

APPENDIX E

CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

MEMBERSHIP

The Rt Rev Trevor Williams	(House of Bishops)
Dr Valerie Jones	(Standing Committee)
Ven Robin Bantry White	(Honorary Secretary)
Rev Eileen Cremin	(Chair - Broadcasting Committee)
Dr Kenneth Milne	(Chair - Literature Committee)
Dr Raymond Refaüssé	(Hon Secretary - Literature Committee)
Mr Denis Reardon	(Church House Senior Management)
Mrs Jane Leighton	(Representative Body)
Head of Synod Services & Communications	<i>(ex officio)</i>
Press Officer	<i>(in attendance)</i>

OBJECTIVES 2011-12

- To review the structure and role of the Church of Ireland website.
- To review the role of the Diocesan Communications Officers and the DCO network.
- To examine the potential of social networking media as a tool of central communications.

Terms of Reference

To initiate policy in relation to the communications strategy of the Church.

To co-ordinate the work of the sub-committees.

To report annually to the General Synod.

Executive Summary

The Board directed budgetary resources towards the maintenance of an active press office and providing support to those exceptional events that punctuate the life of the Church, such as providing media support and training for newly appointed bishops and supporting the meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and responding to enquiries around the special meeting of the General Synod. The Board members concentrated on reviewing aspects of the communications structure, prioritising developing the website and refreshing the vision for the diocesan communications officers' network to reflect the multiplication of communications tools in recent years. The Board members invested considerable energy considering the future of the Church of Ireland website and other new media.

Report

Website Review

The CCB would like to develop more of a Church witness aspect to the website, which is currently information oriented. To achieve this it will be necessary to consider how the activity of the wider church relates to and can be articulated on the main website. This, in turn, led to fresh consideration of the role of the diocesan communications officers' network.

At present, the main source of information about the wider church is channelled from the Diocesan Communications Officers (DCOs). Owing to the expansion in communications channels, many DCOs are now managing traditional press releases alongside a website, diocesan magazine and possibly an e-zine and may also be trying to produce pod-casts, while managing Twitter and Facebook profiles. Not surprisingly, many dioceses now require a range of people in various capacities to keep this effort going, so that in addition to the DCO, there is likely to be a web-manager, a magazine team, and perhaps a social networking group. The Board believes that the Church must keep abreast of all these new forms of technology and do so in a competent manner.

The CCB has found itself asking a number of questions. Whether the Church needs a central platform gathering all of the diocesan material, if that material is already accessible? Do we still need the information hosted on the main website, or should the Church move to a completely different model focused on telling the story of the ministry and mission of the Church through stories about people? Should a future site do both of these things?

During the year, the Church of Ireland has developed a presence on Twitter and on Facebook:

Facebook.com/churchofireland

Twitter.com/churchofireland

Many members of the Church are beginning to use these media as a way of keeping in touch with Church news and events. The CCB has prepared a brief survey of usage of new social media which members of Synod are invited to participate in by filling in a survey form which may be obtained from the Press Office.

DCO Network Report

The CCB has been pleased to note that despite the recession, dioceses which committed themselves to magazines, websites and to paid communications staff have maintained their commitment. Almost half of the dioceses now use paid professional communicators in the role of DCO reflecting the increasing volume of work in this area of Church witness. The CCB extends sincere thanks to all those paid and voluntary workers who maintain this body of work. The Board also reminds the Church that this work now requires a much greater number of hours work than used to be the case and that the commitment entailed is considerable.

A DCO training day is held annually. This year, it was decided to extend the invitation to include other volunteers involved in all aspects of diocesan communications work and the new Irish Language Development Officer for Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise, Ms

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Caroline Nolan. Mr Jan Butter, the new Director of Communications for the Anglican Communion addressed the meeting on the subject of new media.

As new technology has altered the nature of communications in society, the Board has recognised that dioceses have increased their resourcing of communications. The Board is looking to a future in which the local dioceses take on a larger role in this area and make greater resources available. Despite the recession this must be a high priority for the Church in the 21st century if it is to be true to its mission.

Publishing

There is ongoing activity and interest in the publishing area and the Literature Committee has had a busy year. The production of the *Church of Ireland Handbook* is moving ahead with a publication date during 2011.

Broadcasting

The Broadcasting Committee is currently exploring the potential for local online broadcast services to assist parishes in providing worship for members who are not able to attend. The CCB referred the launch of a new Christian radio service, Spirit Radio, to the Broadcasting Committee and a presentation was subsequently made at the time of the station's launch. The Board welcomes Spirit Radio and wishes them every success. (Dublin 89.9FM, Galway 91.7FM, Limerick 89.8FM, Cork 90.9FM, Waterford 90.1FM)

Press Office

The Press Office responded to a wide variety of media requests for comment and information in connection with Church-related and societal issues over the course of a busy year. Approximately 120 press releases were issued and disseminated across secular and religious platforms during 2010. These releases ranged from information about significant Church events, initiatives, appointments and newsworthy occasions to statements from several Church committees and by the archbishops and bishops responding to current affairs and concerns, from the local to the national to the international. Press releases were also issued on behalf of certain church-related organisations, some of the dioceses and the larger cathedrals.

Media assistance was given to parishes and cathedrals for civic and large-scale events, such as the funeral of Alex Higgins at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, which invited international interest. In particular, there were a number of responses to political developments and events in Northern Ireland during 2010.

In addition, the Press Office facilitated broadcasters through providing able spokespeople on many topics for both local and national radio and television programmes, and for internet-based outlets. Good working relations were maintained with the main national and local broadcasters. News from the General Synod and from meetings of the Standing Committee during the year was also reported in detail.

A regular flow of information was maintained with Diocesan Communications Officers across the island and with *The Church of Ireland Gazette*. The main Church of Ireland website was updated with news stories (as press releases) and with updates from several committees and Church of Ireland Publishing; the front page of the site was modified to appear less static and to highlight news pieces and information about upcoming events easily as they were uploaded.

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The appearance and workability of the site remains under continued review and development. Information generated by the Press Office was simultaneously issued via Twitter and the Church of Ireland Facebook site which has enabled a degree of social interaction with Church news – a new development during the year.

As well as being the conduit for responding to and issuing news and information at the central level, it has been the aim of the Press Office to provide communications advice and support to all areas of Church life and to encourage greater emphasis on effective local communication at parish and diocesan levels. Once again, the Press Office ran its annual Communications Competition for parish and diocesan magazines / newsletters, websites and social media / new technologies, attracting a healthy level of interest and indicating much excellent work being carried out by communicators across the whole Church.

The Board is aware of the demands on the time of staff of the press office both during and beyond office hours and wishes to express its appreciation of the professional and courteous manner in which they respond.

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LITERATURE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

Dr Kenneth Milne (Chairman)

Prof Raymond Gillespie

Rev Peter McDowell

Ven Richard Rountree

Rev Bernard Treacy OP

Ms Cecilia West

Very Rev Stephen White

Dr Raymond Refaüssé (Honorary Secretary) Mrs Janet Maxwell (*ex officio*)

In attendance: Dr Susan Hood, Publications Officer

Mr Paul Harron, Press Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011 the Committee will seek to:

- promote church-related publications within and beyond the Church of Ireland;
- manage Church of Ireland Publishing in the new economic climate;
- evaluate applications for support from the General Synod Royalties Fund.

ACTION PLAN 2011

- Implement a formal promotion and marketing, sales and distribution, management structure;
- promote the use of electronic publishing as well as traditionally printed material to maximise the use of resources;
- work towards the publication of a Church of Ireland parish handbook;
- work with the Liturgical Advisory Committee on the publication of a marriage service booklet;
- work with Booklink publishers on the production of a pictorial history of the Church of Ireland;
- work with the Rev Dr Michael Kennedy on the on-line publication of his course material on authorized liturgies of the Church of Ireland.

CHURCH OF IRELAND PUBLISHING

The Literature Committee has continued to devote much of its time to furthering the work of Church of Ireland Publishing (CIP), the publishing imprint for the Church of Ireland. The CIP website (cip.ireland.anglican.org) was maintained.

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The following titles were published in 2010:

- Mr Andrew Brannigan, *Church of Ireland origins, history & present day practice*;
- Church in Society Committee, Social Justice and Theology Group (RI), *Broken trust and how to restore it*;
- Liturgical Advisory Committee, *Liturgical space and church re-ordering*;
- Rev Brian Mayne (ed.) *Sunday and weekday readings 2011*;
- Dr Kenneth Milne (ed.) *Journal of the General Synod 2009*.

PUBLICATIONS OFFICER

The Publications Officer worked with the authors and editors of the titles listed above and continued to work with the designer, Mr Bill Bolger.

In addition to preparing the CIP titles for publication she has worked with the Rev Dr Michael Kennedy to prepare an on-line edition of his course material on authorized liturgies of the Church of Ireland.

GENERAL SYNOD ROYALTIES FUND

The Committee recommended the following grants:-

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BROADCASTING COMMITTEE

Members

Ms Ruth Buchanan
Mr Roger Childs
Rev Eileen Cremin (Chair)
Very Rev Tom Gordon
Rev Dr Bert Tosh

In attendance

Mrs Janet Maxwell: Head of Synod Services and Communications
Mr Paul Harron: Press Officer

Executive Summary

The Committee explored a new service that enables on-line transmission of religious services. The Committee continued to maintain links with the main broadcasters, the Churches Media Council, Westminster Media Forum and Ofcom and to support broadcasters in maintaining religious programming.

Objectives

To encourage parishes and dioceses to engage with new technology to enable the provision of local religious services through on-line access.

Webcast Religious Services

During 2010, the Broadcasting Committee gave consideration to developing broadcast church services on the website and investigated how this might be provided. This follows a pilot project several years ago, when a number of parishes engaged with an Ofcom-led project to utilise CB radio to broadcast services to parishioners. This scheme enjoyed moderate success, but technology has moved on significantly and it is now possible to transmit live services on-line with both sound and image.

To do this requires the placement of cameras and microphones and the installation of a computer editing system in the church. Services can be picked up by parishioners on a home computer linked to the internet or their TV using a set-top box which is rented from the service provider for a cost of €8.00 or £6.50 per month. In future, it will be possible to watch on a home TV set linked to the internet.

The Committee received a presentation from a provider called Catholic Ireland (catholicireland.net) and examples of what can be achieved can be viewed at their website <http://www.churchservices.tv>. Other information can be found on the main Church of Ireland website at the following link www.ireland.anglican.org/resources/broadcasting. The set-up costs for such broadcasts are in the region of €5,000 (£8,750 approximately), although a very basic version of the system may be established for €4,000 (£3,600 approximately). Annual hosting costs are approximately €250 + VAT (£215 +VAT approximately). Given the cost of establishment and maintenance, the Broadcasting Committee suggests that this concept might be given consideration at a diocesan level as well as by individual parishes. It is unlikely that every parish will find itself in a position to install such a system. However, a strategic approach might identify one or two parishes that would be interested in

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exploring this new way of sharing ministry, providing access to a local church service for those unable to attend across a wider catchment area.

The benefits of the system are that it is simpler to use than the previous radio-based system. It allows more participation through visual as well as aural reception. It enables a better local connection to be maintained with parishioners who are unable to attend services. The Committee will write to dioceses during 2011 regarding this service.

Churches Media Council, Westminster Media Forum, Ofcom

The Committee reduced its level of attendance at the Churches Media Council and Westminster Media Forum in line with budgetary restraints. However, the Committee remains in contact with these organisations which provide key networking and industry information contacts. Ofcom NI ran a particularly significant seminar on protecting children in the on-line environment in the summer of 2010 and this event was also attended by the Secretary to the Board of Education NI, Rev Ian Ellis.

Broadcast Training

Ongoing budgetary restraints curtailed broadcast training in 2010 and no plans to reinstate training have been put forward for 2011. The Broadcasting Committee hopes that finances will be available to begin further training in 2012. The Committee thanks Rev Dr Bert Tosh for assisting the communications team in providing a short course in communications to the Ordinands at the Theological Institute. Dr Tosh lectured on skills and techniques for broadcast services.

BBC

BBC Radio Ulster continues to carry religious and ethical programming of different types: music based, worship, reflection and current affairs, represented by Sunday Sequence which, in September 2010, celebrated its 30th anniversary. Presented by Mr William Crawley and produced by Mr Martin O'Brien, the programme continues to probe and examine those areas where religion, ethics, society and culture interact with each other.

BBC Northern Ireland continues to contribute to various network programmes on Radios 2, 3 and 4. On network television, *Songs of Praise* reflects the best of church music, traditional and contemporary, and a televised version of The Nativity won good audiences and critical praise. The Sunday morning show, *Sunday Morning Live* was produced from Belfast.

Generally, the BBC is facing a tough time ahead in financial terms. The decision not to seek licence fee increases and the taking on of extra commitments does mean that further economies will be made, but exactly where and when is not yet known.

RTÉ

RTÉ Religious Programmes continues to be committed to reflecting, interrogating, celebrating and explaining the full diversity of religious life in Ireland, north and south of the border. In terms of Church of Ireland coverage, significant events in recent months have included:

- i. broadcast coverage of *Summer Madness*, the Christian youth event in Belfast;

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- ii. a Midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve from St Stephen's Church, Dublin, which drew a certain amount of controversy, because it was perceived to be in place of Midnight Mass, but nonetheless attracted more viewers than the previous year's religious broadcast on Christmas Eve;
- iii. a live, televised sung Eucharist, featuring the Dean and Choir of Christ Church, Dublin, during RTÉ Music Week, in October.

Live coverage of the National Service of Remembrance from St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, has now become a regular feature on RTÉ Radio One, as has the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and RTÉ continues to enjoy a fruitful partnership with the Anglican community, through the Broadcasting Committee and the particular efforts and creativity of the Dean of Leighlin, Dr Tom Gordon.

A tendering process is under way to commission radio worship programmes from the independent sector, but this is being done on the understanding that neither liturgical nor broadcasting quality will suffer in the process. Editorial control will still rest with the Editor of Religious Programmes at RTÉ, Mr Roger Childs.