

## Diocesan Registrar and Bishop's Legal Officer

### Role Description

The Diocesan Registrar is responsible for advising on the legal aspects of Diocesan policy and the overall strategic framework for the future.

The Diocesan Registrar is responsible for providing sound legal advice to the Bishop and Archdeacons and also to Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councils. S/he is also responsible for the routine preparation of deeds and licences. The Diocesan Registrar must ensure that a professional, caring and Christian image is presented at all times.

The Diocesan Registrar will engage fully with members of the Bishop's Staff Team (Bishops, Archdeacons, Chief Executive, Dean) on issues of broad policy, clergy deployment and individual problem cases (save where this would create a conflict of interest under the Clergy Discipline Measure).

The Diocesan Registrar acts as Registrar to the Diocesan Synod, which meets two to three times per year, and the Bishop's Council, which meets up to nine times per year to discuss policy, strategy and finance. The registrar attends these meetings.

### **Advice**

Give advice to the Diocesan Bishop, Suffragan Bishop, Diocesan Chief Executive, Archdeacons, Chairmen of the Houses of the Diocesan Synod, all clergy, on any legal matter properly arising in connection with the discharge of their respective ecclesiastical or Synodical offices;

Give advice to any person concerned in or with the administration of an election under the Church Representation Rules on any question properly arising under those Rules;

Give advice to a bona fide enquirer concerning Canon Law, baptism, confirmation and burial of the dead according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England;

Give legal advice to clergy, churchwardens and PCC Secretaries, Treasurers and other members of the PCC on any matter that arises in their duties

### **Appointments**

The preparation of notices, licences, permissions, instruments and all other documents relating to the appointment of clergy and lay office holders. Includes acting as Designated Officer for vacancy of benefices

### **Consecrations**

The preparation of the documents required for the consecration of churches, churchyards and cemeteries.

### **Diocesan Records**

Maintenance of all such records for the diocese as are customarily kept by the Diocesan Registrar including the making of entries therein, and the making of searches and reports on matters recorded in the Registry or in documents held by the Registry upon request; These include:

- registers of all clerical appointments
- the Patronage Register
- records of all vacancies, suspensions and restrictions in parishes

### **Faculties**

Checking, allocating and issuing faculties to authorise changes or additions to consecrated buildings and burial grounds. Includes attending Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches

### **Marriage Licences**

Checking affidavits and supporting evidence for Common Licences for marriages and issuing the Common Licences on behalf of the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, to authorise marriages in parish churches and in other buildings licensed for the solemnisation of marriages according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England. In addition, in recent years, with the influx of 'sham marriages' also liaising with the Police and UKBA where the application for a Common Licence appears suspect

### **Patronage**

Maintenance of a register of patrons of the diocese, and ensuring that the provisions of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 are complied with in relation to the filling of vacant benefices.

### **Other**

Occasional attendance at meetings of the Bishop's Staff for the purpose of giving advice on specific matters;  
Act as Returning Officer for General Synod Elections

All the above is within the framework of Schedule 2 of the The Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2011

### **Workspace and Support**

A workspace is provided within Dunham House at Southwell and the Diocese employs a Registry Clerk.

**Fees:** The combined annual fee in 2011 is £46,361

### **Person Specification**

The skills and personal qualities demanded by this unique role are many and varied and include:

- a strong knowledge of ecclesiastical law;
- an ability to think and work both strategically and operationally;
- an ability to think creatively and outside the box;
- an incisive and can-do attitude;
- an excellent flair for communication, both orally and in writing;
- an ability to seek and provide unique solutions to complex problems;
- sensitivity, wisdom, patience and sound judgement;
- a flexible, accessible and welcoming manner and demeanour;
- a team player with a supportive and collaborative leadership style; and
- an enthusiasm to help drive the vision for the future of the Diocese.

The Registrar must be a communicant member of the Church of England.

Knowledge and experience of Property Law would also be beneficial, but is not a prerequisite for the role.