

APPENDIX U

WORKING GROUP ON DISABILITY REPORT

Membership

Rev J McGaffin (Chairperson)

Mrs JM Bruton

Mr J Clarke

Rev Canon WA Murphy

Mr I Slaine

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Standing Committee, in March 2005, established the Working Group on Disability to address issues concerning disability that affect the Church of Ireland and to consider the implications of legislation and proposed legislation on disability in both jurisdictions. The Church of Ireland is periodically invited to comment on consultation documents, white papers and draft legislation. It was envisaged that a working group with expertise in this area would be in a position to prepare considered responses on behalf of the Church.

2. DISABILITY ACCESS AUDIT

At the request of the Honorary Secretaries, the document *Opening Doors – 2006 Audit of Disabled Access* was sent to each of the Diocesan offices for information and with a request that each diocese should confirm the figures contained in the report.

3. DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY

This is the sixth such Sunday in the Church of Ireland calendar. This year a sermon and prayers were sent to all parishes in the Church of Ireland to help them celebrate *Disability Sunday* on the third Sunday in November. Again the evaluation of the event was positive, with requests for more information and resources to be sent to parishes in future years.

4. MINISTRY TO DEAF PEOPLE

The group continues to work with the Rev Canon W Murphy and other agencies with expertise in this area of ministry to raise awareness and to provide services to deaf people.

5. FUTURE WORKING

Since its formation by Standing Committee in 2005 the Working Group has continuously tried to raise the awareness of the whole Church to issues relating to people with a range of disabilities.

Standing Committee – Report 2010

In order for this to continue to be relevant and appropriate to the ever-changing needs of our society in general the working group chair met with the Honorary Secretaries and have set out a skeletal work plan that they will develop and which will include:

- Modification of terms of reference to reflect the need to be proactive as well as reactive and to encompass the principles of growth, unity and service
- A detailed 3-year rolling work plan
- A call for new Working Group members
- A mapping exercise to other Church committees ensure that the outworking of the work plan are deliver by the right person in a timely and effective way
- Education of ordinands and continuing ministerial education for ordained clergy
- A communication strategy
- As well as consolidating the work on physical disability and sensory impairment, development work in the area of learning disability should be prioritised