

Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church

Local Mission and Ministry Review

Summary

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

“The 2006 General Assembly agreed (resolution 16) “in principle to replace the existing scheme for Ministerial Accompanied Self-Appraisal with a more comprehensive review scheme which would eventually include all Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers” and would (amongst other things) “be based around an agreed role description for the Minister”, “retain the confidential accompanied self-appraisal discussion for the Minister” and would “include open discussions involving both the Minister and the pastorate or post” and “would become a standard part of the Terms of Settlement”.

The Wessex Synod recognises that there is a wide variety of types of pastorates and team ministries; the system described below will need appropriate adoption for each context. Normally all churches and ministers in a pastorate will proceed through the scheme at the same time.

The Synod’s Local Ministry and Mission Review process will:

- a) *Have as its purpose:* ‘to explore a *Minister's sense of vocation, the pastorates' understanding(s) of mission in context, and the relationship between the two’
(*minister is an inclusive term for Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Workers)
- b) *Have as its intended outcomes;*
 - i. ‘that the minister's professional development will benefit, the pastorate's understanding of mission in context be enhanced and there will be a development of the cooperative working between minister and pastorate.
 - ii. that the Synod helps churches better identify and access appropriate resources and support from the synod and wider church.
- c) *Use the following outline process:*
 - i. church and ministers independently and simultaneously reviewing their mission,
 - ii. the minister then reflecting on their role in that context and finally
 - iii. agreement on the way forward and an endorsement of the minister's role within the framework of the church's plan for mission.
- d) *Include these key elements:*
 - i. include the ministries of Word and Sacrament and Church Related Community Work.
 - ii. a major review every four years and a recommended follow up internal review after two years.
 - iii. be based around an agreed role description for the minister and the pastorate profile which becomes a living document which is thus periodically reviewed in this process.
 - iv. include a confidential Ministerial Accompanied Self Appraisal (MASA) — with ministers supported by an Appraisal Partner
 - v. the church’s reviews will be supported by Outside Facilitators
 - vi. be a standard part of the Terms of Settlement (as agreed by Mission Council)

ETHOS:

- a) The intention of the Synod's Local Ministry and Mission Review process is that of encouraging local churches by the Synod in their mission and is not to be seen or perceived as forms of 'inspection' or 'assessment' of any church or Pastorate.
- b) The aim of the approach is to enhance the covenantal relationship between churches within Synod through mutual support by fellow URC members undertaking the process; this differs from any formal and bureaucratic attempt at 'evaluation'.
- c) The model of 'accompanied self appraisal' to both the minister AND pastorate (either single or multi-church) elements of the process should be seen as an aid rather than an imposition on the churches or denial of their authority.
- d) The review process is to be established as a ongoing experience where one review builds on the previous one.

SYNOD REVIEW ADMINISTRATION

- a) Administration will be done by one person for both the Church Review process and the Ministerial Accompanied Self- Appraisal.

OUTSIDE FACILITATORS and APPRAISAL PARTNERS

- a) The Local Ministry and Mission Review Administrator will keep a list of Synod appointed and trained Outside Facilitators and Appraisal Partners and will link churches/ministers with their respective Outside Facilitators and Appraisal Partners.
- b) To ensure that the reviews of the Pastorate are done as well as possible we suggest that there should be two people to adequately resource the process, at least one of whom is a trained Outside Facilitator. Otherwise it might be a real burden for one person to keep track of all the aspects of the process – and the mutual reflection between two people would be really helpful.

FREQUENCY

- a) There should be a Major Church Life Review (for minister and pastorate) every four years with a recommended follow up internal review in the intervening second year.
- b) Normally three years after every induction or commissioning/appointment there should be a Major Church Life Review thereafter the four yearly review cycles will commence.
- c) For churches with ministers in post we will look at each Synod Pastoral Area, divide the churches by four and seek to review a quarter each year. We will start with those requesting a review and those where ministry has been in place for longest.

ECUMENICAL

- a) For churches in an ecumenical relationship the reviews will be those undertaken by the ecumenical sponsoring bodies.
- b) For United Reformed Church ministers serving in churches in an ecumenical relationship their Ministerial Accompanied Self Appraisal (MASA) process will be implemented to coincide with the ecumenical review processes.
(Non URC ministers will be exempt from the URC MASA process).

COMPLEX PASTORATES

- a) Where there is a group of churches, joint pastorate or 'team ministry', the review will need to happen for each church and so might need a team of Outside Facilitators. Similarly where there is a team of ministers then the MASA will need to happen for all.
- b) Where there are two or more churches the process will review the individual churches and the pastorate as a whole. In some cases it might need an Outside Facilitator for each church.

DOCUMENTATION

- a) Documentation for the pastorate will essentially be the Pastorate Mission Profile which includes the Minister's Role Description. When the Area Synod Pastoral Committee notifies a Pastorate of an intended review it will also send a brief questionnaire to be completed and returned to the Local Ministry and Mission Review Administrator prior to the visit by the Outside Facilitator.
- b) Only in places where a church has been in a recent vacancy will there be an up to date Pastorate Mission Profile. All other churches are strongly encouraged to compile a new Pastorate Mission Profile and the Minister's Role Description as soon as possible but at least prior to the first visit by the Outside Facilitator for the first Major Church Life Review.
- c) The Minister's Role Description can only be constructed out of the Pastorate Mission Profile.

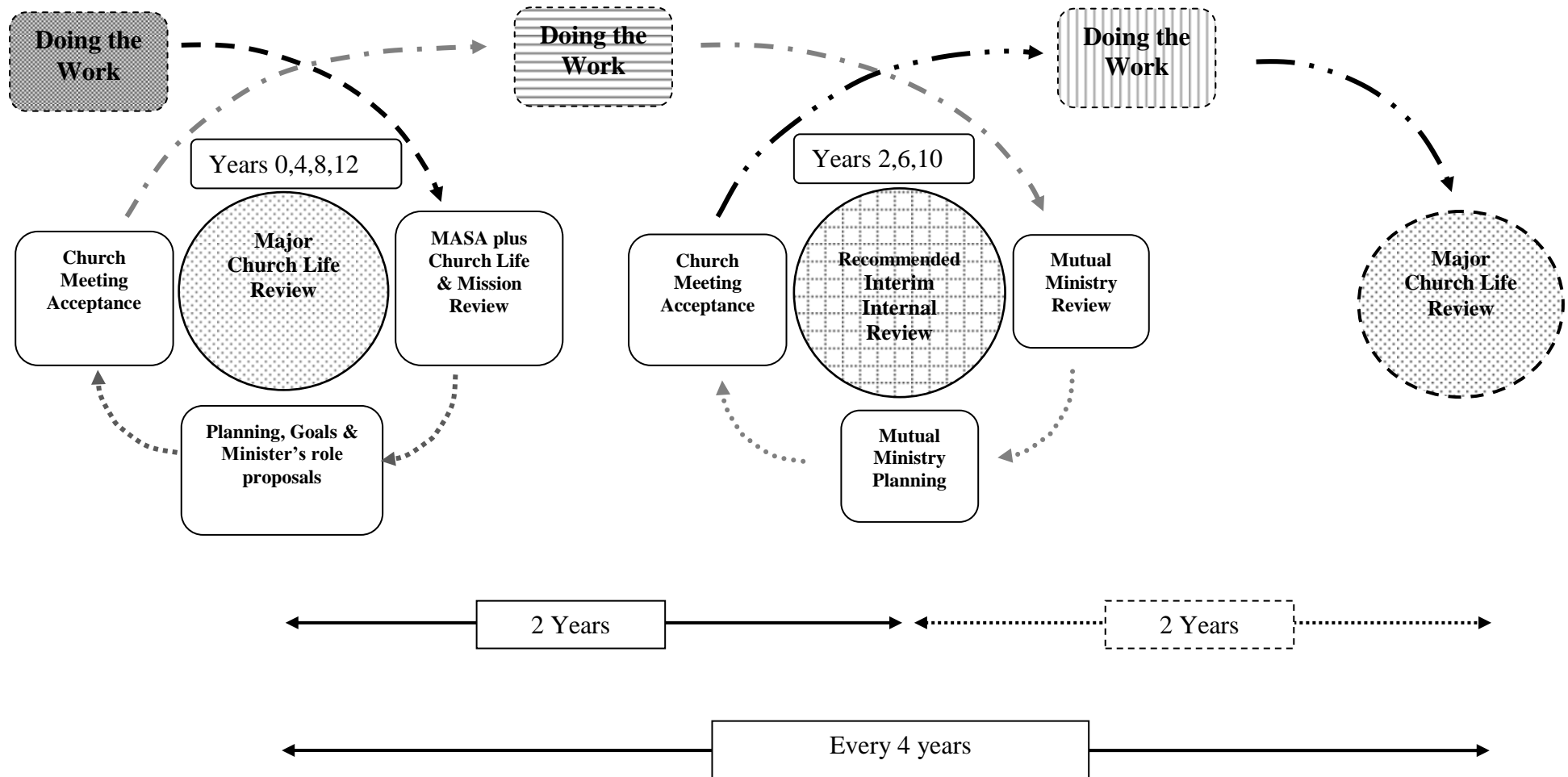
PROCESS

- a) Both Elders' and Church Meetings need to be involved in the process.
- b) At the final meeting the minister with the Outside Facilitator in attendance, share in presenting the Major Church Life Review's conclusions to the congregation.
- c) A copy of the revised Pastorate Mission Profile should be endorsed by the churches and forwarded to the Area Synod Pastoral Committee.

Note

- This document needs to read in conjunction with the more detailed document "*Local Mission and Ministry Review: Background and Guidance*"
- That where a review is happening close to the time when a minister is leaving a pastorate the minister should play very little role in the production of the pastorate profile as this task is undertaken by the Interim Moderator.
- It is anticipated that if a church has made 'Mission Pledges' as a result of Vision 2020 that these should be incorporated in its priorities and objectives in the Pastorate Mission Profile.

Flowchart for Local Mission and Ministry Reviews (LMMR's)



Note:
 MASA = Ministerial Accompanied Self Appraisal