

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Colin Adams asked the following question –

1.

- (a) Given the President's comments, referring to the Anglican Church Property Trust, that "there is always room for improvement" in how the Property Trust fulfils its role as "a servant of the parishes rather than a master", does the Property Trust have a policy on the simultaneous sale and purchase of property?
- (b) Has the Property Trust considered, as a matter of policy, allowing the wardens or members of a parish to provide an indemnity to cover any timing differences between the exchange of contracts for purchase and the settlement of sale?

To which the President replied –

1. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

(a) Yes.

The issue of simultaneous sale and purchase of property for a given parish does arise on rare occasions. On the most recent occasion, the Property Trust was asked to execute a contract for the purchase of land where the ability to settle the contract required clear funds to be available from the sale of another property. The Property Trust's policy requires cash sufficient to meet the contractual obligation to settle a property purchase, or a combination of cash or clear funds, an unconditional and irrevocable bank guarantee or an unconditional irrevocable offer of finance from an APRA regulated financial institution to be held by the Property Trust before the Property Trust will execute a purchase contract.

(b) The Property Trust has considered giving the option of a guarantee and indemnity being obtained from the members of the parish council of the parish for whom the acquisition is being made as an alternative. On balance, the Property Trust decided against introducing this option as the Property Trust was very uneasy about potentially needing to contemplate legal action against the members of a parish council in the event a settlement could not proceed due to insufficient funds.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Bruce Stanley asked the following question –

2.

- (a) (Approximately) How many Chinese-speaking Rectors are there currently in the Sydney Diocese?
- (b) (Approximately) How many Chinese-speaking congregations are currently operating in the Diocese on a weekly basis?
- (c) How many of these Chinese speaking services occur in Parishes with a non-Chinese speaking Rector?
- (d) How many Parishes employ more than one full time Chinese-speaking clergy?

To which the President replied –

2. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The following numbers are approximate, based on the best information that could be gathered in the time period.

- (a) 8
- (b) 37
- (c) 18
- (d) Parishes do not employ clergy. However there are 3 parishes which have more than one licensed Chinese-speaking member of clergy as a rector or assistant minister.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

The Rev Alistair Seabrook asked the following question –

3. Are there any plans for a regional mission in the Western Region in 2018/2019?

To which the President replied –

3. There has been a recent discussion by the Archbishop and Regional Bishops about the possibility of regional missions over the next few years. The bishops of Western Sydney and South Sydney will be consulting with Mission Area leaders and rectors before any plans are made for missions in those regions.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Alistair Seabrook asked the following question –

4. Are there any plans to make SRE accreditation training available online?

To which the President replied –

4. I am informed that the answer is as follows -

The 'Anglican Diocese of Sydney' is one of over 100 organisations approved by the NSW Department of Education to provide special religious education in public schools in NSW. Consequently each year I sign an 'Annual Assurance Letter' on behalf of the Diocese as one of these providers. The letter includes a declaration that the Diocese has a complying training program in place for SRE teachers.

I have delegated responsibility for SRE training and accreditation within the Diocese to Anglican Youthworks. At present there are no firm plans to make SRE training and accreditation available online for Sydney Anglican SRE Teachers. Face to face training provides the opportunity not only to pass on knowledge, but to also model the teaching principles and practices that we want SRE teachers to know and use in the classroom. Youthworks expansive and growing network of local and senior trainers build relationships between local trainers and teachers and enable the training to be contextualised to the local schools. Moreover, our local and senior trainer system provide a cost effective method of providing SRE training across the diocese.

Youthworks SRE curriculum resources are also used in regional NSW, Queensland, Western Australia and New Zealand. Youthworks is investigating the provision of online SRE training for providers outside the Diocese of Sydney.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

The Rev Andrew Katay asked the following question –

5. Noting the answer by the President to question 5 asked on 9 October, namely that the modelling provided to Synod in its papers of the proposed Property Receipts Levy was necessarily incomplete because the proposed Property Receipts Levy allows deductions for various property-related expenses that were not separately captured in 2015 parish returns; what is the best estimate of the net increase in income if the proposed levy were to be adopted, over the existing arrangements of ordinance income under the current Large Receipts Policy?

To which the President replied –

5. I am informed that the answer is as follows -

The best available estimate of the net increase in income if the proposed levy were to be adopted, over the existing arrangements of ordinance income under the current Large Receipts Policy is not less than \$500,000 per annum.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Greg Burke asked the following question –

6.

- (a) Was any consideration given to advising the parishes of the diocese of the decision to contribute \$1 million to the Coalition for Marriage's advertising campaign either before or after the decision was taken (and before the Presidential Address)?
- (b) Was any consideration given to alternatives such as making a smaller "seed funding contribution" and asking parishes and individual Anglicans to make voluntary contributions to the campaign if they wished?

To which the President replied –

6. I am informed that the answer is as follows -

- (a) The timeline of events in the same-sex marriage postal survey meant that it was not possible to consult with parishes before the decision was made by Standing Committee. Like the postal survey itself, our contribution was "urgent and unforeseen" until early September. There was no certainty that the postal survey would go ahead until the High Court dismissed the legal challenge on 6 September. The report proposing a contribution to Coalition for Marriage was written after this date, and circulated to Standing Committee members on 12 September for the Standing Committee meeting on 18 September. The decision of the Standing Committee was made public to synod members soon thereafter, in the report on pages 272-284 of the Supplementary Report of the Standing Committee. This report was distributed to all synod members on 22 September, that is, 4 days after the decision was made.
- (b) The Archbishop wrote a letter to all Sydney Anglicans on August 16 advising that the Diocese of Sydney had committed to being a lead partner in the Coalition for Marriage, and to encourage Sydney Anglicans to make voluntary contributions to the campaign. The Archbishop made direct contact with a number of individual Sydney Anglicans to invite them to contribute. The diocesan contribution was intended to be in addition to these individual contributions.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Martyn Davis asked the following question –

7. Are there currently any details available about the proposed redress scheme arising out of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse?
  - (a) If so –
    - (i) Are there any indications about our responsibilities and obligations in this matter?
    - (ii) Are there any projections of the financial costs to the Sydney diocese to meet these obligations and how is it envisaged that these costs will be covered?
  - (b) If not, is there any indication of when these kinds of details will become available?

To which the President replied –

7. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The Federal Government has announced that a Commonwealth Redress Scheme will commence on 1 July 2018. The Scheme will be limited to child sexual abuse which occurred prior to that date.

Institutions will be invited to voluntarily opt into the Scheme by written agreement.

The Scheme will operate on the basis that each participating responsible entity meets the cost of the claims attributable to the entity which are processed through the Scheme. Participating entities will need to meet the following costs:

- redress costs comprising a monetary payment, direct personal response, and psychological counselling;
- contribution to the cost of a survivor's legal advice to a capped amount; and
- administration costs.

Many details are still unknown. However it is anticipated that an exposure draft of the proposed legislation to establish the Scheme will soon be made publicly available by the Government.

Once further details are made available it may be possible to determine an approximate cost for an average claim. However it is difficult to estimate

how many survivors of abuse committed in our Diocese may wish to apply to have their claims assessed under the Commonwealth Redress Scheme. At the recent session of General Synod, Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald from the Royal Commission indicated that only 34% of survivors of abuse in Anglican institutions attending private sessions had reported the abuse to the relevant institution.

The Royal Commission Working Group of the General Synod is in active discussion with the Honourable Christian Porter MP, Minister for Social Services in respect to the proposed redress scheme. Two members of our Synod, Mr Garth Blake SC and the Rev Dr Andrew Ford are members of the Working Group. The matter is also under active consideration by our Diocesan Royal Commission Steering Committee on behalf of the Standing Committee.



## **Question: 11 October 2017**

Canon Tom Harricks asked the following question –

8.

- (a) What was the amount of General Synod Assessments last year?
- (b) What was the cost of sending Sydney's delegation (including airfares, accommodation, meals) to General Synod 2017?

To which the President replied –

8. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The General Synod Assessment for 2016 was \$459,008.
- (b) Noting that travel costs for General Synod members (such as airfares and airport transfers) are paid by the General Synod Office from the Assessments contributed from each diocese, it is expected that the final cost (excluding travel costs) will be approximately \$68,000. This figure includes the cost of accommodation and meals, meeting room hire, the travel costs for the Archbishop's Media Advisor and known miscellaneous expenses.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Ms Alison Woof asked the following question –

9.

- (a) Do all persons elected to Committees and Boards by the Synod have appropriate Directors and Officers Insurance?
- (b) If not, does the diocese formally indemnify all such persons?
- (c) Where the answer to the above two questions is not 'yes', which Committees and Boards are not so covered?

To which the President replied –

9. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The Property Trust arranges a program of insurance for parishes and a number of diocesan organisations. This program includes Directors and Officers insurance. Diocesan organisations arrange their insurance independently. In the time available it has not been possible to ascertain whether diocesan organisations not covered by the Program have Directors and Officers insurance.
- (b) No. However the ordinance of a diocesan organisation may specify an indemnity against the assets of the organisation or the organisation may have entered into deeds of indemnity with its board members.
- (c) As many diocesan organisations arrange their own insurance it is not known which, if any, do not have Directors and Officers insurance.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Jeremy Freeman asked the following question –

10. Has Standing Committee, within the last fifteen years, reviewed the policy decisions and management of the diocesan insurance program? If so, when and what was the scope of the review?

To which the President replied –

10. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The Synod has given responsibility for the insurance program to the Property Trust through the *Church Insurances Ordinance 1981*.

The Property Trust obtains independent advice from the insurance broker, Marsh Pty Ltd as to the adequacy of the insurance program. The Property Trust also obtains the concurrence of the boards of those diocesan organisations covered by the Program as to the adequacy of the insurance. Over recent years many of those organisations have obtained independent professional advice in order to inform the feedback they provide to the Property Trust.

Periodically, since 2007, the Property Trust has obtained an independent professional actuarial report about the adequacy of insurance policies and related cover provided under the Program. These reports have been provided to the Finance Committee of the Standing Committee.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Jeremy Freeman asked the following question –

11.

- (a) Does the Synod membership ordinance provide for Authorised Lay Ministers to be represented on Synod? How many members of Synod are Lay Ministers? What is this number as a proportion of the total membership?
- (b) Does the Synod membership ordinance provide for Assistant Ministers to be represented on Synod? How many members of Synod are Assistant Ministers? What is this number as a proportion of the total membership?

To which the President replied –

11. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Lay ministers can be members of Synod if they are elected by the parish under Part 5, or appointed by Standing Committee or the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee under Part 8 and 8A of the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995*. There are 16 lay ministers who are members of the 51<sup>st</sup> Synod and this represents 1.99% of the total membership.
- (b) Assistant Ministers may be members of Synod if they are appointed as an alternate by their rector, or appointed by the Archbishop under Part 7. There are 15 Assistant Ministers who are members of the current session of the 51<sup>st</sup> Synod and this represents 1.86% of the total membership.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

Mr Jeremy Freeman asked the following question –

12. What is the dioceses ongoing participation in the General Synod Viability and Structures Taskforce process?

To which the President replied –

12. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The Viability and Structures Steering Group was set up at the 2014 General Synod and had its goal to make some transformative recommendations that every diocese could support and pursue collaboratively. The Sydney Diocese made representations to the Steering Group and a member of our clergy was the NSW Provincial Representative.

The Final Report of the Steering Group was received by the 2017 General Synod and there are five main recommendations that can be found in the report in Book 2 of the General Synod Papers available on the General Synod website.

The final recommendations of the Steering Group report requested the General Synod Standing Committee to take further action on the recommendations.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Jeremy Freeman asked the following question –

13. How are the diocesan organisations held accountable to the Synod?

To which the President replied –

13. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There are four main ways in which diocesan organisations are accountable to the Synod.

Firstly, members of the boards of diocesan organisations are elected by the Synod.

Secondly, the constitutions of diocesan organisations are set out in an ordinance and can be amended by the Synod or Standing Committee. These ordinances set out the governance arrangements of the organisations, including their purposes, membership, functions and powers.

Thirdly, the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* requires all diocesan organisations to provide an annual report to the Synod, which includes certain information in respect to their governance, finances and operations.

And fourthly, Synod members have the opportunity to ask questions of the President about the work of diocesan organisations at each session of the Synod.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

Mr Jeremy Freeman asked the following question –

14. If the proposed Property Receipts Levy is adopted by the Synod, under current accounting arrangements will parish payments made in accordance will the levy be transparently reported to synod? What will be transparently reported to Synod?

To which the President replied –

14. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Synod can expect details of all parish payments made in accordance with the proposed property receipts levy to be reported each year to the Synod in the Annual Financial Reports, most likely in a way similar to the transparent annual reporting of payments by parishes to the Synod Fund (see pages 18 and 23 of the Synod Funds - Amalgamated Annual Financial Report for 2016). However the final arrangements for reporting will be determined in the ordinance establishing the levy if it is passed by the Synod.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Matthew Robson asked the following question –

15. Regarding incumbents of full parishes where arrangements have been made for the incumbent's appointment to be less than full time –
- (a) What are the parishes where such an arrangement exists?
  - (b) What is the variation in Parish Cost Recoveries (both fixed and variable) for each of those parishes due to such arrangements?

To which the President replied –

15. I am informed that the answer is as follows –
- (a) There is no requirement for the Diocesan Registry or other central authority to be notified when an incumbent and parish authorities come to an arrangement for the incumbent to be less than full time so it is not possible to provide this information. The Regional Bishops are aware of special arrangements applying in 4 parishes.
  - (b) In each of these 4 cases known to the Regional Bishops, there is no variation in the Parish Cost Recoveries and the incumbent receives 100% of the long service leave and other benefits under the PCR system.



## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Rick Stevens asked the following question –

16. Concerning the synod Business Paper 17 October 2016: Motion passed at Item 6.15 – Opening, Closure, Merger or Takeover of Schools Corporation Schools (acknowledging the Supplementary Report, page 203, Book 2, of the current Synod) –
- (a) When can Synod expect to receive a report from the Standing Committee with regard to reviewing the Anglican Schools Ordinance as requested in the above motion?
  - (b) Has the Schools Corporation board reviewed its internal processes and procedures as requested in the above motion?

To which the President replied –

16. I am informed that the answer is as follows –
- (a) The Standing Committee received a response from the Anglican Schools Corporation in relation to this matter at its August 2017 meeting. However by reason of the pressing nature of other business, the Standing Committee was unable to consider the response prior to this session of the Synod. The Synod can expect to receive a report concerning this matter as part of the Standing Committee's annual report in 2018.
  - (b) Yes. The outcome of the review has been provided to the Standing Committee.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Ken West asked the following question –

17. With regard to the church attendance statistics which parishes regularly supply to the Diocese, please advise –
- (a) What was the aggregate church attendance across the Diocese in each of the years 2011 to 2016 and 2017 to date?
  - (b) How do these numbers correlate with the metrics gathered as part of Mission 2020?
  - (c) Do these statistics offer any insights into the success or direction of Mission 2020?

To which the President replied –

17. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Early in each year parishes are asked to advise the Registry of their attendance statistics for the previous calendar year. The Archbishop's Office makes significant effort to collect these statistics but the response rate varies from year to year.

The total attendance numbers provided by parishes for the years requested are:

2011	53,162
2012	52,947
2013	53,297
2014	54,468
2015	55,028
2016	51,533

I regret to inform the Synod that 26 parishes have not provided their attendance statistics for 2016. Attendances for 2017 will not be available until early 2018.

- (b) & (c) This data is consistent with the concern that was expressed in the Strategic Resources Group presentation on Mission 2020 that indicated a plateau or decreases on a number of measures.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Peter Hanson asked the following question –

18. Regarding the Diocesan Endowment –

- (a) Who are the Trustees?
- (b) What was the surplus of the Diocesan Endowment in 2016 and are there any significant changes anticipated in 2017?
- (c) What percentage of the Surplus from the Diocesan Endowment is paid into Synod Funds (i.e. what percentage of the total surplus from the Endowment was the \$4.3 million in 2016 and what is the percentage budgeted for 2017)?
- (d) What, if any, discretion did the Trustees of the Diocesan Endowment have in responding to the request from Standing Committee for the \$1 million funding given to the No to Same Sex Marriage campaign?
- (e) Did the Ordinance demanding the extra \$1 million distribution from the Diocesan Endowment vary any of the terms of the Endowment Deed to allow a distribution for this purpose?
- (f) Where was the \$1,000,000 paid from – was it from the earnings of the Endowment in 2017 or was it from the Capital or from the Accumulated Funds built up over past years?
- (g) Given Bishop Michael Stead's speech to synod in 2016 regarding the lack of wisdom in plundering the Capital and Accumulated Funds of Diocesan Endowment for worthy purposes, what effect will the \$1 million taken from the Endowment have on its ability to pay a greater share of its income towards Synod Funds in future years?
- (h) How much was taken from the Diocesan Endowment to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give the thirsty something to drink, welcome asylum seekers and refugees, house the homeless, cure the sick, and visit those in prison (see Matthew 25:31-46) in each of –
  - (i) 2016; and
  - (ii) Year to date 2017?

To which the President replied –

18. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The Glebe Administration Board.
- (b) The surplus in 2016 was \$13.7 million. The surplus in 2017 is expected to be significantly lower due to the transfer on 1 September 2017 of the half share in St Andrew's House from the Diocesan

Endowment to the Synod. It is not possible to predict the amount of the surplus for 2017 with any significant level of precision as a large proportion of the assets of the Diocesan Endowment are invested in assets which vary in value with changes in investment markets.

- (c) Distributions are not determined by reference to the surplus earned by the Diocesan Endowment. Under the *Diocesan Endowment Trust Ordinance 2016*, the GAB is required to advise the Standing Committee each year of the amount which may prudently be distributed from the Diocesan Endowment in the following year. GAB gives this advice having regard to modelling provided by its Asset Consultant, Mercer. GAB's principal consideration is having a high level of confidence that the real value of the Diocesan Endowment will be maintained over time, as required by the *Diocesan Endowment Trust Ordinance 2016*.
- (d) The Standing Committee has authority under delegations from the Synod to make special appropriations from the Diocesan Endowment. However, as a matter of courtesy, the Standing Committee has adopted a policy to consult with the GAB before consideration is given to making any special appropriation. The GAB was consulted in accordance with this policy. For the purpose of the consultation, GAB obtained advice from Mercer about the impact that payments of various amounts up to \$1,000,000 from the Diocesan Endowment would have on GAB's ability to maintain the real value of the Diocesan Endowment and on future distributions to the Synod. Based on that advice the Standing Committee was persuaded that a \$1 million payment was appropriate in all the circumstances.
- (e) No
- (f) The \$1 million was paid from the accumulated funds of the Diocesan Endowment.
- (g) Based on the modelling from GAB's Asset Consultant, Mercer, GAB was advised that a payment of \$1 million from the Endowment in 2017 is expected to have no impact on the absolute levels of projected distributions to the Synod over the next 20 years. The effect of the \$1 million payment was in terms of risk. That is, the probability of the Diocesan Endowment maintaining its real value over the next 20 years would drop marginally if a \$1 million payment was made but would remain well above the confidence level required by GAB to maintain expected levels of distributions to the Synod.
- (h) Distributions from the Diocesan Endowment are paid to Synod Fund 129 and combined with distributions from a number of other funds. Payments from Synod Fund 129 are made for a range of purposes to the organisations specified in the annual Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinances. It is not possible to specify the particular use

of the amounts applied from the Diocesan Endowment since the amounts allocated for spending are made from a pool of funds.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Peter Hanson asked the following question –

19.

- (a) Does the Archbishop recall stating in his acceptance speech to his election as Archbishop, that one of the aims of his Arch-episcopacy was along the lines that he wanted the Diocese of Sydney to become “as well known for its love as it is for its doctrinal purity”?
- (b) Is that still one of his aims?
- (c) Is he measuring progress towards the achievement of this goal?
- (d) What progress has been made towards its achievement?
- (e) Has he measured the effect that:
  - (i) The active participation of the Diocese in the No campaign for Same Sex Marriage; and
  - (ii) His participation in the consecration of a bishop in a church not in communion with the Anglican Communion worldwide, has had on the achievement of this goal?

To which the President replied –

19.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) Though it is not easy to measure such progress, in my view the manner in which debates are conducted in the Synod, bears testimony to the manner in which our mutual respect and love for one another is displayed. However, this has been confirmed by a recently received and unsolicited email from a newish member of our Synod who has experienced Synods in other dioceses.

“I feel greatly privileged to be a member of the Sydney Synod. I'm struck by the way in which we give ourselves to serious matters with thoughtfulness, prayerfulness, humility and a deeply biblical form of engagement. I'm struck by how we disagree peaceably and fruitfully. Without putting too fine a point on it, I am not used to Synods of such reverence, seriousness and love.”

(e)

- (i) While there has been a few cases of ungodly behaviour in the 'No' campaign, I am not aware of any that may be attributed to Sydney Anglicans. On the contrary, I believe that our own booklet, *What has God joined together?*, and its good reception among Sydney Anglicans has borne fruit in providing a winsome and sensitive approach to putting the case for voting 'No'.
- (ii) I believe that my participation in the consecration of Canon Andy Lines as a bishop in the Church of God, has not deflected either my goal or the progress of my goal. It is not well known that although the Archbishop of Canterbury may not consider ACNA as a member of the Anglican Communion, the Church of England does recognise his episcopal orders, as they do all ACNA orders. This is a strange anomaly, but part of the unusual nature of the Anglican Communion. Furthermore, at the consecration in Chicago in June the largest number of Anglican bishops in living memory gathered in fellowship and prayer to set apart a godly man for episcopal ministry. Not only that, the number of Primates, Archbishops and Diocesan Bishops represented more than 2/3 of the worldwide membership of the Anglican Communion. To consider such a consecration with this representation by bona fide bishops as improper or illegal ignores the voice of Anglicans from around the world who say otherwise. That I stand alongside Athanasius, who ordained orthodox men in provinces where heretical bishops of Arian theology presided, and alongside our own former Archbishop Donald Robinson, who consecrated Dudley Foord for the Church of England in South Africa (also not recognised by the Archbishop of Canterbury as part of the Anglican Communion) in St Andrew's Cathedral in 1984, is I believe a mark of honour from which I do not resile. As the apostle Paul so eloquent describes standing for the truth of the gospel: 'the only thing that counts is faith working through love' (Galatians 5:6).

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Peter M.G. Young asked the following question –

20.

- (a) How soon can we ask questions of the diocese for the next ordinary session of Synod?
- (b) How can such questions be answered prior to the first day of the ordinary session of Synod?
- (c) Can written answers be issued before such day and if so how?
- (d) To whom should we address questions to the diocese, as Synod representatives, during the year?
- (e) Do answers to questions at Synod currently have to be oral?
- (f) Is there a procedure at meetings of the Standing Committee, whereby Standing Committee representatives may ask questions of the diocese?

To which the President replied –

20. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) A member can give notice of a question for a session of Synod to the Secretary at any time. However, the question must formally be asked as part of the business of the Synod at the session.
- (b) A question asked as part of the business of the Synod cannot formally be answered prior to the session of the Synod.
- (c) No.
- (d) Outside the proceedings of a session of the Synod members may not always be entitled to receive answers to questions about diocesan organisations and the affairs of the Diocese generally. However, the staff of SDS and the Archbishop's Office are willing to assist with reasonable questions from Synod members during the year and will provide answers to the extent they are able. If members use the Contact Form on the SDS website, the question will be allocated to the relevant member of staff. Members can also ask questions through the Secretary.
- (e) Under Synod business rule 6.3(2), a question is asked by making a brief statement informing the Synod of the subject matter of the question when called upon by the President, and handing the full text of the question to the Secretary. To this extent, questions must be oral.
- (f) There is no formal procedure allowing members of the Standing Committee to ask questions of the President on matters affecting the



diocese generally. However there are certain bodies that provide regular reports to the Standing Committee and these reports provide a context for asking questions. A member also has the ability to move a motion requesting the provision of a report or information by a diocesan body.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Steven Layson asked the following question –

21. In the light of the excellent presentation on online Safe Ministry Training, could the Archbishop please let us know how many (if any) clergy and/or bishops are not up to date with their Safe Ministry Training? What, if anything, is planned to be done to ensure our church leaders lead by example in this important matter?

To which the President replied –

21. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The Archbishop and the five Assistant Bishops are all up to date with their Safe Ministry Training. The Faithfulness in Service Conference this year did not contain a component to update Safe Ministry Training so the Archbishop and Assistant Bishops made sure they attended a refresher course before their 3 year period expired. It is expected that all licensed clergy and authorised lay ministers have done the same. If not, then they should immediately take steps to undertake a refresher course. I suggest the new online safe ministry training be used.

No central records are maintained of the Safe Ministry Training status of clergy. All these records are maintained by the relevant parish or employer. In the context of recent and expected future changes in requirements for Safe Ministry Training, the Professional Standards Unit and Registrar are examining the possibility of a system being developed to enable parishes to be offered an efficient centralised record of safe ministry information.

Rule 7.2(4) of Schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* gives the Archbishop power to direct that parish clergy undertake the required training. It is my intention to obtain information on the status of clergy safe ministry training and to issue directions to any clergy who are not up to date.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

Dr David Oakenfull asked the following question –

22. Is it now official diocesan policy for patron saints of parishes to be given redundancy notices?

To which the President replied –

22. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There is no ordinance giving any diocesan authority the power to give redundancy notices to patron saints.

Relevant clauses in the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 are:

### **5.2 Name of a church**

- (1) The name of a church is that specified in the licence or sentence of consecration.
- (2) The name of a church may only be changed by the Archbishop at the request of the minister and wardens, if any.

### **9.1 Name of parish**

- (1) The name of the parish is that last designated by the Archbishop.
- (2) The name of the parish may only be changed by the Archbishop at the request of the minister and parish council.

From time to time the Archbishop receives requests from the relevant parish authorities to change the name of a church or parish. After considering each request, the Archbishop decides whether he agrees with the proposal.

In recent times there has been one occasion when the long standing name of a parish was changed and the name was subsequently changed back to the original name.

## Question: 11 October 2017

Mr Peter Yates asked the following question –

23.

- (a) What is the status of the Parish of Beacon Hill in the North Sydney Region?
- (b) Why were the Parish's Nomination Rights not restored to it some years ago, following the Parish's agreement to go into partnership with the Parish of Narrabeen and, after the ending of that partnership by the Senior Minister of the Narrabeen Parish?
- (c) Why has the Parish been given neither Nomination Rights nor been declared a Provisional Parish?
- (d) Will the Bishop of North Sydney, as the Acting Rector of the Parish, undertake to hold discussions with the few remaining stalwarts of the parish's congregations (and with past members of the parish who still have an interest) about future alternatives for the Parish?
- (e) Were the Regional Bishop and the Archbishop aware of the decision taken by the then Parish Council, at the insistence of the current Acting Incumbent, to sell the Christian Pre-School Kindergarten that leased the Parish's Church Property, which lease provided, but its rentals, substantial funds to allow the Parish to remain financially viable?
- (f) Is it correct that because of the closure of the Christian Pre-School Kindergarten, together with the departure to other neighbouring parishes of a significant number of longstanding Beacon Hill Church Members, mainly because of that closure, the parish is struggling financially?
- (g) Is it correct that the Archbishop's wife, Dianne, had much of her childhood upbringing in the Parish of Beacon Hill, and that her parents were faithful servants of the Lord Jesus in the Parish for many years?
- (h) Is it correct that the Archbishop, as the previous Regional Bishop of North Sydney, when opening the Parish's new Rectory at Oxford Falls some years ago, encouraged both the then clergy and parishioners of the parish to persevere because the parish had a vital role for Christian growth on the Northern Beaches of Sydney?
- (i) What future does the Diocese see for the Parish of Beacon Hill? Before any decision is taken, will the Regional Bishop of North Sydney undertake to discuss alternative options for the Parish with all of the Church's parishioners who have an interest?

To which the President replied –

23. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) It is a parish, not a provisional parish that has been vacant since the resignation of the Rev David Lakos on 10 October 2010.
- (b) A request was received from the parish nominators with the support of the then Regional Bishop to suspend the nomination process for twelve months until 9 September 2011. A further extension was sought from the parish nominators with the support of the then Regional Bishop for a two year period until 19 July 2013. No further extension was sought.
- (c) To be declared a provisional parish, the parish needs to have failed the local revenue test for 3 consecutive years. This has not occurred. The Parish's nomination rights have lapsed because they did not seek an extension.
- (d) The Bishop of North Sydney has, as recently as two weeks ago, met with the Acting Minister, the Rev Rick Mason, and a warden of the Parish and will continue discussions with the Wardens and the Assistant Minister about the future plans for the Parish.
- (e) The decision in 2015 not to renew the lease to the preschool was made by the Parish Council. The incumbent, namely the Regional Bishop, placed no pressure on the Parish Council with respect to any decision regarding the preschool. Rather he worked hard to broker an agreeable compromise. The Parish Council and Wardens were of the mind that the preschool was not aligned with the ministry purposes of the Parish.
- (f) In its most recent times the preschool was not advertised as a Christian preschool and its chair was not attending any church. Some of the teachers were Christians and they faithfully witnessed to Christ through their work but the preschool was not part of the ministry of the parish and its objects were more aligned with being a community preschool. The financial returns from the parish for the year following the closure of the preschool passed the diocesan test for parish status to be maintained.
- (g) True, but not relevant.
- (h) Yes.
- (i) The Regional Bishop has for some time been in discussions with the wardens and the Parish Council about the future of the Parish and they will be bringing some suggestions to the Parish as a whole in due course.

## **Question: 11 October 2017**

The Rev Peter Tong asked the following question –

24. What strategies does the Diocese have in order to recruit candidates for Anglican ordination? If this is done regionally, what strategies does each Region have?

To which the President replied –

24. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The local church is the primary location for recruiting men and women for ordination. Our ministers are our primary recruiters.

As ministers live in community with, serve with and equip the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4) they are able to identify who has the potential convictions, character and competencies to consider full-time ministry and to encourage such people to pursue training and ordination.

Ministry Training and Development seeks to support this recruiting by speaking at churches about ordained ministry when invited, meeting with people individually and visiting Moore College and Regional Conferences to promote and discuss ordained ministry.

## Question: 11 October 2017

The Rev Peter Tong asked the following question –

25.

- (a) If an incumbent is licensed on a full-time basis, is it purely a matter between the incumbent and his parish council if the incumbent is to take up other positions outside the parish?
- (b) Does the diocese provide any guidelines to help incumbents and parish councils come to part-time arrangements?
- (c) Is this the same process for Assistant Ministers?

To which the President replied –

25. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) A rector is not required to work a set number of hours as part of the office that they hold in the parish. However in most parishes clergy work a 6 day week. It is expected that any proposed deviations from this would be discussed with the Archbishop (or relevant regional bishop) and the parish council.

Habitual and wilful neglect of duty after written admonition is an offence under the *Offences Ordinance 1962*, and will also be a ground of misconduct under the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*. If a member of clergy neglected the duties of their office by taking up another position without the agreement of the Archbishop (or relevant regional bishop) and the parish council they could, depending on the circumstances, be subject to a professional standards process.

- (b) No.
- (c) No. Assistant Ministers are under the direction of the Rector in respect to their ministry duties. An Assistant Minister who is ordained also does not work a set number of hours. Their duties are determined by the Rector, and therefore any position that would require the Assistant Minister allocating time to another pursuit would need to be agreed with the Rector. Depending on the nature of the position, this may involve a commensurate change to the stipend, benefits and allowances paid to the Assistant Minister. The wardens and parish council should therefore also be involved in any such decision.