

## Funding church planting in urban areas 13/15 Study into effective church planting

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- By resolution 13/15, Synod requested, among other things, that the Standing Committee consider appropriate ways of providing financial support to church plants in brownfield areas, and report their findings to the next session of Synod
- Seeking additional funds through the proposed Property Receipts Levy seems the only potentially appropriate source of funds for Synod to provide financial support to church plants in urban areas
- Inter-parochial partnerships that allow larger churches to resource the planting or repotting of new or smaller churches, should be encouraged, with Regional Bishops and the Department of Evangelism and New Churches the most obvious groups to facilitate such partnerships
- If funding were to be made available through the proposed Property Receipts Levy, increasing financial support to ENC would be the most beneficial and targeted means of supporting church plants in urban areas

### Purpose

1. This report sets out the Standing Committee's findings regarding appropriate ways to fund church planting in brownfield areas.

### Recommendations

2. That Synod receive this report.
3. That Synod pass the following motion to be moved "by request of the Standing Committee" –  
'Synod, noting the report "Funding church planting in urban areas" –
  - (a) recommends that the Regional Bishops and the Department of Evangelism and New Churches ("ENC") encourage and facilitate inter-parochial partnerships, where needed, to allow larger churches to resource the planting of churches in urban areas,
  - (b) requests the Large Property Receipts Policy Committee, when presenting the proposed Property Receipts Levy, to include in its modelling an option that provides significant additional funding for ministry initiatives, and
  - (c) agrees that if additional funding were provided through a Property Receipts Levy, additional funding for ENC is worthy of strong consideration in order to support church planting initiatives in urban areas.'

### Background

4. At its session in October 2015, Synod passed resolution 13/15 as follows –  
"Synod, noting –
  - (i) the Study into Effective Church Planting in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, and
  - (ii) the Mission 2020 goals to plant 15 new churches in greenfield areas and at least two new churches per mission area by 2020,
  - (a) encourages rectors and parish councils to consider how they could initiate church planting in their parishes, or partner with other parishes to support church planting elsewhere in the Diocese,
  - (b) requests that Evangelism and New Churches ("ENC"), in view of the decreased rates of church planting in this Diocese in recent years, to provide recommendations as to –
    - (i) how recruitment and training of potential church planters may be improved,
    - (ii) the identification of church planting opportunities with regard to strategic planning at a regional level,
    - (iii) the most effective method of identifying resources and assets to assist church planting,
    - (iv) effective methods to address conflict resolution in the context of church planting,

- (v) how funding models underpinning the different styles of church planting in the Diocese could be enhanced,
  - (vi) how the role and resourcing of ENC may be improved in order to better support church planting in this Diocese, and
- (c) requests that the Standing Committee consider appropriate ways of providing financial support to church plants in brownfield areas, and report their findings to the next session of Synod.”

5. At its meeting on 30 May 2016, the Standing Committee requested that a working group comprising Bishop Peter Lin (chair), the Rev Raj Gupta and Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo consider the request in paragraph (c) of resolution 13/15 in light of the findings of the Funding Urban Renewal (“FUR”) committee (the committee considering resolution 42/15: Ministry progress and brownfields grants) and report to a future meeting of the Standing Committee.

6. The group reviewed a summary of the findings of the FUR committee and also noted the Church Planting Report produced for Synod in 2015, which was the catalyst for resolution 13/15.

7. When the term “brownfield” was used in resolution 13/15 it appears to have been intended to describe the areas of Sydney that are not greenfield. However, since “brownfield” is a term that usually refers to land reclaimed from previous industrial use, the group agreed to use the generic term “urban” in place of “brownfield” in this report (except when referring to Synod resolutions 13/15 and 42/15).

### Discussion

8. The group noted that 70% of the growth in new housing in Sydney is anticipated to be in urban areas, which by nature are experiencing an increasing cost of land, restrictions on buildings and the likelihood of increased restrictions on public building use. However, the majority of fundraising in the Diocese seems to be focused on greenfield areas, through –

- (a) the 2% levy for the purchase of land in greenfield areas, and
- (b) the funds raised for the purchase or construction of buildings by New Churches for New Communities.

9. The group reviewed each of the following options for providing additional funds in light of comments provided by the FUR committee regarding each option –

- (a) redeploying “lazy assets” within the Diocese,
- (b) a drawdown from the Diocesan Endowment,
- (c) underwriting loans,
- (d) providing interest-free loans,
- (e) direct fundraising from parishioners across Anglican churches,
- (f) reduction in allocation to current Synod funded ministries,
- (g) an increase in the Diocesan levy, and
- (h) seeking additional funds through the proposed Property Receipts Levy (“PRL”).

10. Following this review, the group confirmed the majority of these options could not be considered viable, agreeing that –

- (a) options (a) to (e) were not feasible sources of funding to support church planting, and
- (b) options (f) and (g) were undesirable for the purpose of funding church planting.

Seeking additional funds through the proposed PRL seemed the only remaining potentially appropriate source of funds for Synod to provide financial support to church plants in urban areas.

### *Inter-parochial partnerships*

11. The group discussed the nature of church planting in urban areas, and noted that typical church plants often have the support of one or more ‘mother’ churches which provide members or financial support or both. The group assumed that any church plant will be actively involved in raising its own funds and that any grants or loans provided directly to church plants would be to supplement those who are not able to raise all that they need.

12. In many situations, having several churches partner in supporting the church plant is desirable and should be encouraged. However, while helpful, even having multiple churches partner in this way is not expected to resolve the financial difficulties in many circumstances, as the ‘mother’ churches who provide members will already be foregoing the financial giving of those members.

13. The group discussed the desirability of encouraging partnerships of parishes to provide funding with other parishes able to supply a core group of members. Such inter-parochial partnerships need not be within the one region, and may be facilitated through informal discussions within mission areas, or by Regional Bishops across regions.

14. Providing a recognised avenue to promote and progress such partnerships could prove to be a helpful support to church planting initiatives. The group agreed that Regional Bishops and the Department of Evangelism and New Churches ("ENC"), being the most obvious groups to facilitate inter-parochial partnerships, should be encouraged to identify and facilitate such partnerships, where needed, in order to allow larger churches to resource the planting or repotting of new or smaller churches.

*Providing financial support to church plants*

15. Noting that the resolution calls for the Standing Committee report to Synod regarding appropriate ways of providing financial support to church plants in urban areas, the recommendation of the group was to give strong consideration to seeking additional funding from the proposed PRL.

16. If funding were to become available through the proposed PRL or other means, the group agreed that increasing financial support to ENC – and thereby allowing ENC to provide increased training, support, guidance and resources – would be the most beneficial and targeted means of supporting church plants in urban areas, as opposed to providing funding directly to church plants.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BISHOP PETER LIN  
*Chair of the Working Group*

24 August 2016