

Diocese of Chelmsford

Transforming Leadership

Report and Recommendations from the Leadership Review Group

Our Passion:

Our Passion is **Jesus** - Proclaiming and Living out God's love for all people

Our Aspiration:

To be a Transforming Presence in every Community,
Open and welcoming to all, and serving all

Our Resources:

Faithful people, Prayer and worship, Visionary leadership, Liberating gifts

A. Introduction

This report comes from the Leadership Review Group appointed by Bishop Stephen and chaired by Archdeacon Martin. It has been considered by the Bishop's Council and is offered to Diocesan Synod for consideration and action.

The Church of England is facing a time of unprecedented change, not least because of the anticipated reduction of stipendiary clergy by around 25% in the next decade. At the same time expectations of the church's role in society provide increasingly more mission opportunities.

This paper is offered alongside the emerging priorities for our future diocesan strategy contained in the paper *Transforming Presence*. These are:

- Inhabiting the world distinctively,
- Evangelising effectively, and
- Serving with accountability.

These three priorities connect with our existing diocesan vision statement and the Five Marks of Mission and will require a new strategy for ministry, including vocations and deployment.

Whatever new patterns of ministry emerge, the priority for local parish ministry is unchanging. It is only with local participation that appropriate patterns of ministry for mission can be discerned, resourced and implemented. Our intention is to maximise the number of licensed ministers deployed locally in parish ministry, including appropriate new mission or pioneer roles. This will require a concerted effort to ensure that discipleship development and vocational discernment processes are given higher priority across the diocese. During this time of transition, as effective and sustainable patterns of ministry and mission are being discerned and implemented, enhanced leadership is required.

It is well known that Chelmsford has a lower ratio of senior staff to clergy and parishes than most other dioceses, which limits their direct involvement in each locality. Moreover, introduction of Common Tenure, increasing professionalisation of support through Ministerial Development Reviews, the need to deal properly with difficult pastoral issues, coupled with the strategic change agenda all create new pressure on senior clergy and increase the risk that ministry in parishes receive less support than needed. Alongside this, Archdeacons have increasing legal responsibilities that also go with the territory, Visitations and Inspections of churches, faculties and de-minimis, CDM procedures and more.

The recognition that our leadership structures are inadequate is not new, for example, the Diocesan Synod in 1989 made a clear recommendation to establish a fourth Episcopal Area with an additional bishop and archdeacon. Although the new Archdeaconry of Harlow was created, the proposal for a new Area and bishop has never been taken forward despite being regularly reconsidered.

This paper sets out new proposals for enhancing the leadership capacity of the Diocese of Chelmsford for the next decade by increasing the number of senior leaders and refocusing the roles of some advisers. These changes will enable the bishop to provide more support to the parishes, congregations and licensed ministers in the diocese. The focus is on developing our senior leadership capacity, not for its own sake, but to invert the usual hierarchical pyramid so that our senior leaders are actively supporting and serving the well-being of the whole diocese during this time of unprecedented change.

B. Objectives

1. To recommend a more effective and focussed leadership structure that will serve parishes and deaneries and enable them to function to their full potential.
2. To affirm the primary importance of local parish ministry in the exercise of God's mission and to increase the opportunity for all licensed ministers to make full use of their God-given gifts.
3. To achieve consistent leadership, oversight and resources across the diocese to enable productive mission-led change in patterns of ministerial deployment in response to the changing availability of stipendiary clergy and the mission opportunities available to us.
4. To close the perceived gap between parish clergy and the Bishop's Senior Staff.
5. To achieve a more manageable workload for the Senior Staff and Area/Rural Deans.
6. To increase partnership and mutual accountability for mission and ministry in the diocese.
7. To implement these developments in an economic and efficient manner without increasing deanery share.

C. Leadership Proposals

Leadership in the Church of England is focused in the episcopal ministry of bishops and so our initial response to these challenges was to consider again an increase in the number of bishops deployed in the diocese. However, we recognise that this is unlikely to be practical or timely when the national church is aiming to reduce the number of bishops. These proposals therefore take a broader view that episcopacy is explicitly shared by the diocesan bishop among his senior colleagues. Our proposal is therefore to increase the number of Archdeacons and enhance their “episcopal” responsibility. This will reshape the way leadership and episcopé is exercised in the diocese and remove any necessity for a fourth Episcopal Area.

We therefore recommend that:

1. One additional Archdeacon is appointed in each Episcopal Area, as illustrated in the Appendix, so that each Archdeacon has oversight of between 2 and 5 deaneries.
2. All Archdeacons’ responsibilities develop to become leaders in mission and enablers of organisational change to ensure that appropriate, effective, sustainable, mission-led, collaborative ministry is provided across the diocese. Current job descriptions and portfolios of responsibility will need to be reviewed and all Archdeacons will have some diocesan-wide responsibilities so that flexibility and mutual support is maximised.
3. The Area/Rural Dean’s role will be increasingly focussed on pastoral leadership (with appropriate support). Responsibility for change management will now be exercised in greater partnership with the Archdeacon.
4. The Director for Mission and Ministry role will be repositioned to include strategic, change management responsibility working in close collaboration with the Bishop, Chief Executive, Archdeacons and Parish Development Advisers with the aim of ensuring that there is coherence of ministry provision for mission across the diocese. The role will be titled Dean of Mission and Ministry and given similar authority and organisational standing to the Archdeacons and Dean.

We make no recommendations to alter existing organisational boundaries but note that some deanery reorganisation has already taken place and envisage that further redefinition of deanery boundaries and size may be appropriate in the future.

It is likely to take a year to get formal agreement to the formation of new archdeaconries and so we recommend proceeding with the selection and appointment of Archdeacons Designate with delegated legal powers in the first instance.

The increased responsibility for archdeacons for overseeing strategic change and their increased capacity for pastoral care of the clergy is likely to free up some capacity among the Area Bishops, giving them greater opportunity to engage in direct mission and involvement in the “public square”.

D. Adviser and Officer Proposals

At present almost all our Area Team and Mission and Ministry Team members are called “advisers” irrespective of how much time is allocated to the role; whether or not they are primarily advisers to bishops or parishes; or whether they carry executive responsibility or not. We make the recommendations set out below for the future of adviser ministries. (It should be noted that roles under the statutory remit of the Board of Education are outside the scope of this review and these proposals.)

5. The term ‘officer’ should be used to designate those with permanent roles that carry executive authority for delivering particular aspects of diocesan or Area ministry. As a result we recommend that the following roles are designated as essential permanent officers for the diocese: Director (Dean of Mission and Ministry), CMD Team, Lay Education and Training, DDO Team. Although these roles are seen as essential, the number of officers should be periodically reviewed in line with the current requirements of diocesan strategy.
6. All further advisor/officer roles should be explicitly linked to the support and development of diocesan priorities and strategy with the expectation that overall numbers of paid advisers will be reduced. Any required changes to the current Area and Diocesan Teams should, where possible, be linked to when existing post-holders move on or retire, with a clear transition plan in each case to ensure benefits from these roles are not lost. Our recommendations for the initial priority of appointments is:
 - a. Three Area Parish Development Officers
 - b. Two Diocesan Officers for the coordination and encouragement of Mission/Evangelism/FX and Faith in Action initiatives
 - c. Further roles supporting the development of discipleship and vocations.
7. All full-time, stipendiary, parish-based clergy should carry responsibility for an aspect of ministry that is additional to the normal demands of parish ministry. This commitment to serve the mission of the church at deanery, diocesan or national level is already common (for example with vocations advisers, LARCs, General Synod members, deanery officers etc). We recognise and celebrate this commitment and consider that it should be seen as part of a normal and healthy ministerial life. The amount of time devoted to “Beyond-the-Parish” (BtP) ministry will normally be an average of one day a week or less. For those in self-supporting, part-time and non-parochial roles, the level of BtP ministry will be agreed with the bishop as part of the Role Description and MDR process.
8. As a result of the above, we further recommend the following good practice guidelines:
 - a. In future, the majority of adviser roles will be held by licensed clergy as part of their BtP ministry or by volunteer lay people. These roles will normally be advertised and have a role description. These roles should relate to important aspects of mission or ministry as well as the individual’s personal interests and skills.

- b. All new appointments which have stipend and housing implications must link with the strategic priorities of the diocese and are to be made with the agreement of the relevant Mission and Pastoral Committee and with prior consultation at the Bishop's Staff Meeting.
- c. All advisers, including BtP ministries, will have a clear reporting line to a member of the senior staff and will normally work in collaboration with a support or special interest group. Expenses and limited administrative support will be clearly defined and budgeted for each role.
- d. Advisers will generally provide a focus for expertise; a signpost for resources; communicate good practice; the hub of a network; and the diocesan point of contact with wider church and civic networks. Some topics may require advisers in more than one Area. Some should ideally work with a network of deanery-based colleagues especially where direct action with parishes is needed.
- e. We encourage Archdeacons to consider appointing others to assist with their statutory duties, such as the current DAC adviser in the Colchester Area.
- f. Dual-role appointments that combine parish responsibility with a major specialist role should become the exception rather than the rule. People generally work better when they combine similar roles and so the focus in future should be on combining either parish or sector responsibilities. This change will also open further roles to lay applicants.
- g. Some advisory roles may need to be half or full time to effectively support or develop a particular area of ministry; some may need to be permanent roles, others for a fixed period. Current examples include Children, Youth, Mission (Fresh Expressions etc) and Rural.

E. Administration Proposals

Currently area bishops, archdeacons, and the DDO work from home with their own, usually part-time, PA/Administrator. This arrangement gives little scope for handling extra work in emergencies or providing effective holiday cover. In general, the advisers have no administrative support.

We recommend that:

- 9. A review of office and administrative support for Area Bishops, Archdeacons, Advisers/Officers and Area/Rural Deans is carried out, especially to consider more cost-effective ways of operating with new technology and enhanced communication links and whether setting up Area Offices or enhancing the provision from the Diocesan Office might be appropriate.
- 10. Administrative support for the new Archdeacons should be provided through existing Diocesan, Bishop's or Archdeacon's offices wherever possible.

F. Financial Implications

These proposals are intended to be broadly cost neutral once fully implemented. There will be some transition/set up/training costs, which are to be met from a designated fund established with money from a bequest. The aim therefore is for these proposals to be implemented with no net cost on parish share. To achieve this, the diocese should work towards releasing equivalent adviser positions over a three year period. This is a realistic goal; one which can be achieved without redundancies, and it may release some ordained resource for parish ministry.¹

G. Conclusion

For too long there has been too large a gap between the leadership of the church, its bishops and archdeacons, and the life and witness of the church in its parishes and communities. These proposals intend to close this gap, and enable us to face the challenges of a changing world and a smaller number of stipendiary clergy more effectively. We are in a missionary situation and we need a missionary leadership, lighter on its feet and better able to serve the church on the ground. The national church has asked every diocese to re-imagine its ministry. For us this must also include re-imagining leadership. We believe that a better led diocese, with leadership closer to the parishes, means better supported clergy, better led churches, and a more effective and, we pray, more fruitful, witness to Christ in a needy world.

With the agreement of Bishop's Council, we offer the following motion for consideration by Diocesan Synod on 5 November 2011:

This Synod welcome the report *Transforming Leadership* and request that the Bishop of Chelmsford and the Diocesan Chief Executive begin the necessary processes and consultations across the Diocese to develop these recommendations and prepare an implementation plan to be agreed by the Bishop's Council.

The Ven Martin Webster

October 2011

On behalf of the Leadership Review Group: Ven Martin Webster (*Chair*), Mr John Ball, Revd Geoff Bayliss, Mr Graham Cook, Bishop Stephen Cottrell, Revd John Dunnnett, Canon Roger Matthews, Mr Roger Shilling, Revd Mina Smallman, Revd Carol Smith, Canon Dave Wade, and Canon Martin Wood.

¹ A bequest in the sum of £500,000 has been set aside for transition and set up costs; initial estimates suggest this to be adequate, and possibly generous depending on the approach taken to administrative support. There are currently 26.5 FTE adviser positions, of which 2.5 FTE are vacant. (Some of these current vacancies will be filled in line with the principles established in this paper).

APPENDIX: ILLUSTRATION OF LEADERSHIP ROLES PROPOSED BY THE LRG

