Area Dean Role Description

The Purpose of the Role
- To share with the Archbishop and Suffragan Bishop in their ministry of oversight across the deanery
- To lead the deanery, working collaboratively with the Lay Dean and Deanery Leadership Team, to fulfil the vision of the deanery as "a local network of churches, inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry"
- To fulfil the canonical expectations of being Area Dean

Primary Responsibilities
- Lead and co-ordinate the Deanery Leadership Team, in conjunction with the Lay Dean.
- Ensure a Deanery Plan for Mission & Ministry is created and implemented, working closely with the Deanery Leadership Team and Deanery Synod.
- Chair the Deanery Synod jointly with the Lay Dean
- Exercise the canonical responsibilities of an Area Dean (see C23 of the Canons) and those expected during Parish Vacancies
- Ensure that an appropriate structure for Gatherings of Ministers is established, and take a leading role in those which involve Ordained colleagues

Key Tasks
Working collaboratively with the Lay Dean and the Deanery Leadership Team, you will ensure:

a) The Deanery Leadership Team meets regularly and has a membership which is appropriate for the deanery
b) A Deanery Plan for Mission & Ministry is created with the full involvement of the Deanery Synod and following consultation with PCC's; the Plan will have engaged with the three stated purposes of a deanery: 'Enabling Mission', 'Resourcing Ministry' and 'Supportive Relationships'
c) The Deanery Synod has an engaging agenda and develops a pattern of meetings which encourages involvement, creativity and meaningful outcomes; ordinarily sharing in the chairing of these meetings with the Lay Dean.
d) The administrative needs of the Deanery Synod, Area Dean and Lay Dean are identified and appropriate support is put in place
e) Participation in the mission and life of the deanery is encouraged amongst the laity and the clergy, and that training is made available where appropriate

Specific responsibilities of the Area Dean:

f) Be aware of the general well-being of the clergy; informing the Bishop of any particular causes for rejoicing or concern

g) Inform the Bishop and Archdeacon of any legal or practical concerns arising from the parishes

h) On occasions, to act as the 'local' representative for the Bishop and/or Archdeacon where issues at (h) and (i) arise

i) Ensure that the Clergy Chapter, and/or any other Gatherings which involve the Clergy, is shaped and led in a manner which serves it membership and encourages an active participation

j) Support parishes through times of vacancy which includes : the formal shared responsibility, with the Church Wardens , for the day to day oversight of the parish; attending the PCC's Pre-Vacancy meeting; advising on issues as they arise; handling applications for churchyard memorials and playing an active role on the interview day.

k) Oversee arrangements for Services of Licensing, Institution or Collation and acts as a focus for the deanery's initial support of new Incumbents and their families

l) Support the Archdeacon in his/her Parish Visitations

m) Be aware of the Freewill Offers within the deanery and, as a member of the Deanery Partnership, actively seek to encourage financial generosity and commitment

n) Be the local link, where appropriate, with Civic, Ecumenical and Inter-Faith partners

o) Attend regular meetings with the Bishop and Archdeacon

Key Relationships

- The Archbishop, Suffragan Bishop and Archdeacon
- The Lay Dean
- The Deanery Leadership Team and Deanery Synod
- The Gatherings of Ministers, especially the Clergy
- Churchwardens, especially of parishes in vacancy

Commitment, Resourcing and Support

The role of Area Dean is stimulating and stretching; it develops clergy and gives them a wider perspective on ministry. It can also be very demanding, especially when a deanery has a number of vacancies or particular issues arise. The time commitment varies from week to week but is likely to average around 1 day a week, depending on the size and complexity of the deanery.
It is recognised that resources are required and, whilst different contexts will be able to express this in different ways, the following are being explored and considered during this period of consultation :

1. **Ministerial Support.** On the assumption that the Area Dean is an Incumbent, it is envisaged that if their benefice does not already have a team of Ministers (RPAs, Readers, self-supporting or stipendiary Clergy) to share the demands of authorized and licensed ministry, then an attempt would be made to identify colleagues who could minister in the benefice.

2. **Administrative Support.** Being Area Dean brings extra administrative demands, though these are not regular or predictable in nature. Support may be provided by various means, including the following:

   a) An administrator might offer time voluntarily
   b) An administrator might be employed on a sessional basis; or an existing parish administrator might be paid for these additional hours
   c) An alternative, would be to explore if the Area Dean could be provided with administrative help to support them in their parish role.

   Each deanery will have up to £1000 a year available to offer support to the deanery and/or the Area Dean. It might be that deaneries are in a position to contribute further to this..

3. **Expenses.** Clear guidelines for expenses will be provided, with an explicit encouragement for expenses to be claimed

4. **Study Leave.** A month's funded study leave during every five years as Area Dean (this would be separate from the ideal of clergy taking 3 months every 10 years)

5. **Training.** Diocesan delivered training for Area Deans and Lay Deans will be provided. The diocesan Deanery Development Group also exists to offer support and advice.

6. **Collegiality and Collaboration.** It is hoped that Area Deans will benefit from the shared ministry with the Lay Dean, the Deanery Leadership Team, and through regular meetings with the Bishop and Archdeacon.