*Ministerial Development Review*

*MDR in The Diocese of Sodor and Man (2018)*

**DRAFT DOCUMENT OUTLINING MDR**

**A Theological Foundation for MDR**

Clergy are called to be priests and ministers of the gospel. They are also servants and ‘stewards of the mysteries of God’ (1 Cor. Ch.4 v.1) and ‘ambassadors for Christ’ (2 Cor. Ch.5 v.20). They are required to perform specific tasks and as God’s stewards ‘they should be found trustworthy’ (1 Cor. Ch.4 v.2) Ministerial utility or effectiveness can never be divorced from the character of the minister. The principle of accountability that should lead to a realistic covenant between parish (or other ministry context), clergy and Diocese setting out clear expectations and working boundaries is tempered by the requirement for the ordained to live faithfully, prayerfully and responsibly in accordance with their high calling. The gospel demands the best of us and faith must be informed by goodness, knowledge, self-control and enduring love (2 Peter Ch.1 vv.5-8).

Clergy do not operate in a vacuum – they are part of the whole Body of Christ (1 Corinthians Ch.12 12-26). Our belonging to the Body requires us to recognise that our own life and ministry impinge on others and affects them for good or ill. Ministerial Development Review is therefore of great value to the congregation and Diocese. It gives tangible expression to the principle of shared ministry and provides a framework that can help to minimise unacceptable levels of stress or over work. Ministerial Development Review aims to be supportive and affirmative in relation to the ministerial task but for the sake of the whole Body of Christ it also exists to promote achievable objectives that lead to growth and change:

**Why Review?**

A sacred trust as demanding and costly as Christian priesthood and ministry requires and deserves continuing support and the opportunity to reflect upon its effectiveness and development. Historically the provision and quality of such support has varied widely across the Church of England. MDR, based on nationally agreed guidelines, is a means of encouraging and resourcing clergy in vital and often costly ministry of preaching the gospel, prayer, celebrating the sacraments, offering leadership within the church, enabling the ministry of church members, working collaboratively in pastoral care and the development of faith and discipleship and discerning the working of God within a society which is changing rapidly. It does this by assisting a minister in effective critical reflection on his/her ministry context and guiding him/her to those priorities that will promote continuing ministry development and training. One of the major responsibilities of a bishop is the pastoral and professional care of clergy. Ministerial Development Review is an important part of the process for exercising that responsibility.

MDR reviews will take place every two years**.** The Bishop is required to provide the Review scheme in statute. Clergy with Common Tenure are required to participate. Failure to comply with the Review process may result in disciplinary action.

The Clergy Terms of Service Regulations say:

Regulation18

(1) Every diocesan bishop shall ensure that arrangements are made for a person nominated by him to conduct with each office holder in that diocese a review of his or her ministry to be known as a “ministerial development review” on at least one occasion in each period of two calendar years*.*

(3) It shall be the duty of each office holder to co-operate in any ministerial development review undertaken under this regulation. (GS 1638)

**Overview of Ministerial Development Review in the Diocese of Sodor and Man**

Ministerial Development Review is a bi annual process for all licensed clergy in the Diocese of Sodor and Man. It is an aspect of the Episcopal Oversight of the Bishop, and functions under his authority, and in keeping with the guidelines of the Church of England.

Ministerial Development Review is to be undertaken by all clergy in the Diocese, for all are united in the same call to service.

The purpose of Ministerial Development Review is

1. to support clergy
2. to help equip them for their ministry.
3. to allow clergy to be more focused in their ministry
4. to ensure others in their context understand that focus

Therefore, Ministerial Development Review is not an appraisal system for clergy, nor is it a mechanism for bringing in targets for parishes. Its purpose is solely to help clergy develop in their ministry, and to foster a greater sense of collaboration between clergy and those they serve alongside.  At the heart of Ministerial Development Review is a conversation between the clergy person and the Bishop (or if required a reviewer nominated by the Bishop). This conversation is confidential, and should be wide ranging, honest and searching. The guiding text for this conversation is the Ordinal.  In preparation for the review, a ‘listening to those we are called to serve’ exercise will be undertaken. This involves a number of people, both within and outside of the church, who encounter the clergy person’s ministry being asked to comment on it. This listening exercise provides an opportunity for encouragements to be heard, and for the clergy person’s own perceptions to be balanced. The listening exercise will also allow for the voice of the wider church to be heard, such as the clergy person’s contribution to the Mission Partnership and to any diocesan roles.  During the review, a number of objectives for the clergy person are identified, which might equally be personal developments or ministry-focused. Any further training opportunities or needs are also noted. These objectives are shared with those with whom the clergy person works – for example for parish clergy this might include Churchwardens and PCC – to foster understanding and support for the clergy person in achieving these objectives. The Director for CMD will also support, as appropriate, in helping to meet identified training needs. The summary of the review conversation, written up by the clergy person themselves, will be confidential to the clergy person and the Bishop. This mutually agreed summary will be filled. In addition, there is an opportunity to follow up particular issues in the intervening years between reviews.

**The Ministerial Development Review Process**

Each clergy person will normally have a review bi annually (exceptions would be those who were ordained in that year, since ordination involves its own reviews, and those joining the diocese part-way through a year).

# **Preparation for the Review –**

The clergy person (from henceforth reviewee) will be alerted to the fact that their MDR is due by the Director of CMD. The reviewee should then phone the Bishop’s office and :

1. agree the date of review discussion (it is suggested that 4 weeks is needed to complete required paper work)- the recommended time for the review discussion is 1 – 1.5hrs. The Bishop’s office will inform the Director of CMD that a date has been set to enable forms to be sent out.
2. The reviewee should schedule time for preparation at least 2 weeks before the meeting, and schedule time for writing up the review discussion, ideally no more than 4 or 5 days after the meeting;
3. They should prayerfully choose the people who are going to participate in the Listening Process and obtain their agreement to assist in the process. The Director for CMD will send to the reviewee **Document A** to be completed with the names and contact details of those who have agreed to participate in the Listening Exercise. This form will then be returned to the Director of CMD. The Bishop at his discretion can ask for other individuals to be included in the Listening Process, the reviewee would be informed if this were the case:

The Director of CMD will also send a copy **of Document C** to the reviewee. The reviewee should agree to send a provisional draft of the **Document C** to the Director of CMD at least 1 week prior to the review date.

**Listening to those we are called to serve:**

This Listening Exercise is a key part of the Ministerial Development Review process. The aim of the Listening Exercise is to invite helpful feedback from those the reviewee is called to serve. For this to be helpful there should be a balance of positive feedback and constructive comments on areas of potential growth.  In preparation for each review, the reviewee invites people to contribute to the review process.

The Reviewee invites four - six people to act as Review Contributors.

Three of these people should be ministry colleagues - for example, someone with whom the Reviewee works closely in a staff-member relationship (Curate, Reader, Clergy colleague etc), or one or two people with whom he/she works closely in a colleague relationship (Head Teacher of local school, or colleague in a Diocesan context, etc). The other three should be church members - for example, a significant PCC member (Churchwarden, Treasurer, etc) or one or two discerning members of the congregation. Where the Reviewee has a number of different worshipping communities or work contexts (i.e. a significantDiocesan Role) he/she will need tomake a choice about where and from whom the most helpful responses may be sought.

The important guideline is that those invited to be Review Contributors should be ‘critical friends’, not ‘committed opponents’ or ‘over-enthusiastic supporters’! The Reviewee needs people who are supportive of his/her ministry, but who can speak the truth in such a way that it can be heard and responded to.

Occasionally, the Bishop may wish to nominate people to act as Review Contributors. The Reviewee may object to these nominations and any objection will be noted.

# **Inviting contributors to the Listening Exercise:**

For the Listening Exercise to be of maximum value it is important those individuals who contribute feel free to give honest feedback. This may be hindered if they think that Clergy will ask to see the individual forms returned by respondents. It is therefore preferable that the written forms remain confidential. The completed forms will be sent to the Director of CMD who will summarise the feedback and send this to the Bishop ahead of the review conversation. However, data protection policy is clear; clergy do have a right to see all of the material written about them if they so wish. If those being reviewed want to see the feedback forms or summary, it is suggested that this is done at the end of the review discussion, when hopefully it may no longer be necessary.  Once possible contributors have been identified it is important to discuss the issue of whether the reviewee will want to see the original feedback responses from the contributors.  This should be made clear to the contributors prior to them agreeing to participate in the exercise.  The reviewee should complete **Document A** and send to the Director of CMD, who will give or send a copy of **Document B** to each contributor. **Document B** should be returned directly to the Director of CMD by the contributor, ideally at least 10 days before the MDR date.

**Once Responses are received back from contributors**:

The Director of CMD will summarise the returned contributions, the summary will then be used to inform the review discussion. Themes will be identified, these will include areas for encouragement, alongside possible areas for development. The intention is not that they are simply copied and given to the clergy person concerned. However, the clergy person has the right to ask to see them if they wish.

The summary will be sent to the Bishop along with the reviewee’s own reflection **Document C** and these will inform the foundation for the meeting with the Bishop for the MDR.

**Setting Objectives:**

The purpose of MDR is to reflect upon the previous 24 months and identify things to celebrate, lament or learn from. This provides a basis from which to look forward to what God may be saying for the future. Therefore, the final part of the discussion involves the setting of objectives for the coming year. This is not simply a business planning exercise, but an opportunity to listen to God and reflect upon what He may be saying about the development of ministry for the future.

Because everything we do is ultimately an expression of 'the hope that is in us' (1 Peter 3.15) it is important to remember that planning and the setting of objectives leave room for God to change, challenge and surprise us.

During the conversation, there should be enough time for a full discussion about setting objectives, which should also include at least one objective about the wellbeing of the reviewee

Good objectives are SMART. For the objectives to be of greatest use it is important that they are

**S** pecific **M** easurable **A** chieveable **R** ealistic **T** ime set

When setting objectives try to avoid wording such as

*“ get the church to think about mission in the coming year”*

*“spend more time reading”*

Once you have agreed the objectives for the coming year, they need to be added to the final pages of **Document C.**

After the MDR meeting the reviewee must complete **Part 3 of MDR Document C** and sign it off by the deadline agreed with the Bishop and return it to his office. This will be kept on file. Following the meeting the Bishop may give his own written response.

Both the reviewee and the Bishop keep a copy of the signed MDR Form (Document C). All other documentation received from contributors of the Listening Process is destroyed once the MDR is completed.

The MDR scheme itself is overseen by the Director of CMD, who will only hold documentation for as long as necessary for the smooth running of the system. The only personnel files will continue to be those held by the Bishop, though information about training will be retained by the Director of CMD.