

Opportunities to provide feedback

Domestic Abuse Response

Gender Identity Issues

Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines

5 December 2017

Dear Synod Members

You may recall that at its recent session, the Synod considered the following three significant matters –

- Domestic Abuse Response
- Gender Identity Issues
- Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines

For each of these matters, Synod asked Members to provide feedback or comments to help shape the Diocese's understanding and future decisions.

Accordingly, I have included below –

- a record of the relevant resolution of Synod for each matter, namely –
 - 16/17 Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Response
 - 24/17 Development of a final form of diocesan policy for gender identity issues
 - 33/17 Licensing of incumbents interim report
- links to updated or additional material that may be of benefit to you and your church
- contact details in order to direct your feedback.

Domestic Abuse Response

At its recent session, the Synod adopted the Provisional Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse (“the Provisional Policy”), which was accompanied by a document *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Provisional Policy and Good Practice Guidelines* (the “Domestic Abuse Response”). The provisional policy is aimed at informing, directing and equipping people working at a local level to offer the most appropriate care in circumstances of domestic abuse.

The [Provisional Policy](#) and the [Domestic Abuse Response](#) (including Good Practice Guidelines) can be found on the [Policies of the Synod](#) page of SDS's website.

Following the adoption of the Provisional Policy, the Synod passed resolution 16/17 regarding the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Response. The full text of the resolution is as follows –

‘Synod, noting –

- (i) the report *24/16 Domestic Violence* (the “Report”), and

- (ii) the accompanying document Responding to Domestic Abuse: Provisional Policy and Good Practice Guidelines (the “Domestic Abuse Response”), and
- (iii) the *Provisional Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse* (set out in Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Response) (the “Provisional Policy”) –
 - (a) commends the Provisional Policy to all clergy and parish councils for use in churches,
 - (b) invites clergy and church members to provide comments and feedback on the Domestic Abuse Response (including the Provisional Policy) to Standing Committee by 30 April 2018,
 - (c) requests that the Standing Committee bring to the Synod session in 2018 proposed amendments to the Provisional Policy, and
 - (d) requests the Standing Committee to consider and, if thought fit, act on the recommendations referred to in the Report.’

Could I draw your particular attention to the commendation of the Provisional Policy in paragraph (a), and accordingly encourage you to bring these to the attention of your parish council for use in your church.

You will also note that in paragraph (b) of the resolution, clergy and church members are invited to provide feedback. Could you provide a copy of this circular to all clergy in your parish and any other members who might have an interest in providing feedback. Any comments can be provided to the Standing Committee by emailing diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au by 30 April 2018.

Gender identity issues

Synod passed resolution 24/17 in the following terms –

‘Synod commends the Gender Identity Report (“the Report”) to all Synod members, Anglican schools and other agencies in the Diocese which are called upon to care for people with gender identity issues and asks the governing boards and councils, and asks the heads and chief executive officers of such schools and agencies, as well as Synod members, to –

- (a) provide comments and feedback to Standing Committee on the Initial Principles of Engagement approved in principle as a policy of the Synod at its session in 2017 by 30 April 2018, and
- (b) ensure any policies, guidelines and procedures which they draft to address this issue are consistent with those Initial Principles of Engagement, and
- (c) consult with the Archbishop about the final form of such policies, guidelines and procedures before they are published, and
- (d) commit to reviewing such policies, guidelines and procedures in light of any revised form of policy adopted by the Synod following its session in 2017,

and requests that the Standing Committee bring to the Synod session in 2018 a revised form of the Initial Principles of Engagement with a view to the revised form being adopted as a policy of the Synod.’

For your convenience, a standalone version of a slightly revised form of the Report is available from the SDS website at www.sds.asn.au/gender-identity-report-2017. Can I encourage you to use this revised form of the Report as the basis for any comments or feedback under paragraph (a) of the resolution, and for any policies, guidelines or procedures drafted as anticipated in paragraphs (b) and (c).

You will notice that the terms of the resolution make frequent reference to the Initial Principles of Engagement (“the Principles”). These are found on pp.39-42 of the Gender Identity Report (the “Report”).

Any comments or feedback, as requested in paragraph (a) of the resolution, can be provided to the Social Issues Committee of the Standing Committee by emailing sic@sydney.anglican.asn.au by 30 April 2018.

Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines

The Licensing of Incumbents Committee provided a report to the Synod on a number of issues relating to the licensing of ministry staff. Included as an appendix to the report was a draft ‘Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines’ document, for which the Synod invited members to provide feedback.

The Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines are provided as an extract from the report on the SDS website at www.sds.asn.au/healthy-parish-relationships-guidelines. Please provide your feedback to the Committee by emailing diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au by 31 March 2018.

The full text of resolution 33/17 is as follows –

‘Synod, noting the Second Interim Report of the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee –

- (a) requests the Standing Committee to amend the Ministry Training and Development (“MT&D”) Ordinance Objects to provide an approved accreditation system for clergy Professional Development,
 - (b) requests MT&D to develop and distribute a resource to assist nominators who are involved in interviewing prospective rectors, that includes recommendations to discuss the prospective rector’s future professional development,
 - (c) requests Standing Committee to amend the parish Prescribed Financial Statement to include an expense line for Professional Development and to ask the Stipends and Allowances Committee to make a recommendation of an appropriate amount per clergy to be included in annual parish budgets for professional development,
 - (d) endorses the concept of Voluntary Relinquishment of Incumbency as a mechanism to assist Rectors who are choosing, or being encouraged to leave a parish, and requests Standing Committee to determine how it is to be implemented and report to Synod in 2018,
 - (e) notes the draft Healthy Parish Relationships guidelines, invites members to provide feedback to the Committee and endorses the Committee’s attention to this area, and
 - (f) requests the Standing Committee to bring a bill to the next Synod that would constitute as misconduct “unreasonable and persistent failure to attend the triennial *Faithfulness in Service* training” and “unreasonable and persistent failure to complete the triennial Safe Ministry training”.’
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If you would like to discuss any of these matters more generally, please contact me at (02) 9265 1668 or dmg@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Kind regards



DANIEL GLYNN
Diocesan Secretary