

Deployment in Southern Synod - A brief summary of the process for Scoping

This is a summary of the process, set out in detail in the detailed policy and procedures paper “Ministerial Deployment in Southern Synod”.

(N.B. Material in small print below is drawn from the detailed policy and procedures papers referred to above.)

1. Two members of the Deployment Group to be nominated to serve for each vacancy.
2. One of those nominated from the Deployment Group to be appointed as Convenor
3. Secretary of the SAPC informs the Convenor of the two local people, thus making the Scoping group complete
- 3 Convenor obtains background info relating to the pastorate from Moderator and Synod Mapping
- 4 Convenor contacts Church sec(s) to ask for paperwork supporting pastorate's preferred scoping and arranges meeting with pastorate elders

The Interim Moderator has a responsibility to catalyse or stimulate the preparation by the churches in the Pastorate of their case for scoping. This needs to contain many elements of the document that will (if scoping then occurs) become the Pastorate profile. It also needs to contain sufficient information to allow the Scoping Group to make their assessment against the Synod Mission Criteria.

The data that comes to the Scoping Group should be drawn from that already collected for the Synod's 'mapping' exercise and from the Local Ministry and Mission review process, (it is possible that some further data may also be needed). Those responsible for assembling the data needed by the scoping group may seek advice and assistance in that task from the pastoral committee of the Synod Area or United Area. The local pastoral committee of the Synod Area or United Area will wish to know the support available to a pastorate facing a vacancy and will also need to understand whether there are specific matters requiring action relating to the local circumstances.

A local pastorate may ask the pastoral committee for help with developing and of reviewing its documentation before the scoping review (and also any subsequent pastorate profile) before it is finalised and made available to the Scoping Group and others. Given the concerns of some smaller pastorates that some larger local churches may be able to put together documentation which is thought more fluent and impressive, the benefits of such help and review input from local pastoral committees is emphasised.

- 5 Convenor arranges meeting of Scoping Group
(When it meets, the members will have the benefit of the inputs from Moderator, Synod Mapping and the local pastorate's case for scoping. Available for preliminary consideration)

6 Scoping Group meets Elders. (During that discussion of the pastorate's case for scoping, the Scoping Group will consider how the pastorate is responding to the Synod Mission Criteria)

7 Scoping Group meets to decide on Scoping

Because some scoping decisions for some pastorates will change, Scoping Groups will be encouraged to present their findings to stimulate questions about whether there are ways in which the churches in the Pastorate can or should develop a very different (and much stronger) case for their scoping. It is to be hoped that the result will be a stimulant for a form of negotiation between all the parties affected. Such a stimulant will sometimes provide a powerful challenge where a scoping decision would otherwise leave one or more local churches without any prospect of calling a minister.

Thus the interim findings of the Scoping Group but may be seen as a catalyst for some change in the underlying arrangements and hence the case for scoping. The interim findings of the Scoping Group may well include questions as to whether the existing grouping of churches should be changed (enlarged, or combined) and as to whether ecumenical opportunities and implications have been considered. They may well initiate a further period of negotiation where all involved renew their efforts to seek God's will for the situation, whilst continuing to have regard to Synod's mission criteria. Such negotiations require a balance to be struck between the strategic imperatives (stemming from the shortage of stipendiary resources) and resulting pastoral considerations. The discussion of necessary changes in a pastorate and its approach is therefore a time for great openness and honesty as well as pastoral sensitivity.

The Scoping Group having carefully considered all the facts available, will bring its findings and recommendation to the full Synod Ministerial Deployment Group which will have take to into consideration the broader Synod perspective of similar issues. The final decision on scoping is taken by the full Synod Deployment Group.

8 Deployment Group informs Moderator of proposed decision

9 Deployment Group reports decision to SAPC