

Diocese of Manchester

Ministerial Development Review: An Introduction to the Scheme

Aims

The ministerial review scheme derives from the shared responsibility for ministry and the cure of souls (“yours and mine”), in which the Diocesan Bishop and his immediate colleagues, offer a ministry of both affirmation and accountability. Within the exercise of the Bishop’s pastoral oversight of the diocese, the scheme aims to:

- *Assist the clergy to explore and review their ministry*
- *Discern and affirm strengths and address needs in the exercise of ministry, with a view to personal growth and development.*
- *Provide a more structured form of appraisal*
- *Meet the requirements of the new Clergy Terms and Conditions of Service legislation.*

Participants

It will be a requirement of all those holding the Bishop’s licence that they take part in the review scheme, the only exception being those undertaking post-ordination training. (OLMs will come into the scheme following their second OLM review and after their third year.) For those whose appointment includes its own review arrangements, for example in the case of a full-time hospital chaplain, it offers an opportunity alongside other institutional requirements, to explore and review ministry from a personal and vocational perspective, as well as a professional one.

Frequency

National guidelines which are soon to be brought in, are expected to make an annual review for clergy mandatory. It is an annual review therefore that will begin under the new scheme. This is a significant undertaking by the Bishop and his colleagues, but one to which they are committed as providing a more systematic and regular approach to pastoral care and encouragement of clergy, as well as accountability.

The Reviewers and Review Patterns

The aims stated above indicate that the review is part of the Diocesan Bishop’s pastoral oversight and responsibility. This is extended and exercised on his behalf by his fellow bishops, the Dean, archdeacons and other members of the Bishop’s staff. (Currently this is to include the Director of Ordinands, the Director of Ministry Training, The Bishop’s Chaplain, The Bishop’s Advisor in Women’s Ministry, The Bishop’s Missioner).

Reviews will work on a three year pattern. The pattern for parochial clergy will be that within any three year cycle there will be a review with a bishop, an archdeacon and another member of the Bishop’s staff. (NB. *The Bishop of Beverley will be allocated reviews where this is specifically requested.*)

In the case of non-parochial clergy, there will be a slightly different pattern that will involve review by a bishop once every three years, and review in the other two years by another of the

Bishop's immediate colleagues, informed by particular areas of responsibility and portfolios carried.

As part of the preparation for the review meeting, there will be a built-in element of peer and lay review. This will be by means of gathering feedback on personal ministry from a number of nominated colleagues according to certain guidelines. Written comments will be invited from these under a series of headings and then forwarded to both the reviewer and the one being reviewed. This is intended to help clergy in their own reflections on their ministry, and to accept affirmation as well as become more self-aware.

Preparation, Documentation and Follow- up

- a) When a ministerial review is due, an enquiry form, built around the ordinal, will be despatched from Bishops court, to help reflection and then stimulate the review meeting. Guidelines will also be sent on how to engage in the preliminary peer and lay review, and also the forms to be given to nominated colleagues. An accompanying letter from the Bishop will give information as to who will be conducting the review.
- b) The reviewer will be in touch to arrange a date for the review meeting. It is to the reviewer that the completed enquiry form should be sent at least 10 days before the meeting, to allow for preparation. This will provide the primary material for discussion in the review meeting. It will only be kept on file up until the time of the individual's next review, when it will be destroyed and replaced with the new completed form.
- c) The review meeting will last about an hour. Towards the end of the review meeting, major issues will be summarised, particularly those issues of a forward looking / developmental nature. Within the discipline of one side of A4, a summary will be sent to the person reviewed for his /her comment. The agreed document bearing both signatures will be forwarded to the Diocesan Bishop and kept on file at Bishops court. It will provide a starting point for the next review the following year. *(NB. If there is significant disagreement with some element of the summary on the part of the person who has been reviewed, there will be opportunity to add a note to record this before the document is signed.)*
- d) The Bishop will write to acknowledge receipt of the summary and the completion of the review. Any training needs that have been identified will be shared with the CME Officer who will offer advice on how expected outcomes can be taken forward.

Wider Context

It is intended that the practice of regular ministerial review will contribute to the refreshing and sustaining of all in ordained ministry, as well as enable systematic and professional meetings with colleagues on the part of the bishops and other members of the Bishop's staff. Whilst not directly related to the processes involved in the new Clergy Discipline Measure, regular review will also contribute to a culture of greater accountability, which will feed in to those processes if a complaint is sustained against a member of the clergy. It will offer greater protection in cases of unfair complaint.

The Ministry Review scheme does not fulfil all that is needed for ministerial development or personal support. What it can do is highlight other networks which may help clergy through Continuing Ministerial Education, counselling, spiritual direction and work consultancy. At any time, resources in each of these areas can be called upon by any person wishing to explore more fully their potential.