

Bill No. 2

Proposer – Ms Hazel Corrigan

Embargoed Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery

As you will have all read in the explanatory memorandum this Bill has a very simple purpose – that is to ensure that those who act as parochial nominators at a time of a vacancy have a good measure of gender balance.

Presently parochial nominators could be all male or indeed all female and this Bill will ensure that a panel would never consist of only women or only men.

The purpose of a panel of parochial nominators is to discern the suitability and fit for the parish of a clerical candidate. It is hard to understand why so many of our panels are exclusively male given the high participation levels of women in every aspect of church life although there has been a case of an all female group of nominators. The desire is to have a balance rather than an entirely male or female group of parochial nominators.

The Commission on Ministry has given careful consideration to this Bill and is also conscious that there may be the need for parochial groups to coordinate the elections to facilitate this balance. However, the Commission felt that it was best left to the parishes concerned to organise this, rather than legislate for every possibility.

Typically, it is the parochial nominators who meet with candidates and discuss the needs of the parish and these changes would ensure that candidates are not meeting an either all male or all female group of parochial nominators. It is important that the parochial nominators, in as far as possible, represent the breadth of the parish or parishes and including both male and female together will help to do this.

To avoid any disruption to those parochial nominators currently elected this Bill, if passed, will not take effect until the triennial elections in 2023 – at that stage it would be necessary for at least one man and one woman to be elected as parochial nominators and supplementals.

Inclusivity is something we should all strive for and therefore the members of the Commission on Ministry bring this Bill before you this afternoon.