

**INTRODUCTION, AFFIRMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**  
**Common Tenure**  
**The Role of Human Resources in the Diocese**  
**(Version 6 January 2020)**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Ecclesiastical (Terms of Service) Measure, confers on clergy many rights and responsibilities which, in effect, reflect many secular employment arrangements. There are however, still significant changes in the way we think about the developing role of clergy in a wide variety of contexts, protecting parochial Office Holder status, ensuring there are appropriate policies, practices and system in place, and offering information, support and advice.
- 1.2 Within this context our diocesan vision is that, as we work to consistently develop our own diocesan guidelines and policies, we never lose sight of the historic values of ordained ministry. The Measure does not change our fundamental assumption that priesthood has always been a call to holiness of life and we will continue to reflect together not just on the changes that law and good process require, but on the theological insights that will always guide our understanding of ministry and our common calling to live in the hope of the Kingdom in which we are all united.
- 1.3 Clergy will always have their personal and local networks of support and ministerial development. Within the context this document covers:
- 1.4.1 The ways in which the diocese supports centrally its clergy and communicates with them about Terms of Service/Common Tenure issues rights, requirements and protocols.
  - 1.4.2 The guidelines and policies for how the more formal arrangements should be carried out and 'managed'.
  - 1.4.3 A resource for clergy which will help them in their parish responsibilities eg where parishes are an employer in their own right.

**2. Affirmation and Accountability**

- 2.1 In all processes we will ensure that we respect the individual and their individual circumstances, and offer practical and pastoral care for them and their family.
- 2.2 Where an individual is part of a formal process we will ensure that:
- 2.2.1 They fully understand all aspects of the processes and possible outcomes, and have the opportunity to explore these in confidence at every stage.
  - 2.2.2 They are aware of the range of pastoral and practical support available.

- 2.2.3 They are made aware of timescales and next steps as formal processes are run and managed consistently, and as quickly and fairly as possible.
- 2.2.4 They are aware of roles and responsibilities, and their right of representation at all stages.
- 2.3 When things go awry with relationships both personally and in local communities, the Diocese's priority will always be to do what it can to bring people together in order to help restore relationships and will always exhaust informal ways of moving forward positively, before any formal process is instigated where this is appropriate.
- 2.4 We will plan to do this with the individuals concerned in safe, creative and thoughtful ways which ensure respect, fair process, the right to be heard, and the right of reply. (We will of course only do this in ways which are appropriate to the individual set of circumstances). Further information is set out in Section 8 of this Clergy and Parish Handbook resource.
- 2.5 Confident that clergy are determined to live out the commitments and promises they made at ordination, there are three key expectations on those who find themselves in situations of conflict:
  - 2.5.1 That they will do all that they can to bring about a local resolution.
  - 2.5.2 That where bringing about local reconciliation is a struggle, (for whatever reason), and where additional assistance, advice, and support may be helpful, that they actively seek this from colleagues, national bodies, and the diocese.
  - 2.5.3 Where the diocese has become involved because of the nature of the difficulties, that clergy will fully co-operate with the diocese in its responsibility to seek and facilitate all opportunities for reconciliation (eg through mediation).

### **3. Human Resources support and advice**

- 3.1 A key part of the role of the Director for People, Pastoral and Safeguarding; and of the HR Adviser is to support the GDBF centrally, as well as our PCCs and clergy across the range of people and people management issues.
- 3.2 Where there are issues of concern they can advise on both informal and formal processes and responsibilities to each party involved so there is clarity at each stage.
- 3.3 Where appropriate they will act as 'the keeper of the process' so may attend meetings, make notes and share minutes; and assist the individuals involved and the processes, working with senior clergy to ensure that support mechanisms are in place and that there is clarity at each stage.
- 3.4 They will remain professionally objective throughout any process so can be approached by any party to discuss anything in confidence at any stage of a process

**For full details of the Church of England Common Tenure arrangements please visit: <https://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/common-tenure.aspx>**