

Matters reserved for the Bishop

This schedule is a practical guide for trustees. It identifies the main areas of business that belong to the Diocesan Bishop rather than to the Board of Trustees, Bishop's Council or Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. It should be read alongside the Scheme of Delegation, which sets out matters reserved for Trustees. The aim is to help trustees route business correctly and recognise where the Bishop and trustees have distinct roles. This is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities of the Diocesan Bishop.

This document should be used as a prompt for routing business correctly. Where responsibilities overlap, the paper or discussion should make clear which part is for the Bishop and which part is for trustees.

Key matters reserved for the Bishop include the following:

1. Spiritual and Liturgical Leadership

- Oversight of the spiritual life, worship, and mission of the Diocese as its chief pastor and with the ultimate cure of souls.
- Conducting ordinations, confirmations, institutions, collations and licensing of clergy and lay ministers.
- Presiding at major diocesan liturgical events and services.
- Ensuring the provision of pastoral care for clergy and laity.
- Approval of any liturgy or departure from authorised liturgy

2. Clergy Appointments and Discipline

- Making clergy appointments, issuing licences and permissions to officiate, exercising clergy disciplinary powers, and granting, withdrawing or suspending ministry permissions in accordance with the relevant legal processes.
- Oversight of clergy wellbeing, support, and continuing ministerial development.

3. Oversight of Doctrine and Teaching

- Safeguarding the doctrine, teaching, and liturgical practice of the Church of England within the Diocese.
- Addressing matters of faith, doctrine, and theological dispute.
- Ensuring compliance with canon law and Church of England doctrine.

4. Pastoral Reorganisation and Mission

- Initiating, approving or consenting to pastoral schemes, pastoral orders and Bishop's pastoral orders, including parish boundary changes, church closures and related mission proposals, subject to the relevant statutory consultation and process.
- Leading diocesan mission strategy and vision.
- Suspending presentation (ie the appointment of an incumbent) to a benefice, normally in the context of pastoral reorganisation.

5. Safeguarding

- The Bishop has overall *episcopal* responsibility for safeguarding within the Diocese, including responding to serious safeguarding matters and engaging with national Church processes where required.

6. Synod and Governance Functions

- The Bishop has particular responsibilities in relation to Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council, including presiding at meetings when required, summoning Synod, making appointments where provided for in the relevant rules, and exercising any reserved or casting-vote powers set out in Standing Orders or the Church Representation Rules.
- Exercising powers to make supplementary provision where there is none (CRR 78).

7. Faculty Jurisdiction and Church Buildings

- The Bishop has spiritual and legal responsibilities in relation to church buildings, land and contents, exercised through the faculty jurisdiction and the Chancellor of the Diocese. The Diocesan Advisory Committee provides advice on these matters and is separate from the BCDT.

8. Management of the Bishop's Office

- Recruitment, appointment, management and policy oversight for the Bishop's Office staff, who are not generally employees of the LDTBF.
- Holding clergy personal files where the Bishop's Office is the data controller.
- Developing and maintaining policies pertaining to the Bishop's staff.

9. Ecumenical and Civic Representation

- Representing the Diocese in ecumenical, interfaith, and civic contexts.
- Building relationships with other denominations, faiths, and public authorities.

10. Other Reserved Matters

- Consecration of land and buildings, licensing buildings for worship and marriages.
- Granting dispensations and permissions as required by canon law.
- Exercising other powers that belong to the Bishop under statute, canon law or national Church regulations.
- Acting as the Visitor and principal dignity of Lincoln Cathedral and as Visitor or as trustee of various trusts, charities and ecclesiastical foundations.

Notes for Trustees:

- The Bishop's reserved matters are separate from the governance, financial and strategic responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and Bishop's Council. Where both sets of responsibilities are engaged, papers and decisions should identify the Bishop's role and the trustees' role separately.
- In the case of pastoral reorganisation the BCDT and the Bishop generally both have separately defined roles and are both involved at different stages in the preparation and approval of schemes and orders.