

HOUSE OF LORDS
HOUSE OF COMMONS
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN BEFORE
THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMITTEE

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS MEASURE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS)
MEASURE

CHURCH PROPERTY MEASURE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PENSIONS MEASURE

WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER 2018

1.10 pm



Oral Evidence

Taken before the Ecclesiastical Committee

on Wednesday 24 October 2018

Members present:

Baroness Butler-Sloss (Chairman)
Baroness Berridge
Sir Peter Bottomley
Mr Ben Bradshaw
The Earl of Cork and Orrery
Lord Elton
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Kevin Foster
Helen Goodman
Mr Dominic Grieve
Baroness Harris of Richmond
Lord Judd
Lord Lexden
Lord Lisvane
Rachael Maskell
Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall
Dame Caroline Spelman
Sir Desmond Swayne

Witnesses

William Nye, Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod

The Reverend Dr Callan Slipper, National Ecumenical Officer
Stephen Slack, Legal Adviser

The Reverend Alexander McGregor, Deputy Legal Advisor
Josile Munro, Member of the House of Laity, General Synod
Andrew Brown, Secretary, Church Commissioners,

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden, Vicar-General, Province of Canterbury
Peter Wagon, Church Commissioners (Pastoral and Closed Churches Division)
Dr Jonathan Spencer, Chair, Church of England Pensions Board
Lee Marshall, Chief of Staff, Church of England Pensions Board

Examination of witnesses: Ecumenical Relations Measure

William Nye, Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod, **the Reverend Dr Callan Slipper**, National Ecumenical Officer, **Stephen Slack**, Legal Adviser, and **the Reverend Alexander McGregor**, Deputy Legal Advisor

Q1 **The Chairman:** I welcome the national ecumenical officer, Dr Callan Slipper; Mr Stephen Slack, whom we are delighted, as always, to see; Mr William Nye, who is now Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod; and the Reverend Alexander McGregor, who, again, comes from time to time. It is a great pleasure to see you. Are there any relevant interests to declare?

Lord Lisvane: In respect, my Lord Chairman, of items 1, 2 and 3, I am married to a Church of England priest, who is also chairman of the Hereford diocesan board of finance. In respect of items 2 and 3, I am a churchwarden of St Leonard's Church, Blakemere, Herefordshire.

Baroness Harris of Richmond: My nephew is a vicar in the Isle of Man, and I am high steward of Ripon Cathedral.

Mr Dominic Grieve: My sister-in-law is a member of the Anglican clergy and my wife is a churchwarden.

Lord Elton: I am a retired lay minister in the diocese of Oxford and I have a daughter who is an assistant curate in Guildford.

Sir Peter Bottomley: My wife is a retired lay canon of Guildford. I am the parliamentary warden of St Margaret's, Westminster and I am chairman of the trustees of Dr Busby's main trust, which for 300 years has supported distressed clergy in two dioceses.

The Chairman: I was chairman of St Paul's advisory council. I conducted a number of inquiries, particularly into Chichester and into Exeter.

The Earl of Cork and Orrery: I am an ex-member of the cathedral council in Chichester, trustee of Chichester Cathedral restoration trust and its endowment fund, and chairman of the oddly named Society for Advancing the Christian Faith.

Lord Judd: I am a former member and chair of the diocesan board for social responsibility in Oxford. I have lived for many years in Cumberland. I quite often do the readings and my wife does prayers.

Helen Goodman: In respect of item 4, my father is in receipt of a Church of England spouse's pension.

Mr Dominic Grieve: I forgot to mention that I am a member of the council of reference of the Westminster Abbey Institute.

The Chairman: So am I. I forgot that, too.

Baroness Harris of Richmond: If we were talking about formers, I was

president of the National Association of Chaplains to the Police.

Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall: Are we declaring former interests, Lord Chairman? I thought possibly not.

Q2 **The Chairman:** I think we have produced enough interests between us all.

Thank you for coming to talk to us about the Ecumenical Relations Measure. What would you like to tell us about it?

William Nye: The Ecumenical Relations Measure is intended to simplify the way in which the Church of England can work with other Christian bodies. At present, the law essentially requires that the Church identifies other national denominations with a similar structure to the Church of England. Many of the established denominations—I do not mean established with a capital E, but with a small e—have a national presence and in a sense look a bit like the Church of England. They operate with a national headquarters, and it is easy for the Church nationally to engage with and recognise them. On the basis of that, ministers in those churches are able to participate in certain ways in Church of England worship.

We have identified that, of course, the diversity of Christian expression in England is much wider now than it used to be. Many churches either do not have a national presence or do not have a national presence in quite such an established way. Some of them are local. Some of them are new forms of churches. Some of them have grown out of the house church movement or are new churches. Some of them particularly are black-majority churches.

We think it is important, and the General Synod agreed, that the Church of England should be able, as the established church, to engage with the whole diversity of Christian expression, particularly the new and often flourishing forms that exist in many parts of the country, and often in parts of the country where you would not necessarily expect there to be such a diversity of churches.

This Measure makes it possible for bishops to recognise churches on a local scale and engage with them. In particular, it makes it possible to operate with Pentecostal churches, the black-majority churches—with which, in many places, churches in the Church of England has informally tried to find ways to operate—in a way that is entirely supported by the Measure. It makes it possible for the Church of England to build local partnerships, which may be informal rather than the proper local ecumenical partnerships, where they can work with the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Church of God of Prophecy, other Pentecostal and other denominations. We think this will be a way of helping to strengthen Christian expression between the different forms of church that now exist in our country.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. Does anybody else want to add to what Mr Nye has said?

The Reverend Dr Callan Slipper: The Measure does other things that tidy up our relationships with other churches, facilitating co-operation with churches that do not come on to the list of churches to which the Measure and the canon apply. It helps to make our response to other Churches more flexible and more welcoming.

Lord Elton: I wanted to express the view that this is a much more important Measure than the weight given to it. That is largely because I have had occasion to read and consider very closely our Lord's last prayer on the way to Gethsemane for the church universal. This is actually a flagship movement of the Church that we have upon us to unify the body of Christ. Here, we are starting that at the ground level, very late, and please hurry up.

Q3 **Baroness Harris of Richmond:** On item 1, I just wondered whether the extension of power went up to Scotland as well, because there are churches in Scotland that have Church of England services.

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: No, the territorial extent of the Measure is only the provinces of Canterbury and York. We, being the Church of England, would not normally seek to legislate for what happens outside England. It would not seem appropriate to seek a greater territorial extent than that.

What happens in Scotland, in terms of ecumenical relations, will be governed by local arrangements there. Strictly speaking, I do not think the Church of England has any churches in Scotland nowadays. The Anglican churches in Scotland will be the Scottish Episcopal Church, so it would be for them to determine how their ecumenical relations work.

Q4 **Lord Judd:** I must just say how glad I am to see this Measure. It seems to me that it is catching up with the situation that has been operational in a lot of places, and it is in a good spirit.

There is one issue that interests me. The parish to which I belong has had a long interregnum, and some clergy from other Churches have been absolutely terrific. One former United Reformed Church minister in particular has made a tremendous impression in the parish. He loves the Anglican service, treats it with great reverence and takes it with great care. Why is it not possible for him to take communion under these rules?

The Reverend Dr Callan Slipper: It is because we are still not yet in full communion with the United Reformed Church. We are growing in communion and the situation you describe is one of our partial communion, but the point is that it is real. It is possible for a United Reformed minister to take the service of holy communion, though. The only difference would be that it would be always understood, as the rearrangements are at the moment, as being a United Reformed service. We can actually go a long way in co-operation just as things stand.

Lord Judd: It is not illegal if he does.

The Reverend Dr Callan Slipper: No.

Lord Judd: I am very reassured. Thank you very much indeed.

Q5 **Sir Peter Bottomley:** Just as a matter of interest, does whoever is the priest in charge at the Church of the Ascension at Cadenabbia on Lake Como in the Diocese in Europe count as being within Canterbury and York? Is it some other provision, or is it not covered? I do not mind what the answer is. It is just a matter of interest.

William Nye: It is in the Diocese in Europe, which is in the province of Canterbury.

The Chairman: Are there any other questions? Are there any other points that anybody wants to make? Thank you all very much.

Examination of witnesses: Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure

Josile Munro, Member of the House of Laity, General Synod, **Andrew Brown**, Secretary of the Church Commissioners, **William Nye**, Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod, **Stephen Slack**, Legal Adviser, and **the Reverend Alexander McGregor**, Deputy Legal Advisor

Q6 **The Chairman:** Welcome to Ms Munro and Mr Andrew Brown. Would you like to tell us about the miscellaneous provisions?

Josile Munro: The Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure makes a provision for a range of matters concerning the Church of England which on their own do not merit freestanding legislation. The key part of this legislation is the ability for the Church Commissioners to make grants to the Archbishops' Council. There are provisions there allowing other people, clergy and readers, to conduct funerals where they are asked to by the family of the deceased.

There are also provisions about the clergy terms of service and decisions of the appeal courts, so a decision of the Dean of Arches in Canterbury is also binding on York. There is also a range of other miscellaneous matters, some of them tidying up, some reducing or removing redundant sections. A key one is the power of the Church to give the power to the Church Commissioners to make grants for mission.

Q7 **The Chairman:** That is out of the general fund and a very broad function of the Archbishops' Council, I assume.

Josile Munro: I am going to hand over to my colleague, Andrew Brown, to talk more about the Church Commissioners.

The Chairman: That is right, is it, Mr Brown? It is for very broad use by the Archbishops' Council?

Andrew Brown: As drafted, it is, because the Church Commissioners' current powers to distribute from general fund are really very narrow—for

bishop's stipends, working costs, clergy pensions—and limited to additional provision for cure of souls in areas where most needed.

We found ourselves in a situation—the presenting issue was the request from the Archbishops Council' to the Church Commissioners—to fund a digital evangelism project. It was held that this did not fall within the powers of the Church Commissioners. We found a way to do it, but in doing it we felt that it was not ideal. We would much rather have a power in place that enabled us to fund specific projects and to keep control, because there was great concern, because, as you highlighted, it is wide.

The Chairman: That was what lay behind my question, yes.

Andrew Brown: The board and the Archbishops' Council have agreed a very clear policy framework to set out the exact nature of that expenditure for the types of activity. It should, for example, support projects that are in effect undertaken from the national, not the local, level, and funded only if they are clearly within the priorities of the Archbishops' Council. The funds should be distributed still with a mind towards need and opportunity, and for a set, clearly defined period. I could go on.

This policy is seeking to ensure that this additional funding power can be directed to areas of priority for the Archbishops' Council within the Church of England.

The Chairman: Is the general policy that has been agreed between the Church Commissioners and the Archbishops' Council public knowledge? Is it capable of being read by any of the public?

Andrew Brown: There is absolutely no reason why not. I hesitate to say yes definitively, because the website changed rather recently, but I am very happy that it should be available on the website.

The Chairman: I do not know what other members of the Committee think, but it would seem to me that for something as important as this it would be helpful to know what the parameters are.

Dame Caroline Spelman: I think members of the Committee might find it helpful, because, for example, there is the lovely poetic language of the objectives being for the cure of souls, but beneath that lies an enormously important initiative by the Church, which has been permitted by the board of governors, to build new churches in places where we have none.

Classically, housing estates are built with no places of worship. In my own diocese of Birmingham, for example, a grant of £1 million was given to turn an old gasworks into a new student church, reaching a young population that otherwise might go unchurched. I think members of the Committee would find it really interesting to see what the policy is, with examples that I think everybody could then relate to.

Andrew Brown: Yes, very happy.

Q8 **Helen Goodman:** Does this include things such as the Church Urban Fund,

or does it have a completely separate legal structure?

Andrew Brown: It has a completely separate legal structure, but the Church Commissioners have power to make grants to the Church Urban Fund as a specific Measure.

The Chairman: Lord Lexden, do you have any questions? I know you had some written ones. Did you get satisfactory answers?

Lord Lexden: I will not come in at this stage, thank you.

The Chairman: You are not going to raise them at this stage. Thank you very much.

Q9 **Rachael Maskell:** I have a question on Section 6 on the terms of service, regarding maternity, parental, adoption leave, et cetera, and time off for carers on page 5, lines 21 to 23. I just wanted to ask about the appropriate variation in stipend that would otherwise be payable to an office holder and to ask about the impact on equality issues to enable people to undertake caring duties.

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: The provisions here effectively apply equivalence to the secular legislation in relation to maternity, parental leave and so on. The provision that we are making here has to be adapted to a certain extent, because clergy are not employees. They do not have salaries and that kind of thing. We have here, in effect, a Church version of the secular system, so the outcome should not be materially different.

Rachael Maskell: May I further ask how that will be applied, because they also will not have fixed hours? How will that be calculated? Will there be any detriment as a result of people taking caring responsibilities as part of their day?

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: I do not know the precise answer to that. This is a restatement of some legislation that is currently in regulations and other subordinate legislation. It is not new, so that should already have been working to a certain extent.

I can probably ask for the information and give you a written response as to how this provision has been operating in practice so far. The Measure simply takes what are currently regulations and other subordinate legislation and puts them into primary legislation, so it is only a technical legislative change. The information you are asking about should be available from those who have experience of operating these provisions so far, which have been in place since 2009 or 2010.

Q10 **Rachael Maskell:** I know this has been an ongoing source of concern for clergy. Obviously, we want to enable people to provide care and we do not want people to experience financial detriment as a result. It can be incredibly hard if that is for a sustained period of time. How will the Church ensure that people will not experience hardship or detriment as a result of this Measure?

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: The provisions confer entitlements to leave and to be considered for time off in relation to caring. Precisely how dioceses will operate it will not necessarily always be the same.

Again, I am afraid I do not know the specific answer to your question. The people in the human resources department who deal with clergy pay and clergy terms of service will, I am sure, be able to provide more detailed written answers.

Q11 **Sir Peter Bottomley:** This is on Section 4 on funerals conduct, on page 2, and the commentary is on page 2. First, I greatly welcome the dropping of the rubric in subsection (8), which I think has not been read out for a long time. It is well worth getting rid of, and I approve of that.

Secondly, can you confirm that this is only about clerks in holy orders and those who are authorised? It does not prevent others taking services who are not clerks in holy orders and are not authorised to take what appears to be a Christian service at a crematorium for a member of their family.

Lastly, there is a lexicographer here. Is there much difference between the word "enabled", which is in the commentary, and the word "entitled", which is in subsection (1)?

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: On the first point, only clerks in holy orders and laypeople are specially authorised are regulated by the canons or by ecclesiastical, or at all.

Sir Peter Bottomley: Others are outwith.

The Reverend Alexander McGregor: Yes. On the second point, the reference to "entitled" in subsection (1) arises because the normal rule is that no member of the clergy can exercise ministry in a parish without the consent of the incumbent of that parish. That gives rise to the reference to the clerk not otherwise being entitled to perform the service.

Q12 **Dame Caroline Spelman:** Coming back to the very interesting point raised by Rachael Maskell, given the huge change in the gender balance of clergy in the Church of England, and the fact that so many more women are coming forward to be ordained, like a lot of professions, such as medicine, where we have seen this big change, it would be quite interesting to look into the question of the responsibilities that women tend to have. Obviously, only they can have the babies, so what happens in respect of maternity leave in practice? There is a period of time, as MPs know very well. We have no maternity leave here, and it presents us, as politicians, with quite a big problem as to how to manage that.

Also, the latter stages of a woman's career quite often coincide with caring responsibilities for elderly relatives. As a little sub-point, it would be quite interesting for the Church to look at what the impact has been and what provision we have. It might provide some reassurance to Rachael and to the rest of us that that big social change in the make-up of our workforce has been thought through. What is happening in practice? I would be interested myself to know.

The Chairman: It would be very helpful if representatives here were to take what Dame Caroline has said back and reflect upon it.

William Nye: We will certainly see what we can provide on both matters. Ms Maskell's particular question, under Section 6, relates to a request under Section 3, which is about care for a dependent relative. As you said, Caroline, that is an issue for people towards the end of their career, particularly when their parents are in their 80s and 90s. It may be more relevant for female clergy than for male clergy, although of course it can apply to both. We will see what we can find out in answer to your question of how that is applied in practice now.

The Chairman: Were you thinking that that might go on the website?

Dame Caroline Spelman: It would be interesting to know. As much as anything, the Second Church Estates Commissioner would quite like to know the answer to the question, lest I should get a question on the Floor of the House.

William Nye: I was rather anticipating that point, which is why we will see what information we can provide the Second Church Estates Commissioner with about that.

We also take the point about the application of maternity leave, which is not directly relevant under Section 6 but is also a very relevant question for younger female clergy. We will see what information it is possible to gather.

The Chairman: It is not just the Second Church Estates Commissioner who wants to know. A very interesting point has been raised and we would find it very interesting to have the answer. I would have thought it is an answer that ought to be public. That is why.

Dame Caroline Spelman: We could do it as a written question and written answer perhaps. That is a good way of doing it.

The Chairman: That would be very good. If I might go back to the point of 1 and the grants, it would be very interesting—and probably appropriate, if I may say so—to make the agreement between the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners public.

Andrew Brown: We may be able to do that by question or some other form.

The Chairman: Are you happy with that? I thought perhaps I ought to ask the Second Church Estates Commissioner whether she is happy with it.

Dame Caroline Spelman: It is a good idea.

Andrew Brown: We can do it, definitely. We can work on how it is done for the best effect.

The Chairman: That is a matter for you to discuss, yes. Does anybody have any other points?

William Nye: I wonder whether I might suggest something further to that last point on the power under 1.

It might help the Committee generally to have an understanding of the sort of things that the Archbishops' Council is currently doing with money provided by the Church Commissioners, and which this extra power will give a little degree of extra freedom for. We could send the Committee a copy of the annual report that is produced by the Strategic Investment Board of the Archbishops' Council.

The Strategic Investment Board is a subcommittee of the Archbishops' Council that is responsible for distributing money as what we call strategic development fund grants and lowest income communities funding to dioceses. The example of St Luke's Gas Street, which Dame Caroline referred to, and other projects—some of them large, some of them small—are included in that report, which shows the diversity of the sort of work the council is trying to do with the Commissioners' money to promote the growth of the Church. The Committee might find it interesting.

The Chairman: Yes, that is very interesting. Thank you very much.

Examination of witnesses: Church Property Measure

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden, Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury, **William Nye**, Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod, **Peter Wagon**, Church Commissioners (Pastoral and Closed Churches Division), and **the Reverend Alexander McGregor**, Deputy Legal Advisor

Q13 **The Chairman:** May I welcome both of you? Could I perhaps shorten this a little by saying that, as I understand it, this is a consolidation Measure? Perhaps you might explain to us what that means and the extent to which any changes could be made, if any.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: Thank you, and thank you for the opportunity to speak about this legislation. By way of background, church legislation tends to grow incrementally over a lengthy period of time. One gets to the stage at which the law on a particular topic is spread over numerous Measures and pieces of subordinate legislation. Mismatches in drafting become apparent and it becomes extremely inconvenient for people using this legislation regularly to cross refer from one Measure to another. The need arises for legislation on a particular topic to be consolidated periodically. This consolidation exercise has been encouraged over the years by this honourable Committee. Moved by such encouragement, we have tackled the subject of church property.

Consolidation of legislation is very strictly regulated by the standing orders of the General Synod. In essence, it is not appropriate for a consolidation Measure to effect alterations of a substantive nature in the law. The draftsman is entitled to make adjustments to make the language consistent throughout.

It is also appropriate to bring the legislation in line with other separate legislation. Of course, in that context it is necessary for the draftsman to have an eye upon what is happening in the secular world, and in particular in a property situation where there has to be appropriate alignment between legal practice applying to real property generally and that applicable to church property specifically.

The Measure being brought before you makes no substantive changes to the law. It is, in effect, an exercise in refreshment and rearrangement. It will bring together the law relating to land vested in the Church, which is now spread over four principal and 22 other Measures, starting with the Parsonages Measure 1938. So, the oldest Measure is 80 years old, and, indeed, it is time for work to be done on this.

The upshot, it is hoped, is to produce in one place a piece of legislation that is coherent and easy to use. In that context, I draw particular attention to Section 49, subsection (12), which confirms the now established practice in legal firms of solicitors and other institutions that notices can be given by electronic means.

During the debate on this Measure in Synod, we were heartened by the response to this, which we were told would make life considerably easier for diocesan registries and firms of solicitors dealing with church property, at a time when, with developments in the railway system and the like, there is a particular need for procedures to be efficient and easy to operate. Fortunately, this is the sort of change that can be included within a consolidation exercise. That is what I was hoping to say by way of introduction.

The Chairman: Thank you very much. Lord Elton, I think you had some points, did you, at one point?

Lord Elton: They have been resolved outside this chamber.

The Chairman: Good. Thank you very much. Does anybody else have any point on this?

Q14 **Sir Peter Bottomley:** Could I just make a general point that the presentation and the commentary has been superb? It makes the whole thing completely comprehensible. I hope that those who laboured in the background will know that their work has been appreciated.

For this Committee, and my membership of it, although provision 12 of Section 49 about electronic means of communication is welcome, I hope we can go on getting paper. It is much easier to refer from one paper to the other than it is to start flipping through a whole bank of iPads.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: I am very grateful for those observations. I am sure they will have been heard by the diligent members of staff who, I confirm, have done a tremendous amount of work in making sense of this rather difficult area of the law.

The Chairman: You must be very relieved to be stopping cross

referencing, which is a nightmare, is it not?

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: Yes.

The Chairman: Does anybody else want to say anything? If not, thank you very much.

Examination of witnesses: Church of England Pensions Measure

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden, Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury, **Dr Jonathan Spencer**, Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board, **Lee Marshall**, Chief of Staff of the Church of England Pensions Board, **William Nye**, Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council and the General Synod, and **the Reverend Alexander McGregor**, Deputy Legal Advisor

Q15 **The Chairman:** The last Measure, which is also a consolidation, is the pensions Measure. It would be difficult for this to be controversial, since it is consolidation.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: It would indeed.

The Chairman: Can I welcome Dr Jonathan Spencer and Mr Lee Marshall. I know, Mr Briden, you are still with us.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: I am still with you, yes.

The Chairman: Good. Thank you.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: Over the years, there have been numerous pension amendment Measures, which have been involved with the fine tuning of the principal provision, the Clergy Pensions Measure of 1961. Again, in relation to the subject of pensions, the time has come for a coherent consolidation of these numerous pieces of legislation. I emphasise that this Measure does not, save in relation to two matters that I will mention in a moment, bring about any substantive changes in the law. In particular, the entitlements of clergy and others to pension provision remain unchanged by this new Measure.

The matters I wanted to refer to briefly arise specifically from the use for the first time of the Legislative Reform Measure with which this Committee will have been concerned very recently. Two matters were discovered at a late stage that were not properly the subject of consolidation but which on the other hand it was thought necessary to bring into a new Measure in order to achieve completeness.

One of those was Section 15(5), which corrected what was believed to have been an error in the original legislation. The law, as it has stood, gave the power to grant periodical payments to retiring clergy where they were vacating their offices more than 10 years before normal retirement age. This is an important power, because it enables provision to be made in compassionate cases in which, for one reason or another, a member of the clergy can no longer function up until the expected retirement date.

For some reason that is not now understood, the power to grant lump sums to the clergy in those circumstances was expressed to be five years rather than 10. Happily, the Church of England pensions board never noticed this, and, in practice, grants of lump sums were apparently made to clergy retiring in the difficult circumstances that I have mentioned. This required correction and it has been done by a retrospective provision in Section 15(5), providing for the 10-year period to apply.

The other matter was in paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 1, whereby it was thought appropriate that if a potential member or serving member of the Pensions Board had been disqualified for service as a trustee under Section 29 of the Pensions Act 1995, that also ought to be a disqualification in the context of the clergy pensions legislation, because one wants to achieve parity between the secular and the ecclesiastical system.

This, again, could not be dealt with under consolidation, so the Legislative Reform Measure was brought into play and a statutory instrument made a pre-consolidation Order, which enabled these two alterations to be made. This was enormously beneficial. Without the ability to make such an Order, there would have been considerable delay in bringing this Measure before Parliament, because another pre-consolidation Measure would have been required, and that would have taken additional time. We are very grateful for the existence of the greater flexibility in the Legislative Reform Measure to deal with awkward problems of this nature.

The Chairman: I see that at the synod you had 106 clergy and 129 laity, all of whom agreed with this.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: Yes.

The Chairman: There was no problem in Synod about these extensions of what was otherwise a consolidation Measure.

The Rt Worshipful Timothy Briden: Not at all, and the support we had in Synod was, as you will see from the voting figures, universal.

The Chairman: Does anybody have any questions on this? These two extensions of consolidation seem to be entirely sensible, so I do not see why we need to be concerned about them, unless anybody has a concern. Thank you all very much. Thank you for explaining to us all four Measures. We will now consider whether they are expedient, so we ask you to withdraw now.