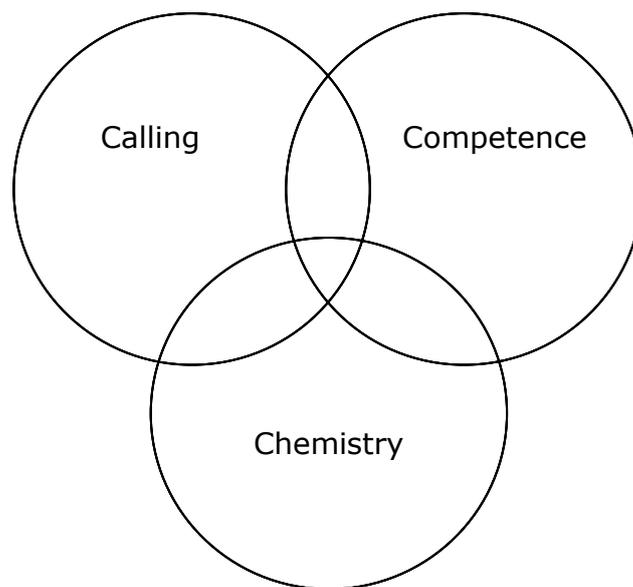


# Guidance Notes

## Best Practice in Vocational Selection Interviewing



**Fig. 1 Elements of calling**

**January 2013**

## How to make selection work for you

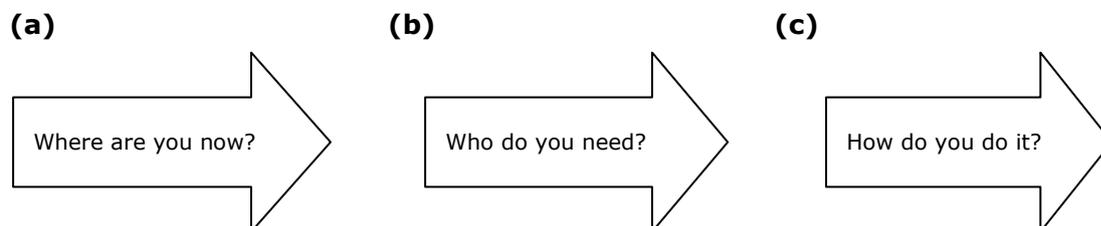
**Fig. 1 Elements of Calling** shows three elements that are required for you to appoint the right minister: **Calling, Competence and Chemistry**. In this context you will be looking to see if the candidate:

1. Is called to your Parish
2. Is competent enough to meet your needs
3. Has the right chemistry to fit with your team

Ideally you will be looking for someone who has a balance of all three elements and who can fit in your church context. A minister may feel called to your church and may have the skills your require, but may lack the qualities needed to work well within your team. Equally, they may have the right skills (competence) and connection with your people (chemistry) but their vocation is not in your church setting. Alternatively, calling and chemistry may be right but they do not have the skills that you require them to have in order to do the work that you need them to do.

You can assume that the candidates you see are called to ministry and competent enough to fulfil the general requirements of the role of minister. However, that does not mean they will be right for you in your church context at this time.

In order for you to find the right person for you need to understand your setting



**Fig: 1.2 Vocational selection process**

**(a)** In order to find the right person you need to understand your setting (**Where are you now?**). 'Where are you now?' should be incorporated in your parish profile.

**(b)** Considering both the history and possible future of the church will enable you to determine '**Who do you need?**' Who you need will form the basis of your Job Profile and your Person Specification.

**(c)** Once you have the above information discerning who can take on your role becomes much clearer. This process document will take you through the steps of '**How do you do it?**' and help you appoint the right person for your parish.

## **CONTENTS**

How to make selection work for you	2
Introduction	4
The Law	5
Ecclesiastical Law	5
Discrimination	6
Pre – interview Process	7
Short listing	7
Responsibility for short listing	7
The short listing stage	7
Other selection methods	8
Interview structure	8
Panel interviews	8
Structure of the panel	9
Roles and responsibilities of panel members	9
Confidentiality and Data Protection	11
Other considerations in the selection process	12
Appendices	14
References and Resources	24

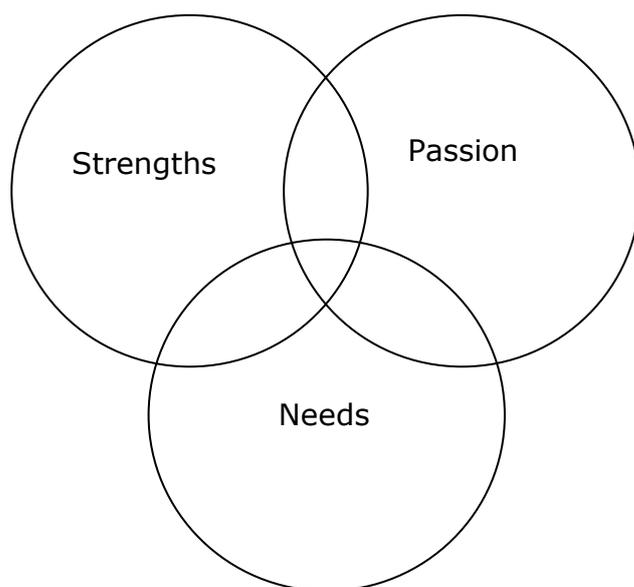
## Introduction

Vocational selection is like building a jigsaw. It involves discerning whether a candidate has the talent and skills to fill your needs at the same time as testing their 'call' against objective selection measurements. Your church and other stakeholders need enough of a picture to be reasonably confident that the candidate is both called and confident enough to be appointed. That picture will be drawn from a combination of paperwork, prayer, references and encounters that determine whether the applicant's strengths and passions fulfil your needs (**Fig 1.3 Elements of calling**).

The selection interview plays a significant part in the vocational selection process and in the building of this jigsaw. The interview is your opportunity to discern whether the applicant is right for your parish. Within the context of vocational selection it is used either as the sole method of selection or in conjunction with other types of assessment e.g. presentations, observed preaching etc. Whilst interviews are a widely accepted practice across our Diocese this guide is aimed at providing guidance and hints and tips on how to maximise the effectiveness of interviews when selecting the best minister for your parish. It covers the following areas:

- The Law
- Ecclesiastical Law
- Legislation
- Discrimination
- Pre interview process / short listing
- Interview Structure (Panel Interviews)
- Interview techniques and tips including example interview questions
- Other considerations in the selection process
- Tools to help you

**Please note this document does not replace training for interviewers.**



## **The law**

Ecclesiastical and secular law applies to the appointment process. Employment law i.e. the Equality Act 2010 does not apply to the appointment of incumbents (apart from those in Crown or Lord Chancellor livings) although it does apply to some other clergy e.g. assistant curates. Regardless of this a dissatisfied applicant may try to claim that the Equality Act 2010 does apply and the parish, the diocese, the bishop and / or the patrons may all be called to defend their actions as part of the determination by the courts whether there is jurisdiction.

### **Ecclesiastical law**

Parts of the appointment process are governed by Ecclesiastical Law (generally measures approved by Parliament) whilst matters to do with the role and duties of the clergy are also governed by Canon Law and the Anglican formularies (39 Articles, 1662 Prayer Book and 1662 Ordinal). However, these laws and formularies make it plain that in matters of faith and conduct our supreme authority must be the Bible, which is God's written word.

### **Legislation**

The main piece of legislation that has a bearing on the process of appointments is the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. This covers the process of appointments and the roles and responsibilities of the various parties. Further information on this measure can be found on the Office of Public Sector information website [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)

### **Appointment of women priests**

The priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 allows parishes not to appoint a woman priest, but the PCC must have passed the appropriate resolutions before the appointments process commences for this exemption to be valid

### **Common Tenure**

From 2011 clergy appointed to an ecclesiastical office hold that office under Common Tenure. Incumbents are still freeholders of the benefice property but they no longer have freehold of office. Under this legislation development, review and capability procedures make it desirable for clergy to have a job description but this legislation does not otherwise alter previous legislation regarding appointments.

**All appointment processes should however take into consideration anti - discrimination law covered by the Equality Act 2010. Further information on this law is outlined in the next section.**

## **Discrimination**

### **Potential liability for discrimination in employment**

Anti-discrimination law (**Equality Act 2010**) applies throughout the entire process of recruitment, including selection interviewing. The application of this act to ecclesiastical offices is however not straightforward because Clergy holding parochial offices are not employees and do not work under any form of contract. The act itself is tailored to the secular sphere and does not reflect the particular characteristics of some ecclesiastical offices however, in order to provide an equitable approach to all of our appointments we recommend treating all Clergy appointments, for practical purposes, as if they were subject to the Act.

This means it is particularly important to scrutinise any requirements or selection practices that appear to discriminate against women (or men), or on grounds of age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, pregnancy, marital or civil partnership status. It also means that great care must be taken during the process, for example at interview, only to ask questions that are strictly relevant to determining how far the applicant meets the criteria. Questions about family circumstances will need to be justified. (**See Appendix E – Avoiding discriminatory questions**)

The House of Bishops' statement *Issues in Human Sexuality* makes a distinction between sexual orientation and sexual conduct. A pastoral statement of 25 July 2005 on the Civil Partnership Act reaffirms this teaching. All clergy are expected to conduct their relationships in a manner consistent with the standards set out for them in *Issues*.

Anybody wishing to restrict the field of candidates on the grounds of sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, including remarriage, will need to think very carefully about how this could be justified and take legal advice. If any exemption (occupational requirement) is claimed under the Equality Act 2010 with reasons which comply with the exemptions under the Act this should be stated at the outset in the advert and the person specification. Candidates would therefore be expected to state at the panel interview that they are able to comply with this exemption.

Apart from any questioning relating to stated occupational requirements it is very strongly recommended that lifestyle issues are not raised at panel interview. This guards against inferences being drawn about the reasons why a particular decision has been reached as well as helping to prevent interview panels straying into inappropriate areas of questioning. If there is no occupational requirement attached to the post then it is for the bishop at his interview with the recommended candidate, to probe his or her fitness for office in relation to their ability to comply with the Canons, the Ordinal and any agreed Church of England protocols for priests.

**Further Guidance on the Equality Act (2010) is covered in Appendix D**

## **Pre - interview process**

Once you have received applications for your post the process goes live. Up to this point you have been focussing on what the parish is like and creating a profile that you would like to fill with the next leader of your parish. Now you have to pre –select and in doing so remove any preconceptions you may have developed over time about the type of person you would like to fill the role.

### **Short Listing**

Application forms encourage applicants to show how they meet the criteria in the person specification by using specific examples. This ensures all candidates are judged by the same criteria: that is, those recorded in the person specification as either **essential** or **desirable**. This approach ensures that the best candidate for the job is selected in a transparent way and can help to protect against allegations of discrimination. It also demonstrates as far as possible at this stage that the candidate is capable of doing the role.

Even if there is only one candidate you should go through this process. You need to make sure any candidate meets the minimum criteria otherwise they should not be appointed if you firmly believe they do not meet your needs.

### **Responsibility for short listing**

The responsibility for short listing rests with patrons and the Bishop’s representative (usually the Archdeacon). However, they may choose to involve others and will have to decide who to involve based on the circumstances. It would be reasonable to expect all those involved in the interviewing to participate in the short listing as this helps with continuity and consistency and means that feedback to candidates can be given by the Bishop’s representative (the Archdeacon).

### **The Short Listing Stage**

At the short listing stage it is helpful to use a grid for comparing candidates fairly against the criteria required for the role. The person specification supports this process and ensures that all candidates are measured against the same criteria (essential and desirable). This is a transparent method and can help to protect against allegations of discrimination. Those who meet the criteria can be invited to interview.

**A short listing template is included in Appendix A.**

## **Other selection methods**

Whilst the interview is an important part of the selection process, it is also useful to build up an understanding of candidate's strengths and gaps against the profile via other means which might include the following:

**Presentations** – Prepared in advance on a topic specified by the panel. They demonstrate ability to present knowledge and lateral thinking and to communicate vision and ideas about areas of work relevant to the role. Applicants should be given sufficient time to prepare for the presentation and should be given the choice on how to present i.e. Flipchart, power point or oral presentation. The duration of the presentation should last up to 10 minutes.

Example presentation topics are included in **Appendix B**

**Exposition of a biblical text** – Candidates would be requested to prepare a brief on a particular biblical text. This would give some insights into someone's teaching style, their ability to communicate theological ideas and to engage people.

## **Interview structure**

In its purest sense an 'interview' is a selection instrument with emphasis on the interviewer/s obtaining information from candidates in order to assess their ability to perform the role. It can take many forms from a one on one interview to one to several interviewers culminating in a panel interview. The latter method is the one most commonly used in a Church context when selecting members of clergy.

In practice, interviewers and candidates place considerable importance on the interview as an exchange of information and on how well the candidate performs on the day. Equally important are the less tangible and more subjective issues such as the personal fit of the candidate for the team / parish and discerning whether someone has the calling and the gifts to do a particular job in a particular place. The interview is designed to find out whether the candidate is right for you but also whether they feel the Church is right for them.

Variations in objectives of the interviewers will also influence the type of interview to be carried out and the questions to be asked it is therefore crucial to the procedure that interview objectives, format and content are agreed with all concerned prior to selection taking place.

## **Panel Interviews**

Interviews can be conducted in a number of ways however the main model recommended within a Church context is the Panel interview (competitive interview).

### **Definition**

The panel interview refers to the number of interviewers on the panel. The panel strives to achieve greater accuracy and objectivity by combining the skills and viewpoints from a range of specialists and then pooling their judgements to evaluate the candidate against a shared understanding of the assessment criteria.

## Structure of the panel

It is good practice for the composition of the panel to be balanced in terms of age, gender and race, although it is recognised that this cannot always be achieved

As a recommended guide we suggest a maximum of five panel members consisting of:

<b>Archdeacon</b>	represents the Bishop
<b>Area Dean or the Lay Chair</b>	represents the Deanery mission planning and thinking
<b>Two parish representatives</b>	provide the local knowledge and in the work setting understands team requirements and the context in which individuals will be required to work.
<b>One private patron</b>	to find someone to be the new parish priest and to present them to the Bishop

## Roles and responsibilities of panel members

### Before the interview day

- It is important that panel members meet up with other panel members before the interview to discuss the overall approach. (This meeting can take place at the same time as the short listing meeting or on a separate occasion).
- A chairperson should be appointed at this meeting.
- It is the chairperson's responsibility to ensure that all interview arrangements for candidates are applied fairly with equal consideration to all applicants. The chairperson can appoint other members of the panel to co-ordinate activities on their behalf and also to arrange any pre- interview visits to the parish from short listed applicants (**see 'Other considerations in the selection process' which includes 'Visit by the spouse' on page 12**).
- Any relevant documentation e.g. person specification, application form, interview guide, should be reviewed by the panel before the interview.
- The panel should also discuss the strategy to be followed: what to look for, who explores what areas and for how long.
- There should be a set list of questions prepared in advance, based on the person specification which the panel will use to determine who will ask what. Only trained interviewers or those who have interview experience should ask the questions. If you are a member of the panel and have no experience you can still take part in the interview but only as an observer / note taker.
- Questions asked should only be used if they are:
  - ❖ Useful for the process
  - ❖ The candidate is clear what the question means
  - ❖ You are clear what your question means and (if any) appropriate response options
  - ❖ Suitable for comparing different candidates against the person profile

### **(Sample questions are included in Appendix F)**

- Prior to the interview, the chairperson should ensure that the panel has agreed on how the interview is to be conducted.
- All panel members should keep notes of the interview but at least one member of the panel needs to be identified beforehand as the person that will record an evaluation of candidates against the criteria of the role. This should be completed on all candidates as it will assist in any subsequent one to one meeting with the candidate and with feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

### **(Refer to Appendix C for Preparation for Interview Checklist)**

#### **During**

The interview will take place in the context of prayer and the systematic testing of each candidate against the criteria will include testing out the insights gained through the process of discernment. Notes will be taken during the interview and a standard interview report form should be used for this purpose by all panel members. **(Refer to Appendix G for sample Interview Report)**

The **chairperson** has responsibility for:

- ❖ Welcoming the candidate and making them feel at ease
- ❖ Introducing panel members
- ❖ Maintaining control of the interview e.g. by picking up on any points which may need further exploration and summarising where appropriate
- ❖ Explaining the format of the interview and the expected length of time (try to stick to the timetable; interviews too frequently overrun). As a general guide allow one hour for the interview with a 15 – 30 minute break in between the next one. This will allow you a small time for reflection and some extra time for any interviews that overrun
- ❖ Outlining the role
- ❖ Explaining that you will be taking notes giving reasons

All **panel members** have responsibility for:

- ❖ Asking open questions as per the questions set
- ❖ Avoiding closed questions that illicit a 'yes / no' response
- ❖ Avoiding going back over the application form, repeating what is already there (anything that needs clarifying from the application form should be picked up by the chairperson)
- ❖ Listening and looking attentive, allowing the candidate time to think and speak. Remember that the candidate should be doing most of the talking. Try to read between the lines of what is being said.
- ❖ Probing if the need arises, it is better to get any doubts out into the open than to wonder about them afterwards
- ❖ Being aware of your own behaviour during the interview, in particular it is important to avoid distractions such as shuffling papers and talking to each other and staring fixedly at the candidate. This can be just as unsettling as appearing to take no interest at all.

#### **The close of the interview**

The **chairperson** has responsibility for:

- ❖ Allowing the candidate time to ask questions at the end of the interview
- ❖ Advising the candidate what will happen next e.g. when you will make the selection decision, when they will know the outcome etc.

- ❖ Thanking the candidate for their time.

## **Afterwards**

The **chairperson** should:

- ❖ Lead the discussion of the candidate recording the panel's assessment, differences of opinion within the panel, and ensuring those members' judgements are based on evidence rather than guess-work.
- ❖ Classify and evaluate the behaviour of the candidate in terms of the criteria being assessed.
- ❖ Be aware that any record created about an individual and placed in a structured file (or input onto a computer) will give rise to individual rights under the Data Protection Act 1998. Specifically applicants will have the right, upon written request, to be given a copy of their own file. Interview notes should therefore be compiled with this in mind.
- ❖ Notify the candidates of the outcome as soon as possible; you may wish to delay telling any reserve candidate until the first choice has been accepted but this delay should not be too long.
- ❖ Ensure that the patrons make arrangements for the successful candidate to be presented to the Bishop - provisional appointment at this stage. (Only once the Bishop has satisfied himself on the candidate's fitness for office will the Bishop express the appointment through the licensing process).
- ❖ Arrange feedback to be given to any unsuccessful internal candidates ensuring that the feedback is developmental.
- ❖ Retain a note of why you appointed the successful person in case you receive any complaints of discrimination from those who were unsuccessful.

## **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- Confidentiality both in relation to identities and to information disclosed should be maintained at all times by all participating in the process.
- It is likely that candidates would like their application to be treated in confidence and their identities not disclosed to people who are not part of the process.
- If group activities are involved with other applicants it is recommended that candidates are asked to keep the identity of other candidates confidential.
- When making notes about candidates at any stage during the recruitment process those involved should avoid recording personal thoughts, which the writer would not wish to be shared. Under the Data Protection Act candidates have the right to request sight of any papers relating to their application, including interview notes, and such comments could conceivably be actionable under other secular legislation and be disclosable in any such proceedings.

## **Other considerations in the selection process**

### **Meeting other people in the parish(es)**

If the candidates are to meet other people in the parish the guiding principles should be that:

- It is clear to candidates when they are being assessed and they have been informed accordingly.
- That each candidate has the same opportunity to meet the same people and to discuss the same issues
- If the purpose is to provide information about the role and the context, each candidate should meet the group prior to the formal in interview.
- It may be helpful for candidates to meet other members of the ministry team and, in the case of incumbent level offices, the Area Dean and /or Lay Chair.

### ***Candidates should not be expected to 'work a room' at a social gathering unless this is specifically a requirement of the person specification.***

- It is easier to manage meetings with candidates where there is only one candidate present. In addition care must be taken not to make any decisions on the basis of evidence provided at these meetings about how the candidate/s met the person specification.
- The parish should not expect to make a collective decision based on their impression of the candidate as this will be handled by parish representatives who have been appointed to the interview panel and chosen to take a decision on behalf of the parish.
- If any information about the candidate comes to light during a meeting the chair of the interview panel may ask for disclosure of any such information prior to the formal interview so that issues raised can be dealt with or put aside.
- All information about candidates can be properly taken into account so long as it has been carefully assessed both for accuracy and relevance. This assessment process is particularly important in using information gleaned from candidates from other sources, for example information put into the public domain by candidates themselves on social networking sites or blogs.
- Your congregation will want to know everything about the candidates. Remember that the candidates may not have told their churches that they are looking for a move, so be sensitive about how much information you divulge.

### **Visit by the spouse**

Selection processes are about appointing a new minister and whilst it may seem appropriate to invite a candidates partner and family (if they have one) with them to the interview it could actually imply bias against single applicants. You may therefore want to:

1. Invite candidates to come and look round the church, community, and house before the interview day. If they have school aged children they may want to visit a school before the formal process starts. **OR**
2. Delay a visit by the spouse / family until after a candidate has been offered a role.

## **APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix A</b> - Short listing template	15
<b>Appendix B</b> - Presentation Topics	16
<b>Appendix B</b> - Preparation for interview – Checklist	17
<b>Appendix C</b> – Equality and Diversity issues	18
<b>Appendix D</b> – Avoiding discriminatory questions	19
<b>Appendix E</b> – Example questions for the appointment of Clergy	21
<b>Appendix F</b> – Interview report template	23

## Appendix A

### Short listing Template

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Vacancy title:</b>						
<b>Panel Chair:</b>		<b>Names of panel members:</b>						
<b>Scoring:</b>								
<b>0 = Does not meet criteria    1 = partly meets    2 = fully meets    3 = exceeds</b>								
<b>Number of candidate</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Essential Criteria</b>								
<b>1</b>								
<b>2</b>								
<b>3</b>								
<b>4</b>								
<b>5</b>								
<b>Desirable Criteria</b>								
<b>1</b>								
<b>2</b>								
<b>3</b>								
<b>4</b>								
<b>5</b>								
<b>Total</b>								

## **Appendix B**

### **Example Presentation Topics**

Candidates are requested to present on a topic relevant to the post. The presentation will usually last between 7 – 10 minutes maximum. Below are some example topics:

#### **Prepare a 10 minute presentation on:**

1. The role and work of a priest in a local parish (for a catholic parish).
2. What your priorities in ministry would be during your first year as incumbent.
3. What you hope to have achieved after your first year in post.
4. What has attracted you to the position as Vicar here, and what you see as the chief challenges for the post.
5. What your priorities in ministry would be at each of the two churches during your first year as incumbent.
6. Three key strategies for growth which you would consider appropriate in XXXXXX.
7. What you will do in the first 6 months in your new post and how you will do it.
8. How you see the role of Team Rector of XXXX developing over the next few years.
9. The five prime objectives you might set yourself to achieve during your first six months in post, and how you would go about them.
10. What your understanding of Fresh Expressions of church is, and their effectiveness in urban priority areas.
11. What you might look for and what challenges you would expect in developing lay leaders in an urban context.
12. Something about yourself, your faith journey, and why you believe God is calling you to St XXXXXX
13. The faith-journey that has brought you to this point in your ministry.

## Appendix C

### PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Consider the following factors when preparing for an interview:

- Do you have all relevant information about the candidates, including:
  - Application forms / CV's
  - All other correspondence with the applicant
  - References if obtained beforehand
  - Results of any tests carried out
  - Any relevant information on internal candidates from previous roles
  - Any other information you may have about the candidate
  
- Have you identified important issues to be discussed in the interview?
- Do you have the role description, person specification, parish profile?
- Have the candidates been informed of the date, time and venue of the interview?
- Have candidates been advised of the names of panel members and their roles, the format of the day, including any special instructions e.g. that a presentation is to be given and any details / arrangements for visiting the parish with travel arrangements?
- Have you taken account of their travelling or other constraints?
- If disabled candidates are attending the interview ensure that appropriate facilities are provided e.g. access arrangements, signing interpreter, and/or T loop induction. Candidates with disabilities should be assessed against the same criteria as other candidates and consideration given to where a reasonable adjustment can be made to the relevant aspects of the office.
- Have you arranged for someone appropriate to greet the candidate when they arrive?
- Have other members of the interview panel been told:
  - Time and place of interview
  - Been given all the relevant paperwork
  - Been fully briefed on their role in the interview
  
- If appropriate have arrangements been made to pay for travelling expenses?
- Do you have all necessary information about the salary and terms and conditions relating to the role?
- Have you decided on the information you require and prepared a list of relevant questions?
- Have you considered questions that the candidates are likely to ask and your responses to them?
- Has a suitable interview room been prepared?
- Have you arranged to divert telephone calls and avoid interruptions?
- Have waiting facilities been provided for candidates?
- Have candidate assessment forms been prepared and made available to the panel members?
- Has the decision making process been agreed?
- Has the process for notifying candidates of the results been agreed?
- Have the candidates been told the stages in the interview process?

## Appendix D

### Equality and Diversity issues

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010. It harmonises and replaces previous legislation protecting people from discrimination in the context of their work. The act protects applicants against discrimination because of 'protected characteristics':

- sex;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- marriage or civil partnership;
- race, colour, nationality, ethnic origins and national origins;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- age; and
- disability

The general principle contained in the UK's anti - discrimination legislation is that all job applicants must be treated equally, irrespective of sex, race, etc. The structure of the law on disability is slightly different in that the employer may choose if it wishes to treat a disabled candidate more favourable than other candidates (and in some cases must treat a disabled candidate more favourable than other candidates).

#### Types of discrimination

1. **Direct Discrimination** – This occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.
2. **Associative Discrimination** – This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic e.g. if an applicant has a disabled son. Associative discrimination applies to all the protected characteristics except marriage / civil partnership and pregnancy / maternity.
3. **Perceptive Discrimination** – This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think he or she possesses a particular protected characteristic e.g. a person is not appointed to a post because those making the appointment assume that he is much younger than he really is. Perceptive discrimination applies to all the protected characteristics except marriage / civil partnership and pregnancy / maternity.
4. **Indirect Discrimination** – This occurs when a condition, rule, policy or practice is applied across the board but particularly damages people who share a protected characteristic e.g. a post is advertised on the basis that it is only open to applicants with a driving licence, which places disabled people at a disadvantage. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be shown that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. This means that the employer must act reasonably and should be able to show that he or she has considered less discriminatory alternatives.
5. **Harassment** – This is unwanted conduct, related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. It applies to all the protected characteristics except marriage / civil partnership and pregnancy / maternity.
6. **Victimisation** – This occurs when a person is treated unfairly because he or she has made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Act.

## **Application of the Act to Clergy appointments**

As previously mentioned in the main body of this document the application of the Act to Clergy appointments is not straightforward as Clergy are not 'employees' and do not have contracts of employment. That said in order to avoid any claims of unfair discrimination in our appointment process, we do need to ensure that that we adhere to the guiding principles of the Act and treat all applicants fairly as though they were subject to it.

It is important that those concerned in the appointments process in the Church familiarise themselves with this Act and ensure that any requirements imposed in relation to a 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act are both justified and properly applied.

If things go awry those involved in the process could be the subject of a complaint, either through the grievance procedure or an employment tribunal i.e. discrimination claim. This might require those individuals, including patrons and PCC representatives, to appear in the witness box to justify their behaviour with possible adverse implications from the point of view of cost, loss of time and damage to reputation.

## Appendix E

### Avoiding discriminatory questions

Parish representatives need to exercise considerable sensitivity. When considering asking a personal question, one guiding principle should be 'Don't ask a question that you would not answer yourself'. The interview must not be used to ask intimate questions about marital history, sexuality, personal financial matters, or past history of mental illness. If there are issues that worry the parish representatives, they should consult the bishop.

It is helpful to concentrate on how candidates work in practice rather than how effectively they handle ideas, and to try to obtain stories of actual experience rather than theory.

- ❖ Questions that encourage discussion and that begin with **what, where, why** and **how**.
- ❖ You avoid closed questions which elicit a 'yes' or 'no' response. For example it is better to ask 'What do you like about your present role?' as opposed to 'Do you like your present role? Use phrases such as 'Tell us what you think about.....'
- ❖ Ask questions that relate to required job competencies and the applicant's previous experience, e.g. 'Describe a time when.....' and 'What did you learn from this?'
- ❖ Include questions that explore vocational issues relating to the individual's ministries and how their calling and experience will enable them to fulfil the needs of this particular role.
- ❖ Avoid any questions that might appear to be discriminatory on grounds of sex, race, religion or belief, age or disability such as:

<b>Don't say</b>	<b>Do say</b>
Are you planning to get married / have a family in the next few years?	What are your general aims and goals over the next three/five years?
Are you likely to want to take holidays in your own country?	Do you have any holidays planned in the next few months that we need to be aware of?
Will your disability mean that you have to have time off for hospital visits?	Is there anything regarding your disability that we need to be made aware of?
Do you think you would be able to work in a team role where everyone else is younger than you?	When working as part of a team what do you most enjoy / least enjoy?

- ❖ Ensure that you can justify the relevance of any questions you intend to ask.

## Appendix F

### Example Questions for the Appointment of Clergy

The purpose of an interview is to enable the Panel to compare the candidate with the person specification. Therefore, each question should be designed to reveal the candidate's match, or lack of match, to the person specification. A small sample of interview questions are detailed below, you not endless and you

1. Please tell us about yourself, your faith journey and why you believe God is calling you to this post.
2. What do you see as being the main challenges of the post? How will you approach the challenges?
3. How would you describe your leadership style? Give a recent example of how you have put this into practice.
4. What do you understand by collaborative ministry?
5. Give an example of where you have discerned gifts in people and made good use of them.
6. What experience do you have of lay leadership teams and what factors would you see as being key to their effectiveness?
7. Given the diocesan growth agenda, tell us what you understand by growth and how you would set about helping the Church to grow.
8. Tell us about a mission initiative undertaken in your present Parish.
9. What kind of barriers have you experienced which prevent the Church engaging in the local community, and how can they be overcome?
10. How have you responded to those who are not Church members who have asked for your help?
11. How would you endeavour to ensure that young people are welcomed and nurtured in the faith and practice of the Church?
12. Describe an initiative that you led which proved difficult or failed, and explain what you learned from it.
13. What is your view of the special needs of an urban/rural community. How would you try to ensure that they are met?
14. What are the joys and pitfalls of ecumenical links? Give examples of cooperative ventures you have been involved with.
15. What changes have you encouraged and achieved at [present parish] during your tenure?
16. What makes for good worship?

17. How do you initiate and sustain growth in discipleship?
18. What is your experience of managing conflict?
19. There is a strong measure of support in this Diocese for women bishops. What are your views about women bishops?
20. What makes for an effective Chair of a meeting? Are you a good Chair?
21. How do you balance your time to include spiritual reflection and personal development?
22. How have you kept a balance if there have been various power groups in the parish?

**APPENDIX E**

**Interview Report**

**Role:**

**Candidate:**

**Panel Members:**

**Date:**

<b>Person Specification</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Score 1-5</b>
<b>Qualifications</b>		
<b>Theological</b>		
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>		
<b>Experience</b>		
<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
<b>Circumstances and other information</b>	<b>DO NOT SCORE</b>	
<b>Total</b>		

**Additional Notes:**

**Successful / Not successful (circle)**

## References and resources

Good practice in appointment of ministers

'How to Make Great Appointments in the Church' by Claire Pedrick and Su Blanch

In the SPCK Library of Ministry series

<http://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/asa/senappt.aspx>

Information about common tenure

<http://commontenure.org>

Clergy Appointments - An Overview

Church Society Trust

<http://www.churchsocietytrust.org.uk>

XperthR

<http://www.xperthr.co.uk/>