford.</p> <p>But in many ways this is not a new proposal. It is an extension of our current plan outlined in the strategy document “Re-Imagining Ministry for Mission 2012-2022” which included larger mission units, the sharing of stipendiary clergy and local ministry teams. This proposal is building on that plan. We need to remain flexible enough to adapt the way we deliver ministry and mission to respond to change and so we will never really arrive at plan A or B, but have to respond to what God is doing in the world and his church.</p> |
| 14 | What is the implementation timetable? | <p>What we have proposed is a framework and not a detailed plan. Once Bishop’s Council and Diocesan Synod have approved the framework the detailing planning will begin.</p> <p>One of the complexities in our situation is that where stipendiary incumbents are already in post, implementation is only possible with their consent. It is hard to see how it will ever be possible to provide a detailed timetable.</p> |

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| 15 | Can our church opt out if we don't accept the model? | <p>It's hard to know what 'opting out' might look like. We hope every parish will be looking beyond its own needs and interests to those of the deanery and diocese. So our hope would be that every parish would be asking, 'How far can we opt in? What contribution is God calling us to make to the wider Body of Christ, for the sake of those with whom we are one in the Spirit?'.</p> <p>Parishes able fully to support their own full time priest (and maybe other staff also) will hopefully continue to do the excellent work they are already doing. The inherited model is working in some of our more affluent areas. We also look to such parishes to be or become resource churches who will help us plant new congregations and reinforce struggling ones. We are already partnering with better resourced churches to achieve this.</p> <p>When vacancies occur in such parishes, we will work with the Parish and Patrons to appoint new incumbents who will strongly commit to playing a full part in resourcing the diocesan strategy</p> |
| 16 | Will Mission Partnerships and benefices that are working well still be required to change? | The formation of the Mission Areas will be designed locally by deaneries who will be able to consider if it makes sense to keep an existing Mission Partnership or benefice as a Mission Area. |
| 17 | Why are we focussed on the younger generation when middle aged and older people could be encouraged? | Our diocesan strategy recognises the demographic challenges that we face as a church but this model does not focus on the younger generation. It recognises that we have to find ways to grow our Diocese with people of all ages. The mixed economy model of church, with existing and new churches working alongside each other is the best way to encourage this. |

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| 18 | What thought has been given to working ecumenically? | Admittedly, we need to do more work in this regard, but we certainly haven't been working in a 'Church of England bubble'! The Archdeacon of Sheffield & Rotherham is a member of the Joint Oversight of LEPs group and meets regularly with ecumenical partners to both care for our established LEPs and to think creatively about opportunities for closer working. Bishop Pete has also convened meetings of ecumenical leaders to consider how we might work together more strategically to share resources in the mission of God. Under the umbrella of the Covenant Partnership in the Extended Area of Sheffield, we are making a joint Anglican/Methodist appointment in Crosspool and are working ecumenically in Attercliffe & Darnall in order to reconfigure the relationship between the LEP and the parish and plant a new Centre of Mission in partnership with Church Army. |
| 19 | How can we start new growth whilst honouring the existing services in parishes? | <p>Again this is about releasing the vocation and gifts of all the people of God. In models of ministry which are over dependant on the priest they can quickly become the cork in the bottle, limiting the amount of mission and ministry. This also adds to clergy burn out.</p> <p>Clergy will operate a more enabling and facilitating model, endeavouring to identify, train and release others to deliver the ministry, increasing available capacity. Of course where church numbers are small, all the available energy is focused on maintaining what is already happening whatever model of ministry is adopted. In many places it will only be possible to start with small steps, but we are encouraged by the great number of new initiatives that our churches have already reported in their MAP 3 returns.</p> |
| 110 | Are we prepared to consider the use of Communion by Extension as regular provision? | By definition, Communion by Extension is permitted only in exceptional circumstances — so no, it cannot be a regular provision. For a period of time, while we recruit greater numbers of self-supporting clergy, it may become more common; but so will non-Eucharistic worship in some places. |

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| I11 | Can Communion be administered by a lay person? | Technically, the 'administration' of Holy Communion refers simply to the act of distributing it and in most churches this is already done by lay people. But if the question really means, 'Can Holy Communion be celebrated by a lay person — can a lay person preside at the Eucharist?', then the answer is clearly No. |
| I12 | How will Communion be made possible for parishes with very different traditions about style and frequency of services? | Increasingly over the past few decades, Priests have been trained to cross traditions and so in most cases this will not be a problem, but each instance will have to be looked at separately. As a diocese we remain committed to the House of Bishops Five Guiding Principles as a basis for mutual flourishing. It may not be possible to offer a service of Holy Communion in every church every Sunday (in fact it is not now). There may need to be some flexibility as times and frequencies of services are reviewed in each Mission Area. |

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| I13 | How do the new arrangements meet the legal requirements for the constitution of churches? | Canon Law will of course be observed throughout the Diocese. For example, laws relating to the appointment of clergy, arrangements during vacancies and the suspension of benefices will continue. PCC and Churchwardens' roles remain, not least the canonical requirements that Wardens and Councils must actively encourage (and certainly not thwart) the mission of the Church. The law already offers considerable flexibility for changing circumstances. A whole raft of legislation is currently being steered through Synod to release us (note the word "release"!) from inherited legal constraints that hold back the mission of the Church. So, for instance, the Bishop now has powers to appoint Interim Ministers to take on specific parochial tasks for limited periods. He can set up Bishop's Mission Orders that allow new congregations to be set up within, but not constitutionally part of, existing parishes. Clergy are not required any longer to robe for every service, with due regard to PCC and congregation sensitivities. Expect this trend towards greater flexibility and spontaneity to develop further, as what is known as "The Simplification Agenda" continues on its course. Canon Law is leaning in a more permission-giving direction. The Law of the Parish Church is changing. We will of course uphold the law as it evolves, and will work within its boundaries. |
| I14 | How will you measure success and monitor progress? | Finance and clergy numbers will be carefully monitored against budgets and manpower plans. Things like church attendance, growth, the number of occasional offices, confirmations etc. will be monitored though annual mission statistics. These are only hard facts and the health of churches is much more complex. Things like inspiring worship services, a warm welcome, trying new things, growing confident whole life disciples and serving our communities are harder to measure but are equally important. |
| I15 | How will the strategy ensure all local congregations have a regular diet of bible teachings? | Clergy and lay leaders with responsibility for teaching and preaching in our churches will continue to be suitably trained. |

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| I16 | How quickly do we have to move to 75 clergy? | The five year plan predicts that we will be able to afford 75 stipendiary incumbents by 2025, unless we draw on our reserves. However this is not our ambition, and if Common Fund or other income sources increase we will be able to afford more. Reductions will only happen as people choose to retire, or leave the diocese, and so it is impossible to give a precise timescale. |
| I17 | What will the process be for reducing to 75 clergy? | On the whole, as in the last year, it will simply be a case of waiting for clergy either to retire, or to move to posts outside the Diocese. In some cases, clergy may agree to retire earlier than they might otherwise have planned to do, to assist the diocese with this process. |
| I18 | Are locally funded ministers in addition to the 75? | Yes, parish-based locally funded ministers and curates; grant funded roles such as those paid for through Strategic Development Funding from the National Church, House for Duty and Bishop's interim roles are in addition to the 75. The paper put out for consultation by PCCs in fact showed the deployment of about 80 clergy to deaneries, without adding in locally supported clergy. |
| I19 | Would the number of Mission Areas be determined by the number of potential Oversight Ministers? | Not entirely. Every Mission Area will have an Oversight Minister, but some may have more than one. Where deaneries have more clergy than the planned numbers of Mission Areas there will be an opportunity to think how to best use these posts to develop the mission of the deanery and some clergy may prefer to have supporting roles. |
| I20 | Will parishes have a say on who their Oversight Minister is? | The formation of Mission areas will need to be agreed at deanery level in the first instance and so parishes and existing clergy will need to be fully involved in this consultation. PCCs and their representatives will always have some say, but often there may be little room for manoeuvre. In many cases, the present stipendiary incumbent will be the Oversight Minister in the first instance. |

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| I21 | Will there be only one Oversight Minister in each Mission Area? | Not always. The proposed model is not intended to be a strait jacket, but a framework which needs to be shaped by the local context. One factor will be the number of available Oversight Ministers in each deanery which will determine the size of each Mission Area. It is also vitally important that in shaping the model we take the opportunity to think creatively and look at the mission opportunities and the needs of our communities rather than just focusing on what happens now. The resources available and the local context will mean that the model will look different in different parts of the diocese. For example what works in inner city Sheffield may need to look different in Snaith and Hatfield. |
| I22 | Will individual parishes have a Focal Minister if they lose their current vicar? | The plan is for every parish to have a Focal Minister. In the short term it may take some time to identify and train sufficient Focal Ministers, but during this period all parishes will be under the care of their Oversight Minister. |
| I23 | How are we seeking God's guidance in the implementation going forward? | Prayer has been central in all our deliberations to date and will need to be as we move forward. Our Diocesan prayer community is praying every day, as many others are in the diocese. Bishop's staff and the Task and finish Group pray every time we meet seeking God's guidance and wisdom. We also plan 2 Bishop led prayer events per deanery each year to specifically pray for the diocese. We would welcome any suggestions about how we might add to this. There can never be enough prayer. |
| I24 | What about Church Schools? How will governing bodies and Head Teachers be supported? | Although some of our clergy are heavily involved with local schools so are many of our lay members of the church, as governors, volunteers and employees. We do not envisage this changing. We will continue to encourage churches to support their local schools. However, it is true that a reduced number of stipendiary clergy will not always be able to fulfil all the roles previously filled by say the 155 stipendiary incumbents that there were in this Diocese are recently as 20 years ago. |

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| I25 | How will this model work in Local Ecumenical Partnerships where the incumbent might not always be Anglican? | This will need to be worked through in each situation, but we currently have a number of LEP's who are fully involved in a Mission Partnership working together with Anglican churches. We will be able to draw on their experience. |
| I26 | Will we get an opportunity to provide feedback on the final model prior to approval? | The current plan is for the feedback from the consultation to go to the Task and Finish group and the Bishop's Council. Any changes to the model will be presented to Diocesan Synod for final approval. It would only seem sensible to consult further if the model is substantially changed during this process. |
| I27 | Will a church's tradition be honoured in this model? | Church tradition will need to be one of the factors which is considered as the Mission Areas are identified. . As a diocese we remain committed to the House of Bishops Five Guiding Principles as a basis for mutual flourishing. |
| I28 | Does Canon Law allow us to implement the model? | The proposals we are making can be achieved without complex legal changes. In the medium term there could be benefits from simplifying legal structures, such as reducing the number of church officers required and fewer formal meetings, but that should evolve naturally from congregations and parishes. |
| I29 | Can we reduce the number of PCCs in the new model? | Currently we are not planning to change parish boundaries through pastoral re-organisation which could reduce the number of PCC's. However the experience of some Mission Partnerships is that as they start to work well together they have requested changes to make this happen. We envisage this being the case in the Mission Areas. |
| I30 | Can we do a bottom-up consultation starting with the local community? | Yes! PCCs are strongly encouraged to engage in this sort of exercise. But it did not seem wise or practical for the Diocesan Board of Finance to do this, given the urgency of our financial challenges. |

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| I31 | How will the new Missional Areas be decided? | <p>See questions I 6 & I 20. Once deaneries have formulated their local plan these will need to be approved by the Archdeacon/Bishop and the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee.</p> <p>It may seem a small point but we are trying to refer to these areas not as “missional areas”, as the question states, but as “<u>mission</u> areas”. This is because the areas themselves are not missional – it is us who must be missional within our mission areas.</p> |
| I32 | Can Prisons be included in Mission Areas? | <p>An interesting idea which could also apply to hospitals and schools and other places with authorised Anglican ministry. This is something to be explored locally.</p> <p>In fact our chaplains in these institutions argue strongly that they are engaged in front-line mission every day. They minister mainly to people of little or no church connection, often at times of deep anxiety or sorrow. So in a sense they are partnering with the parishes already but no doubt they will be eager to explore a fuller partnership too.</p> |
| I33 | How will parishes in vacancy be helped to transition to the new model? | <p>The current support offered by the Archdeacons, Area Deans and Parish Support Team will remain. In addition the proposed new stipendiary Area Deans will be able to provide more focused support to parishes in transition to the new model.</p> |

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| I34 | How can we ensure diversity and inclusivity? | In many ways, this is one of the most pressing questions for the Church of England as a whole, and a particular challenge for the Diocese of Sheffield. We are one of a very small number of dioceses where the senior clerical positions (Bishops, Dean and Archdeacons) are all held by white men, although there are opportunities to address this imbalance in the forthcoming appointments of a new Bishop and Archdeacon of Doncaster. As appointments are made to both ordained and lay posts, the Bishop's Staff are committed to ensuring that role descriptions will encourage applications from women, members of BAME communities and people with disabilities. Documents will also state that the Diocese practices an inclusive approach to all applicants, irrespective of gender and sexual orientation, as we seek to increase the diversity of our leadership. In addition, following the recent departure of the Bishop's Adviser for Disability and Inclusion, the Bishop is consulting on what role is required to work alongside the Dean of Women's ministry in ensuring greater inclusivity. |
| I35 | Will clergy be asked to move parishes? | It is normal for clergy to have conversations with their Bishop about when it is the right time to move parishes. These conversations also take place at Ministerial Development Review meetings which clergy have every 2 years. These conversations will continue as the new model of ministry takes shape. |
| I36 | Anecdote to Evidence research showed that one priest per parish was the best way to grow a church: this model seems to go against that evidence? | What "From Anecdote to Evidence" showed was that churches with a single leader are more likely to grow. That leader may or may not be ordained, and the research demonstrated that some of the fastest growing congregations were Fresh Expressions which were led by lay leaders. This is one of the reasons why many dioceses, including ours, believe that it is important for every church to have a Focal Minister, who may be ordained or lay. It is too early for researchers to evaluate if churches led by Focal Ministers grow at the same rate as those led by clergy, but in time this research will be done. |
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| | TRAINING | |
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| T1 | What training will be available for clergy to help them transition to the new model? | It is recognised that some existing priests feel that they have not been equipped for oversight ministry, so it will be vital to ensure that we have high quality training and mentoring in place. There will be a mixture of training around key competencies, 1-1 mentoring and peer group support. This will involve adapting the current Leading Well model. We hope to obtain financial assistance to increase the capacity of St Peter's College to deliver this. We intend to consult with the clergy in designing and shaping this training to ensure that their learning needs are met to the best of our ability. |
| T2 | Why are we stopping training for lay readers, pastoral workers and parish evangelists at this time? | We are hitting the pause button to enable us to review these roles in the diocese. This will also give us time to reassess the training needs these roles might require to better equip those who undertake them within the proposed new model of church. |
| T3 | Can we train people quickly enough? | We will begin by training the early adopters in the coming academic year on a pilot project for Focal Ministers. The updated version of Leading Well will begin in January 2020 and the finalised training programme for Focal leader/Teams will be ready in the spring. What happens after then will be determined to some extent by take up from parishes – we will endeavour to train as many people as we can. Realistically this will be dependent on obtaining central church funding to employ trainers and will probably take 3-5 years to provide training for the whole diocese. |
| T4 | Can training be available locally? | This is what we are aspiring to. However, 'local' may mean deanery or even archdeaconry – it will be very dependent on cohort sizes. |
| T5 | Can people access online training and webinars? | The aim is to include online training and webinars as well as face-to-face sessions – using in a blended approach to training. However, we will need time to develop the bespoke online resources needed. |

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| T6 | Can we make St Peter's College more accessible particularly in deprived areas that are digitally excluded? | We are aware of this issue and have no desire to exclude those who do not have access to the digital tools. St Peter's resources are available via a variety of digital devices including smartphones and recent research from the Office for National Statistics suggest that 87% of adults access the internet almost daily via these devices with very many adults owning smart phones. However, if digital resources proved to be a barrier we would endeavour seek alternative ways to provide the training that others access online. |
| T7 | How can you ensure that people are trained to ensure there are no safeguarding issues and they are theologically competent? | The expectation that all leaders will have the appropriate level of safeguarding training is current diocesan policy and failure to not comply with these requirements will result in licences/authorisation being withdrawn. Local and central records will keep a close eye on this. Theological competency – skills to develop theological reflective practitioners will be a key element in the new forms of training. |
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| | RESOURCES | |
| Res1 | What provision will there be for Occasional Offices, especially where there are high numbers of these? | This will need to be taken into consideration in forming the Mission Areas. In addition to clergy, appropriately trained Lay Readers already conduct funerals in the diocese and some deaneries are already exploring creating new post which focus on the occasional offices. In many parishes lay members of the congregation are involved in baptism ministry. Whilst clergy will remain the only ministers who can Baptise and conduct weddings, we will need to think together creatively about how to offer this ministry in the new model. Again our hope is that it will provide an opportunity for new vocations and gifts to emerge. |

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| Res2 | If we do grow, will there be more stipendiary posts? | <p>Yes almost certainly, See Q I 16</p> <p>However the new model of ministry is not just about how to deploy stipendiary clergy. It is a genuine attempt to reimagine ministry in order for parish ministry to be sustainable and flourishing in the long term. This is about valuing the part played by every member of our diocese.</p> |
| Res3 | Why can't those in Church House who are ordained be moved into parishes, even if on a part-time basis? | <p>The Archdeacons and ordained members of the Parish Support Team already spend the majority of their time involved in parishes, providing support, training and advice. They all work 6 day weeks and provide essential Sunday service cover across the diocese. If they were to change their existing patterns of work they would need to greatly reduce the amount of time they are currently available to support parishes across the diocese.</p> |

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| Res4 | Will you reduce Church House staff by 25% if you reduce clergy by 25%? | <p>No, unfortunately not. There are two principal reasons why central costs are likely to increase in the next 5 years. The first has to do with compliance in relation to national mandates: the most obvious case is Safeguarding, where costs will continue to rise for the foreseeable future as well tackle 'Past Cases Review 2' — we have no choice about this. The second reason has to do with the SDF process, which requires us to increase capacity centrally to deliver the outcomes for which grants are provided.</p> <p>However, we have recently conducted a review of central services to look at the level of staffing and if it is configured in the best way to serve our parishes and implement the diocesan strategy. The review concluded that Church House is running at full capacity and staffing numbers are in line with equivalent diocese. The majority of new staff at Church House have been essential to meet the growing demands of safeguarding, or are funded from Strategic Development Funds, which is additional to our normal income and can only be used for specific projects e.g. Centenary Project, Resourcing Church and Mission Partnership Development Project.</p> <p>In many ways this is a “chicken and egg” situation. Parishes are quite rightly seeking more support from the centre to help with the compliance and administrative burden, and at the same time concerned if more staff are employed to deliver it.</p> |
| Res5 | How specifically will the diocese help to simplify and provide support with administration and compliance issues? | <p>The departments in Church House are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are supporting parishes in the best possible way. In addition we will be including in our funding bid additional support for parishes.</p> |

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| Res6 | How will we increase the number of SSMs and how far will they be deployable? | By definition, SSMs are less deployable than stipendiary clergy, because they are volunteers. However, we will increasingly be encouraging SSMs to make themselves more deployable than we have done before. We will increase the number in the way that vocations to specific ministries are always increased: by praying, and then inviting God's people to consider what ministries God might be raising up by the power of his Spirit in their midst. |
| Res7 | Is there a property, HR and Finance strategy to support the mission? | A property strategy is currently being refreshed by the Diocesan Surveyor and will go to Finance and Property Committee before Christmas. Finance and HR are integral to the Diocesan Renewed, Released, Rejuvenated strategy, not standalone. |
| Res8 | Would it make more sense to close some church buildings and merge parishes? | <p>There is currently no over-arching plan to close particular churches. However, some churches have already closed of their own accord and others are on the path towards redundancy. It remains clear that the current number of church buildings across the Diocese at present is not sustainable. Until now, this process has been entirely reactive.</p> <p>As part of the Released strand of our strategy we are developing tools to help us evaluate the health and sustainability of our buildings. As deaneries and Mission Areas review how best to serve their communities the suitability and resources involved in maintaining our current buildings will inevitably be part of the conversation. These tools should provide helpful information to aid these discussions.</p> <p>One simple option would be to keep our 75 largest and best resourced churches open and close all the rest. This has never been the Anglican way. Our giving is to support the mission of God across the diocese, not just in our local church. We are a family, with the strong delighting in being able to support the weak.</p> <p>Our diocesan vision makes it clear that we remain committed to the parish system which means having an effective Anglican presence in every place. But parishes are not static entities and have always changed over time. We</p> |

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| | | <p>need to re-imagine what this looks like on the ground in the twenty first century across the diocese of Sheffield.</p> |
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| Res9 | If a church needs to close, how will the decision be taken? | <p>Until now, church closures have essentially only happened reactively, as dwindling congregations have reached the point of reluctantly accepting that they are unable to keep their church open any longer. We should at least attempt to be more proactive, so that church closures take place with a wider picture in mind, of the best possible offer to our local communities across the length and breadth of the Diocese.</p> <p>As part of the 'Release' strategy, a small group, consisting of the Archdeacons and relevant Church House officers, has been meeting over recent months with the specific task of developing a process for holistic assessment of buildings and their future role for worship, mission, community use etc. in a re-structured Diocese; and to advise the Bishop on a time scale for a progressive advisory audit of church buildings, commencing as soon as practicable. This work has, at times, been sensitive and testing as we grapple with the reality that some of our buildings are simply unsustainable, and difficult decisions will need to be made. The group will be presenting their proposal to the Bishop's Council towards the end of the year and the process is likely to be piloted in early 2020. The group have ensured that the process will involve extensive engagement with the parishes concerned as well as with the Diocesan and relevant Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committees.</p> |
| Res10 | What will happen to the empty vicarages that are released by having less clergy? | Empty properties are managed in line with the relevant Measures, overseen by Sequestrators or the Diocese as appropriate. Decisions on individual properties are taken by Finance and Property Committee e.g. to agree mission related use or rental if in vacancy. Where a parsonage property is sold, the funds are managed in the Pastoral Account by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. |
| Res11 | Will the Cathedral be included in the cuts? | No. Like the staffing of Bishopschoft and Doncaster House, the Cathedral (in our Diocese as in every Diocese) is not funded by the Diocesan Board of Finance but directly by the Church Commissioners. The stipends for one Dean and two residentiary canons is secure for the time being. |

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| Res12 | Can we invest in festival churches to reduce buildings without putting extra strain on clergy? | <p>The process referred to in the answer to Res9 will ensure that all options are considered where a building is unsustainable in its current use. The Festival Church approach is being increasingly adopted, especially (but not exclusively) in rural contexts, to enable a building to remain open for occasional worship around the festivals of the Church (usually approximately six services in a calendar year) by accommodating appropriate complementary uses (community, cultural and commercial) that finance the maintenance of the building. Recent changes to Canon B.14(a) mean that a Festival Church can remain legally open as a parish church while embracing this flexibility. The Festival Church approach has many advantages, not least the fact that an otherwise unsustainable building can remain open for worship along with the opportunities afforded for a stronger connection with the local community. However, it is not a solution for all cases, as there needs to be a sustainable business plan developed with an external organisation who would take on most of the burden of building maintenance. As you might imagine, there are not many community groups that are in the position to do this, even if the desire is there. Consequently, even though we hope to develop some Festival Churches in the diocese, there is no avoiding the inevitability of some church closures too.</p> |
| Res13 | How could we deploy retired clergy to support the new model? | <p>Our retired clergy already play a very significant part in supporting the mission and ministry in the diocese. We are enormously grateful to them. We hope that they will continue to offer their service to the Church as Mission Areas involve them as part of the ordained resources available.</p> |

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| Res14 | With a smaller number of clergy, why do we need 2 Bishops and 2 Archdeacons? | <p>It's worth noting that the stipends of our two bishops are not paid by the Board of Finance but directly by the Church Commissioners, as are their admin staff (and Bishopscroft is also owned by them). So reducing from 2 bishops to 1 would not bring any financial benefit to the Diocese and might actually bring some additional expenses if functions presently delivered by eg the Bishop of Doncaster had to be delivered by Board of Finance staff.</p> <p>As far as archdeacons are concerned, there is no reduction in their work just because stipendiary clergy numbers are reduced. For instances, the role of archdeacons in relation to church buildings and parish boundaries is likely to grow in the next 5 years.</p> |
| Res15 | What opportunities are there to share resources and reduce be-spoke costs? | <p>Again we can learn from some of our Mission Partnerships which are already doing this. In some places the skills of church officers like wardens and treasurers are shared across the partnership. Shared youth and children's workers and admin support posts are proving to be very effective. One of the tasks of the new posts at deanery level, the Area Deans and Buildings and Operations managers will be to look for opportunities to create common systems and working practises to share resources and costs.</p> |
| Res16 | Can we have more detail on what Strategic Development Fund funded central support would look like? | <p>We have been asked to submit a new funding request to a centrally funded Diocesan Sustainability Fund in 2020. Over the next few months we will be working with people from our deaneries and parishes to further shape this work.</p> |
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| | FUNDING | |
| F1 | Who funds the additional travel costs of lay and ordained ministers? | <p>To be honest we have not looked at this in any detail yet. We would welcome your ideas on this.</p> |

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| F2 | Will parishes who are not able to have their own clergy have to pay expenses for visiting clergy? | As with the previous question (F1), this is a detail that our consultation stage has not yet addressed. However, in Mission Areas we will aim for less emphasis on “having or not having our own clergy”, fewer “odd man out” parishes who have to “go without”, and more mutual sharing of ministry resources across the partnership. Developing unpaid ordained and lay leadership, strategically deployed across more than one parish, should allow each Mission Area to make its own arrangements for ministry costs including clergy expenses as a whole. |
| F3 | Are we lobbying National Church Institutions about the financial inequalities between dioceses? | <p>Yes. Bishop Pete has made representations to key figures and governing bodies about this. Other Bishops have also done so and there is a growing groundswell of opinion that a major review of the disparity between the Northern and Southern provinces should take place. Realistically this will not happen quickly and we cannot afford to wait before making decisions locally. The introduction of a Diocesan Sustainability Fund of £45m over the next 3 years, announced at General Synod in July is the result of lobbying by +Pete and others.</p> <p>However we do need to recognise that as a diocese we benefit from several existing mechanisms, including the Lower Income Communities Fund, and Strategic Development Funding</p> |

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| F4 | What evidence is there that the strategy will result in growth of Common Fund? | There are no guarantees here and we remain reliant on the outstanding generosity of our church members to fund the mission and ministry across the diocese through their giving to Common Fund. These plans are designed to enable numerical and financial growth, but this will not happen overnight and the new model of ministry will take time to bed in and bear fruit. Our financial plans take account of the fact that growth will not happen immediately. We are grateful that Common Fund has held up since the Common Fund Roadshows in 2018 and Deanery Consultation meetings in 2019. Communications for Common Fund Pledge requests for 2020 also include new opportunities to give directly to the SDBF via the Parish Giving Scheme. |
| F5 | Will churches that go from a full-time priest to sharing a priest still be expected to maintain current Common Fund contributions? | The only way to fund the projected number of stipendiary priest is if we maintain and grow our Common Fund contributions. The allocation of priests to each deanery has taken into account a number of factors including population size, deprivation, current church attendance and Common Fund contributions to ensure fairness. If some churches decide to reduce their Common Fund contributions we will have to reduce the number of available priests further. |
| F6 | What will happen when the Strategic Development Fund funded posts run out? | We are carefully designing these posts to be transitional. They are intended to help parishes and deaneries move to the new model and to provide the initial training and setting up systems of work which will then continue to run without them. Most centrally funded posts are for 5 years. |

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| F7 | When will the moratorium on clergy appointments be lifted? | +Pete hopes to be able to ease the moratorium on 10th October 2019 — exactly a year after it was introduced. However, please note that this will not mean that we are immediately able to appoint to vacancies , as we still have more stipendiary incumbents at present than we can afford. We will also be exercising considerable caution in making permanent appointments under Common Tenure before allocations of numbers of stipendiary incumbents to deaneries have been agreed. Where appointments are possible, there will be a strong expectation that parishes are able to indicate how an appointment will carry forward the Diocesan Strategy. |
| F8 | Will there be investment and resources for church planting? | Church planting is an important part of our diocesan strategy and we are already working hard on this. We have been given SDF funding to help develop this in Rotherham, Wath and Goole. In addition we are working in partnership with the larger Sheffield Churches to develop our church planting strategy. We have also identified a significant number of churches through MAP 3 who are committed to become planting churches. This includes starting new congregations and school based congregations. |
| F9 | Can we consider paying some lay leaders to ensure the most suited and gifted people will take on the role? | This is an interesting idea which needs investigating further. Some diocese have experimented with paid lay leadership posts and we need to learn from them. We will be open to new and creative ideas about the best way to deliver ministry in the new model. However it must be done within available resources. |
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| | MISC | |

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| M1 | Who was on the Task and Finish Group? | <p>The group was chaired by Bishop Pete and included Bishop Peter, our two Archdeacons, Malcolm and Steve. Heidi our Diocesan Secretary and Mark our Director of Parish Support. A great deal of support work was done by the Finance department and the Parish Support Team. As the plans emerged they were regularly tested and shared with our Area Deans. We also received specialist input and support from the Communications Manager, Bishop's Advisor in Pastoral Care, Ian Walker Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance and Alex Shilkoff Programme Manager.</p> |
| M2 | How did we get to this stage of the consultation? | <p>Bishop's Council set up the Task and finish Group in September 2018 to make recommendations to Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod to produce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreed implementation plan Diocesan strategy for 2025 (To ensure finance and strategy are aligned – not parallel tasks). • An agreed seven year Diocesan financial plan to achieve, maintain and sustain balanced budget from 2020, while investing for growth. • Re-imagined Ministry deployment and structures to achieve parity of esteem to release and deploy the gifts of Clergy: stipendiary, Self and locally supported; Lay and all God's children to ensure a sustainable Christian presence in the Diocese of Sheffield in perpetuity. • A new, Bishop-led, locally owned Diocesan plan which better reflects the communities we serve <p>This has resulted in the production of the Consultation Document. Responses will be considered by the Task and Finish Group and modifications and changes will be reported to Bishop's Council prior to being presented to Diocesan Synod in November 2019.</p> |

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| M3 | How long has the scale of challenge and financial problems been known? | In one sense, it has been known a long time. The challenges were identified in the strategy document “Re-Imagining Ministry for Mission: A Strategy for sustainable ministry in the Diocese of Sheffield 2012-2022”. However, +Pete admits it took him 12 months to grasp the full implications of it. |
| M4 | Are we addressing the right question e.g. is the key problem how missional we are currently expected to be in our churches? | As stated previously the intention was always to be led by mission not finance and to reimagine a sustainable and flourishing ministry for the future. We were guided by the diocesan vision and strategy. |
| M5 | What lessons have we learnt from other churches and dioceses? | In producing the model we have drawn heavily on the work of other diocese who are implementing similar models, especially Birmingham, Portsmouth, Truro and Carlisle. Our work on Focal Ministry has been assisted by learning from Liverpool and St David’s. |
| M6 | What lessons have been learnt from the 2012 strategy and has it worked? | As indicated in Q I 13 in many way this model is in continuity with Re-Imagining Ministry for Mission and seeks to build on our learning to date. It is clear that in most cases Mission Partnerships and collaborative working have happened much more quickly where stipendiary clergy have worked across a number of parishes. Progress on joint partnership has tended to be slower where the model of one clergy for one parish has been maintained. Creative use of shared resources like Centenary Project Workers and Mission Partnership Development Workers has helped Mission Partnerships to work more effectively together. The key, as always has been about building trusting and mutually supportive relationships which often start with the clergy and leadership and then cascades to church members. Re-structuring and changes in governance usually come much later after trust and mutual benefit have been worked out in practice. It has been least effective where there has been no sense of urgency or perceived desire or reason to change current practises. |

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| M7 | What plans are in place to protect the needs of those who are covered by the Equality Act? | We take our legal responsibilities very seriously, supported by our Registrar and our Dean of Women's Ministry and Bishop's Champion for Black and Minority Ethnic concerns. Additionally, the Bishop of Sheffield is looking to appoint a new Bishop's Adviser for Disability and Inclusion. |
| M8 | Can the 2019 Review of Church House report be shared? | Yes, it has always been the intention to publish this report. This consultation exercise and the demands of the IICSA inquiry have delayed matters, but it will be available before the end of the year. |
| M9 | Have we considered merging with another diocese or sharing administrative functions? | <p>Merging with another Diocese is not a choice we can make, although it is a proposal we could make. It's fair to say that the experience of merging the Dioceses of Bradford, Wakefield and Ripon in 2013 has not encouraged the Dioceses' Commission to repeat the exercise. However, if we are not able to reverse the trends of decline which have existed for 20 years, this is the likely outcome in 2030 or beyond.</p> <p>In terms of sharing functions, we do share our HR Director with another Diocese. Similarly dioceses help each other out on issues like safeguarding and communications. However all dioceses are struggling to cope with the demands of safeguarding and compliance and simply do not have the capacity to take on work from other diocese.</p> |

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| M10 | Many visitors to church for whatever reason, want to talk to a parish priest face to face. How will this be affected? | <p>Again, please bear in mind that in the last 20 years, the number of stipendiary incumbents in this Diocese has fallen, year on year, from 155 to less than 100. So this access has presumably already been greatly eroded. And if that trend continues for another decade, we will have only 75 in post in any case. It is not this proposal which is reducing stipendiary clergy numbers, but falling income over many years.</p> <p>Of course there will always be a need for face to face conversations with a Priest. Whilst some clergy will need to work differently they will all continue to exercise their priestly ministry which will involve pastoring their flock. However many parishes have benefited from releasing the pastoral gifts of their lay members who support others in their church and local community. Small group leaders and people in the church with pastoral gifts are often the first and most welcome point of call for care and support. People who want or need priestly care are then put in touch with the Priest. This and similar models of providing good pastoral care would work well in Mission Areas. Again one model will not fit all, and much will depend on local context.</p> |
| M11 | Do the parish patrons need to be consulted? | <p>This question has already been largely covered in the answer to question R11. Whilst there is no legal obligation to consult Patrons outside of the usual process of appointing an Incumbent or in the case of suspension of presentation and pastoral reorganisation, the Archdeacons seek to work closely with all patrons whenever changes affecting the benefices under their patronage are envisaged. Patrons can also be approached directly by PCCs and Incumbents under their patronage to discuss matters of concern in the benefice.</p> |

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| M12 | What is “natter” and how are people in these groups encouraged to grow in their faiths? | Natter is a mission initiative which is championed by The Revd John Marsh. It is based around ministry and outreach to the elderly, lonely and isolated members of the community and involves meeting over coffee for friendship and conversation in a church context. These groups can then build in discussion and discipleship courses and often incorporate acts of worship, developing into a congregation in their own right. More information can be found on the diocesan website. |
| M13 | Which are the 25 most deprived parishes? | Based on national IMD rankings they are: Denaby Main, All Saints Dalton, Holy Trinity Masbrough, St Paul Thurnscoe, St Cecilia Parsons Cross, Holy Cross Gleadless Valley, Arbouthorne and Norfolk Park, St James Clifton, St Leonard Norwood, St James Doncaster, New Bentley, St Cuthbert Fir Vale, Sheffield Manor, Doncaster Minster, St Mary Stainforth, Christ Church Pitsmoor, Goldthorpe, Ellesmere, Attecliffe and Darnall, St Jude Hexthorpe, Shiregreen, Kendray, Thrybergh, St Helen Thurnscoe, St John Park, Worsbrough. |
| M14 | How does the proposal fit with the diocesan synod commitment to focus on the poor? | Deprivation was one of the weightings which was included in calculating the allocation of stipendiary clergy to deaneries. We are committed to maintaining a worshipping church presence in our poorer parishes and will continue to explore ways how best to achieve this. We are currently taking a fresh look at the way in which we apply the ‘Lowest Income Communities Funding’ we receive from the Church Commissioners, to ensure it is targeted at the most deprived communities in our Diocese. |
| M15 | What are Resourcing Churches? | In our strategy document a resourcing church is defined as “a church which is so designated by the Bishop’s senior staff and its own PCC and is committed to give away (its members, key leaders and most generous givers) in a published programme of church planting in collaboration with the senior staff”. It does not necessarily need to be a large church, but has a desire to see new congregations established. |

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| M16 | Can service times only be changed by the PCC? | Forms of Sunday worship must be by agreement between the Vicar and PCC (Canon B3[2]) and decisions about Sunday service times should follow the same good practice. Only this year (2019) General Synod caught up with reality by relaxing the law relating to weekly worship in every parish. It has long been accepted that rural clergy with multiple benefices and small congregations cannot deliver what was possible years ago. The same is now true of many urban and suburban areas. Realism and collaboration are needed, so that worship fulfils the revised canon, which requires that, on any given Sunday, worship must be provided “in at least one church in each benefice.” This offers great flexibility to serve local mission. It is entirely in line with the “Release” agenda of our Diocesan Strategy. PCCs and clergy must now work out together how this greater flexibility will best serve the mission of their parishes. It may take some experimentation before we get everything right. |
| M17 | What is a learning community and how will it work? | A learning community is a well tried and tested model of learning where groups of people come together around a topic to learn and make action plans to implement the learning. Usually the learning community meets 4-6 times over a period of 18 months to 2 years and each time they meet they report back on the progress made and make new action plans. We are currently running a learning community in the diocese where groups from 10 churches are looking together at how to become whole of life disciple making churches. |
| M18 | Will lots of new separate congregations mean we lose the sense of church family? | The sense of belonging to a church family is important but it is made up of all shapes and sizes. For some it is their regular congregation e.g. 8:30 communion or Messy church. For others it is their wider church family. Others would call their Mission Partnership church family and other still the wider diocese or even the church universal. Everyone needs to have a sense of belonging and this needs to be worked at whatever model of church we prefer. |

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| M19 | Is Scenario 6 just Scenario 2 – is the proposed model radical enough? | <p>There are significant differences between these scenarios. Scenario 2 envisages that we simply carry on as usual, asking fewer clergy to personally lead more and more churches. Scenario 6 is about ensuring that each church has a locally identified leader who may be lay or ordained. The stipendiary clergy will provide leadership and oversight over a number of churches, but not be expected to deliver ministry in them all. In addition the Oversight Minister and the Mission Area Ministry Team will not just be looking at how to maintain existing church services, but will be looking at how best to provide ministry to a defined geographical area, which might require new and different things in addition to what is currently in place.</p> <p>If we were starting with a blank piece of paper we may not have come up with the proposed model. But we are not. The model is only a framework and is clearly not perfect and will need to change and evolve as it develops. However at this stage it is our best attempt at delivering mission and ministry to enable us to work towards our vision: to grow a sustainable network of Christ-like, lively and diverse Christian communities in every place which are effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God's world. Through this consultation we were genuinely open to suggestions of a better and more effective model to achieve sustainability and growth potential, but to date we have not received any.</p> |
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