

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have announced the formal response from the House of Bishops following the publication of Sir Philip Mawer's independent review into the nomination to the See of Sheffield.

Following the publication of Sir Philip Mawer's independent review into the nomination to the See of Sheffield, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have announced the formal response from the House of Bishops.

In a joint statement, on behalf of the House, they said:

"We remain very grateful to Sir Philip Mawer for his detailed, thoughtful and authoritative review which the House of Bishops has read carefully and discussed at its meeting in December. The House of Bishops whole-heartedly accepts all four of the recommendations from this review and wishes to put on record its thanks to Sir Philip for his work.

As we stated in September 2017 at the time of publication, we reaffirm our commitment to the vital principle of mutual flourishing as the Church and will endeavour to maintain the bonds of peace and affection and live God's reconciliation in Jesus Christ, even amid difference on questions on which Christians may "disagree Christianly". The House of Bishops believes that working to the recommendations from Sir Philip's review will help us to put this into action.

When we wrote to Sir Philip to ask him to undertake this review, our first concern was whether the Church had done enough to inform and educate clergy and laity about the 2014 settlement and the effect of the House of Bishops' Declaration within it. We regret that, as Sir Philip concluded, not nearly enough was done to create an understanding of what the Declaration and Settlement would mean in practice. Sir Philip's recommendation to form "a group with balanced membership to review what has been done; distil examples of good practice within dioceses; and provide resources to help dioceses, deaneries and parishes, and theological training institutions to engage in further consideration of the issues" has led us to establish an Implementation and Dialogue Group. The Bishop of Rochester has agreed to Chair this group, with the support of the Bishop of Aston. As Chair of the Steering Committee in charge of the draft legislation to enable women to become bishops that the Synod approved in 2014, Bishop James will bring significant experience to the Implementation and Dialogue Group along with others who sat on the Steering Committee with him. We have taken very seriously the call from Sir Philip to make this a diverse and balanced group and are pleased that the following people have agreed to sit on this group:

- The Rt Revd James Langstaff, Chair of Bishop of Rochester
- The Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst, Vice-Chair of Bishop of Aston
- The Rt Revd Jonathan Baker of Bishop of Fulham
- The Rt Revd Rod Thomas of Bishop of Maidstone

- Miss Debbie Buggs â€” member of the House of Laity
- The Revd Canon Dr Emma Percy â€” Chair of WATCH
- The Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett â€” member of the House of Clergy
- The Revd Dr Emma Ineson â€” Principal, Trinity College Bristol and member of the House of Clergy
- The Revd Dr Philip Plyming â€” Warden, Cranmer Hall Durham and member of the House of Clergy
- The Ven Michael Everitt â€” Archdeacon of Lancaster and member of the House of Clergy
- Canon Elizabeth Paver â€” Vice-Chair of the House of Laity

In his third recommendation, Sir Philip invites the Faith and Order Commission to 'examine the theological challenge which has been posed to the 2014 Settlement'. The House of Bishops agreed in December that this work would be essential to the Implementation and Dialogue Group and we are grateful to FAOC for producing *The Five Guiding Principles: A Resource for Study* which is available online from today and in print from Church House Publishing later this month. This resource will be invaluable not only to the Implementation and Dialogue Group but to all bishops, clergy and laity in thinking about what the Five Guiding Principles mean in our ministry and the life of the Church.

This document is not intended to be the last word on the theological implications of the Five Guiding Principles. It is intended to contribute to the dialogue the Church needs. The Faith and Order Commission may produce further reflections in due course.

Sir Philip also recommended that the Secretary General should review the lessons to be learned from the nomination process, addressing in particular how the national Church institutions support the nomination process, and the nominee for a see. The Secretary General has begun work on this review. Sir Philip also made a number of detailed recommendations relating to the working of the Crown Nominations Commission, which he suggested should be taken forward alongside or as part of the implementation of the parallel report from Professor Oliver Oâ€™Donovan and others on the theology of the CNCâ€™s work. We accept this recommendation too, and Sir Philipâ€™s points will be developed in the implementation plan for Professor Oâ€™Donovanâ€™s review. We hope in following the recommendations in Sir Philip Mawerâ€™s report we will go some way to realising the commitment that we have to maintaining the highest possible degree of communion, while contributing to mutual flourishing, across the whole Church of England.

We are indebted to Sir Philip Mawer, not just for this review, but also for serving as the Independent Reviewer over the past 3 years. Over this period he has published three reviews and answered many other queries around the Five Guiding Principles. As the first person to take on this new role in 2014 he has established the role of Independent Reviewer and brought to it unwavering commitment, great experience and much wisdom. As Sir Philip's term of office draws to a close, we are delighted to announce that Sir William Fittall will succeed him as Independent Reviewer from February 2018. Sir William was Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council from 2002 until 2015 and brings to this role the experience of being Secretary General during the discussions in Synod around the 2014 settlement and the House of Bishops' Declaration. We are grateful to Sir William for taking on this role and are confident that he will continue Sir Philip's good work."

+Justin Cantuar:

+Sentamu Ebor:

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