

TEAMS & COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Does 'everyone achieve more together'?

A Research Paper, with recommendations, for
the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

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ABBREVIATIONS

Code	Code of Practice, <i>Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011</i>
CofE	Church of England
DCC	District Church Council
DMPC	Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee
GM	Group Ministry
Measure	<i>Pastoral Measure 1983</i>
MLT	Ministry Leadership Team
MOA	Memorandum of Understanding
OLM	Ordained Local Minister
PCC	Parochial Church Council (Vestry)
TM	Team Ministry

INTRODUCTION

There are many within the Church of England (hereafter CofE), who would agree, at various levels of enthusiasm, with the statement below by (Australian) theologian Stephen Pickard.

The church is at a critical stage in its life where it urgently requires collaborative and mutually enriching ministries. This will require ministries that embody an interweaving of spontaneity and stability, open to new expressions and resilient through creative adaptation.¹

For several decades now, since at least the passing into law of the first *Pastoral Measure* in 1968 (see further at Part One), and in the wake of significant reports into patterns of ordained ministry commissioned by the national church, in particular the 'Paul Report' in the 1960's and the 'Tiller report' in the 1980's, the CofE has been widely exposed to the concept, theology, and practice of collaborative ministry in a way that is (generally) not true of the Australian experience. Christian ministry in the United States is, similarly, largely untouched by collaborative approaches, if the observation by church consultant Tom Bandy below (made in 2001) is accurate:

No organization more desperately needs a new organizational approach to mission than the church. At long last, the church in all its large and small manifestations is beginning to awaken to the power of teams'.²

But what, specifically, is meant by the term 'collaborative ministry'? At essence it means, of course, 'working together' in the context of Christian ministry. But who? Clergy with other clergy, clergy and laypeople, churchgoers and non-churchgoers, ecumenically, inter-faith etc.? The term can be used of all of the above, and even when it applies exclusively to Christian ministry, and further specifically to Christian ministry in an Anglican context, it can describe both teams of ordained ministers working together in a particular setting, or more broadly, the theological conviction that 'all who are baptized have a share in the ministry the church'.³ The CofE Code of Practice (5.1), drafted to accompany the 2011 *Mission and Pastoral Measure*, acknowledges the problem of definition:

The term "collaborative ministry" covers a wide range of arrangements for shared ministry within (and beyond) the Church of England, some

¹ *Theological foundations for collaborative ministry* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), p. 116.

² 'Let's go, team!' *Net Results* (February 2001), p. 3.

³ David Leslie, 'Educating collaboratively for change', in *Local ministry: story, process & meaning* (ed. Robin Greenwood & Caroline Pascoe; London: SPCK, 2006), p. 94.

formal, some legally regulated, and others informal. It refers to a style of ministry based on partnership and teamwork.⁴

Importantly, there is both a theology and a practice (or applied theology) of collaborative ministry. This is crucial, because in all of the conversations I conducted, with several bishops, numerous archdeacons, diocesan administrators, a church commissioner, and a number of parish priests involved in collaborative ministry, several pointed to an often missing foundation – that of ‘the theology’. Where work had been done in this area, typically the production of diocesan reports on mission and growth (given titles like ‘Going for Growth’ or ‘Renewing Church’), there was often a disjunction between the theological concepts articulated in the report, and the implementation thereof. Sometimes the transition from theory to practice was not made explicit, came too late, or the two bore insufficient resemblance to one another. It is of first importance, then, that there be a theological foundation of collaborative ministry, before there is, in fact, a collaborative ministry.⁵ Generally, this needs to be grounded in the local (diocesan) context, and to arise out of the episcopal vision for the diocese. Hence, such theologies are most commonly found embedded in the types of reports referred to above, which are usually readily available on the web sites of just about any one of the (42 or) 43 dioceses of the CofE.⁶ Having produced a theology of collaborative ministry, most often couched in the language of vision, there follows in most places an applied theology, in which collaborative ministry is expressed ‘on the ground’, in the context of the parish. This may assume a variety of forms admitted by the legislation, which are explained in full in Part One. The manner in which a collaborative ministry might effect and impact on the parish is outlined in Part Two, whilst in Part Three the praxis of collaborative ministry is explored through the means of a series of case studies, examining individual parishes in a variety of settings. A précis of the merits and strengths, together with the flaws and weaknesses, of the collaborative approach, arising primarily out of conversations with team rectors (who were, rather unsurprisingly, more candid than archdeacons and bishops in their comments, especially in regards to the flaws and weaknesses) is then given in Part Four. In the final section of the report, Part Five, a brief summary is given, accompanied by a series of recommendations for consideration by the Diocese of Melbourne.

The content of the five parts to this report was informed by a considerable body of written reports, legislation, and other documentation and literature, listed in an Appendix as ‘Documents Consulted’, supplemented by a very select body of relevant literature, mostly applied theology, which is cited in the small Bibliography. To a somewhat more important extent, the content of the report

⁴ The Code (explained further in Part One) is at pains to point out that, whilst recognizing the existence of informal arrangements, the legislation is dealing only with legally constituted collaborative ministries.

⁵ Of course, Stephen Pickard, in his *Theological foundations for collaborative ministry* cited above, supplies a thorough one – but it is somewhat complex and inaccessible, especially to the non-theologically educated.

⁶ Whether there are 42 or 43 dioceses in the CofE depends on how the singular case of the Isle of Man is regarded.

arises also out of a series of meetings, parish visits, and face to face conversations, conducted across several dioceses of the CofE, over a three week period in late January and early February 2012. The list of consultants and interviewees is provided towards the end of the report in the Appendix 'People Consulted'. I was very fortunate to be given significant time by a number of bishops and archdeacons in various places, including the collected archdeacons of the dioceses of London and Southwark, and to be afforded with extensive documentation and advice by church commissioner Mr. Peter Wagon in the London offices of the commissioners on Great Smith Street. Professor Martyn Percy of Ripon College Cuddesdon provided several insights into the matter of theological education in particular, and the experience of collaborative ministry in general. I am further grateful to the several extremely busy and energetic parish priests and team rectors who agreed to share with me the benefit of their experience of collaborative ministry in face to face conversations. In many ways, their experiences are represented, not just briefly and in summary in the case studies that make up Part Three, but lie beneath the surface of almost all of the recommendations embodied in Part Five. I was, further, most grateful for the generous hospitality of a number of people and places across the country; in particular Clare College Cambridge, St Matthew's Westminster London, and Wycliffe Hall Oxford. And, of course, my thanks and appreciation are extended to the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Revd Dr Philip Freier, and to the Bishop of the Southern Region, the Rt Revd Paul White, for entrusting me with this task, and to my staff, the churchwardens, vestry, and people, of my own parish of St John's Toorak, for releasing me on three weeks study leave to undertake it.

There needs to be, at his point and before proceeding to the body of the report, a word or two about differences, for it is fundamental to all that follows to recognize from the outset that there exist a number of important points of difference between the CofE and the Anglican Church of Australia. The main areas of dissonance are:⁷

- The CofE, being established by law, has an instrument of legislation that is not paralleled in the Australian context, in that legislation passed by General Synod and ratified by Parliament, is capable of being binding on all 43 dioceses in a way that is not true of the Anglican Church of Australia, whereby individual dioceses have the ability to ratify or reject General Synod canons and Parliament has no role.
- Stipends and benefits in the CofE are paid centrally by all dioceses. This means, in effect, that larger and more prosperous parishes effectively subsidise smaller parishes. This also gives diocesan bishops greater ability to maintain 'a Christian presence in every community' (the CofE's vision statement), and greater discretion in the placement of Curates in

⁷ There are, of course, many further areas of difference, among them; that the financial resources of the CofE as a whole, and of many of its dioceses, far surpass that of most Australian dioceses; archdeacons are, generally, not parish priests but function as full time diocesan officers; there is no real direct equivalent in Australia to the English concepts of benefice and patronage.

particular, who may be placed on the basis of need and necessity, to where there is a capable supervisor, and with an eye to future ministry, rather than on the basis of the ability of the parish to pay.

- The CofE has had several decades practice and experience in collaborative ministry, in a variety of ways, sometimes by compulsion, sometimes by necessity, and sometimes voluntarily. The language, concept, and function, of the combined or united benefice, team ministry parish, cluster or group ministry, are all well established and widely recognized, in a way that is generally not present in the Australian experience, except perhaps in some rural dioceses.

And, lastly, it is worth reiterating that it is definitely no accident that the instances of collaborative ministry that I observed which were working well and which were achieving their mission in terms of growth and evangelism, had this in common – they were all founded with a clearly articulated vision to do just this, with stated objectives and guidelines, and with the very strong (and continuing) support of the diocesan leadership.

PART ONE

LEGISLATION AND THE DIOCESE

In 2000 the Archbishop's Council commissioned a review of the operation of existing legislation dealing with diocesan and parish boundaries, team ministries, clerical appointments and deprivations, and the consecration and de-consecration of church buildings. The review, led by Professor Peter Toyne, was the most extensive of any legislation since the General Synod came into being in 1970. Its publication appeared at a watershed moment in the CofE, coinciding with the publication of the 2004 *Mission-Shaped Church* report.⁸ The report led to an amendment of existing legislation, and ultimately to the 2011 *Mission and Pastoral Measure*, which is poised to become law at the next session of General Synod (February 2012), replacing the earlier, and still authoritative, *Pastoral Measure 1983*. Because of the special situation of the CofE, as the established church of England, this legislation, once passed by General Synod and ratified by both Houses of Parliament, and having received the Royal Assent, is then binding on all 43 dioceses of the CofE. It provides a single, comprehensive piece of legislation, governing all and any changes to parishes across the CofE, inclusive of amalgamations, closures, changes to boundaries, and the establishment (or dissolution) of team or group (or other collaborative) ministries. In order to understand how collaborative ministry works, across the CofE, it is imperative then, to understand the legislation.

1.1 THE PASTORAL MEASURE 1983

The sequence of legislation relating to pastoral reorganisations (the term, or as some said, the euphemism, used for implementing team ministries or for amalgamating or closing parishes across the CofE), is as follows:

- 1968, *Pastoral Measure*. Arising out of a General Synod report, permitted the formation of team and group ministries, and provided guidelines for dealing with closed or redundant churches.
- 1983, *Pastoral Measure*. Replaced the 1968 legislation, added a range of new possibilities, and further defined the roles and responsibilities of the clergy within teams and groups.
- 2007, *Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Measure*. Amended the 1983 legislation but did not replace it. Introduced bishop's 'mission orders' (non-geographical parishes).
- 2011, *Mission & Pastoral Measure*. Intended to consolidate existing practices, will become law probably at the February 2012 session

⁸ Not all are enthused by the emergence of mission-shaped church and fresh expressions – a sustained negative critique is conducted by the recently published work of Andrew Davison and Alison Milbank, *For the parish: a critique of fresh expressions* (London, SCM, 2010).

of General Synod, replacing the (still in force at time of writing) 1983 *Pastoral Measure*.

The *Pastoral Measure 1983* (hereafter the 'Measure') is the largest single piece of church legislation in the Church of England.⁹ Its stated purpose is:

To provide the legal process for rearranging benefices and parishes and deciding the future of church buildings closed for regular public worship (or closed churches) so that the Church's limited resources of money and ministers can be deployed as effectively as possible.

An important, practical outcome, to facilitate implementation, is that the Measure required every diocese in the CofE, through its Synod, to establish a Mission and Pastoral Committee. It is of first order importance to note that the Measure understands itself to be a primarily missional document. The first principle stated therein is:

It shall be the duty of any person or body carrying out functions under this Measure to have due regard to the furtherance of the mission of the Church of England.¹⁰

The processes for the establishment of group and team ministries, and combined and united benefices, is set out in the Measure under the sections dealing with the content and effects of pastoral schemes and orders (34).

1.2 THE CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice (henceforth the 'Code') was first issued in 1976, and reissued in 1983 to accompany the Pastoral Measure of that year. A further Code has been drafted to accompany the 2011 legislation when it becomes law. The purpose of the Code is articulated in the opening section:

The Code is intended to serve as a standard reference document for those who operate the legislation for pastoral reorganisation, closed churches and associated matters. It provides guidance on procedures and seeks to identify those areas where problems are most likely to occur in practice (1.8).¹¹

The current form of the Code, the 5th edition of December 2009, has 19 distinct sections and runs to 225 A4 pages. The 2011 draft is slightly longer.

⁹ The status will be retained by the *Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011* which has 112 sections and 7 schedules, and runs to 111 A4 pages.

¹⁰ Mission is here defined in familiar terms, arising out of a number of Measures mainly affecting Parochial Church Councils (or vestries), as 'the whole mission of the Church of England, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical'.

¹¹ It is important to note that the Code does not replace nor act as a substitute to the Measure itself, but is everywhere intended to be used as a supplement to it (1.11).

1.3 THE DIOCESAN MISSION AND PASTORAL COMMITTEE

The *Pastoral Measure 1983* (continued by the amendments of 2007 and the draft 2011 legislation) requires every diocese in the CofE to establish through its Synod a Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee (hereafter DMPC).¹² The Measure defines the functions of the DMPC in wide ranging terms, and as having particular regard to:

- Worship, mission, and community as being central to the life and work of the church (3.1).
- Financial implications for the diocese and church as a whole (3.2a).
- To implement 'better provision' for the cure of souls in the diocese as a whole, in particular parts of the diocese, and in particular parishes (3.3b).
- To maintain an overview of matters related to church buildings in the diocese and their use (3.3d).
- To fix or alter the terms of service of any person employed or holding office in the diocese (3.5b).

The composition of the DMPC is determined by Schedule 1 of the Measure.

- The Chair, which may be the bishop.
- The bishop (if not the chair).
- All archdeacons in the diocese.
- A number of persons appointed and elected in a manner by, and for a period of time, as determined by the diocesan synod, being equal numbers of clergy and laity as 'nearly as possible'.¹³
- There may be sub-committees, the composition of which may include persons who are not members of the DMPC.

One of the express duties of the DMPC since the 2007 amendment is to conduct five yearly reviews.

It shall be the duty of the mission and pastoral committee of a diocese from time to time as may be directed by the bishop, and in any event at least once every five years, to review the arrangements for pastoral supervision in each conventional district in the diocese (4).

As part of its duties, the DMPC makes recommendations to the bishop on pastoral reorganisations within the diocese. The Measure (3) requires the DMPC to consult, so far as is possible, all 'interested parties', and in particular those directly affected by any recommendations that shall be made to the bishop, especially in regard to the possible closure of a church for worship.

¹² The Measure allowed individual dioceses to apply different nomenclature to the DMPC, at their discretion, so long as the functions of the committee were not changed (hence some dioceses have a DMPC under a different name).

¹³ In practice, a number of bishops and archdeacons confided that it is very difficult to recruit lay members to the DMPC, and seats often remain vacant.

1.4 PROCESS FOR PASTORAL REORGANISATION

The DMPC typically follows a long and deliberative process where pastoral reorganisation is being considered (this may include closure, amalgamation, or the formation or reordering of a group or team ministry, or combining individual benefices or parishes). Ultimately the DMPC is responsible for the approval of proposals to be put to the diocesan bishop. The main steps followed in regards to pastoral reorganisations are:

- The DMPC will consider the proposal for a new group or team ministry, or other reorganisation.¹⁴ There will have been a degree of informal consultation with local stakeholders and interested parties prior to this.
- When the committee has given formal approval to the proposal, a draft set of proposals are supplied to the statutory interested parties, as defined by the Measure. They are generally given a period of time (on average two months to respond).
- The responses from interested parties and any other stakeholders are collated and reported to the DMPC. If there are objections, these are noted and action considered at the meeting. A copy of the proposal, noting objections adjudged to have substance if any, is then supplied to the diocesan bishop.
- The proposal and associated paperwork is forwarded to the Church Commissioners. The paperwork details that the procedure has been followed as per the Measure. The Commissioners then determine whether to publish a draft Pastoral Scheme detailing the reorganisation and / or formation of the Team (in practice, it is very rare for the proposal to be rejected at this stage).
- Upon receipt of the draft Pastoral Scheme, a copy is sent to all interested parties again, and must be displayed at all places of worship affected, giving all stakeholders the opportunity to make representations. The time frame for this is generally around two months.
- If there are no objections the scheme will be signed and come into effect on the date indicated in the draft. If there are objections and negative representations, the Church Commissioners will adjudicate on whether they are reasonable. The scheme may be revoked if it is determined (by the Church Commissioners) that there is a high level risk it may fail.
- Final appeals are to the Privy Council, but this is rare.

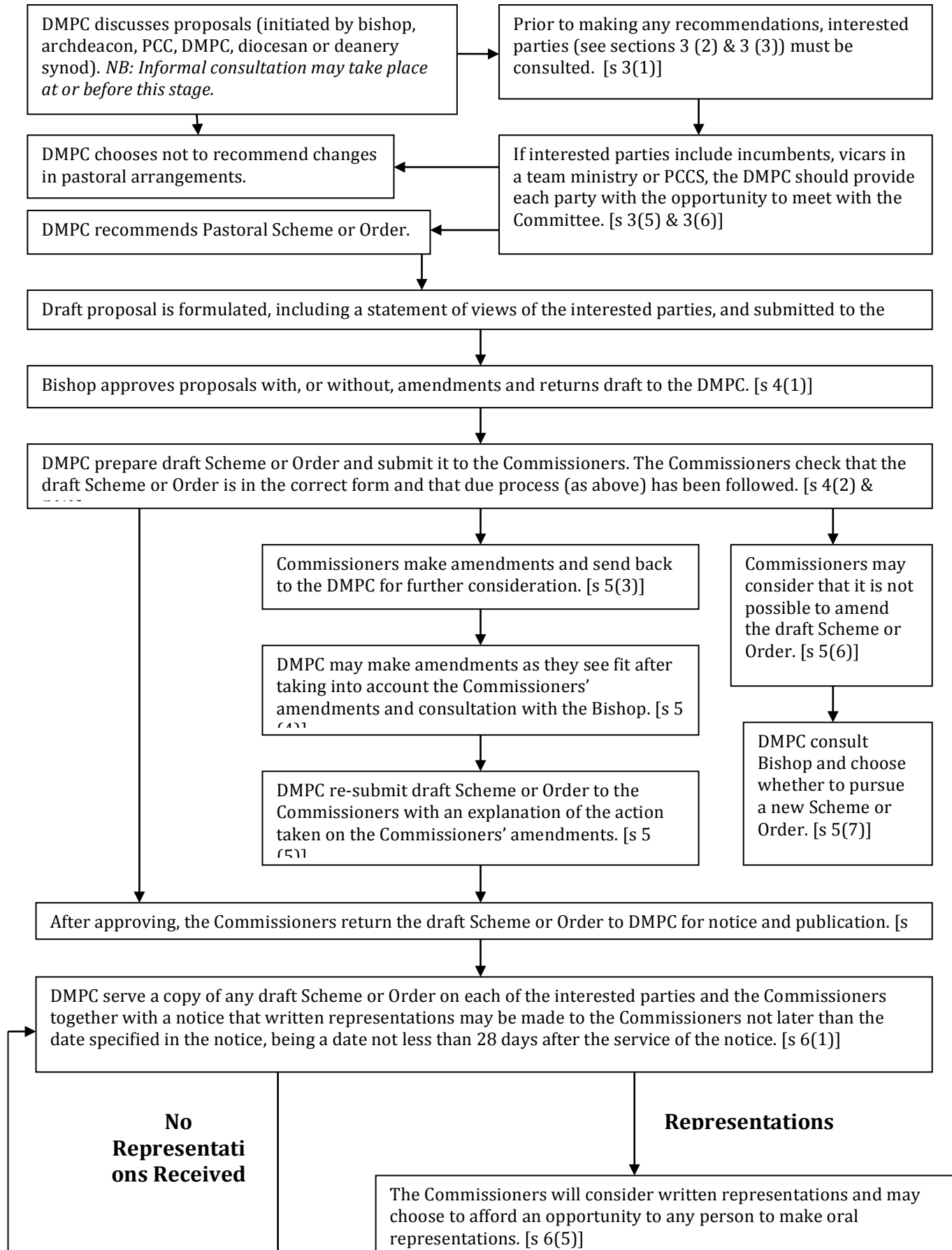
The document establishing, amending, or dissolving, a pastoral reorganisation, is a 'Pastoral Scheme'. This sets out pragmatic things such as the name of the entity (if applicable), describes any change to parish boundaries, allocates a deanery and archdeaconry, and names the clerics to be licensed to the entity, as well as

¹⁴ There may be a sub-committee in place to consider the proposal. For instance, Chelmsford diocese requires that the deanery and episcopal area sub committees consider the matter before coming to the DMPC. The convener notes: 'in many ways the diocesan level is the rubber stamp, with the consideration largely taking place at local level'.

the terms by which the entity will function legally. Once issued, by the church commissioners, the pastoral scheme can only be revoked by petition to the same.

Pastoral Measure 1983 – Part I (the first)

Progress of the Pastoral Scheme or Order



1.5 MEASURING VITALITY

It is worthwhile briefly canvassing the instruments used for determining the health and vitality of individual churches, and to gain an understanding of the measures used to assess the need for reorganisations, which are considered by a DMPC in making recommendations. In their comprehensive report to the Diocese of London (*Another capital idea 2010*), Bob Jackson and Alan Piggott identify the following as being essential indicators of church health.

- Electoral roll or 'membership' (acknowledging the varied nature and vulnerability of this measure).
- Average Sunday attendance at all advertised Sunday services
- Average weekly attendance at all services
- Attendances at Christmas and Easter
- Annual giving ('live offertory')
- The number of people who 'joined' and the number who 'left' during the course of a year ('joiners and leavers').¹⁵

In the same report, Jackson and Piggott identify these as mitigating factors:

- Frequency of attendance: it is not that there are fewer attenders in many places, but that those who do attend do so less frequently (the authors estimate that the average churchgoer attends around six in every ten Sundays)
- Long vacancies (over six months) led to decline, of 10-15% on average during an interregnum
- Turnover of people due to fluid job and housing markets
- Poor welcome and integration strategies
- The 'glass ceiling' inhibiting growth beyond 75-125 for mid-size churches
- Lack of a vision or Mission Action Plan.

These indicators, together with the mitigating factors inhibiting growth, are used by the Diocese of London to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of parishes in the jurisdiction, with a view to formulating strategies for growth and development across the diocese well prior to a crisis point being reached in individual places. The policy in London is, overtly, 'not to close anything', but to foster ministry in all existing physical localities, even where a stipend cannot be justified. In these instances, a 'fresh expressions' team, or 'planting team', often drawn from the immensely successful Holy Trinity Brompton, will be 'sent out' to revive the fortunes of the non-viable parish.

In discussing church viability it is critically important to note that the CofE, in every diocese I visited, are generally committed to retaining parishes that may be non-viable by most or even all of the above measures, so as to attain the stated goal of the national church to be 'a Christian presence in every community'. The measure of viability may well be, then, 'Do we want to be here'?

¹⁵ This measure is being pioneered by the Diocese of Leicester, with encouraging results, as a way of penetrating beyond the reporting of averages.

or 'Do we need to be here'? If the answer is 'yes', the ministry in that place will be sustained through the formation of a team or group, or by subsidization. Furthermore, it is important to note that, because all stipends are paid centrally by the diocese, the financial ability of a parish to pay to a stipend is not the most critical test of viability – indeed, in some places this is irrelevant. One diocese, for instance, uses the measure of 'priest per population' to determine how many stipends will be paid to a particular parish or ministry area. The calculation is one stipend per 12,000 people; hence a parish with a population of 8,000 would receive a part time (66%) stipend, but a parish with 25,000 people would receive two full time stipends. It is more accurate to say that, in the CofE, viability is measured at diocesan, rather than parish, level – i.e. the diocese, through its central office, determines the number of stipends it can sustain across the whole diocese, and if less than the number of present full time stipendiary positions, determines through a committee (often the DMPC), a process of consultation often at Deanery Synod level (which has no equivalent in Melbourne), or an existing strategic plan, where the cuts will be made.¹⁶

1.6 COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES ACROSS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Finally, a brief survey of the number and extent of collaborative ministries across the CofE is helpful before proceeding to a discussion of their implementation at parish level. Figures provided by the Church Commissioners show the following:

- At December 2011 there were in the CofE
 - 516 team ministries
 - 184 group ministries¹⁷
- In the four calendar years from 2007 to 2011
 - 54 team or group ministries were established
 - 9 were varied
 - 80 were dissolved
- The highest numbers of team and group ministries were in the dioceses of Exeter, Salisbury, Oxford, and Lichfield, all largely rural dioceses, although Chelmsford (in Essex, a mixture of urban and rural), Manchester, and Bristol, also had significant numbers.

It is worth noting that the enthusiasm for collaborative ministries varies from diocese to diocese, often depending on the perspective of the bishop concerned, and sometimes in the light of local history and experience. The diocese of London, for instance, generally, does not form team or group ministries – the stated preference is for 'a priest in every parish' and, if this is not possible, rather than form a team or group with neighbouring parishes, the next option is for a non-stipendiary, part time cleric, house for duty arrangement, or 'planting team'. This may be possible in a place like London, which attracts very significant

¹⁶ This can still be very difficult for all involved – one archdeacon I visited was coming to terms with the realisation that he was going to be recommending that up to 60 presently full time stipendiary positions will need to be made redundant in the next ten years, across his diocese.

¹⁷ The distinction is explained in Part Two.

numbers of clerics seeking both stipendiary and non-stipendiary posts, but is less possible in rural areas, for instance, which often have a high number of parishes, lower numbers of clergy, and less resources. The situation was markedly different 'across the river' in Southwark for instance. It is, further, unsurprising that the vast majority of team and group ministries are in rural dioceses.

PART TWO

COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY, PASTORAL REORGANISATION, AND THE PARISH

The traditional model of church life that invariably comes to mind is that of one church, one vicar, one parish. Since the 1968 Measure, when team and group ministries first emerged, and in the wake of the pioneering work of John Tiller among others in this area, the traditional model (although a long way from dead) has increasingly been supplemented by a variety of other models across the CofE. Almost every deanery, and most parishes, in every diocese, have been exposed to alternative ways of 'being church' – from group ministries, cluster ministries, united and combined benefices, to team ministries, and now to fresh expressions.¹⁸ The advent of fresh expressions, the impact of the mission-shaped church report, and the now decades long experience of pastoral reorganisations, prompts Robert Warren to call time on the 'mental model' of the parish as 'church = building + priest + Sunday services' that is so deeply embedded in our culture, and especially our church culture.¹⁹ One of the successors to that 'old model' (although not by any means the only one) are collaborative forms of ministry. The nomenclature, and the varieties of collaborative ministry, recognised within the several hundred pages of the *Pastoral Measure*, allow for a wide range of possibilities that take us far beyond the traditional 'one vicar, one parish' model.

2.1 DEFINITIONS

The Code of Practice (5.3) distinguishes between three types of collaborative ministry, which may take effect at parish level.

(a) TEAM MINISTRY (hereafter TM)

- An arrangement whereby a team of clergy (and sometimes lay people) legally share ministry in a parish or across more than one parish.²⁰
- Essentially there are no boundaries between the individual churches within the team ministry, but a single 'team ministry area' encompassing all of the churches therein; even if the individual churches remain as parishes in their own right and retain their own PCC, and have their own 'team' vicar

¹⁸ Not all of the models are directly relevant to the Australian context, which lacks any direct equivalent, in most cases, to the benefice, to patronage, and a number of other situations unique to the CofE. The concepts of group or cluster ministries, and team ministries, are however, directly relevant.

¹⁹ *The healthy churches handbook: A process for revitalizing your church* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004), p. 83.

²⁰ The Code of Practice (6.3) strongly recommends that teams comprise a minimum of three members.

- Often there is a 'main' or 'parish church', of which the team rector is also the vicar, and one or more 'district' churches with their own team vicars
- This situation exists, in various forms and in varying degrees of likeness, in the Diocese of Melbourne, in the form of the multi-centre parish.

(b) GROUP MINISTRY (hereafter GM)

- A grouping of one or more parishes whereby the clergy of two or more parishes are under a legal duty to assist each other to make the best possible provisions for the cure of souls in the area as a whole
- Often the group is formed when one parish is invited (some would say required) by the diocesan bishop (typically through the DMPC) to enter into a ministry and resource sharing arrangement with another parish
- This often occurs where one parish is asked to 'take on' another neighbouring parish, but a variety of circumstances are possible.

Where a group ministry (sometimes called a 'cluster' or 'ministry area' depending on the diocese concerned) is established, the parishes involved generally retain their own identity, boundaries, and sometimes clergy. This situation typically arises where it is desirable that one or more 'weaker' parishes, share ministry with a 'stronger' parish, so as to sustain ministry in all of the communities represented. The group may also be established to facilitate a fresh expression, a mission to a particular group or sub group in the community, a new plant in a new ministry area, or a like project. Typically group ministries are geographically arranged, but not always – the Diocese of Derby has recently appointed a single parish priest to a group ministry consisting of two like (Forward in Faith) parishes several miles apart. Group ministries encompass a broad variety of situations that may include a united or combined benefice, whereby, typically, it is determined that a benefice (parish) becoming vacant will be combined with a neighbouring parish and the vicar of the neighbouring parish will become vicar of both parishes. This situation, very common in rural dioceses, effectively means that the cleric is being asked to continue as vicar to his or her own parish, whilst additionally becoming vicar to the 'other' parish also. Confusingly, a GM can also include a parish in which a TM operates!

(c) MINISTRY TEAMS

This is a distinct category, influenced by the work of Robin Greenwood and others, whereby there exists an informal arrangement for the sharing of ministry among clerics and lay people, in a particular parish or district. Such teams, which are convened informally and at local level, have no statutory basis and are not governed by the provisions of the Measure or the Code of Practice.²¹

²¹ Such teams are often called Ministry Leadership Teams (MLT's), and seem to, in some manifestations, embrace the whole of the parish, not just the leaders. See Robin Greenwood, *The ministry team handbook* (London: SPCK, 2000).

2.3 TEAMS OR GROUPS?

Whether a team or group Ministry is established in the CofE is determined by the implementation of a Pastoral Scheme or, in the case of group ministries, a Pastoral Order,²² both of which are issued under the provisions of the Pastoral Measure. The decision, team or group, is generally governed by factors such as the prevailing methodology current in that diocese at the time; the history, if any, of the parishes affected (often there is already a TM to which a new parish or benefice is being added); and sometimes convictions about the merits, or otherwise, of either approach. In the diocese of Chichester, for instance, teams are currently being replaced with groups in most new pastoral reorganisations, on the basis that groups have functioned more effectively. There is, furthermore, quite a bit of truth to the understanding of many in the church that creating group ministries involving more than one parish, initially without any change to the number of stipendiary clergy within the group, does make it easier to be reductionist in the future (i.e. a group ministry, commencing with three stipendiary clergy working across three parishes, creates the situation whereby the diocese can readily reduce the number of stipendiary clergy to two at a future date, typically on the resignation or retirement of one of the group clergy, without, of course, reducing the number of parishes in the group). In essence, and often very confusingly, teams and groups function in like ways; in that some groups work very effectively in partnership across parishes and among different clerics and lay people, whilst some teams effectively function as individual parishes in their own right, treating each other with a suspicious aloofness. Almost everything hinges on the quality, or otherwise, of the relationships between the clergy and lay people involved, in both team and group (indeed all collaborative) situations.

2.4 THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTERS

It is usual for team and group ministry clergy to have distinct roles and responsibilities. For example:

- Team rector for the whole TM (incorporating church X Y and Z), who may have particular responsibility for, and be team vicar for, church X, in addition to being team rector
- Team vicars, usually geographically defined – e.g., a team vicar for each of church Y and Z, or a team vicar with responsibility for churches Y and Z together.

The team clergy are often supplemented by other clerics and lay people in a variety of roles. These typically include:

²² A Pastoral Order is less complex, and quicker to obtain, than a Pastoral Scheme.

- Associate priests, often retired or semi-retired, full or part time stipendiary, or house for duty
- Curates in training
- Youth or Families and Children's Ministers
- Pastoral workers or visitors
- Parish Readers
- Ordained Local Ministers.²³

Sometimes ministers, and occasionally team vicars, have particular areas of pastoral responsibility within a team or group; for instance to a school community, to children and families, to pastoral visiting, chaplaincy, or to a religious community, depending on the nature of the arrangement and the demands in the local area. This is, generally, rare, though several more recently formed teams have taken this approach.

2.5 ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

It is always helpful, indeed essential, for there to be clearly defined and carefully worded job descriptions for each position within the team or group (indeed, this was the main purpose of the 2005 amendment to the Measure, which sought to further define the nature of the roles within teams and groups). The Code of Practice acknowledges in more than one place the necessity for good communication, well developed and mutually agreed position descriptions, together with the closely related priority of internal relationships:

Clarity about the task to be performed and trust and inter-dependence between participants are crucial if collaborative ministry is to be effective. Where these characteristics are lacking, the energy and effort needed to keep the team or group together may outweigh the benefit of having the team or group (5.4).

The effectiveness of ministry in a team often depends on the agreement of clear job descriptions (6.11).

The relationships within a team or group can be very complex and demand a high level of spiritual maturity. The Measure and Code legislate that the team members are to relate to each other on the basis of parity, under the 'sensitive' leadership of the team rector, in a non-hierarchical way (Code, 6.9). This results in the situation whereby the team rector and team vicars are 'equals', each having the status of incumbent, but whereby the team rector has only a 'moral authority' within the team, despite the title that implies he or she is the 'team leader'.

²³ In some rural dioceses, the ordained local minister (OLM) is ordained by the church and licensed to minister in a single geographical area only, i.e. one parish, and sometimes only one church within a team ministry parish.

2.6 COLLEGIALITY

The Code of Practice recognizes that collegiality is at the heart of the collaborative project.

Regular meetings are central to the life of an effective team ministry. Although the legislation deals with “business” meetings, it is also essential for the team to meet regularly for worship and prayer, and meetings to simply enjoy one another’s company and to have fun are also to be commended! The use of a consultant may help the team to meet and work together.

This is a lofty, if somewhat idyllic, goal to find expression in a legal document! The manner in which collegiality is achieved among the clerics working in five individual team ministries is discussed in the case studies that make up Part Three

2.7 APPOINTMENTS & TENURE

Whilst the particular ministry roles that exist in each team or group ministry are described by the Pastoral Scheme or Pastoral Order that initially created or amended that team or group (e.g. ‘there shall be a team rector, and three team vicars...’ etc.), each of the team members occupy those roles by virtue of the bishop’s license. Most existing team rectors have ‘freehold’ in regards to tenure, although the introduction of the *Ecclesiastical Terms of Service Measure 2009* limited all new appointments in some ways, including mandatory retirement at seventy. The team rector within a TM is appointed by the bishop and has a right of veto in the appointment of all TM positions, especially in regards to team vicars who are jointly appointed by the bishop and the team rector. Within a TM, all of the licensed clergy (usually team vicars), have a similar right of veto in regards to any new appointment of a team vicar or other member of the team mandated by the Scheme or Order. This does not, generally, include Curates, who are licensed directly to the team rector in most cases for training and supervision.

2.8 LITURGICAL LIFE

The nature of most TM’s provide for clergy who have particular or special responsibility to individual churches (one or more) within the TM. This can mean that a parish church, having originally been a single centre parish in its own right, might conceivably enter a TM and experience little or even no change to the regime of Sunday worship, with the vicar in place (now called a team vicar) continuing to have responsibility for that church and continuing to lead most, if not all, liturgical services in that church.

Most TM’s have come to exercise, however, considerable intentionality in regards to ensuring each church within the TM experiences the benefit of a shared ministry.

- Whilst having particular responsibility for one or more churches within the TM, there will usually be some deliberate rotation among the licensed clergy of the TM
- There is usually at least one, and sometimes more, occasions each year on which the whole of the TM parish will worship together, typically on a major feast day or patronal festival
- The TM clergy will often share the demand for pastoral services.

This can often be invigorating, but also unsettling and difficult, as it is frequently the case that individual churches within a single TM will have different traditions and liturgical styles – often the grouping into a TM is determined by geography, although tradition and ‘churchmanship’ are taken into consideration. A frequent situation also is the formation of a TM in order to ‘lose a stipend’. In this situation, what were three individual parishes served by three individual clerics, may be joined together into a single TM with two clerics, meaning of course the clergy must be shared across the three centres.

2.9 GOVERNANCE

A small variety of governance structures are in place, operating under the *Parochial Church Council Powers Measure* and the Church Representation Rules. The governance structure in place is determined by the wording of the Pastoral Scheme that creates or revises the group or team. This is a critical point, as it is often very difficult, and time consuming, to amend or abolish the governance structure once it is in place.

The ideal structure of governance, according to the Measure, for a TM parish is that of the single Team Council:

- A Single Team Council for the whole parish, meeting 6 times annually
- A single Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the whole parish
- Individual churches within the TM parish do not maintain their own PCC, but may have a District Church Council (DCC) which has no legislative authority, but deals with matters especially relevant to that particular church, effectively operating as a sub-committee of the Team Council.

More common, however, is the model whereby individual churches within the team or group retain their own distinct PCC's. This is frequently a pragmatic concession, without which the pastoral reorganisation creating the team or group would have been strongly opposed at parish level. In effect this means that each church within the team or group operates its own affairs through its PCC. The serious pitfall to this model is obvious – there are lots of meetings! The *Mission-Shaped parish* report noted that in one combined benefice, a new incumbent found herself spending 54 evenings of the year at meetings of the nine individual PCC's.²⁴ The retention of PCC's within a team or group further

²⁴ Paul Bayes & Tim Sledge (eds), *Mission-shaped parish: traditional church in a changing context* (London: Church House Publishing, 2009), p. 115.

leads inevitably, to parochialism within the team ministry area. This results in the situation whereby it is uncommon, for example, for churches having their own PCC, to volunteer to pay for, or subsidise, expenses incurred by another church in the team or group for maintenance, restorations, or urgent repairs, thus diminishing the concept of the 'team' and the collaborative nature of the ministry itself.

PART THREE

CASE STUDIES

Case studies and examples are drawn from a range of sources, inclusive of written reports, diocesan assessments of individual teams, and direct contact with the team ministry concerned, primarily through its team rector. TM situations from across a spectrum of socio-economic and demographically diverse areas, across theological and liturgical traditions, and in different dioceses, were sought as examples of how teams actually function 'on the ground', in the widest possible sense.

3.1 CASE STUDY A

Suburban parish, Diocese of Birmingham

The Context & Community

The community is a mixture of commuters, mainly families, together with significant council house estates experiencing considerable social disadvantage. There are ten schools in the parish area, and a very high demand for pastoral services, funerals in particular (230 in the last church year).

The parish

The team ministry is centered on an ancient parish church, which is a very significant landmark and presence in the community, and one of the most important parish churches in the Diocese of Birmingham. The team ministry was established twenty years ago, but had failed when the current incumbent took up the post twelve years ago. Two years 'repair work' was required to re-establish the team. In addition to the main church, there are two other district churches in the parish, however neither has a church building, both meet in community centre halls.

Governance

There is a single PCC. The two district churches elect churchwardens and retain their own DCC which effectively functions as a sub-committee of the PCC. All of the decisions are taken at PCC level, with extensive consultation across the parish.

Ministry Team

There are three clerics in the team ministry.

Team rector, full time stipendiary.

Two team vicars, full time stipendiary.

Supported by two Readers, one Administrator, and two retired clergy.

The team arranges ministry in a manner that is different to other TM parishes, in that the team vicars do not have primary responsibility for an individual church or faith community, but for areas of ministry.

The team rector oversees vision and mission.

One team vicar oversees all of the ministry to the schools.

One team vicar has responsibility for confirmation, learning, and discipleship.

Other areas of ministry are shared between the three stipendiary clergy as equally as possible.

The clergy within the team represent different traditions within the church, with the team rector identifying strongly with the 'liberal catholic' tradition, and one of the team vicar's with the evangelical tradition.

Weaknesses, challenges and work areas

The team is functioning at a high level now, but it was hard work and took a long time! The key to the current success is entirely in the relationships – it took time to bring the team clergy to a place where each felt open, honest, and comfortable in the presence of the other. Considerable emphasis was placed on recruiting the right person to the team. There is, still a sense, however, that relationship breakdown is a real possibility, and the team needs to be continually vigilant.

Strengths and positives

The demands of a very busy parish are being shared constructively across the team clergy, mission is being enhanced, and the parish is growing as a result. The team rector confesses that he alone could not possibly meet all of the needs here – but with two colleagues assisting, bringing giftedness and skills in different areas, it is possible to make a real difference in a demanding ministry context.

The future

Very bright. The parish is flourishing under its present leadership.

3.2 CASE STUDY B

Suburban parish, Diocese of Southwark

The Context & Community

The team ministry includes three parishes in a southern borough of London. The borough is predominately 'middle class', but has several pockets of social disadvantage, and there is a residual undercurrent of unrest created by the perceived 'disenfranchisement' felt by some sections of the predominant Anglo-Saxon community due to very high unemployment and the noticeable contrasting fortunes of some immigrant groups from the sub-continent and Eastern Europe.

The parish

The team ministry parish includes three centres, which came into creation six years ago through implementation of a Pastoral Scheme sponsored by the diocese.

Governance

Each of the three churches in the TM area retains its own PCC. Consequently, there is no Team Council and no formal instrument for the lay people of the parish to come together.

Ministry Team

The team ministers are:

Team Rector, full time stipendiary

Team Vicar, full time stipendiary

Team Curate, part time stipendiary

Team Curate, non stipendiary

The clergy are supported, from time to time, by a local hospital chaplain, and by one lay Reader.

The clergy meet weekly to discuss pastoral needs and to 'de-brief' after Sunday worship, as well as plan for the future.

Weaknesses, challenges and work areas

One of the main issues identified by the team rector is that of 'pastoral continuity'. Unlike other TM situations, the team has no dedicated 'team vicar' for each church. The clergy spread themselves over the three centres through a complex rotation system, which means it is very difficult to ascertain who is worshipping where Sunday by Sunday, who is new, and who has 'dropped out'. A further problem area is the level of administration imposed by the Pastoral Scheme when it was first devised, allowing each church in the TM to retain its own PCC. As a consequence, there is a minimum of cooperation among the TM churches, each of which continues to function, in many ways, as an individual parish that just happens to share its clergy with another parish. It is, furthermore, difficult to implement things across the parish, for each one of the three churches retains a right of veto through its PCC (this has happened recently, when one church in the TM blocked a move to simplify the roster by changing the times of worship, even though the other two churches had adopted it).

Strengths and positives

The existence of the TM provides a level of support and mutual encouragement that would otherwise be lacking among the clergy, who often spend time debriefing, reflecting, and praying together, as well as sharing ideas and visions for the future. Through the arrival of new Curates, different theological and liturgical perspectives are also brought to the TM, resulting in a greater awareness, and

acceptance of, the full diversity of the church. Together, the three churches are able to sponsor joint ministries to young people and children, a joint Lent studies program, and occasional combined services on major feast days.

The future

Very positive. Two of the three churches in the TM are growing steadily.

3.3 CASE STUDY C

Suburban parish, Diocese of Chelmsford

Context & Community

The TM is located in the Diocese of Chelmsford, in a growing coastal central area. The community served by the parish is diverse, including some fashionable districts, but also some areas suffering substantial social disadvantage. Around 22,000 people live within the parish area.

The parish

There are four churches in the parish area.

Governance

Each church has its own PCC, but a Team Council administers the shared costs, primarily stipends.

Ministry Team

There are six clerics in the TM.

Team rector, full time stipendiary

Two team vicars, full time stipendiary

Two non-stipendiary priests

One Assistant Curate, non-stipendiary

The team meets:

Weekly (morning) for prayer and mutual support and encouragement

Monthly (evening) for administrative matters

Twice for extended times away annually

Each of the team members have particular responsibility for one of the four churches in the parish, although there is a rotation system, and there are combined services for major feast days.

Weaknesses, challenges and work areas

Although in existence for over thirty years, the TM has a 'chequered history'. Many parishioners at the individual centres lack a strong or meaningful connection to the wider parish. Hence, it is common for events to be supported only if they are based at, or directly effect, 'my church'. There is some degree of the different congregations within the TM differentiating themselves from one

another, mainly on the basis of 'churchmanship'. Communication can be a recurring problem: 'it is easy for the clergy to assume that because they know what is happening across the parish, so does everybody else'. A further concern are transitions – as clergy come and go, the dynamics of the team change and shift, and this is felt across the parish. It was noteworthy that the description of 'team' is almost universally applied in the parish to the clergy alone. The sense of team among the laity is far less present, and sometimes lacking altogether.

Strengths and positives

The primary strengths recognized were pragmatic. There is a widely accepted understanding that, without the presence of the TM, the individual churches would not have survived in their present form. The establishment of the TM has enabled resources to be shared and utilized in a cost effective manner. This has had the tangible result of enabling ministry and enabling an Anglican presence in the four communities served by the parish. The range of clerical skills, and the benefits of experiencing different approaches to ministry across the parish, were also well reported strengths. There is a growing confidence in the team and in the future viability of the parish.

The future

Cautiously optimistic.

3.4 CASE STUDY D

Market town parish, Diocese of Chester

Context & Community

The TM includes four churches located in or near the city centre of a large market town, serving around 23,000 people. The team includes one large and prominent church, located in the town centre. Two churches are located nearby in largely middle class areas, whilst one is within a large council estate. The age range and demographic served by the team is extraordinarily diverse.

The parish

There are four churches in the TM.

Governance

Each church has its own PCC. There is also a Team Council which oversees the central finances and gives advice and direction to the individual PCC's.

Ministry Team

There are seven ministers (ordained and lay) in the TM.

Team rector, full time stipendiary

Two team vicars, full time stipendiary

Town Centre Minister, full time stipendiary.
 Director of 'Create' (a youth ministry), full time stipendiary
 Two non-stipendiary lay ministers
 Team PA & Administrator, full time

In 2006 the TM restructured its operation, largely under the inspiration of the 'ministry leadership team' (MLT) ideals being championed by Robin Greenwood and others. Instead of a team vicar leading each of the four churches in the TM, a 'Local Leadership Team' made up of lay people was developed. The result is that each church has a strong lay leadership that drives its operation locally, with the clergy taking on strategic direction and leadership roles across the parish, and having an active ministry to develop gifts in others.

Weaknesses, challenges and work areas

It has taken considerable time for the four churches to develop the right mix of ordained and lay leadership, and to utilize the skills and gifts of the lay people in the parish. Whilst there is a high level of satisfaction with the current operation and leadership, there is also a sense of awareness that success depends very heavily on the present ordained leadership. The need for succession planning is apparent.

Strengths and positives

The four churches have developed a strong working relationship under the leadership of the clergy, with teams of local lay leaders taking increased responsibility for the operation of each of the four centres. The four churches are able, together, to fund a youth ministry across the churches, central administration, and combined Confirmation classes and Lent studies. The ministry has been so successful that several other neighbouring parishes have enquired about joining!

The future

Very bright.

3.5 CASE STUDY E

Large coastal resort, Diocese of Chichester

The Context & Community

The team parish is centered on a seaside township near the large urban centres of Brighton and Hove. Although having a reputation as a place people retire to, the community has attracted significant numbers of commuters, and is growing rapidly, especially in the 'families with children' demographic. The socio-demographic is mixed, though predominately average to middle-class, with some areas encompassed by the parish which are centered on large council estates, experiencing considerable social disadvantage.

The parish

The parish emerged as a team ministry naturally. The three 'district churches' were all founded by a large and prominent parish in the town centre, which has one of the largest and strongest Sunday congregations in the diocese. The parish includes three churches each with its own building and one outreach congregation worshipping in a school hall.

Governance

The parish is governed by a single PCC which, in the Pastoral Scheme creating the TM, is stipulated as the only statutory decision making body and which functions as a Team Council. Each of the three district churches maintain their own DCC, but these have no statutory authority. Additionally, a lay led leadership team has been developed in each congregation to drive mission and vision.

Ministry Team

There are six members of the ministry team.

The team rector, full time stipendiary, who is also team vicar of one church.

A team vicar (3) for each of the three district churches, each full time stipendiary.

A team Curate, full time stipendiary, licensed to the team rector.

An associate priest, honorary, who is chaplain to the community hospital.

Weaknesses, challenges and work areas

The team operates as a 'loose coalition', with the team vicars taking primary responsibility for each of their churches, each retaining a fairly high degree of autonomy. A frequent frustration for the team rector is the inability to exert anything more than 'moral' authority. It is recognized that the team exists on the basis of the past history between the churches involved and the shared 'churchmanship' and theology of the clergy involved (all are charismatic-evangelical). It is conceded that it would be very difficult to maintain the team without the presence of these two factors. Despite the long history of working together and the well established presence of the team, there is still a strong sense of parochialism, and an unwillingness among many parishioners to 'subsidise' another church.

Strengths and positives

The main strengths are in the ability of the clerics to share ministry in areas of giftedness – for instance, one member of the team is especially gifted pastorally and undertakes most of the home communion and hospital visitations on behalf of all. The three team vicars are all clerics who, whilst no longer Curates, are not in a position or at a stage of their ministry whereby they would be appointed to a parish in their own right (for a variety of reasons). The addition of the non-stipendiary hospital chaplain, who is the only woman and the only non-evangelical (she has an Anglo-Catholic background), has brought diversity and commanded a new level of respect and willingness to work together across traditional boundaries.

The future

Assured. This is one of the largest and most prominent parishes in the diocese.

PART FOUR

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The Church of England has been undertaking ‘pastoral reorganisations’ for several decades, largely out of necessity, but more positively, out of a proclaimed desire to be ‘a Christian presence in every community’. In practice, this means maintaining failed or non-viable parishes, especially in places where the church desires to be present, generally by creating team or group ministry situations. Since the 1990’s the emergence of ‘fresh expressions’ of church in many places alongside traditional forms, such as the parish, has led the move toward a ‘mixed economy’ church (a term coined by Archbishop Rowan Williams). These new possibilities are now being reflected in the training and placement of new ordinands and of ministers in training, and are finding expression, under various guises and with different nomenclature, through the vehicle of national and diocesan reports, together with a wealth of other literature. There is, consequently, a considerable resource, both anecdotal, experiential, and written, accumulating around the phenomenon of collaborative ministry within the CofE, all of which facilitates an informed discussion of the strengths and weaknesses, together with the strengths and opportunities.

4.1 WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES

Ian Cundy points to the most commonly heard criticism of the TM model – there is a widespread perception that it is about ‘managing decline’ rather than promoting growth.²⁵ Cuddesdon theologian Helen Cameron notes: ‘I have not discovered any teams that come into being primarily for reasons of mission’.²⁶ This surmounts to something like the public impression, beyond the church itself. In the wake of opposition to a cap on welfare benefits largely driven by bishops in the House of Lords, John Baird (founder of *The Big Issue*) observed in *The Times* (24th January 2012, p. 20), ‘we know what happens when bishops have less money to play with: they create economies. They join a number of churches together under the ministry of one priest’. There is, therefore, a widespread perception across the CofE, and in the community in general, that team and group ministries are a way of spreading resources more thinly so as to relieve overstretched clergy, and by depending more heavily on other (largely voluntary) helpers, and that all of this accepts the continued inevitability of decline. Bob Jackson, in his influential *Hope for the Church* (2002) and *Road to Growth* (2005), finds that ‘teams often created more problems than they

²⁵ In Steven Croft (ed). *The future of the parish system: shaping the Church of England for the twenty-first century* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), p. 164.

²⁶ *Models of parochial ministry study day* (notes), September 2009. However in my visit to Birmingham I heard a first hand description of a TM created in 1980 in an area undergoing rapid immigration, that was purely for missionary purposes, in that it was not driven by economic considerations, and which remains well established to the present day.

solved'.²⁷ His analysis of the statistical trends was that, 'in a number of dioceses where I have looked at the attendance trends of team parishes I have found them to be significantly worse than those of traditional single-vicar parishes'.²⁸ He identifies the chief factors curtailing growth in TM parishes as:

- Extra layer of administration imposed by the legislation
- Extra meetings required
- Conflicts and personality clashes
- Ambiguity in structures (e.g. Who is in charge of the team vicar's parish? The team vicar who lives in the vicarage and functions as parish priest, or the team rector who has legal charge?)
- Short length of incumbencies and of periods of service for individual clergy in the TM, especially team vicars, for whom the position is often seen as a pathway to 'something better'.

Whilst not arguing for the abolition of TM's, for these reasons Bob Jackson does number TM's among the 'self inflicted wounds presently inhibiting growth' in the CofE.²⁹ Importantly, his criticisms are less strident of group ministries. Whilst Bob Jackson has a number of supporters in this assessment, there remain many enthusiastic proponents of the collaborative approach. It is more fair, and I think more accurate, to say that, to borrow the words of one archdeacon, 'the jury is still out' when it comes to assessing the success, or otherwise, of teams and groups in the CofE. Or, in the assessment of Professor Martyn Percy of Ripon College Cuddesdon, the results of the team approach over the last thirty years have been 'patchy'.

A, further, major pitfall is inherent in the observation of Bishop Rogerson (Bristol), that teams have expended much energy in maintaining relationships, that might have been expended in mission of the church. Or, in other words, that teams inevitably become self focused and inward looking, in a way that is detrimental to the evangelistic mission of the church. Few would deny that it is clear that the success, or otherwise, of team and group parishes relies very heavily on the emotional intelligence and spiritual maturity of the clerics involved, and on the quality, or otherwise, of the relationships that can be established. In the words of one archdeacon – 'collaboration in ministry does not come naturally to most Anglican clergy' – and he is no doubt right. Even the Code of Practice (5.2) recognizes that 'legislation cannot create the goodwill and other qualities necessary for collaborative ministry to work effectively'. It will take a very serious and concerted effort, over long periods of time, to change the culture of clergy and parishes away from 'my ministry' and 'my parish', to 'our ministry' and 'our mission in our community'. The culture change required is so great, in fact, that some seriously doubt it be achieved at all (if, in fact, it should be attempted in the first place)!

²⁷ *The road to growth: Towards a thriving church* (London: Church House Publishing, 2005), p. 17.

²⁸ *Road to growth*, p. 17. The dioceses surveyed are Chichester, Lichfield, and Chester.

²⁹ *Road to Growth*, p. 20.

Even where teams or groups have been established, a recurring theme is that of the collaborative ministry that begins well, largely on the strength of existing relationships, but which fails when the relational dynamics change; whether through a change in diocesan personnel (bishop or archdeacon), or to the clerics within the team. This points to the fundamental importance of appointments – one team rector admitted that it took eight years to get the right team in place! A further area of weakness is the potential for overlap and duplication of pastoral and administrative tasks, and confusion over roles and responsibilities. In terms of administration, it is inevitable that an extra layer is added by any pastoral reorganization. Furthermore, once established, a pastoral reorganisation of any type is very difficult to rescind or change. Hence most will be compelled to ‘live with it’, even if the relationships breakdown. Not surprisingly, there are many ‘horror stories’, right up to denunciations of one team vicar by another in the same parish from the pulpit (although this is, of course, an extreme case – most clerics are far more polite in their denunciations of other clergy).

Finally, rather than being a vehicle for the ‘mixed economy’ church, it is not immediately apparent that a collaborative model is especially appropriate for a church plant or new ministry area, although a team or group may seem at first glance a logical vehicle for creating and sponsoring fresh expressions. The *Mission-Shaped Church* report noted, however, the following disadvantages:

Team rector can control ministry appointments. Complex structures can add burdens to young church. The church plant may not be given synodical voting rights. Some poor experiences of teams, leading to some being disbanded.³⁰

The latter, briefly made point, reflects the statistical data – as at December 31st 2011, more TM’s were dissolved in the CofE than were created. This speaks for itself!

4.2 STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The most commonly cited benefits of a team or group, or of any collaborative ministry situation, for the clergy, is that it is a remedy to isolation, to the ‘father knows best’ approach, and a way of sharing limited human and financial resources in a manner that does not expect one individual to be skilled and gifted in every area of ministry and parish life. Stephen Pickard finds real joy in the team approach.

Wherein lies the joy in Christian ministry? My own conviction is that the joy of Christian ministry arises out of collaborative practice where teamwork, shared ministry and common purpose combine together to further the mission of God in the world.³¹

³⁰ *Mission-shaped church: church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004), p. 128.

³¹ *Theological foundations for collaborative ministry*, p. vii.

The sharing of ministry and resources, in a team situation should 'always be about building up confidence together, so that the gifts of all can be released and used – in ministry within the church and mission in the whole world'.³² Robin Greenwood identifies some of the key strengths of ministry leadership teams, which are effectively team ministries involving both ordained clergy and laypeople in a variety of roles, as the following:³³

- It is consistent with Trinitarian theology
- Teams get things done better than individuals
- Mutual support and encouragement
- Helpful feedback from others involved in ministry
- Frequent reviews of how the team is doing as well as what it is doing
- The causes of mistakes can be faced honestly so error is not repeated
- Hard decisions are taken.

The pragmatic benefits of a team situation are significant. Administration can be rationalised, especially where one TM member may have a special penchant or gift for it. TM clergy can cover for one another for holidays, family occasions. etc. (contra, the frantic search for a locum among vicars working alone). In a mission sense, the TM can look beyond the parish system, the boundaries and legalities around which are usually irrelevant to anyone outside of the church. The team or group can often address the whole of the locality in an integrated and intentional way, rather than protecting and serving 'my patch' only, bringing what they do best to supplement the efforts of others. Events and ministries can be shared across boundaries – for instance children's, family, or youth ministers, Alpha or equivalent, 'away days' and retreats, etc., all of which are often more attractive and better resourced when done together, rather than by a single parish or priest acting alone.

It is, perhaps, at a theological and a scriptural level, that the greatest strengths of the team approach are to be located. Robin Greenwood (above), in identifying Trinitarian theology as the basis for collaborative ministry, pointed to this. Stephen Pickard greatly elaborated on it, using extensively the Pauline metaphor of the body.

A collaborative approach to Christian ministry is not only a useful practical way of getting things done to advance the Kingdom of God but ultimately arises out of the true nature of the gospel to which the Church bears witness. Collaborative ministry is 'first nature', the most natural pattern of practices for the ministries of the body of Christ.³⁴

³² Robin Greenwood, *The Ministry Team Handbook*, p. xviii.

³³ *The ministry team handbook*, pp. 53-54.

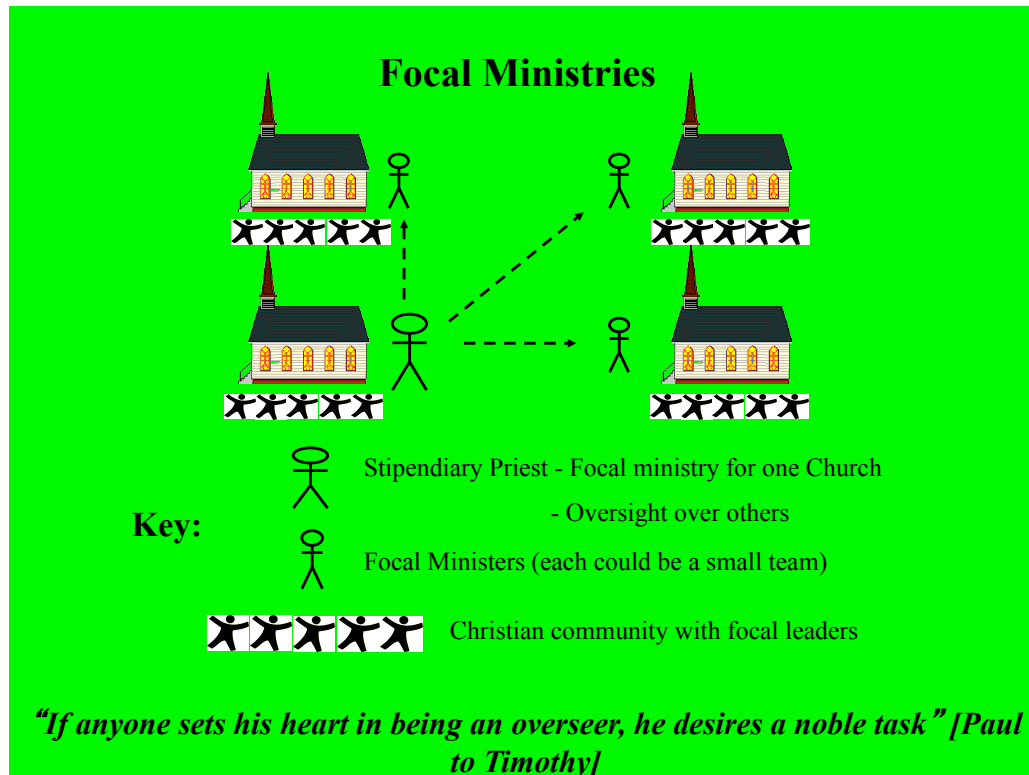
³⁴ *Theological foundations for collaborative ministry*, p. 232.

4.3 THE 'MINSTER MODEL', A FURTHER POSSIBILITY

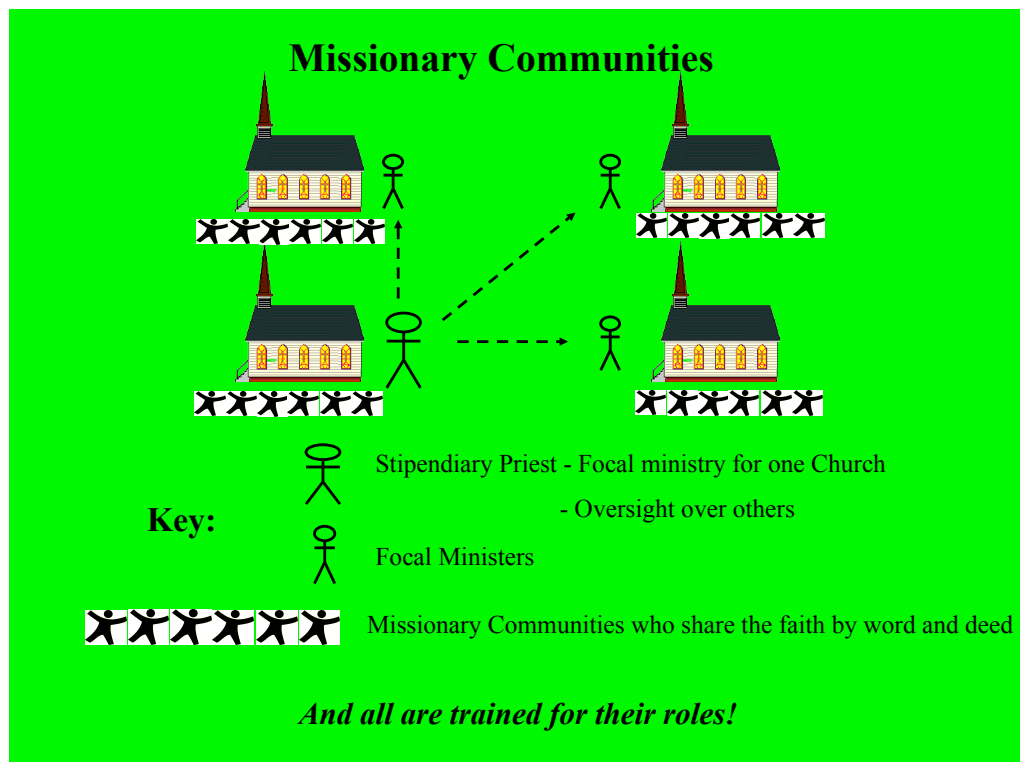
With the benefit of several decades reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the team and group approach, a number of practitioners, consultants, and theologians, in the CofE, have now had ample opportunity to reflect on the experience of pastoral reorganisations, their effects, and their strengths and weaknesses. One consultant who has spent considerable time and energy in researching and documenting team and group parishes, and parish life and mission in general, across almost all of the dioceses of the CofE, is retired Archdeacon Bob Jackson, now on the staff of St John's College Nottingham. I spent a day with Archdeacon Jackson at his home in the village of Eyam, Derbyshire, where he shared with me his proposal for 'Focal Ministries'. Archdeacon Jackson's proposal is very close, if not consistent, with what others refer to as the 'Minster model', whereby one large church (the Minster) sponsors ministry to a number of satellite communities and congregations, each of whom exist in their own right and have their own ministries, but which relate back in some form to 'the Minster'. These are, essentially, akin to the types of collaborative situations recognised as extant by the Code of Practice, but which lie outside of its parameters of, and beyond the scope of, the legislation (the Pastoral Measure), because they have not been created by a Pastoral Scheme or Order. There are significant strengths and weaknesses with this model too. Succinctly, whilst it avoids the administrative burdens imposed by the Measure and relies on 'goodwill' and cooperation at local level instead; if something goes wrong, or if a relational breakdown occurs, there is little or no recourse for those involved, and no legal protection for the clerics or parishes involved in regards to appointments, financial loss, or conflict resolution etc. Notwithstanding this, the model, detailed on the following page, has much to commend itself.³⁵

³⁵ © Archdeacon Bob Jackson.

Focal Ministries are close to group ministries, but lack the legal framework and associated layer of administration, imposed by a pastoral reorganisation.



Archdeacon Jackson's hope is that Focal Ministries evolve into 'missionary communities' in which ministry is genuinely shared by all.



PART FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

There has been much to learn, a lot to take in, some moments of inspiration, and some cautionary tales also, during the course of the three weeks I spent researching collaborative ministry across England. I am not convinced, by any means, that the CofE model of team ministry in particular works, let alone that it should be (if, in fact, it could be) a model adopted by the Diocese of Melbourne. This is despite the fact that I saw and visited some successful instances of TM's at parish level, for I left each with the distinct impression that the success was so heavily predicated on the quality of the existing relationships within the team, that it would be seriously imperiled by the inevitability of a change to that mix of relationships. On the other hand, collaborative ministry has much to commend itself to us, and, in my limited experience, the few instances of what surmount to group ministries (not teams) operating in the Diocese of Melbourne (whereby ministry is being shared across parish boundaries), correspond very closely to the more constructive and positive aspects of the English experience. In short, it would seem that a more informal manifestation of what the CofE refers to as a group ministry, would be a more viable possibility for a diocese like Melbourne, which lacks the instruments to bring into existence something akin to the CofE Pastoral Measure, and to legislate for team ministries along the lines of the English experience. To this end, a number of recommendations, of varying levels of importance and urgency, commend themselves.

5.1 THEOLOGY AND ECCLESIOLOGY: BEYOND THE PARISH

In the light of the *Mission-shaped Church* report, Paul Bayes calls for an urgent rethink of our often deeply entrenched parochialism, and I cannot but help agree with him.

‘Parochial’ has become a dirty word. It implies an inward-looking or backward-looking provincial attitude. Its root is the word ‘parish’, which has always meant a lot to Anglicans, but which has got a bit dirty too - and not without reason. For a good many Christians ‘our parish’ has come to mean ‘our neighbourhood’ and also, too often, ‘our defended territory’. Within the Church of England, creative and hopeful initiatives have shipwrecked on the grumpy insistence of parishes that only they can decide what God should be doing ‘on their patch’. *Mission-shaped Church* is very clear that God’s people are called to leave this sort of parochial thinking far behind.³⁶

A Kingdom perspective calls for an approach to mission and ministry that looks beyond geographical borders and boundaries, and beyond ‘my parish’. Consequently, those reflecting on collaborative approaches to ministry,

³⁶ *Mission-shaped Church: Building missionary values* (Grove Evangelism Series 67. Cambridge: Grove Books, 2004), .p. 18.

prominently Robin Greenwood and Stephen Pickard, call for a theological reorientation of our prevailing notions of ministry, orders, and priesthood. As noted previously, it is imperative, however, that the theology precede the implementation and articulation of a 'vision'. The diocese of Chichester has done this well, producing a comprehensive report (*Towards Revitalisation*) that commences with the realisation that collaborative ministry is not so much a structure to be imposed, but a 'mindset' to be adopted. The report begins with a section headed 'Theology', that articulates a series of biblical and theological imperatives, such as:

The sharing and exercising of gifts central to descriptions of the Body of Christ in the New Testament are at the heart of what, in the contemporary church, is often termed 'collaborative ministry' ... that the ministry of the church should be understood as corporate and not individualistic is implicit not only in the image of the Body of Christ, but also in its origin in the Trinitarian life of God, and in other words and phrases which describe the Church in the New Testament.³⁷

Recommendation 1

A diocesan wide project be initiated, or commissioned (possibly through the Bishop Perry institute?), to articulate a theology for collaborative ministry, and a strategy for working together across parish boundaries; and to provide also some case studies and examples, templates, and structures for implementation (i.e. some applied theology).

5.2 A CENTRAL PAYROLL

In all 43 dioceses of the CofE, all clergy stipends are paid centrally by the diocese. This is, in my view, more genuinely episcopal, in the light of which our current diocesan model looks deficiently congregational, relying as it does on the ability of the parish to generate revenue. The CofE model also enables strategy to occur at a diocesan level, enables Curates to be placed in the best possible circumstances for their training and supervision, and facilitates more readily the provision of ministry to parishes and areas for strategic and missional purposes – for example, to areas that lack the ability to fund a stipend but would otherwise be deprived, and to new ministry areas on the urban fringe that might not become viable financially in their own right for many years but where there is, nonetheless, a missional imperative the church be present in some form. The potential obstacles to implementing this are so many, the cultural shift required

³⁷ Douglas McKittrick, *Towards Revitalisation of the Church of England deaneries of Brighton and Hove 2005*, p. 25. Chichester, which is facing the need to drastically reduce its number of stipendiary clergy, and may need to close a large number of redundant buildings, has determined, in consultation with the Church Commissioners, that group ministries (not teams) will be the best vehicle for this.

so immense, and the probable opposition so great, that I hesitate to include it as a recommendation. However it should, nonetheless, stand as an aspiration, and as an ideal model of the way things ought to be, if we in Melbourne were truly episcopal in our ecclesiology and genuinely missional in our applied theology.

5.3 A POLICY FOR PASTORAL REORGANISATION

As outlined in the Introduction, it is immediately apparent upon beginning any conversation about collaborative ministry, that the CofE functions at a national and diocesan level in ways that are simply not comparable to the Australian church. Notwithstanding this, the parallels and congruencies are still everywhere apparent, and there is much in the English experience to inform a diocese like Melbourne of the way forward in regards to pastoral reorganisations and the formation of team ministries. As noted earlier, the term ‘pastoral reorganisation’ is used in the CofE to describe a range of outcomes – from the closure of a parish, or deconsecration of a church building, to the formation of a team or group ministry, and several other variations. It is retained here as the best description of what is intended by the draft policy referred to in Recommendation 2 below, for it implies a broad range of possible outcomes, only one of which is a collaborative ministry of some description (although the terminology is to some extent irrelevant). It is apparent that Melbourne lacks a diocesan approved manner of implementing pastoral reorganisation, or at least a policy document to guide the process. This has the effect of meaning, in a crude sense, that policy is thereby implemented on a case by case basis, by whoever happens to be in a position capable of implementing it at that time and in that place, with the process being developed ‘on the run’ as it were. The results are, unsurprisingly, often difficult and of a varied nature. In living memory in the Diocese of Melbourne some reorganisations, amalgamations, and closures have been handled well and are, on the whole, successful; some have been failures, and some disasters. At the same time, the received wisdom of practitioners in the CofE in particular (including several bishops I spoke to and many archdeacons), is that the ‘lighter’ the legislation the better’, and the more flexibility and ability to adapt at local level, the better.

Recommendation 2

The draft policy for pastoral reorganisation (Appendix A) be further discussed and amended as necessary by each Regional Council, then by Senior Staff, and then by Archbishop in Council, who shall also determine to what extent it need be represented in legislation. That it then be made available as a policy document authorized by the diocese, to guide the formation of team ministries, and to guide amalgamations and closures, etc. In short, to describe ‘how you do it’.

5.4 CREATING THE TEAM MINISTRY PARISH

Whilst the nomenclature used in the CofE is quite specific, and actually describes something else, the concept of the ‘team ministry’ or ‘team parish’ is one that should become widely known and visible in the Diocese of Melbourne, on its own terms. The phrase ‘team ministry parish’ is employed here for expediency – other terms are equally as valid, such as cluster ministry, group ministry, focal ministry etc. By team ministry parish it will be understood that this is what the draft policy for pastoral reorganisation (Appendix A) might bring into existence. The following features outlined here and embedded in the draft policy (Appendix A), in my view, preserve the best, and avoid the worse, of the English experience. The draft policy anticipates:

- That dialogue should commence between parishes (and their clergy and people) as soon as possible, and continue for as long as necessary.
- That the MOA which creates the team ministry parish is drawn up at local level as the dialogue progresses, and to suit the context in which the team will find expression.
- That a range of circumstances are possible – including trial periods, what surmount to group or cluster ministries, the ‘minster model’, or a multi-centre parish. This is not legislated for, but develops organically at local level.
- That the agreement is ratified by the diocese through its existing instruments of governance (regional council, archbishop in council).
- That it can be ‘undone’ if necessary, or amended, as circumstances change.
- The structure is ‘light’.
- The focus is missional.
- The MOA will outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner parish to the team ministry parish in broad terms, whilst the roles and responsibilities of clerics are determined at local level.

Recommendation 3

Upon acceptance and implementation of Recommendation 2, the diocese, in whatever way expedient, make known the existence of the new category of the Team Ministry Parish.

5.5 A STRATEGIC ROLE FOR REGIONAL COUNCILS

The potential for regional councils to exercise their statutory role in strategic planning is reflected in the English formation of the diocesan DMPC. It is to be recommended that Regional Councils develop long term strategy and planning goals at archdeaconry level, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of individual parishes, and classifying them into three broad categories, as defined below.

- Long Term Viable – will be here for as far as ahead as anyone can see; typically a large, well established parish, with a stable congregation and income, in a central locality.
- Viable – at the present time, a viable parish, but the future is not assured; typically a small to mid size parish in a residential area or located off the main roads; or a parish with a ‘gathered’ community, or which exercises a ‘niche ministry’, which is at the present time, viable.
- Not Viable – unlikely to survive in its own right on the traditional ‘one vicar one parish’ model; will need to consider a ministry sharing arrangement.

- A further category suggests itself – ‘we need to be here’ – identifying those localities where there is not yet an Anglican presence, or where there is a non viable presence, that needs to be established or maintained for strategic purposes.

A possibility is for each of the archdeaconries to present to meetings of regional council progressively throughout the course of a year, with a view to producing a region wide strategy document in a period of twelve months. The intention of such a classification is not to ‘mark’ parishes for closure, but to facilitate strategies for growth, and to assist regional officers, archdeacons, vicars, and churchwardens and vestries etc., in affected areas, to begin planning for the future and to begin talking across parish boundaries and exploring potential partnerships, before a crisis point is reached. This will also guide questions of incumbency as they arise.

Recommendation 4

Regional Councils be asked to develop a strategic overview of parishes in the region, by deanery and / or archdeaconry, with a view to facilitating mission and growth in every area of the region. See Appendix B.

5.6 LICENSING & THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

It is not clear to what extent the Anglican Church in Australia has embraced the need for the training and equipping of prospective clergy and lay ministry that embraces possibilities for ministry beyond the ‘one vicar, one church’ model. In England, several decades of pastoral reorganisations, team ministries, and now mission shaped church and fresh expressions, have led to the situation whereby many ordinands will not be parish priests in the traditional model, and this is reflected in varying degrees in the training, acknowledging that a significant debate exists around the extent to which such training is the responsibility of the Colleges or is to be learned in practical placements. Undoubtedly both are needed – as one bishop put it: ‘colleges need to begin preparing ordinands for possibilities other than the traditional model, and dioceses need to place students and Curates in teams, fresh expressions, and the like’. If collaborative situations are to become part of the parish landscape in Melbourne, it will be

necessary for the diocese to begin training and educating ordinands and lay people for this possibility now. This will also, probably effect the issuing of licenses to Curates in particular.

Recommendation 5

Consideration be given to the training of new ordination candidates for collaborative ministries and for fresh expressions, beyond the traditional model. Licenses for Curates in particular to collaborative ministry situations may need to be extended from two to three years.

5.7 DATA COLLECTION

The manner in which data is collected can be helpful in a variety of ways, especially in assessing the potential and need for pastoral reorganisations. In their *Another capital idea 2010* report, Jackson and Piggott recommend that the collection of the data be more frequently than annual, and that it be the topic of discussion at area meetings (i.e. regional council, senior staff).³⁸ They further recommend digital collection and analysis of pertinent data, such as average Sunday attendance, average weekly attendance, income (separated into offertory and 'other'), and the number of weddings, funerals, and baptisms.

Recommendation 6

The annual data collected by the diocese be reorganized into more useful categories, and made available online in a timely manner. Consideration be given to an 'online parish census' taken over one month, reported and accessible online. Such a census will serve as benchmarking against future censuses. Regional Councils should dedicate time at least one meeting each year to examine the data and / or census figures for parishes in their region.

³⁸ *Another capital idea 2010* pp. 55-56.

APPENDIX

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLANNING CATEGORIES

Suggested categories, into which parishes may be placed, to assist in long term strategic planning. The pertinent category in assessing viability is the ability of the parish to fund a full stipendiary ministry and to meet its operating costs.

1. LONG TERM VIABLE.

These are parishes that will be present in the future, as far ahead as can be conceived of.

Typically, these parishes will be large and prominent 'regional' centres, located on main roads, and with highly visible, and often historical, connections to their local community.

The parish income is good to very good, and often assured by bequests, investments, or other means of income, and is not reliant on live giving.

2. VIABLE

These are parishes that are presently viable and able to fund a full time stipendiary ministry, however it is uncertain that viability will be assured in the long term, in five to ten years time.

Typically, these parishes will be smaller in size (in terms of income and Sunday attendance). They may be located in residential areas, or be the 'second' parish in geographical area dominated by another Anglican parish. They may have a 'niche ministry' or be a 'gathered' community drawn from well beyond the parish boundaries.

3. NOT VIABLE

These are parishes that cannot now or which in the next short term period of up to five years, will not be able to fund a full time stipendiary ministry. They may also be parishes with a source of income, typically from property or a long term lease, but which have declining attendances and declining rates of participation (e.g. less than an average of thirty worshippers each Sunday over a twelve month period).

Typically, these parishes will be located in residential areas or off the main roads, and will be in areas affected by demographic change.

It will be necessary to begin forward planning for parishes in this category immediately, with a view to commencing dialogue with neighbouring parishes, with a view to sustaining ministry (here this is desirable) in a collaborative way.

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An Act of the General Synod of the Church of England, due for ratification at the February 2012 session.

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011

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Volume 1: Pastoral Reorganisation

A guide to section 56 of the Pastoral Measure 1983 (as amended)

Prepared by the Legal Office of the National Institutions of the Church of England in conjunction with the Council for the Care of Churches, the Pastoral and Redundant Churches Department of the Church Commissioners, the Ecclesiastical Judges Association and the Ecclesiastical Law Association.
January 2007

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impacting on and therefore to be read in conjunction with the Pastoral Measure 1983.

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Authors: Bob Jackson & Alan Piggot

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The Archdeacons of the Diocese of London.

The Archdeacons of the Diocese of Southwark.

Mr. John Bevan
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Dr Paula Gooder
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The Revd Peter Irwin-Clark
Broadwater Team Ministry, Diocese of Chichester.

The Venerable Bob Jackson.
St John's College Nottingham

The Venerable Douglas McKittrick
Archdeacon of Chichester, Diocese of Chichester.

Revd. Canon Prof. Martyn Percy
Principal, Ripon College Cuddesdon.

Mr Peter Wagon
Pastoral Team Manager for the Church Commissioners.

Mr. Nathan Whitehead
Pastoral Secretary, Diocese of Chelmsford

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS COMMONLY USED IN PASTORAL REORGANISATION

<i>Archbishop</i>	Senior bishop with authority over a Province - of Canterbury and of York.
<i>Archdeacon</i>	An office held by a senior member of clergy appointed by the bishop with an administrative responsibility over an archdeaconry . Some of his/her duties are laid down by law but in other respects vary according to diocesan practice: they include care for church property.
<i>Archdeaconry</i>	Sub-division of the diocese over which an archdeacon has administrative responsibility.
<i>Area Bishop</i>	In some larger dioceses a bishop who shares spiritual oversight with the diocesan bishop over a particular area.
<i>Benefice</i>	An ecclesiastical office carrying certain duties. An incumbent's benefice is therefore not a geographical area (see parish) but the office to which (s)he is appointed and may comprise one or more parishes. A benefice may be a rectory or vicarage from which the incumbent is called rector or vicar .
<i>Bishop (See also Area Bishop, Assistant Bishop, Flying Bishop and Suffragan Bishop)</i>	In the Church of England the bishop is the central focus of organisation and ministry within his diocese. He is the chief pastor and authority and shares the cure of souls with all the incumbents of that diocese. He is also, in his own person, the chief representative of the diocese in the work of the wider church. He may be assisted by suffragan or assistant bishops.
<i>Canon Law</i>	Canon law forms part of the law of the Church of England. The Canons are, in essence, 'by-laws' for the guidance of the church.
<i>Chapel of Ease</i>	A consecrated church that it is not a parish church but is within a parish that does have a parish church. Originally for the ease of parishioners who could not attend the parish church.
<i>Church</i>	Strictly, and exclusively for the purposes of the Pastoral Measure , a consecrated building used for public worship.
<i>Churchwardens</i>	The chief lay officers of a parish elected annually by parishioners with the consent of the incumbent. The number and qualifications of and the time and manner of choosing churchwardens are regulated by the Churchwardens Measure 2001. There are normally two churchwardens of every parish. They have various statutory duties. They have the right to make representations on a proposed glebe sale when the benefice is vacant and to receive notices under the Pastoral Measure and the Parsonages Measures if there is no parochial church council . They are frequently appointed as sequestrators during vacancies of benefices.
<i>Closure, declaration of</i>	The act of closing a church for regular public worship under the

Pastoral Measure.

<i>Consecration</i>	The act of setting apart land or buildings for sacred uses for all time. Performed by the bishop upon the decree of an ecclesiastical court. In the eyes of the law consecrated land can be used for none other than sacred purposes unless this legal aspect is set aside by due process of law. As a result of the Pastoral (Amendment) Measure 2006 it is now possible to lease under faculty part of a church building, provided that taken as a whole the building continues to be used primarily as a place of worship. (Note: The law does not provide for 'deconsecration' e.g. when a church is declared closed the Pastoral Measure refers to removing the 'legal effects of consecration': the spiritual effects of consecration cannot be removed by legal process.)
<i>Curate</i>	Generally used to describe an assistant curate to an incumbent. Such assistant curates are licensed to their work by the bishop.
<i>Cure of Souls</i>	'Cure' means 'care'. The bishop has the universal cure of souls in a diocese but, subject to this, the incumbent of a benefice (or team rector and team vicar(s) in a TM) has the exclusive cure of souls within his or her parish or parishes. The expression should not be confused with the more general phrase 'pastoral care'.
<i>Deanery</i>	A sub-division of an archdeaconry usually comprising between 10 and 20 parishes.
<i>Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee</i>	Statutory Committee established by the Dioceses Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 . Exercises a major role in relation to reviewing the arrangements for pastoral supervision in the diocese and, as appropriate, making recommendations to the bishop. (See Sections 52, 53 and Schedule 3 to the DPMM 2007 for its constitution and rules of procedure.) Also maintains an overview of matters relating to church buildings and exercises functions in relation to church buildings closed for regular public worship.
<i>Diocesan Synod</i>	A body of clergy and laity, elected from the Deanery Synods, and chaired by the bishop of the diocese.
<i>Electoral Roll</i>	A register of lay members of the Church of England in each parish who are entitled to elect the parochial church council and attend the annual parochial church meeting.
<i>Faculty</i>	Official permission of the chancellor of a diocese (or an archdeacon) to make any changes to a consecrated building or land. Any such changes, e.g. structural works, must not alter the sacred nature of the building or land. A faculty is also required to authorise works to most unconsecrated places of worship and rights of way over a churchyard or church site - e.g. to provide access to the parsonage house.
<i>General Synod</i>	The 'Parliament' of the Church of England comprising the Houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity. It replaced the former Church Assembly and continues to exercise the functions delegated by Parliament in 1919. The General Synod usually meets twice a year to debate and discuss matters of interest and to consider and approve amendments to Church legislation.

<i>Group Ministry</i>	An arrangement, authorised by the Pastoral Measure , whereby the clergy of two or more separate benefices can assist each other to make the best possible provision for the cure of souls in the area as a whole.
<i>Incumbent</i>	The freehold owner of a benefice - can be either a rector or a vicar - with responsibility for the cure of souls. May be assisted by curate, deacon, licensed lay worker, retired priest etc.
<i>Interested Party</i>	One of the statutory persons or bodies that the DMPC is required to consult in accordance with s.3 of the Pastoral Measure .
<i>Joint Parochial Church Council</i>	Where a benefice comprises two or more parishes the parochial church councils of the individual parishes can form a joint parochial church council to act in the benefice as a whole in such matters as the individual PCCs together decide.
<i>Measure</i>	The Church of England equivalent of an Act of Parliament. The General Synod has powers to formulate Measures which must be approved by Parliament and receive the Royal Assent. Whilst Parliament can reject a Measure it has no power to amend one. Measures form part of the laws of England.
<i>Members ('Other') of a TM</i>	May be clerical or lay (see s.20 of Pastoral Measure). They share the pastoral care of the area with the team rector and team vicars, but NOT the cure of souls .
<i>Parish</i>	The basic geographical unit over which an incumbent has cure of souls . There may be several parishes within the area of one benefice.
<i>Parish Church</i>	A consecrated building in a parish in which, subject to canon law , the statutory services must be held. Parishioners have a right to be married, baptised etc. in the parish church. S.27(2) of the Pastoral Measure requires that any new church or existing building which is to become a parish church must be approved by the bishop, subject to the bishop having consulted both the DMPC and the DAC .
<i>Parochial Church Council</i>	Representative body of parishioners elected from those on the electoral roll in accordance with the Church Representation Rules . Usually chaired by incumbent.
<i>Pastoral Measure</i>	The Measure of the General Synod which authorises changes in pastoral reorganisation. Designed to 'make better provision for the cure of souls '. Part of the law of the land and equivalent to an Act of Parliament.
<i>Pastoral Order</i>	A document which effects changes in pastoral reorganisation made under the Pastoral Measure . Differs from a pastoral scheme mainly in that it deals with lesser matters and the procedures are simpler.
<i>Pastoral Scheme</i>	A document which effects more complex changes in pastoral reorganisation made under the Pastoral Measure .
<i>Pastoral Church Buildings Scheme</i>	A document made under the Pastoral Measure which effects the closure of a church building for regular public worship (and may settle

its future).

Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme

A document made under the **Pastoral Measure** which settles the future of a church closed for regular public worship.

Patron

The person or body owning an **advowson** (i.e. right to present a priest to a benefice) who may be a private individual or a corporation (ecclesiastical or lay).

Patronage

Another word for **advowson**.

Place of Worship

An unconsecrated building in a **parish** licensed by the bishop for public worship. It may additionally be licensed for marriages.

Plurality

The holding of two or more separate **benefices** by one **incumbent** who then has the **freehold** of all the benefices. This can only be authorised by a scheme or order under the **Pastoral Measure**.

Priest in Charge

A priest given charge of a **parish** by licence of the bishop. (S)he has not been presented and therefore does not own the **freehold** of the **benefice**.

Rector

The **incumbent** of a **rectory**.

Rectory

Historically a **benefice** where the whole of the tithe and glebe land were available for the maintenance of the minister. Rectories have also been created by statute e.g. a benefice where a **TM** is established. Also the house where a rector lives.

Team Council

Where a **TM** is established a team council can be established, either under the authority of a **scheme** or under the **Church Representation Rules**. Such a council is similar to a **joint parochial church council** and provides a formal structure for all the parishes in the team to discuss matters of mutual concern.

TM

A special form of ministry whereby a team of clergy and possibly lay people share the pastoral care of the area of a **benefice**. Can only be established by a **pastoral scheme**.

Team Rector

The priest in a **TM** who heads the team and owns the property of the **benefice**. (S)he shares the **cure of souls** with the **team vicars**.

Team Vicar

A priest of **incumbent** status in a **TM**, other than the **team rector**. (S)he shares the **cure of souls** with the **team rector** and other team vicars.

Vicar

The incumbent of any benefice that is not a **rectory**.