

Bruton & Cary Deanery

Criteria for Deployment of Stipendiary Clergy

Rationale

In order to compare different options for the deployment of stipendiary clergy in the Deanery, it is helpful to have some objective criteria as the basis for comparison. While other factors may play a role in the decisions to be made (existing relationships, affinities between communities, ease of travel), the criteria determined below should ensure that the workload for the clergy in each post in the Deanery is roughly equal. How we ensure support for the clergy in each post, so that these are posts where the clergy can “serve with joy” without being overloaded, will be an ongoing and vital exercise to be carried out alongside the practicalities of pastoral reorganisation.

Weighting or “the formula”

Some criteria are likely to have more of an impact on clergy workload than others and so we need to determine a relative weighting of the criteria. For example, in the last major pastoral reorganisation in 2004, the Diocese used the following weighted criteria to determine the number of clergy for each Deanery – 50% Church Membership + 35% Population + 15% Number of Churches.

In 2004 the Deanery used the same criteria and weightings to allocate stipendiary clergy within the Deanery. This resulted in a formula that was used to allocate a portion of a clergy person to each parish. Then by combining parishes we ended up with benefices each with the workload for a whole clergy person. (In practice it was not as neat as this, but it did give a guide to producing roughly equal benefices.)

For those interested in the mathematics behind the formula this is explained in Appendix I, but the important points we need to consider are what criteria we use and what weighting we give to each one.

Possible Criteria

For the current pastoral reorganisation, the Diocese used the following weighted criteria to determine the number of clergy for each Deanery – 45% Regular Worshippers + 30% Population + 15% Number of Churches + 10% Deprivation. Other criteria have been suggested such as Number of Church Schools and Number of Weddings. At the September Synod, Synod representatives were asked to consider how important a range of possible criteria were. In addition to those already mentioned these included Other Schools, Care Homes, Surgeries and Hospitals, Baptisms and Funerals, Number of Chapels, Parish Share and anything else they could think of.

Consultations have since taken place with the Clergy Chapter and with the DMPG (Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group) and the result is the formula of criteria and weightings given at the end of this paper. The preceding sections outline the reasons for the suggested criteria and weightings based on the consultations and some practicalities.

Congregation Size (Regular Worshippers) and Population

These two factors are clearly very significant in terms of clergy workload. Much of the clergy's ministry, whether pastoral, social or missional will be relative to the size of their congregations and of the communities in their parish(es). And many of the other suggested criteria are dependent on these two factors. Thus, as with the Diocesan formula, the weighting for these criteria should be significant. There are some issues with the figures to be used for both these criteria which we hope to address before using the criteria to assess different options. The last complete set of figures for Regular Worshippers that we have available is the 2020 count taken before the pandemic and numbers have reduced since then – we plan to address this by using figures from the latest Statistics for Mission figures. And we do not have the 2021 Census figures for individual parishes yet so the figures we have are estimates based on the 2011 Census – however, the 2021 Census population figures for individual parishes should be released in November.

Number of Churches and Chapels

In a rural Deanery the number of parish churches, each with its own PCC, services and events, is clearly also a significant criterion. In the Deanery we have 42 parish churches and a further 8 chapels. As chapels don't have PCCs and generally have fewer services and events, we are proposing that chapels are counted as half a parish church for the purposes of the formula.

Deprivation

The Diocese included Deprivation in their deployment formula to ensure that the Magnificat parishes were supported. A Magnificat parish is one located in an area of high deprivation, such as a large housing estate, with limited resources in terms of finance and lay support – often the Vicar will be the only person in the parish who pays tax or has any higher education. We have no Magnificat parishes in our Deanery and in a rural context deprivation is spread across parishes rather than concentrated in particular ones. Rich and poor will live quite close together in our villages. Deprivation is also difficult to quantify unless you rely on Experian credit data which from experience is somewhat inaccurate at parish level. This would therefore not seem to be a helpful criterion for our Deanery. At the same time, it is likely that our larger communities have more deprivation so this can be borne in mind when giving the weighting to the population size.

Care Homes, Surgeries and Hospitals

These were not seen as major criteria by Synod representatives in September. And generally speaking, they are concentrated in our larger population centres. To avoid over complicating the formula with too many criteria I would suggest these are not included but are also borne in mind when considering the weighting given to population size.

Church Schools and Other Schools

Church Schools are felt to generate significant extra workload, with an expectation for clergy to be on the governing body, to take collective worship and school services in their churches. Other Schools were felt to be less important as there is no such expectation for clergy to be involved. There are 9 Church Schools in the Deanery listed in Appendix II. If we consider the presence of a Church School to be equivalent to an extra parish church,

the question is how we include the Church Schools in the criteria formula. After consultation we agreed to include an extra weighted criteria for Church Schools with a smaller weighting to reflect the fact that there are far fewer Church Schools than parish churches.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

Half the groups at the September Synod felt this was an important factor. However, it can be argued that the number of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals are generally related to the number of Regular Worshippers and the population size in the parish. In addition the number of these Occasional Offices are not easy to quantify. There are statistics collected each year, but particularly in smaller parishes the number of Occasional Offices can vary considerably from year to year. We therefore did not include these as a criterion in the formula.

However, there is at least one case where the number of weddings is not relative to population or congregation size and this in North Cadbury as a result of the wedding venue in North Cadbury Court which generates around fifteen to twenty extra Church weddings each year and significantly adds to the clergy workload. It was decided to reflect this in the criteria by adding the equivalent of an extra parish church or Church School to North Cadbury.

Parish Share

Parish Share paid does not directly affect the workload of the clergy and is currently relative to number of Regular Worshippers which is already one of the criteria. Therefore, it does not need to be one of the criteria considered. However, the Diocese is looking at changing the Parish Share system in the future and the preferred option is one where every benefice is asked to pay for the cost of its clergy. Therefore, when deciding on the future benefices we do need to take into account their ability to cover the cost of their clergy, which is currently £53,116 but will rise as a result of the current rate of inflation.

The Recommended Criteria and Weighting

The above considerations have led to the following criteria with their respective weightings:

46% Regular Worshippers + 36% Population + 15% Churches + 3% Church Schools

Application of this formula to our current benefices can be found in Appendix III on the attached spreadsheet. (For the purposes of this exercise Wincanton and Pen Selwood are being counted as a single benefice). As there are approximately five times as many Churches as Church Schools, the weighting for Churches needs to be five times that of Schools for an individual School to have the same weight as an individual Church.

The weightings can be adjusted if felt appropriate. Previously we had produced the figures for the following criteria:

50% Regular Worshippers + 35% Population + 15% Number of Churches

Appendix I – The Formula

As noted previously, what is important is what criteria are included and their relative weighting – which criteria are seen as more or less significant. However, for those interested in the mathematics behind the use of the criteria and how the results for each parish and benefice are determined this appendix will attempt to explain. We will use the criteria that were suggested above with their respective weightings (although the same principles apply whatever criteria and weightings are used):

46% Regular Worshippers + 36% Population + 15% Churches + 3% Church Schools

The first point is that the weightings need to add up to 100% for the formula to work. We then need data for each parish for each of the criteria which can be entered into a spreadsheet. (Some data may need to be estimated, for example where we only have population figures for civil parishes which comprise two ecclesiastical parishes).

We then need to add the totals for every parish in the Deanery for each criterion so we have a Deanery total for the number of Regular Worshippers, population, numbers of Churches and Church Schools or whatever other criteria we decide to use.

We then go back to each parish, take the number of Regular Worshippers for that parish, divide it by the Deanery total for Regular Worshippers and multiply by the weighting factor (as a fraction of 1 – so 46% is 0.46). We do the same for the three remaining criteria – dividing the parish figure by the Deanery total and multiplying by the weighting factor for that criterion.

We then take the resulting figures for each criterion, add them together and multiply by the number of clergy posts in the Deanery (currently 8.5 but 7 in the future). This gives a fraction of a clergy post for each parish. If the calculations are correct, adding the fractions for all the parishes in the Deanery will end up a total of 8.5 or 7 clergy.

As noted above, the aim of the exercise is to end up with seven benefices which are each equivalent to one clergy post. In reality, it won't be as neat as that but if a benefice scores well over 1.0 then it is clearly too large and if it scores well under 1.0 it could be larger.

Fortunately, the spreadsheet will do all the calculations listed above if we input the correct formula. For any mathematicians reading this the formula equates to:

$$F = [(C1/D1) \times W1 + (C2/D2) \times W2 + (C3/D3) \times W3 + (C4/D4) \times W4] \times N$$

where C1 = the first criterion, C2 = the second, etc

D1 = the Deanery total for the first criterion, D2 = the Deanery total for the second, etc

W1 = the weighting of the first criterion, W2 = the weighting of the second, etc

N = the number of clergy posts and

F = the fraction of a clergy post for a particular parish.

Appendix II – Church Schools

Abbas Templecombe C of E Primary School

Sexey's School, Bruton

Charlton Horethorne C of E Primary School

Evercreech C of E Primary School

St Nicholas C of E Primary School, Henstridge

Horsington C of E Primary School

Lovington C of E Primary School

North Cadbury C of E Primary School

Upton Noble C of E Primary School