

Cover letter for the Final Report of the Governance Task Force

On June 25th 2009, the Governance Task Force submitted to the Diocesan Executive Committee its Report concerning the implementation of governance recommendations pertaining to terms of reference, nominations & decision rights.

A draft of these recommendations was exposed to extensive scrutiny in a series of consultations held at many levels across the Diocese in May and June. The Task Force is very grateful for the excellent participation and engagement in the consultation process. It was rewarding to receive so many carefully considered thoughts and suggestions from fellow members of the diocese. Everyone shares with us the concern to get it right, and this has made our work on behalf of the Diocese much easier. We extend sincere thanks to everyone who took the time and effort to comment during the consultations, and to our consultants at Deloitte for their invaluable assistance.

In the feedback received during the consultation period, the proposed Terms of Reference and the Nominations Process for the Diocesan Council and five standing committees were generally validated, with a number of very helpful suggestions for refinement, which were incorporated into the June 25 Report.

On page 11 of the Report, there is a summary of the refinements that were made to the Terms of Reference and the Nominations Process.

There was a lot of interest in the Diocesan Council Nominations Process. While most people suggested refinements to the proposed process, a number of people perceived there to be a fundamental lack of open democracy in the process. In response to this, the Task Force considered a number of electoral or ballot-style options. For example: a) Synod elects six clergy and six lay members by ballot from a field of nominees, with the other four appointed by the Bishop; or b) each Deanery Great Chapter elects a member, for a total of nine elected members, with the other seven members chosen by nomination and confirmation/election by Synod or appointment by the Bishop.

While these or similar options are a way to address perceptions about a lack of open democracy, such an approach would compromise the Diocese's ability to actively attract a wide range of nominees and to ensure that the mandate of the Diocesan Council can be achieved by a balanced and skilled membership profile.

The Task Force therefore recommended the adoption of the refined nominations process as proposed in the June 25 Report, believing that this reflects the majority opinion from the extensive consultations that were held.

The Executive Committee passed the following motion at its meeting on June 25, 2009:

That the Executive Committee approves the implementation of the governance recommendations contained in the June 25, 2009 Report of the Governance Task Force, subject to ratification by Synod 2009, and authorizes the Task Force to undertake the work necessary to prepare for ratification.

This cover letter, the Final Report and a one-page summary of what it all means were posted on the Diocesan Website in mid-July, and will be distributed to all members of Synod. A Working Group has been formed to implement the Diocesan Council nominations process leading up to Synod, and a nominations package will also be posted and circulated in early August.

– Respectfully submitted by the Governance Task Force, June 15th 2009.