

## APPENDIX F

### RECVLVER DEANERY SYNOD MOTION

Since 2020 deaneries have been responsible for strategic planning in their areas. This applies to virtually everything except the appointment of clergy which still rests with the Bishop for legal reasons. There is no formal place within the legal process of clergy appointment for the deanery voice to be heard and there is a strong argument in favour of ensuring effective consultation with deaneries, with the Deanery Synod and/or the Deanery Mission and Ministry Committee.

In May 2023 the parish of Herne with Greenhill fell vacant with the retirement of the Vicar who was also the Area Dean (the Deanery Lay Chair stood down at the same time). The summer was taken up with the appointment and election of a new Area Dean and Lay Chair, and when the reformed DMMC met for the first time in September it was preparing to discuss the issues surrounding an appointment at Herne. However, the DMMC was surprised to be informed that a timetable had already been set for the appointment process in relation to a fulltime stipendiary post, with a date for interviews agreed.

The possibility of pastoral reorganisation had been talked about informally for a number of years, mainly because the eastern half of the Deanery was not financially self-sustaining. A group of small churches was unable to meet the costs of their Vicar, and Herne had had to use reserves to meet its full Parish Share for 4 of the previous 6 years, in common with most of the other churches in the Deanery. The DMMC saw that there was a significant fragility in the Deanery's financial position and the appointment of a fulltime priest needed careful consideration. But no transparent consultation had taken place between the DMMC/Synod and the Diocesan leadership on financial matters.

Eventually discussions took place, and the Deanery Synod was able to commend a fulltime appointment but with a commentary on the financial situation and prospects of the parish included in the appointment literature and interviews. But the events had thrown light on a question about the deanery planning process i.e. How can a deanery plan effectively for ministry and mission if it is not consulted about each and every clergy appointment?

This motion is not attempting to change the legal process surrounding clergy appointments, nor challenging the Bishop's right and responsibility to make appointments. It is about recognising the important role in planning mission and ministry which has been handed to deaneries, and ensuring that all the stakeholders are heard. It is asking for a transparent, collaborative process between the Diocesan leadership and deaneries on the crucial matter of clergy appointments.

**“Bearing in mind that the Diocese has delegated strategic planning to the deaneries, this Synod urges the Archbishop's Council to take advice, devise and implement a process of consultation (with written Minutes) with the relevant Deanery Synod for every clerical and ministerial appointment across the Diocese.”**

The motion above was passed by the Reculver Deanery Synod on 5 February 2024.