

DIOCESAN SYNOD

Title: **SEE OF BRADWELL**
Sponsor: **BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD**
Date: **18 NOVEMBER 2017**

1. INTRODUCTION

It is with great sadness that we must now consider the vacant See of Bradwell.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2013 our Diocesan Synod considered a potential future shape for episcopal ministry in the Diocese of Chelmsford. In particular Synod explored the possibility that, in time, the seven archdeaconries might become co-terminus with seven episcopal areas, which in combination with the establishment of Mission and Ministry Units, would lead to a significant de-layering of diocesan structures. The Synod discussion showed an openness to the concept while also raising some concerns about points of detail.

It was recognised that this represents a significant amount of change. For a good period while Mission and Ministry Units are established there will continue to be a need to operate the structure of three areas and seven archdeaconries. On this basis, it was felt right to apply to the Dioceses Commission for agreement to fill the Sees of Colchester and Barking.

These arguments continue to apply in respect of Bradwell. In addition the particular and tragic circumstances of this vacancy create a pastoral case for moving forward with an appointment on the current model, and on a reasonable timescale, rather than attempting to do anything new without detailed consideration.

In the context of the 2013 Synod discussion, members were invited to offer suggestions on what qualities should be sought in our area bishops, bearing in mind the potential future. Common responses included the ability to lead change and communicate, and the importance of having a balanced bishop's staff team. These considerations continue to be valid.

3. STATEMENT OF CASE

By law, approval of the Dioceses Commission is required before the vacant bishoprics can be filled. This requires a strong and positive justification. The draft statement of case in respect of Bradwell is attached. This includes the role description for Area Bishops, which is in line with that for Colchester and Barking.

4. OUTLINE OF NEXT STEPS

1. Does the diocese wish to appoint a new Bishop of Bradwell?
 - Bishop's Council vote on this on 19 October – this was agreed.
 - Diocesan Synod to vote on 18 November
2. Application to the Dioceses Commission to support an appointment. Papers are to be submitted in November in time for the next meeting.
3. Appointment of a small Advisory Group.¹ The role of the group is to:
 - Work with the bishop in drawing up the role and person specification
 - If necessary, assist the bishop with the shortlisting of candidates
 - Assist the Bishop with interviews of the candidates
 - Agree the themes for feedback to candidates with the bishop

Assuming a positive response from the Dioceses Commission, announcements will be made in the church press in December. It is hoped that interviews and follow up processes could take place in late January or February.

There follows further processes involving the Archbishop of Canterbury, Downing Street and a petition to the Queen.

The likely consecration dates in 2018 (if required) are 1 May 2018 or 3 July 2018.

5. MOTIONS

The President to move that:-

'This Synod wish to support in principle the appointment of a new Bishop of Bradwell and ask the Bishop of Chelmsford to appoint an Advisory Group to work with him and the Bishop's Council in taking the appointment forward

The President to move that:-

'This Synod note the draft statement of case for the vacancy in the See of Bradwell and the role specification for the Area Bishops in the Diocese of Chelmsford, and ask the Bishop of Chelmsford to commence the appointment processes'

¹ Alongside the Bishop of Chelmsford this group would include the Chief Executive, one lay and one clergy person from Bishop's Council, and a further person from the Bradwell Episcopal Area. A representative from the national church is also optional. It is recommended that the Archdeacons who will be working directly with an Area Bishop are not part of the group, though they will be consulted and asked to meet any preferred candidate.