# Webinar Questions & Answers

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| **Insights** | | |
| 1 | Why does it have to be 'either/or', when with God things are more often 'both/and'? | Absolutely. These are tensions and not binary choices. The interesting thing to explore is where both individual Christians and local Christian communities place the greater weighting on the both/and continuum. For different contexts and communities, the centre of gravity might be located on a different place on the spectrum. |
| 2 | Why do you say it's either/or? Surely, they are both/and? So, I am curious as to why you set against each other? | Absolutely correct. In a sense the answer to all of these is "yes"! They're not binaries in opposition to each other, but it's interesting to work out where you and your church community place a higher emphasis in terms of how you "do" church and understand your particular calling in your context. |
| 3 | What is meant by seeking the kingdom in contrast to gathering the faithful? Is it meaning the Sunday gathering as somewhere non-Christians discover Christ? | Shorthand language for the emphasis different churches place on the spectrum between serving and witnessing to their communities and the life of the gathered people for nurture, teaching, prayer and sacraments. |
| 4 | I am curious about either/or questions being a Western worldview. Could there be space for both/and answers as well? | Absolutely correct. In a sense the answer to all of these is "yes"! They're not binaries in opposition to each other, but it's interesting to work out where you and your church community place a higher emphasis in terms of how you "do" church and understand your particular calling in your context. |
| 5 | Surely some of these 'opposites' are 'both/and? | Absolutely correct. In a sense the answer to all of these is "yes"! They're not binaries in opposition to each other, but it's interesting to work out where you and your church community place a higher emphasis in terms of how you "do" church and understand your particular calling in your context. |
| 6 | Why can't all these things be a mixture of all these things? | yes, you're absolutely right, which is why we're referring to them as "tensions", not "choices". Perhaps the interesting thing is to think about which end of the spectrum you feel most resonance/dissonance with and why. |
| 7 | I like the boxes but can't the 'or' be 'and'? | yes, you're absolutely right, which is why we're referring to them as "tensions", not "choices". Perhaps the interesting thing is to think about which end of the spectrum you feel most resonance/dissonance with and why. |
| 8 | Please can you explain what is meant by 'curious'? | live answered |
| 9 | Does couching the tension in developing our faith in the language of "my responsibility or my priest's" reveal that we are still not serious about lay ministry (i.e. it is all down to my priest, and not others who might also help my growth)? | live answered |

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| **Ministry Models – One model?** | | |
| 10 | Can there be more than one model operating in a deanery? | live answered |
| 11 | Does the Diocese expect there to be one model only? | live answered |
| 12 | It strikes me that all three models might be needed to have effective mission across a diocese, depending on context. Might choosing just the one model end up hindering mission, making it rather monochrome? | live answered |
| 13 | Are we trying to choose one model for the Diocesan framework to be used everywhere in the Diocese? | live answered |
| 14 | Questions and chat (and answers) illustrate many complex competing interests that would need to be addressed - how will one model only for the diocese address all these competing and sometimes conflicting interests? | live answered |
| 15 | Can the 3 models exist win one diocese or deanery or is it one model for all? | live answered |
| 16 | Is there a possibility to have a mixture of ministry models or is the Diocese looking to move to one model? | The intention is to have one diocesan model, rather than a mixture of models working simultaneously. |
| 17 | Is the intention to adopt a single model throughout the diocese, or might more than one be adopted? | live answered |
| 18 | I think that no one of the three models of ministry would fit across the Diocese. I am sure that we will need a combination. It is worth remembering the Parish Development Scheme that the Diocese used to use and promote would be worth revisiting. | live answered |
| 19 | I like the creativity of the thinking but I can't see yet how one of the three models for the Diocese can cover the probable need for all three models to be in existence. Is there a way? | live answered |
| 20 | Is the church's aim to have one model covering the whole/most of the country or can/should each diocese/'group' choose the model best for them, in their opinion, (so that there are different 'ways' of church all over the land? | live answered |
| 21 | Does it have to be a single model or could a blend of the 3 models work? | A blend of three would most probably be inordinately complicated and unworkable. |
| 22 | Will there be a mixture of the three approaches all across the diocese or will any one of the three models predominate? | live answered |
| 23 | I am really not sure that one model will fit all churches and all areas of the Diocese. Surely there is a need to retain diversity among our churches and not simply absorb some into some kind of large sponges? | Diversity is in the DNA of the Church of England and will undoubtedly and rightly persist in which ever model is adapted. |
| 24 | Could we mix and match. Does one model have to fit all? | We think it will become inordinately complex to have all three or to mix and match. They are frameworks and so working them out in each place would look different. But there also needs to be a degree of coherence and family likeness. |
| 25 | All of these have benefits so can we pick and mix to suit different situations? | The Bishop's Council will discern this down to one to make it understandable and workable as it all could get very complicated. These are frameworks to be adapted locally. |
| 26 | In any organisation where there is an element of centralisation, the success, or otherwise, will depend on the personalities involved, is it sensible to have a one size fits all model when the diocese is so diverse? | live answered |
| 27 | What number of each type would you expect in the diocese? Do we assume that only one type will be chosen? | We are assuming only one model. The scale envisaged in models a and c is very different from model b so not easy to give a firm number. However, we know scale matters. |
| 28 | Does the choice of A, B or C have to be for the whole Diocese? | live answered |
| 29 | Surely, each congregation is unique so why should a 'one size fit all' to ministry work? | Absolutely. This can't and shouldn’t be one size fits all, but valuing how each local community can help contribute to serving the five wider strategic priorities. |
| 30 | Will any one model suit or accommodate every church in the Diocese? | live answered |
| 31 | Would the whole diocese go with one model or would different models exist across the diocese dependent on need etc? | live answered |
| 32 | To what extent are these models mutually exclusive? If as a Diocese we have one overarching model, can other models be put in place where there is a particular reason to do so? | live answered |
| 33 | Why will there only be one model (A, B or C) for the whole Diocese rather than the most appropriate model for each area? | live answered |
| 34 | Has the final approach got to be one model or may it be a mixture? | From the point of view of being manageable, we expect that one model will emerge. That said, local engagement in working out what any model looks like in practice will be vital. |
| 35 | It all has a very fluid feel to it and could easily fall apart without oversight, coordination, evaluation, monitoring. I fully support increased involvement of people but it may require recognising abilities that people may themselves not realise they have. Implies identifying and then some form of training/preparation. Couldn't more than one model exist at the same time? It would be chaotic of course. There is a feel of central control to it all, responsibilities, accountability, etc. | I think it is about getting the right amount of freedom and the right amount of accountability. The oversight piece is important, and we're looking for a framework that provides enough of both. It's the local / central location of the vision, and how we can best support vision. |

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| **Ministry Models - Clarification** | | |
| 36 | Would it help if the summaries that help decide which of the three ministry models is adopted include a summary of the Pros and Cons noted for each? | Perspectives about what the potential "pros" and "cons" of the 3 models are a big part of what we hope will emerge from the local conversations. The local conversations won't be asking churches to vote for their favourite option or to choose, but to think hard about the models and what about each is attractive, and where in each there are challenges or perceived weaknesses. |
| 37 | What are the anticipated benefits and drawbacks of each model of ministry? Could there be a summary of these? | We are keen to see that in a grass roots up process and that is why we want the conversations locally - we are not asking those to ‘vote’ but wanting local areas to look at the pros and cons - that will help us pool those and understand how each model might each work locally. One observation in a recent discussion was that they may all be ‘good enough’ for what is needed and understanding what is the easiest to implement locally is also important. |
| 38 | When we look at the different models, are there some outcomes that we'd use to evaluate each against? Are the key strategic outcomes in the pack? | The strategic outcomes relate to the local worked out answers to that which will be discerned in relation to the diocesan vision, the 3 questions and 5 strategic priorities. |
| 39 | In model A how many resource churches are envisaged and how many other churches /parishes will be with each? | We currently have 6 designated Resourcing Churches, some of which are actually more than one individual church (e.g. the Harborough team) and they are connected to their fresh expressions and church plants. The number of churches grouped with a Minster will need to be worked out in more detail in due course, ensuring that the whole group is an effective size for enabling ministry and mission. |
| 40 | I am concerned that the models put the emphasis on WHERE the church meets more than why. | Interesting you heard it that way - we are trying to put more emphasis on the why than the where! If each church / Fresh Expression can articulate their Why it makes the whole discernment piece a lot 'easier' (although easier is probably the wrong word) |
| 41 | Do all these models have a strong emphasis on youth and our future? | Yes! |
| 42 | Are we replacing the existing church model with the new three models? | These models will change the way in which individual churches relate to each other, share in mission, and how ministry is provided. The individual church identity and mission remains. |
| 43 | Where does the idea of relational "cells" as the basic building blocks of the church fit into any of these 3 models of church? | Can be adapted to whatever scale of Christian community and so possible across all 3 models. |
| 44 | What Bible passages inform our understanding of church and ministry in these different models? | live answered |
| 45 | Have the discussions so far thought about where individuals find their sense of belonging within their church community? | Great question. Absolutely. Our prime place of belonging remains often the most local. Retaining that sense of belonging is key to this, whilst opening ourselves to wider networks, vision and oversight to support us locally and help us do together the things not possible apart. |
| 46 | Research has demonstrated a strong correlation between paid church leadership (either ordained or lay—e.g. youth ministers) and growth. How do these models reflect that? | live answered |
| 47 | What is sacramental mission? | Churches which emphasise sacraments more than others may stress their simple presence or their occasional offices offering the sacraments to others much more than another church focussed say on work with children. |
| 48 | I am struggling with the jargon. This is simply not the way I talk to people around the parish. Looking at other questions I see I am not the only one! | Jargon not good but illustrates how different our experiences and languages are in churches - please feel free to ask your question in your way. There is also a glossary available on the Shaped By God Together webpage that might be of use. |
| 49 | Minster Model: Challenge of getting local school/community to relate to minster rather than local church | I'm not sure that is necessary for local missional relationships. For example, local village schools would be expected to relate to the local church but may relate primarily to a local lay person rather than a clergy person. However, it may be that the people who are involved in our governance responsibilities in diocesan schools may be drawn from a wider area than the local village. |
| 50 | Market towns and small rural villages are very different animals. How can one ensure that those in the resourcing churches fully understand village life? | Model A is not just about Resourcing Churches, who already work in partnership with other parishes in the course of church planting. Minster Churches and those they relate to will need to get to know each other and understand each other's mission, identity and context. |
| 51 | How does the minster system differ from deaneries? | Some deaneries work very collectively and share resources, some function more just as geographical "accidents of history" and are just an aggregation of parishes and benefices who operate pretty autonomously. In a Minster Model the "minster" intentionally resources the churches which relate back to the minster church. |
| 52 | Will there be a limit to the number of churches e.g. minster church can be ‘ministering’ to? | Great question. Am sure the answer is yes. Important to note too that Minster Churches wouldn't be focused on taking all the services and doing all the ministry of all the churches they serve, but overseeing, supporting and encouraging them in the things of God and helping them journey further into the calling of our five strategic priorities (the river banks to the river). |
| 53 | What kind of administrative burdens would Minster Churches take from smaller ones? | Such an important question. As a wise theologian once said 'the Holy Spirit always has an address'. God always acts specifically not generally, incarnationally not from afar. The focus on the local church, it's distinctive calling and charisms are key. But increasingly it is recognised that this isn't enough alone and therefore agreeing five strategic priorities (the river banks of local mission and ministry if you like) is key to this. This will need to hold local calling and wider structures and priorities in creative tension. |
| 54 | Under the Minster model, will all parish churches, including Festival churches, be linked to a ‘Minster’? | Yes, the idea is that all churches in the diocese would be part of this structure, but it will look and feel different in different places and contexts across the diocese. |
| 55 | What sort of administrative tasks would you envisage being done centrally in the minster model? | Broadly only do centrally what has to be done centrally. |
| 56 | Where do Estates parishes fit in a Minster model? | The minster model would look and feel different in different contexts across the diocese. We have already had some ideas from one deprived estate church about how this could work in their context. |
| 57 | Has the danger of the Minster model creating a sense of two classes of church been considered? It feels top down. | live answered |
| 58 | I understand the Network model - gathering people around a shared missional intent but I'm unclear about the difference between Minster model and the Missional Area model. Could that be explained? | A minster model would gather churches around a larger church who would in turn provide resource to the churches who related to the "Minster church." In the Missional Area model, it's more about geography. |
| 59 | I am struggling to grasp the main differences between minster and mission areas. Both are geographical, but in the minster model there was some overlap; but in the mission areas, the hexagon did not overlap. | A great question - a core characteristic of the minister model is that the resources within a particular larger church are there to resource across a wider area and it has something of a monastic principle in being sent out to minister and returning to refresh and be equipped. It probably also reflects that some of the specialisms that are needed in individual locations are present in the minster and available to support local leadership. |
| 60 | How would the Mission model work if your church is not in an area where there is a school? | The model is bigger than just school catchments- school catchments might be a key focus for many of these missional areas, but it may not be the case that every single missional area is based around schools, as in some areas there may be other factors that determine where focus would need to be, and what the make-up of the missional area should be. |
| 61 | How would Mission Areas work when many schools are now part of Academy Trusts which are across the whole county, not based in local geographical areas? | The academy trusts which our church schools are in, are all based within the diocese. I agree that it would be much more complex with a range of schools in different trusts and I wonder if the emphasis there would need to be on the relationship with the individual school? |
| 62 | Whilst our links with schools are not exclusively with Church of England Schools, the city has very few, but is the major population centre. Would this entail a different approach? Also, are Further Education (FE) colleges included in your thinking? | The national Church of England Education Office has just launched a new vision for FE colleges so your comment is timely. We would encourage our church communities to engage with schools whether church or community - and yes, also with FE colleges too. That will be in some ways about local discernment. |
| 63 | What happens when your schools are not church schools? | The engagement local churches have with community schools can be incredibly fruitful. The relationship usually needs to be negotiated and is much more at the invitation of the local headteacher. We would encourage this model to be as committed to working with community schools as it would be with church schools - but it may look different in practice. |
| 64 | Mission Areas - How does this impact where there are no Church Schools? | The model is bigger than just school catchments- school catchments might be a key focus for many of these missional areas, but it may not be the case that every single missional area is based around schools, as in some areas there may be other factors that determine where focus would need to be, and what the make-up of the missional area should be. |
| 65 | If we work on school catchment areas, how do we manage to balance the great differences between primary catchments and secondary? | Great question which would need careful consideration and may not be able to square that one everywhere. |
| 66 | I thought that the school catchment was not individual schools but 'pyramids' - i.e. primary and secondary schools which relate to each other? | Yes - it will vary from place to place. |
| 67 | Please would you explain more about mission areas based around school catchment areas. How would this work for village churches with small church schools? | live answered |
| 68 | If we move to the mission area model, does it not just depend on the central leader? | Across all the models there will be a need for working in ministry teams, including both lay and ordained people. These teams will need to develop good collaborative working to ensure they are not dependent upon one individual. Training will need to be provided to support team development. |
| 69 | Mission Area Leader - would this need to be an ordained person or could it be a lay person? | This is exactly the kind of creative thinking around leadership that we need to keep open as part of the development of these models. |
| 70 | We have very good connections with our local schools in Birstall & Wanlip. What would happen about these if that model was adopted? | Schools will be central - so connections and ministry within schools, homes, households will hopefully develop even further. |
| 71 | One issue in the CinW reorganisation is that the idea was ministry areas of around 10,000 population which makes sense in the sparsely populated rural areas, but has been a challenge in Cardiff where individual parishes are often bigger than that, what can we learn from that experience? | Not sure how much thinking has been done around learning from Wales, we'll talk to the workstream who've been looking at ministry etc and get back to you on that one |
| 72 | Is the area model a reframing of the Methodist circuit system? | There are some similarities and much we could learn from the Methodist system, but there also likely to be distinct differences related to how our Anglican structures and parishes work. |
| 73 | Will the network churches take over existing buildings, or not need buildings? If they take over existing buildings, what happens to the people in that church with a different ministry focus to the network? | Churches would join a Network based on the main focus of their mission but may of course have a number of smaller missional activities they are also engaged in. There's no intention of breaking up church communities or taking over buildings. |
| 74 | how would networks of churches/missional communities be co-ordinated and resourced? | Each network would have a lead person, and our resources would be aligned with the diocesan priorities. Our ministry support would be tailored to supporting the networks also. |
| 75 | What happens when a church has a change in focus, does it leave one ‘network’ and join another, is there a period of signup? | Churches would join a Network based on their main focus of mission which we would expect to be a long-term commitment. However, things do change and we would need to work out how flexibility works within this model. |
| 76 | Network Churches - who decides upon the accepted ‘focus’? | Individual churches will need to discern their missional focus and support would be available to help with this. The details of how decisions will be taken about what the various missional foci of Networks would be across the diocese will need to be worked out. |
| 77 | Is the local church then freed from doing other stuff? So, for example agreed focus is schools work, is that church then freed from doing weddings? | All CofE parishes would be expected to enable people to have their occasional offices (weddings, baptisms and funerals) as stipulated in the relevant national regulations. |
| 78 | Are network churches connected by the focus of mission (e.g. young people) or by philosophy of mission? If the former, how do we ensure that our churches express the way Christ brings together very different people in his Body and don't just mirror the divisions evident in our society along lines of age, class, etc.? | live answered |
| 79 | Although the Network model sounds interesting and would support churches with similar mission and focus, I wonder how it will work in the longer term when needs and mission focus might need to change and evolve in a particular church / parish. The re-focusing of mission priorities in a particular parish may no longer be compatible with those of partners. Would you be locked in to a particular network? | live answered |
| 80 | How do you envisage the network model working for physical links where in largely rural areas public transport is very limited and getting from one side of the county to the other may be physically difficult? | Covid has helped us see that all kinds of networks operate sometimes over big distances with technology - for example the average internet speed in the county is now greater than that in the city. |
| 81 | In model C could one parish church be a member of several networks? | The network model, would be network shared through a connection of a primary gift/charism, membership to just one network. |
| 82 | The model of Network Churches has been mentioned as one model- would it be possible to have a group of Eucharistic focused churches linked together as a network group? | Yes, I imagine that could be possible. The key question in networks relates to a common missional charism but not just a common church tradition. |
| 83 | Model C makes it possible for a parish to opt out. Can the diocese handle this? | There will be an expectation that all parishes in the diocese engage with whatever ministry model is chosen. There will be a process for conversations between local churches and diocesan leadership to decide together how each parish finds its place within the new diocesan framework. |
| 84 | How do we avoid large holes in the net in a network model? | live answered |
| 85 | Does the network model fundamentally undermine the concept of a presence and witness in every place? | We remain committed to the parish system and the presence of a Christian witness in every place. The Network is how individual churches relate to each other in mission and the provision of ministry. |
| 86 | How does Model 2 differ from the Mission Partnerships we had a few years ago but were abandoned? What can we learn from that experience? | live answered |
| 87 | Mission partnerships were formed some years ago. Some may have worked well, but probably not all. How do these mission partnerships compare with mission areas of model 2? | We learnt a lot as a diocese through Mission Partnerships, and a reflection will be added to the resource pack as this was raised in other areas. The cost and commitment of Mission Partnerships was significant, and in some places flourished. One of the lessons learnt was about adding extra levels of organisation without releasing ourselves from existing ones. |
| 88 | In the minster model, how would the rural parishes and their needs be catered for? We are a rural diocese with a city in the middle, the minster model seems to be focussed in the other direction. | Some Minsters may be rural churches, in other places rural churches may relate to a Minster in a larger place. Each group of churches that relates to an individual Minster will need to get to know each other and understand each other's mission, identity and context. |
| 89 | I understand the need for growing disciples which seems to be the focus of school-based ministries but where does meeting the needs of existing disciples fit in to any of these models especially in rural communities? | That tension was one of the Insights that came out clearly in the story gathering process - different churches balance those different priorities in different ways and all three models need to be considered in the light of all the tensions that the insights highlight. |
| 90 | In options 1 & 2 Do you see rural churches being forced to close? | None of the models see rural churches closing - actually much of the SBGT process is about how we can help local churches be more able to respond to their communities and equip Christians locally to do that most effectively. |
| 91 | How would a rural church with a small, aging congregation be supported by any of these models? | Any of these models would have the potential to do so, as they're all relational models. A small rural benefice could be resourced by a larger minster church (Model A), could be part of a geographically designated area (Model B), or could be involved in a network of churches providing support and sharing ministry. Any of the models should be able to encompass large, small or medium sized churches in towns, villages or suburbs. |
| 92 | How do we envisage the sacraments working when lay ministers and volunteers will be relied on for local parishes? Surely this will stretch priests quite thinly or people will be required to travel for eucharist which goes against inclusion? | live answered |
| 93 | What about the Eucharist the sacrament? It is a very important part of worship something I have really missed. | As Anglicans the Eucharist is integral to our life as worshipping communities. We see the sacraments as fundamental to each model. |
| 94 | The sacraments are very absent from the presentations. Whatever clergy 'deployment' might look like in the future, how the sacraments of the church are administered needs to be a key part of the conversation and considerations. | Really important question. They must be key as they are key to our theology as a church. Unless a church is Eucharistic and is baptising new believers, it is not fully church. Both dimensions must be central to the forming of new worshipping communities and the development of existing ones. |
| 95 | I'm guessing a refined version of the current model isn't on the table? | It would be good for you to share more about how you think it could be refined. Send in and share your ideas. |
| 96 | How can we make sure that we don’t privilege the rich? If people have to travel, that’s easy for those with cars, money for taxis, and those who are not disabled. | Thank you for your comment and this is very helpful and will need to inform the local provision of church and gathered communities from worship, home groups and other elements of ministry |
| 97 | I love the idea of working across churches, but how might this impact on younger Christians/those on the edge of faith wanting to be part of a ‘family’ that they personally know the leadership of etc? | The prime place of belonging (and evangelism) remains the local church. This is more about how we oversee, resource and support churches, and how we have enough of a common vision (strategic priorities) to provide enough banks to the river to help them flow well |
| 98 | Will there be a corresponding shrinkage in central Diocesan staffing—i.e. reducing the footprint of the Diocesan footprint and devolving more responsibility to the grass roots as Jonathan Trott has advocated? | The Support for Ministry Group has been developing principles around which the wide-ranging support that is currently provided for mission and ministry across the diocese might be provided in future. We are committed to ensuring that this is done proportionately and effectively, and in recognising that there are some whose vocation is to a supportive rather than local ministry. |
| 99 | Glad to see administration featured in the models - will this be paid admin roles to free up clergy for sacramental, pastoral and missional ministry? | There is a workstream that is working within the SBGT process, led by Dean David, which is addressing this question and thinking about support for ministry. There is not a definitive answer to this question yet - but it currently being asked. |

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| **Ministry models - parish system/ identity/ autonomy** | | |
| 100 | how does the parish system figure in the three options? | We remain committed to the parish system and a Christian presence in every community. The models refer to a framework of how churches relate to each other and how we provide mission and ministry across the whole diocese. |
| 101 | Are these models all still based on existing parishes and parish churches? | All of these models can include both existing parishes and parish churches, alongside new forms of church such as fresh expressions of church and/or church plants. |
| 102 | Can you explain how the Parishes retain their identity and role in mission and ministry with the new models please. | live answered |
| 103 | How would redrawing ministry lines around say schools affect the current system of parishes and the role of the "parish"? | Organising ministry around schools would enable the outward looking mission of parishes to focus on and serve the children and families of the local area. |
| 104 | How would we ensure that local parishes do not become small empires for long standing members of churches? Volunteers are amazing however there is some risk without devoted | Yes, that is potentially a danger in every form of church. It is really a question how power is understood and worked through i.e. accountability has to be woven into each model. |
| 105 | What about local vision and developing the local parish church? | live answered |
| 106 | Given that each locality is by definition distinctive, how easily can flexibility be built into these models? | Such an important question. As a wide theologian once said 'the Holy Spirit always has an address'. God always acts specifically not generally, incarnationally not from afar. The focus on the local church, it's distinctive calling and charisms are key. But increasingly it is recognised that this isn't enough alone and therefore agreeing five strategic priorities (the river banks of local mission and ministry if you like) is key to this. This will need to hold local calling and wider structures and priorities in creative tension. |
| 107 | Often local clergy have a particular vision for transformation in their parish. This would be less possible with any of the three models. Will there be room for that? | Local vision is key - the framework has to engage with the local- and make the local expression of faith central to our discernment. |

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| **Ministry models - diversity of theology/tradition** | | |
| 108 | How do Resolution churches fit into these models? | The CofE is committed to ongoing diversity on this subject with the Five Guiding Principles set to help us. So, these parishes will be fully part of these conversations seeking maximum connection and co-operation within our differences. The details of how this will work would be worked out once a ministry model has been chosen and is being worked up into a Diocesan Framework, as it is likely to look different in each of the models. |
| 109 | With missional areas and minster church models, what provision will be made for parishes which don't accept women's ordained ministry? | The CofE is committed to ongoing diversity on this subject with the Five Guiding Principles set to help us. So, these parishes will be fully part of these conversations seeking maximum connection and co-operation within our differences. The details of how this will work would be worked out once a ministry model has been chosen and is being worked up into a Diocesan Framework, as it is likely to look different in each of the models. |
| 110 | In our diocese the six Society Benefices who receive pastoral and sacramental care delegated by Bishop Martyn to a Society Bishop (in our case Bishop Norman) already successfully network together (through the All Saints Mission Partnership) to support and promote incarnational, sacramental, mission and to provide service cover, leadership and advice during times of vacancy. The House of Bishops Declaration, which is underpinned by a Measure in Canon Law, requires that such networking between Society Parishes should be enabled to continue in every diocese of the CofE and that Society Parishes should receive a fair share of diocesan resources. Given that this legal framework will still be in place after the SBGT Process is completed, are we sure that each of the three Ministry Models which we are considering under the SBGT process will provide a sufficiently flexible framework to enable the mandated networking between Society Parishes to flourish and thrive? Alternatively, could the mandated networking between Society Parishes overlap or complement whichever Ministry Model is preferred? | The CofE is committed to ongoing diversity on this subject with the Five Guiding Principles set to help us. So, these parishes will be fully part of these conversations seeking maximum connection and co-operation within our differences. The details of how this will work would be worked out once a ministry model has been chosen and is being worked up into a Diocesan Framework, as it is likely to look different in each of the models. |
| 111 | Where do churches which have opted for alternative episcopal oversight fit into these models? | The CofE is committed to ongoing diversity on this subject with the Five Guiding Principles set to help us. So, these parishes will be fully part of these conversations seeking maximum connection and co-operation within our differences. The details of how this will work would be worked out once a ministry model has been chosen and is being worked up into a Diocesan Framework, as it is likely to look different in each of the models. |
| 112 | How will the small number of Anglo Catholic churches in the Diocese be supported in all this? | The CofE is committed to ongoing diversity on this subject with the Five Guiding Principles set to help us. So, these parishes will be fully part of these conversations seeking maximum connection and co-operation within our differences. The details of how this will work would be worked out once a ministry model has been chosen and is being worked up into a Diocesan Framework, as it is likely to look different in each of the models. |
| 113 | Currently all resource churches are remarkably similar. This is makes model A potentially difficult for parishes which are very different. Is there a desire to increase the diversity of resource churches? | Model A is not just about Resourcing Churches, of which we currently have 6 designated across the diocese. In this model there would be number of newly designated Minster Churches, alongside Resourcing Churches and our designated Intercultural Worshipping Communities. This reflects the diversity of our diocese. |
| 114 | One of our sources of diversity as a diocese is theological. For a number of those in a local church, they have chosen that church not simply because it is their parish church but because of its theological tradition. How would this work with the grouping together of churches not along lines of theological tradition? As much as a team of clergy serving across an area would respect the tradition of worship in a given church, I can imagine those who have joined a particular church because of shared convictions will find themselves in a different church than they thought they had joined. | To reflect a response +Martyn gave in one of the Q&As, it is no different to the challenge at a diocesan level where the rich diversity of Anglicanism is enabled to bloom - this would just need to be done on a more local level and smaller scale. |
| 115 | Wondering about flourishing across the breadth of tradition in our church and how this plays out in the different models. | Really important question. We've often reflected that it takes all styles to reach all people, given people are made unique and different. Being able to see God at work, learn from, encourage and draw out the best in those different from how we might do it for our preference is key if we are to reach the 93% |
| 116 | How are minorities going to be supported - especially as they are often in smaller churches and churches that are often already struggling? if they become networked or merged with other areas, how will the minorities they served still be supported and most importantly, safeguarded? (From my perspective particularly LGBTQ+ folk, but I think this also applies more broadly). | live answered |
| 117 | So far, we haven't heard anything about the importance of the Eucharist in this webinar. There is no substitute for those who long and look forward to receive the weekly Sacrament in the church. | The sacraments are a core part of our Anglican identity and will be integral to each model. |
| 118 | Isn't there a danger that pastoral relationships will suffer if priests are not able to be a sacramental presence within their communities | I value the sacramental ministry of my parish priest enormously. Through Covid, I have not been able to share in the Eucharist - but my relationship with my parish priest has been strengthened (through his care and concern - and I know I am not unique in this). If the Eucharist is food for the journey, then maybe we need to find ways of it seeming less of a snack for a short journey and more of a feast for a longer one! |
| 119 | Have traditional forms of worship been jettisoned? Do we no longer value liturgy and sacraments? | No - they haven't been jettisoned, and yes, we do still value liturgy and sacraments. We have a breadth of liturgical and worship throughout the diocese and we want to encourage that in all its forms. |
| 120 | Is there any provision for traditional forms of worship? Have we jettisoned the importance of liturgy and sacraments? | Really important question. Not at all. Across the Diocese and every Deanery, the majority of churches offer various forms of traditional worship and all see Baptising new believers and celebrating the Eucharist as key. This will undoubtedly continue and it is important it does. We don't yet offer massive diversity of style across the Diocese to really serve and reach the 93% of people not yet part of a Christian worshipping community. All of these new churches must also be baptismal and eucharistic if they are to be churches, but we will need all styles to reach all peoples. |
| 121 | In each of these models, what happens to those churches which are reluctant (or perhaps unwilling) to work across traditions? | One of our Strategic Priorities is to be Reconciling Communities. That means acknowledging our differences and striving to work well together across these divides. It will take time and commitment from all of us to embody this priority but it is a core part of our Anglican identity. |
| 122 | How would mission areas work with different traditions where values/beliefs clash? | One of our Strategic Priorities is to be Reconciling Communities. That means acknowledging our differences and striving to work well together across these divides. It will take time and commitment from all of us to embody this priority but it is a core part of our Anglican identity. |
| 123 | How will this work when many of our churches have such different churchmanship and have very different and deeply held views on all sorts of aspects of mission and ministry? I wonder how will people who disagree on so much actually work effectively together on the ground? | Our hope is that we can seek out what links us; where there is common ground. To do that reflects our calling as Anglicans. And as we work and worship with those who are different, we learn more about one another, ourselves and our faith. |
| 124 | How will the models deal with theological harmony in a minster, team or a network as the wrong partnership will cause pain for congregations and clergy? | live answered |
| 125 | There are stark theological differences in the C of E how will this tension be dealt with? | One of our Strategic Priorities is to be Reconciling Communities. That means acknowledging our differences and striving to work well together across these divides. It will take time and commitment from all of us to embody this priority but it is a core part of our Anglican identity. |
| 126 | What about when there are conflicts of theology/practice between the minster and the smaller church, who serves? For example, when a local church has a particular practice surrounding communion (i.e. giving children biscuits), and the minister/cathedral church doesn’t want to do that, does the minister follow the local custom. | One of our Strategic Priorities is to be Reconciling Communities. That means acknowledging our differences and striving to work well together across these divides. It will take time and commitment from all of us to embody this priority but it is a core part of our Anglican identity. |
| 127 | How do you anticipate clergy working across minster spokes/areas/networks across very different churchmanship traditions where there could be challenges of conscience? | live answered |
| 128 | Congregations as well as clergy could feel very threatened by a minster church with a very different style of churchmanship. How can this be addressed? | Absolutely right, I think we acknowledged that in our answer to the question re: church tradition & minsters. |

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| **Ministry models - governance / role of Deanery** | | |
| 129 | If we add any of these models, and keep the parish system even just for the function of weddings, funerals & baptisms, and keep deaneries, aren't we just adding an extra level into the church hierarchy? | The parish system remains at the core of all our ministry models. So, each parish would still be undertaking its local mission, including weddings, funerals and baptisms. The models are about how we best resource the local mission. The governance arrangements are important, and will need to be carefully worked out within the new Diocesan Framework to ensure they are effective and fit for purpose. |
| 130 | How is the role of the Deanery seen within these three models? | The deanery structure is important for representation through our governance structures, but deaneries may need to be reshaped once we beginning establishing a new diocesan framework based on one of the ministry models. |
| 131 | Where do deaneries fit into the Minster model? | The deanery structure is important for representation through our governance structures, but deaneries may need to be reshaped once we beginning establishing a new diocesan framework based on one of the ministry models. |
| 132 | what will the impact be on parish governance? | As Bishop Martyn has said the parish system will be part of whichever model is chosen. With the new national 2020 church representation rules there is already greater flexibility in enabling PCCs to work together and we are already supporting PCCs that are looking to develop their parish governance individually or in collaboration with other parishes. |

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| **Ministry Models - role of clergy/lay ministers** | | |
| 133 | How different will clergy deployment look between the three models? | Detailed deployment plans have not yet been developed - that is a later stage in the process and will relate to the process of discernment as to how each church finds its place within the new Diocesan Framework. Local people will be a key part of that discernment. |
| 134 | How do you think these ministry models will impact clergy recruitment? Or is this not an issue as the desire is to reduce clergy numbers? | live answered |
| 135 | How will this impact beneficed clergy and will there be a need for redundancies. Some of us have invested so much in to our churches and communities? | live answered |
| 136 | If different dioceses opt for different models, how is the next generation of clergy to be trained? | An important question which underscores the importance of developing both core principles in priestly leadership alongside patterns and habits that allow people to be increasingly flexible. It is likely new priests in their 20s will of course go through many such changes as these over the next 40 years. |
| 137 | I realise these are to be clergy/lay teams - but wouldn't it help if the clergy became part-time, having another job to make up their income - this would "laicize" them in interesting ways and save a lot of money? | This is an interesting question, and indeed in other dioceses there is a much larger proportion of clergy who are non-stipendiary. Exploration of dual or multi-vocation may be an important consideration for the future. |
| 138 | Would some churches have a lay person authorised to lead the local church? What leadership pattern is envisaged in local churches in these new models? | Quite possibly working with others and with some oversight provided also ensuring support and sacramental provision. |
| 139 | If we are giving lay ministers and congregations more responsibilities, how do we help to empower them in decision making and vision shaping with their knowledge of their local contexts, balancing what that “oversight” might look like? | The importance of the local and a local church's understanding of its own calling, mission and local needs and priorities are a key part of the whole process, and one of the foci of the local conversations which follow this evening's meeting. |
| 140 | Where does the clergy/ lay person split lie in each of the models? No offence but 'lay' is starting to be those with more time on their hands e.g. early retirees, since the working world is changing meaning that those in work/ young families do not necessarily have the time to give to a lay ministry | live answered |
| 141 | With less clergy and more laity involvement will the church consider Lay Presidency? | The calling to administer the sacraments, as set out in the Ordinal, remains a key part of our Anglican understanding of ordained ministry. |
| 142 | Would wider communities accept non ordained leaders and respect them? | I think your question is an interesting one. In some ways this depends how we talk about ministry, leadership and also consider how the sacraments play a part in our different communities. Much of that is about perception of the contribution lay leaders can bring and how we work together with clergy colleagues to further the Kingdom of God. Ah - sorry - It is a challenge within wider communities, and sometime our church titles don't help. So Associate Minister, which could be either Lay or Ordained might help in that. |
| 143 | As a licensed Reader without meaningful work how can I become involved in this new outlook particularly in the field of teaching children about faith? Is there to be a new approach to the way in which Readers are licensed to permit work beyond their own benefice or the area to which they are currently licensed? | This would be a good question to bring into the local conversation in the next few weeks as the models are designed to release more of God’s people into more effective ministry, so ‘testing’ the’ ability of the models to do this, would be a helpful approach. |
| 144 | You say your original timescale was 2026 but you now need to bring it forward but where and how are we going to "grow" all of these new leader lay people so quickly? | live answered |
| 145 | How is a church with a heart for growing its mission in some area but has a small, elderly and over committed congregation enabled to recruit other lay people who are younger to be part of the team developing the mission? | See live answer |
| 146 | With the age of retirement/pension age going up and younger people in often precarious work situations, or having caring responsibilities for children and/or parents, where are volunteers with the time needed to focus on ministry going to be found? | live answered |
| 147 | What training and resources will be available in order to develop Lay people so that they may support/deliver ministry? | Both the vocational and training processes have been significantly reworked recently to make it more flexible, more accessible and a new version will launch soon - look out for news soon. |
| 148 | Can we expect untrained people to act as a draw to increase our congregation in the absence of trained clergy? | Both the vocational and training processes have been significantly reworked recently to make it more flexible, more accessible and a new version will launch soon - look out for news soon. |
| 149 | How is it envisaged - in any of the models - that local volunteer leaders would be recruited, trained and supported in their ministry with ordained clergy removed from day-to-day life in many parishes? How will ordained clergy whose training and vocation has to date been based around immersion in a parish or benefice being amongst the flock ('smelling of their sheep' as it was put on my ordination retreat) be prepared, re-trained and supported in this new oversight role? | live answered |
| 150 | Would Lay leaders be given the same training as those ordained and would their competence be questioned even though they may feel 'called'? | live answered |
| 151 | What evidence is there that lay ministry will flourish as clerical ministry becomes more thinly spread? | you raise an important point that an increase in lay ministry will need to be nurtured, supported, discerned, trained and have ongoing development. This will be crucial for whichever model is taken forward. Both the discernment process and the lay training programme have been reviewed, rethought and redesigned to be fit for purpose - new out shortly on all of this! |
| 152 | How will we define the significance of ordination in future if/when we adopt one of these models? | see live answer |
| 153 | The model of priesthood is laid out in the Ordinal. How are priests going to fulfil their calling as it is defined if they are spending much of their time in meetings? | The calling to ordained ministry is indeed laid out in the Ordinal, but the church down the centuries has always needed to interpret this for the current generation and the society within which they are called to minister. Enabling and equipping the whole people of God to live out their calling, is very much aligned with the Ordinal and doesn't need to involve "meetings"! |
| 154 | I understand that the church has to change but I wonder how a calling to the priesthood is going to be changed too. What are priests being called to in these new times? They seem to be deskbound and managerial nowadays. | The calling to ordained ministry is laid out in the Ordinal, but the church down the centuries has always needed to interpret this for the current generation and the society within which they are called to minister. Enabling and equipping the whole people of God to live out their calling, is very much aligned with the Ordinal. |
| 155 | I like to think that I am a Pastor Priest. Does this mean there is no place for my ministry here? | I don’t think that was implied. We celebrate vocation in their different iterations and want to see them flourish. |
| 156 | Will there be consultation with the stipendiary clergy before Oct or will just be told this is your new job description? | Throughout the coming months there are a variety of opportunities for stipendiary clergy to feed in their thoughts and reflections on the proposed ministry models, including at the upcoming "Renewal of Ministry" days, and many deaneries are also facilitating this. You can also email any thoughts or questions directly. |
| 157 | Does the Ordinal need to be re-written to reflect the changed role of clergy? | live answered |
| 158 | Incarnational ministry, locally rooted in the Parish structure…has been the privilege of the CofE This has been the role of the Priesthood, which to quote Ken Leech ’is not a job, but an identity, a condition, a sacramental state’…SBGT is seeking to change this? | live answered |
| 159 | Concerning “ministry of oversight”, what does this mean? It can throw out all kinds of images and some are not helpful and relate to control. | see live answer |
| 160 | Is ministry of oversight enabling or hierarchical at a local level? How does this fit with Parishes being responsible for ministry locally? | see live answer |
| 161 | Oversight ministry for clergy is very different from how clergy have been trained and are still being trained? Are you sure clergy will take on this role? Where would clergy live? Will they be geographically centralised in the 1st 2 models? If so, how reflect incarnational ministry? And are there really all the local people ready, able and willing to do all that is suggested by all models? | live answered |
| 162 | In rural churches, we are already multi church and that can work. The issue, as one with 8 churches already, is whether you increase that number? In a sense I do oversight already but I am still a parish priest on the ground and known by church and non-church as 'theirs' | We suspect that what we are seeing across the church is that the role of the stipendiary priest is changing again - oversight can be very pastoral but much pastoral care may well be much more focussed on other ministers lay and ordained. |
| 163 | If ordained ministers are to be asked to take on a managerial/oversight role, what does this say about the role of priesthood? Are we to become middle-managers? What about the relationship with the communities we 'serve'? | The ordinal remains core to your calling as priests. Working out how this might look in these different models is part of this process… and I suppose will be part of your ongoing ministry - as it is now? |
| 164 | How do each of the models address the clergy being too busy to do mission? | live answered |
| 165 | Can oversight been thought more along the lines of support and accountability, so we make sure safeguarding etc are included all the way through as someone has said we need to make sure it’s not forgotten and integral to how we work? | Oversight ministry will need to focus on the equipping and enabling of the whole people of God, and the structures we have for support and accountability are important to embed in ways that appropriately release and protect us all. |
| 166 | Would the role of the parish priest still exist in any form? | live answered |
| 167 | Is it not important to develop a sense of belonging among clergy and lay ministers? Failure to include this in future thinking may result in leadership teams becoming confused as to where their ministry actually lies and lose their sense of serving a particular community. | Belonging is important, and many clergy in multi-parish benefices are already working through how they can belong across a number of different communities and there is much wisdom and learning that can be shared across the diocese. |
| 168 | If there are ministry teams with each model, does this imply that the link between a church/parish/benefice and its minister is broken? | I suppose that depends on how you see the ‘link’ expressed. For some, that will be sacramental, for others that will be through pastoral ministry. The key driver is, how are we helping break through the roof to bring people to Jesus? |
| 169 | Will the retreat of clergy to central point mean they are even less visible to local parishes? | Ministry is increasingly shared amongst lay and ordained people, as is our calling as the whole baptised people of God. The models propose that stipendiary clergy would be expecting to work across more than one church, as many already do. |
| 170 | How do we care for our congregations for whom ordained ministry/clergy is critically important, and lay leadership not necessarily satisfying to their spiritual needs? | Development of pastoral care will be really important whichever ministry model is chosen. Addressing some of the constraints of buildings and finance will help to release ordained ministers. Alongside that the enabling ministry of clergy will be important to train up confident associate ministers who will over the course of time gain the trust of congregational members. From my parish experience I know that pastoral assistants and readers can sometimes be the most effective pastoral carers in many situations gaining the trust and respect of parishioners. |
| 171 | These models all seem to be dependent on clergy teams. We don't have a great record in clergy working together in Team Ministries - many of them have been broken up over the decades - not least because of how clergy are formed and imagine what they will be doing. How will clergy be enabled to adapt to a different paradigm, when the majority were trained to be self-sufficient leaders? | live answered |
| 172 | What would a typical “parish leadership team” look like and would the lay personnel need to be authorised/trained? | thanks for a great question with a long answer that would still have many unknowns within it. Certainly, the discernment, training and recognition of lay leadership in all its diversity will be key in any of these models. We have been rethinking, redesigning and will soon be relaunching the training process and are just trailing the revise discernment process. |

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| **Ecumenical / Community / National Partnerships** | | |
| 173 | Church is not only Anglican - how is the Diocese proposing to work with other Christians and those of other faiths - this is crucial for those outside the church otherwise everything appears territorial? | see live answer |
| 174 | Do any or all of the models allow for or even encourage partnership with Christian Communities outside of the CofE? | see live answer |
| 175 | Should we be talking more about working with other denominations and Christian ministries beyond the Church of England? I know that similar questions are being discussed by the Methodist church in our area. | live answered |
| 176 | On finance and mission there has been significant growth of housing and the use of section 106 grants to support our buildings. Why can we not develop Diocese wide interaction with Local Government to use Church buildings and mission as part of other priorities around social services? | We are not envisaging building any new churches buildings but adapting churches for community use is certainly worth considering. Sect 106 grants now often sadly get consumed by other departments in local authorities. |
| 177 | Are we looking to work with other Dioceses - should we be looking towards a national consensus within the Church of England? | There is similar work going on across the CofE and we are talking and learning from them but each diocese is very context specific. |
| 178 | Didn’t the Anglican Methodist Covenant seek to address joint working? | Yes, and it hasn't worked everywhere - local connections seem to be vital. |
| 179 | Which external stakeholders are being consulted about these really interesting different models - how are we exploring this with the wider communities we desire to serve and who might wish to work with us? | Really good question and not much of this has happened so far but it is a known question that needs addressing. We know that models have to be intelligible to and work for our local communities. |
| 180 | In a Local Ecumenical Partnership, how would the ecumenical partner be involved in each model? | The ecumenical partner would continue to be engaged as currently, through exploratory dialogue and agreed shared hope. This would still enable a partner to have a valued and agreed relationship, drawing on the existing ecumenical provisions in place. |
| 181 | How does what we do in Leicester relate to developments and structural changes/ ideas in the rest of the CofE? Will there be parity of thinking across the board, or 40+ different 'models of the church' nationwide? | Yes absolutely, we're spending a lot of energy learning from what is working (and isn't!) elsewhere, with diocesan thinking then both informing and being informed by the emerging whole CofE strategy. |
| 182 | Will there be dialogue with Ecumenical partners as to the best way to work together? | There will be plenty of scope within whichever ministry model is chosen to enable local ecumenical partnerships for mission. As a member of the Churches Together in Leicestershire enabling group, I note that it is commonly observed that local ecumenical initiatives are often the best, but they do require encouragement from leadership in the relevant denominations |
| 183 | How will these models operate where a parish or a group of churches are operating as Churches Together across the denominations - ecumenically | live answered |
| 184 | How likely is it that the National structure of dioceses will changing, impacting these proposals? | The National Church is looking at these questions but it is far from clear what the outcome will be and whether or not there will be significant changes to the number/geography of dioceses. Meanwhile, most dioceses, if not all, are conducting similar reviews to our own, recognising that many of the challenges are the same across the country |
| 185 | As an example, much of the community at Cold Overton/Knossington /etc. actually use Oakham schools and the town’s facilities. Oakham is in the Diocese of Peterborough. Therefore, will consideration be given how the neighbouring parishes could influence the chosen model for those parishes who border these | This sort of local knowledge and understanding of context will be important when we get to the stage of discerning how each church finds its place within the new Diocesan framework following Diocesan Synod in October. |
| 186 | Where there are borders with other counties and Leicestershire shares borders with a number of other counties, how do you see the models working? | Borders between dioceses (some of which cross county borders) always need negotiating. Most dioceses are engaged in similar issues. |
| 187 | Tiffer Robinson tweeted this week suggesting that other dioceses should look at St Edmundsbury and Ipswich's experience of changing models to stem decline, which he says fed decline. Have we looked at the experience of that diocese? | live answered |

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| **Process** | | |
| 188 | If there is the scenario whereby there is no clear definitive choice across our Diocese for any of these three models, how do Synod propose to then, move forward? I note that there is no real viability for a mix and match approach given a previous response. | The Bishop's Council are charged with discerning the model which will go to Synod. If Synod was not able to agree it then we would need to look afresh |
| 189 | Is the timetable for all this realistic? | We don't know and getting the balance right between conversation and consideration and decision is the knack. Covid has taught us that some decision making and adaptation can be much quicker than sometimes we have known in the church. |
| 190 | As a Diocese, once a decision has been made on a model, how often, if at all would it be reviewed and how might this look? | Review, accountability and learning are increasingly becoming embedded practices in church life. I can't give a detailed answer to how often and the process involved but with a big complex process of change there will need to be ongoing learning. |
| 191 | Do you expect the local conversation to be a single parish or benefice based? | It can happen in whatever is deemed to be most fruitful and most practical - local discernment. |
| 192 | I understand why at this stage that we are having discussions at the local level and the importance of that, but surely the Deanery Synods should be involved at some stage or what is the point of having a Deanery Synod? How do the Diocesan Synod reps know the mind of the Deanery without a Deanery Synod discussion / vote? | Live answered. Getting the pace of this right is tricky and going through more standard discussions in the CofE whilst comprehensive is probably too slow - so we hope all Deanery Reps will be involved in local conversations. |
| 193 | Do we get to vote on which model we prefer? | There won’t be a ‘vote’ as such but we are encouraging all of our church communities to have local conversations and give feedback on all three models. |
| 194 | This process leaves clergy feeling very anxious. What are the diocese planning to do about it? | "The diocese" is all of us, and we've chosen to undertake this as a collective discernment process so that clergy and lay people can all contribute to the decision making. I recognise the anxiety and all the usual support is available via your Area Dean or Archdeacon. |
| 195 | How were these three models arrived at? | They have emerged from creative conversations during recent months and that the resource pack to be shared with you after the meeting will provide you with the background info. |
| 196 | It is important that there is a place in this process to acknowledge loss and lament, without judgement. | Absolutely - we have some liturgy resources on the website around these themes, and it is important to do this locally and more regionally. |

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| **Implementation** | | |
| 197 | I’m interested if the diocese is aware of strengths and weaknesses of each church and local area. Initially I was attracted to the minster model, didn’t like the busyness of the networking model but I could see that working if we have a good knowledge of the strengths that could be shared throughout the diocese of Leicester. | There is a myriad of information known about each church in the diocese, but while measures and data can tell us some important things, this always needs to be understood in conjunction with the local history and knowledge of the context. |
| 198 | Doesn't the Minister model mean churches would be competing against each other to become the 'Minister'? | There would be a process through which Minster Churches would be identified and designated. We hope that this wouldn't be competitive, but a shared discernment of which churches are not only best placed to fulfil this role, but also which churches are called to do so. |
| 199 | Are you going to consider existing churches, benefices and teams that are already engaged in some of the proposals already? | In the video, Bishop Martyn identifies that there are some churches already working in similar ways to each of the proposed models of ministry and we can learn from them. Once a ministry model has been decided and a new diocesan framework agreed by Diocesan Synod, there will be a process to work out how each of our churches finds its place within that new framework. |
| 200 | How will we move from what is now to whatever the preferred model is? | Discernment will be by the Bishop's Council in July. Between now and then we need to gather as much wisdom and insight from the communities as we can muster. |
| 201 | What assurances can be given with these models that there is fair distribution between urban and rural ministry. Would there be a 'gap' of understanding between rural/urban needs? | live answered |
| 202 | How will disciple-making be kept front and centre in what seems likely to be a time of significant structural change? | It will require considerable leadership locally and to use this work as part of learning what it means to be disciples. |
| 203 | How will you keep on board those who still appreciate and feel enriched by the current model of church and make them feel valued? | We need to care for and appreciate everyone but the churches also constantly change - helping aspects of our life to die and other things to grow are both Christian ministries. |
| 204 | How will we seek to implement the preferred model? | On the timeline, the decision about core model will be taken by Bishop’s Council in October and after that there is a phase which will then focus on the local context - be that parish, Fx, Benefice and how it can be applied and adopted in a contextually appropriate way. |
| 205 | I appreciate the need for change going forward but in order to have local conversations I wonder if we need more clarity as to how the changes will impact locally, as that is the sort of question we will be asked. | Clarity will come in time and then there will be a transitional period. We suspect the task might be to imagine where a local community could fit into any of the models as a way to provoke imagination. |
| 206 | Are we likely to see a change in personnel i.e. will our incumbents change? | Personnel is forever changing and we imagine that will continue. The role of the clergy has been changing a lot in the past 50 years but some of the demands are increasingly unsustainable and so further change is needed to enable ministry to flourish. |
| 207 | What would the process for gathering churches together to make a network? Most churches have multiple focuses, and what prevents networks being formed for church traditions? | We recognise the temptation with a network to become monochrome. We have not yet worked out processes for forming any of these models but all of them suppose an Anglican identity of commonality yet difference. |
| 208 | What happens if a local congregation doesn't feel that it fits with one of the networks in that model? Do they get forced in to one of them? | I hope that is something that will come out in the local conversations - both the ability to understand the models better, suggest what it might look like locally and be involved in further shaping the process as we then have a clear stage of contextualisation of the model to each local situation. |
| 209 | What are the key challenges to implement each of the models of ministry? | Many and varied! Two of the key ones though will be how we hold independence and interdependence in how we set and implement priorities and make decisions, and secondly keeping the focus on those not yet part of our churches rather than becoming introspective and self-centred as churches (avoiding the institutional sin of congregationalism as opposed to our calling as Parishes) |
| 210 | How do you propose to bring these relationships together formally, by covenant or informal relationships? Legally how will resources be shared around them if differing PCCs are involved? | live answered |
| 211 | How would we ensure that the minster model does not result in further hierarchy and potential localised conflict in resource allocation? | live answered |
| 212 | Whichever model is developed, how will there be a ‘level playing field’ across all the faith communities within the diocese, irrespective of where our faith is lived and shared. | Once a ministry model has been decided and a new diocesan framework agreed by Diocesan Synod, there will be a process to work out how each of our churches finds its place within that new framework. That process will take into account each church's local context and will be undertaken in conversation with local people. |

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| **Church Buildings** | | |
| 213 | What is a festival church? | A church no longer used for regular Sunday by Sunday worship, but still in use for worship on an occasional major festival (Harvest, Easter, Christmas perhaps) basis. |
| 214 | Knowing our small rural parish, I think being a Festival Church would suit us. How though would our very few clergy in the Launde Deanery manage if most churches wanted to celebrate various festivals, often on the same day? I know there is a drive for congregation led services but this just does not cut it with many, and many do not feel confident to lead churches. Small rural parishes try to be co-operative and helpful but they do really like to see a member of the clergy/readers at services! | The process of exploring Festival Church designation would take into account the wider context, including that of other local churches. Decisions about what services would happen in a Festival Church would also need to be decided in conversation with others locally. |
| 215 | If churches become ‘festival churches’ how free would they be to seek alternative uses which, presumably would be necessary to pay for upkeep. Would they need to be deconsecrated for example? | Festival churches remain consecrated but it is already possible to use churches for a wide range of additional purposes - for examples as cathedrals already do. |
| 216 | Would ‘festival churches’ still be able to offer weddings, funerals and baptisms? | 'Festival Churches' provide an opportunity for communities to celebrate the Rites of Passage including Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. |
| 217 | If smaller churches only become festival churches, how can they be self-supporting? The definition of active church building for grants (& organisations) is at least 6 services a year - more than just the festivals - and without regular services (even if small numbers) why would the local community & regular worshipers (who presumably will be worshipping elsewhere between these services & donating there) feel connected enough to support maintenance & ministry. | Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Harvest, Pentecost are six very common festivals so doesn't take that much to reach that current minimum (which may have to change anyway). The evidence from other places is that many people feel more connected because the energies are focussed for specific times rather than keeping it all going week by week. |
| 218 | How would the support and finance work for festival churches? | Potentially some of the costs reduce because of changes to insurance, use of utilities etc. They still need to be funded locally. |
| 219 | With limited numbers of priests spread over more churches, then they will be busier in the more popular churches & the newer expressions at the key festival times, so who would be covering the festival churches? | Festival churches would be connected into the diocesan framework (exactly how will depend on the ministry model) and service arrangements would need to be worked out locally. |
| 220 | The finance/buildings update is a lot to take in, are there any resources to help us understand this? | We know it's a lot of information to take in so there is a summary page on both Finance and Church Buildings included within the resources that will be shared with everyone after this evening. |
| 221 | What are the possibilities for selling or demolishing church buildings that are most underused? | It is possible in some cases but quite complicated especially if they are buildings with heritage listing or other significance. It is easier to put building to new or varied purposes. |
| 222 | What are the financial savings associated with becoming a festival church, given that the buildings overheads would surely stay the same - save, perhaps, heating? Is the saving in ministerial costs, rather than ‘building’ overheads? Have we examples to help us in decision making? | There are lots of examples from across the CofE and they have slightly different forms. There can be savings financially such as with reduced insurance premiums but they can also free people from the sense of burden of keeping places open week by week. |
| 223 | Festival Church: How about leaving a church building where the congregation is small and becoming a House Group kind of group and join a larger church congregation on Sundays? | These are exactly the kind of questions we'll be wrestling with as we move through the process, and as we try to bring together what might work in local contexts and across the diocese. |
| 224 | Is there an opportunity now to remodel our church buildings in being more accessible and more utilised by the local community and still a worshipping space? St Peters West Harrow springs to mind. | Yes, the buildings group are working on this area |
| 225 | What is a Festival Church in the context of the 3 models of Ministry? | A church no longer used for regular Sunday by Sunday worship, but still in use for worship on an occasional major festival (Harvest, Easter, Christmas perhaps) basis. |
| 226 | Block insurance - Isn’t this the Ecclesiastical set up already? | Currently each PCC has to arrange insurance separately. |
| 227 | If our church buildings become "Festival Churches", and are not being regularly used, surely, they will fall into disrepair more rapidly? | The hope for Festival Churches is that they will become a place of gathering for significant Christian events and times of festivals, but not be a place of weekly use. To match this the need to address the fabric needs will be met through a different approach to repair and rhythm for the upkeep as already happens in other dioceses and avoid decay. |
| 228 | Why restrict use of festival churches when they could be used as hubs for many other purposes in the local community and this works well? Surely, we are part of the community whether in the city or rural? | There are many considerations which inform Festival Churches and the wider community element will form part of the thinking, and the potential shaping of the future use of the church building. |

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| **Finance / Resources** | | |
| 229 | Who will fund the administration? | The Support for Ministry Group has been exploring different options for the provision of support and this may look different to current arrangements, but it is anticipated that this support would remain a mixture of that provided by the diocese and provided locally according to need. |
| 230 | Other Dioceses are cutting clergy numbers - is that on the table in any/all of these models? | see live answer |
| 231 | My question is about resources and relational rhythms vis a vis Model C. How will this be financially sustainable and how will the relational rhythms work? | Work on the financial sustainability of all the models is ongoing. Within Model C, as with all the ministry models, local relationships remain rooted within the local context, while relationships between churches are developed through the sharing of ministry and mission. |
| 232 | How many clergy are paid for by the Diocese currently and how many can be afforded in the future? | There are over 150 clergy across the diocese, in a mixture of stipendiary, house for duty, and non-stipendiary parish roles, some of whom are curates and some of whom are externally funded by the national church as part of our Resourcing Churches and Intercultural Worshipping Communities. We also have a number of chaplains and central posts which in some cases are filled by clergy, and are funded in a variety of different ways. Work is ongoing regarding financial modelling of numbers of posts for the future. |
| 233 | Is this about allocation of additional resources or is it about reallocation of existing resources? All three models seem bold and potentially fruitful, but it might feel that we're trying to do more with less. | It isn’t about adding new resources but it is about realigning the existing resources, and in particular the finance we use to subsidise across the diocese in various places, to be in line with the strategic priorities. |
| 234 | How will you encourage generous giving when in reality many congregations will feel they have lost what they pay for? If ordained ministry feels remote and not 'theirs'? | At the moment relatively few parishes actually pay in full the ministry costs associated with stipendiary clergy. So that is quite a complicated thing to answer. |
| 235 | What are the financial implications of each model? Are they equal in nature? Would all be equally practical? | I don't think we entirely know this yet but work is ongoing asking that question. |
| 236 | As Ministry is very relational working over larger areas means that is diminished. We have noticed in the past that larger groups often means less financing as people are less willing to give when they are never able to develop a relationship with the person responsible for pastoral care. | Regular committed giving is a key part of Christian discipleship and the Generous Giving Team are available to support churches in developing their teaching and practice in this area. |
| 237 | Will the information following this meeting contain the cost of a local priest and ministry so this can be clear in PCC conversations? | Yes, we are working on this - elements might include stipend, pension, NI, housing costs, training and some central support but could be some combination. There is no agreed way of speaking of this in the CofE so we need a Leicester way. |
| 238 | I have not grasped the three aspects of money. | The Finance Group is looking at: 1) how we use our diocesan finance to support our priorities 2) understanding parish financial positions 3) developing our Parish Contribution system and relating it more clearly to the cost of ministry received in a parish or benefice. |
| 239 | How sustainable do you envisage each of these new models being? with regards to finance, stipendiary priests etc | Sustainability has been a key part of thinking in relations to each of these models. That said, we hope for local engagement and creativity to make a model flourish. |
| 240 | I support the push towards fresh expressions and creating appropriate church networks to develop these to allow the church to spread the gospel to a wider congregation but many churches will need significant help in getting this started. While the long-term benefit will (hopefully) be an increased following and improved incomes, what financial or practical support will be made to support this? | we already have a network of Ordained Pioneer Ministers in place to do this who between them cover the whole diocese and are there to help all churches learn about and develop fresh expressions - you can find details here <https://www.leicester.anglican.org/about-us/pioneering/> and Jonathan Dowman leads that team. |
| 241 | Many people will see this as a way of smoothing over the inevitable financial cutbacks facing the church. Is it better to acknowledge this and seek the best way to use our limited resources or to focus on the spiritual direction of the church and to minimise the resource issues? | From the beginning we have acknowledged that finance is one of the significant challenges we are facing that needs to be addressed through the Shaped By God Together process. However, we are also clear that we must ensure our focus is on providing ministry that enables us to be the church we are called to be and to undertake the mission we called to do. |
| 242 | The video refers to a growing gap between income and expenditure. It seems clear from the three ministry models that this will impact on the number of clergy. But how much of a reduction in clergy posts does the Diocese think will happen over the next few years? What numbers is the Diocese assuming? What percentage reduction is that? | live answered |
| 243 | How much is the diocese worth in £? | It depends what you mean by "worth"! Anglican finances are complicated, & a headline figure wouldn't take into account the fact that many of our assets aren't realisable in cash terms, and some are legally ringfenced etc. |
| 244 | How do each of the models address the finance issues? | live answered |
| 245 | Understood that pooling services for example church insurance can result in significant savings. We have been talking about doing this and other like things for a number of years do we really understand the financial gap between where we are and where we need to be in the future? Proffering solutions without understanding the financial challenge is unlikely to be successful. | The Finance Planning stream of this process is gathering and analysing information about the financial situation of all our parishes. We are also looking closely at the Diocesan finances and how to share information about that better. |
| 246 | Have you started to do any financial modelling of the 3 ministry models to test possible cost-effectiveness? | We will do detailed financial modelling once the Bishop's Council has decided which model is preferred. Meanwhile we are doing initial projections about the level of resource (money/people) that will be available to be deployed whichever model is chosen. |

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| **Wider Questions** | | |
| 247 | In terms of reaching out to others and ensuring that people don't continue to leave the church, language needs to be welcoming of all - always referring to God as 'he' is alienating, limiting and outdated - how is the Diocese proposing to address this to make sure that everyone feels welcome? (So far God has been referred to as 'he' throughout the presentations and worship.) | Our language, particularly how we talk about God, is really important and you are right to raise this issue. We would encourage all churches to think about this carefully and endeavour to do so in our diocesan worship and communication - but we can all continue to learn and do things better. |
| 248 | Is this webinar and also the proposals, the same for every Deanery? | It is exactly the same proposals and webinar content on all of the evenings for all locations. |
| 249 | I think there was something mentioned about five diocesan priorities. What are these? | They were mentioned in the video at the start of this evening - but we didn’t go into much detail. They are to grow new communities, be reconciling communities, eco communities, intergenerational communities and intercultural communities. There is a document in the resource pack that goes into more detail. |
| 250 | Will the Diocese make a careful and full analysis of Zoom type services held in lockdown? This is particularly important for rural parishes, Hopefully the online experience will continue in combination with services and activities. | Throughout lockdown many churches have successfully used a variety of digital platforms for worship and other gatherings, and it is likely that this will continue to be important for many in the future. We hope that churches will continue to share their learning and experiences in this area and access the training and advice available, not just from within our diocese but that provided nationally also. |
| 251 | Shouldn't all of us and all churches be making everyone feel welcome? | Yes of course - that remains as important as it always has been. |
| 252 | Many of us have got used to zoom services but they have to be 'in the home' Is there any possibility of enabling smaller churches to connect with others and enable one priest to take one service in several churches at the same time? Internet access etc? | Experiences throughout lockdown have shown us the variety of ways in which we can make use of digital platforms in worship. We hope this will continue as churches emerge from lockdown and consider their patterns of worship for the future. |
| 253 | What's missing? Meeting online and outside during and following on from Covid has been liberating both financially and from time perspectives. | Experiences throughout lockdown have shown us the variety of ways in which we can make use of digital platforms in worship. We hope this will continue as churches emerge from lockdown and consider their patterns of worship for the future. |
| 254 | What about the people who aren't part of the church - if we are to be missional - how are we discerning how to be Christ-like for everyone - meeting people on the road and in homes - as in the Bible passage we started with? | These are important questions for every church to consider. Any church that would like support in thinking through questions like this can contact the Mission and Ministry department. |
| 255 | How can we meet physically before June 21st when numbers meeting indoors is limited still right up to then? | You are correct that Covid guidelines must be followed and checked before planning your local conversation. It might be in some cases that 6 people would want to meet socially distanced outdoors in a garden or if/when step three of the lockdown easing takes place in May that 6 people may want to meet socially distanced indoors for example. |
| 256 | Will Parishes be helped with how they can use blended digital worship, especially the rural church? | Yes, this is certainly a great idea - the national church are holding webinars and training on the subject. If you search ‘church of England digital learning labs’ online then you will find their upcoming sessions. We can also support with specific questions - please email us at Communcations@LeicesterCofE.org if you’d like further support on this. |
| 257 | With all this change, is the Church of England considering changing radical things like reducing the number of dioceses and centralising key functions as businesses of this size would do, rather than having a number of highly independent diocese effectively each reinventing the wheel and replicating huge amounts of work? Will we be brave and think about these things? | the Church of England is indeed considering a broader reflection on the various elements of structure etc. although the shape does appear to be an evolving response. |
| 258 | If professional support is useful for managing buildings, would it be useful for managing people? | Yes of course and there has been quite a lot of training for this offered over these past years and more is likely to be needed if it can be resourced. |
| 259 | The frame work of how the meeting is set up interests me as what I am left feeling is rather than drawing us together it somehow holds us apart....is there a lot of anxiety around this whole process? | All change can create anxiety but this meeting process is more set by the current Covid realities. Webinars are thought to be the best way to do this mass sort of communication but we all know the process has limitations. Local conversations can more easily address anxiety if it exists. |
| 260 | Will there be a summary/FAQs response following on from these sessions? | There will be an info pack. |
| 261 | Why are anonymous questions not allowed? I’m hearing from people who feel unable to ask questions due to their lack of power within the church. | That is a really good point and one we can't solve now. We need to find out if the technology can be used to make that possible. For now, we'd be grateful if you could voice questions from anyone who feels unable to do that themselves. |
| 262 | The implications for the whole church are huge potentially. Are other dioceses on similar journeys? | Yes indeed - lots of dioceses wrestling with these issues. And we hope to share learning. |
| 263 | What lessons are there to learn from resourcing churches? | Good question. We have quite detailed processes of learning as part of being Resourcing Churches which are always available to share more widely, but in short three things jump out: 1) we know the model of focusing on forming new worshipping communities helps grow the church (one piece of research suggested that a non-Christian is 33s more likely to join a new worshipping community than an existing one as the culture can be designed much more easily around those who are new in a new church) - we are seeing encouraging growth in church plants/fresh expressions of Church 2) this is really, really hard and painful and sacrificial to do whilst also maintaining what is, so sacrificially space needs to be made if we are to give away in forming a new worshipping community; 3) the place of vulnerability and fragility in stepping out in planting is often the place of quickset growth for us in ministry (lay and ordained). |
| 264 | Re Mission Areas...what lessons were learnt from our Mission Partnerships, l widespread across the diocese 15 years ago? | We learnt a lot as a diocese through Mission Partnerships, and a reflection will be added to the resource pack as this was raised in other areas. The cost and commitment of Mission Partnerships was significant, and in some places flourished. One of the lessons learnt was about adding extra levels of organisation without releasing ourselves from existing ones. |
| 265 | How do we help many churches find a confidence and a sense of adventure where the priority is often survival or repeating the past? In other words, seeing the horizon as our call? | (1) Important question. The five strategic priorities should help in this, especially the one focused on seeing new worshipping communities (church planting, etc.), it is often in this stepping out in faith (as you know) that we see God at work and grow in confidence as a result (we can't learn to swim very well if our feet reach the floor!) (2) That's a key part of our journey - hopefully congregations and FxC's will grow in confidence and faith. |
| 266 | How will this "affect our too busy congregations?" | Really important question. Too often we have tried to do it all, often with fewer resources. The five strategic priorities underline all the models and are key. They are the river banks which help give direction and energy to the river. By focusing on doing less, better, we hope to make church more possible, sustainable and growing as a result. |
| 267 | How do we ensure that those who have found a safe, flourishing and welcoming space continue to be safeguarded and supported? | We need to keep working on it, as we are doing, and some places do very well. Its s good question, and one we continually need to hold before us. |
| 268 | Model B is very much like schools used to work in development groups. Have there been conversations with heads who used to lead schools in successful Development Groups that might help? | Our Director of Education is part of the Ministry Group who have been developing the models, and indeed, drawing on experiences from our schools is something we have done and will continue to do. |
| 269 | What are the lessons learned from the original SBG initiative? | The outward looking missional focus that lay behind the original Shaped by God vision still very much guides our thinking and our vision of "the Kingdom of God." There are a number of lessons to be learned from the Mission Partnerships, particularly those which didn't really take off. With the exception of the Mission Partnerships, Shaped by God more than anything helped us to begin to embrace a much more outward looking vision of what it meant to be church and what we now tend to refer to as "everyday faith." |
| 270 | How does digital fit into these models? | live answered |
| 271 | How would these models support children and families in home education, Forest schools, hospital and home supported schooling for those who are not attending mainstream school or non-attenders! | This is a great point. One of the aspects of our intergenerational communities' priority that we are thinking about is how we link churches, households and schools. We are not forgetting the household link. If you have time google ‘Growing Faith’… it’s an interesting read! Great question - it needs local 'intelligence' and awareness of the schooling outside of the 'mainstream' but these aspects should be integrated into whichever model as well. |
| 272 | One of the principal handicaps has been the aggressive secular movement of recent decades, fuelled a bit too much by ministers and theologians airing their doubts and publishing them. Young peoples’ work is undermined by football and ballet being considered more important than church. Do any of our ministry models really address this? | In the same way as any other group of people, we need to listen carefully to young people, to engage with them where they are, and give them the space and encouragement to explore their faith. Exactly what this looks like will be dependent on your local context. |
| 273 | Very informative this evening, but how do we meaningfully engage young people with God when they have so many other distractions.? | In the same way as any other group of people, we need to listen carefully to young people, to engage with them where they are, and give them the space and encouragement to explore their faith. Exactly what this looks like will be dependent on your local context. |
| 274 | Should we not also look to communicate with parents as well as children? | You are right - there are some good examples around the diocese (and elsewhere) already where the relationships with schools develop into new worshipping communities centred on the school involving children, parents and others. |
| 275 | How are small rural parishes seen by those in the towns - we suspect we are not seen as very important by some! | The Rural Commission described us as " a rural diocese with urban heartlands" and that remains the case. We all need to recognise and value the diversity of our diocese and be open to learning across our differences - this is all part of our Reconciling Communities priority. |
| 276 | Who are the voices on the video? It would be nice to have faces with the voices | Beth Cluer and Jon Barrett, both of whom are part of the team for this evening. |
| 277 | where can we send our thoughts after this meeting has finished | Email any questions to Abbie Allen, abbie.allen@leicestercofe.org, and she will get the question to the appropriate person/people. |