

## ROCHESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

*A briefing paper for members of the Board of Education*

### RD BE RE-CONSTITUTION

#### SUMMARY OVERVIEW

At the last full Board meeting, we looked at two papers which outlined a proposal to re-constitute the Diocesan Board of Education, reducing the number of members from 28 to between 10 and 14.

Since that meeting, I have consulted with the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Secretary and have explored some of the more practical aspects with Clive Mansell in his role as Chair of the DBE.

The documentation was discussed at the last Executive Committee meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February and has been shared with the Bishop's Staff Team at their most recent meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

The proposed constitution would allow for 8 members appointed through Church Corporate governance structures and up to 6 members co-opted by the DBE itself, ensuring a minimum majority of two Church appointed governors.

#### 1. The Diocesan Bishop or someone appointed by him

#### 2. Bishop's nomination

#### 3. Members appointed by Synod \*

- 3 clerks of Holy Orders (Clergy) appointments
- 3 Lay Persons appointments (must be members of their Electoral Roll of their parish)

#### 4. Co-opted Members\*\*

Up to 6 co-opted members with a commitment to education in the context of the Church of England with a specific expertise, experience and skill set including:

- Finance
- Legal
- HR
- School Improvement/Effectiveness
- Experienced Charity Trustee and Church School Governor
- Leadership
- Public Relations
- Serving Church of England School Headteacher or Principal

#### \*Synod Members

It is proposed that these appointments will, in the first instance, be nominated by Deanery Synods (one clergy and one lay from each Archdeaconry area), reviewed by Bishop's Council with reference to the DBE's criteria for co-opted members and then appointed by Diocesan Synod.

#### Local Authority Representatives

In addition to these voting members, each of the four Local Authorities within the diocese would be invited to nominate one representative to be in attendance at Board meetings. These representatives would not be eligible to vote in Board meetings.

## **\*\*Co-opted Members**

The DBE would define commitment of co-opted members in a similar way to which it seeks the commitment of governors for its Church of England schools, namely a signed statement by the nominated person:

*“I confirm that as a member of the Diocesan Board of Education, I am committed to promoting and supporting Christian education in line with the doctrines and practices of the Church of England and I acknowledge the responsibility to uphold the faith and beliefs of the Church of England”.*

## **Existing members**

It is possible that some of the existing deanery and co-opted members could be ‘transferred’ onto the new Board as co-opted members as long as they fulfilled the requirements outlined above.

## **Conflicts of Interests**

All nominated persons, will be asked to declare their membership of any organisations which may lead to a potential conflict of interest in the future and will be required to ask for the permission of the Board of Education before joining any Trust or Boards of Governance whilst they are a member of the RDBE.

## **Sub-Committees & Time Commitment**

Following the approval of the new constitution, the DBE’s Executive Committee will be wound up and replaced by a ‘Standing Committee’ appointed by the new DBE to plan the agenda for Board meetings and deal with any operational issues and/or decision making between main Board meetings.

It is envisaged that the new Board of Education will meet four times a year (including its AGM) with the option of two further meetings to manage extraordinary business if required. A time commitment of three hours for each meeting is expected with some additional meetings for members who serve on sub-committees.

## **TIMESCALES**

Once the DBE Board approves the re-constitution, the proposals will be shared with Bishop’s Council for noting before being sent to the Deanery Synods as part of a wider consultation.

The proposed new constitution will then be taken to the Diocesan Synod to note in order that nominations from the Deanery Synods can commence in time for the appointment of members for a meeting of the new Board of Education in the Autumn Term of 2016.

Once Diocesan Synod has noted the proposals and the Diocesan Bishop has indicated his approval, the final stage is to take the proposed constitution to the Secretary of State for sign off in the summer term.

## **Revised Timescales**

<b>Proposed Date</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016	Executive Committee consider draft revised proposals
11 <sup>th</sup> February	Draft proposals shared with Bishop’s Staff
22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016	Diocesan Board of Education meets to consider revised proposals and approve
25 <sup>th</sup> February	Proposals noted by Bishop’s Council
19 <sup>th</sup> March 2016	Proposals presented to Diocesan Synod to receive and note
Spring-Summer	Deanery Synods are informed of the proposed changes to the DBE’s constitution and routes of nomination and appointment.
May 2016	Final proposals and amended constitution is presented to Bishop of Rochester as president
June 2016	The application for an amendment to the constitution is submitted to the Secretary of State.
July/August 2016	Secretary of State approves/rejects new constitution
Autumn 2016	New DBE members and representatives appointed

It is likely that there will be a transition period between the approval of the new constitution by the Secretary of State for Education and the appointment of the new Board of Education under the new arrangements. It is envisaged that during this time, the existing Board of Education with its current members will continue to meet until the new constitution is approved.

Throughout the process, the proposals and the new constitution will be checked by an experienced legal advisor appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education to ensure that it complies with the DBE Measure 1991 and any statutory requirements.

**Alex Tear**

**Diocesan Director of Education - 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016**