Diocese of Liverpool Parish Share Review Report to Diocesan Synod, 7 November 2026

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Liverpool

The Motion:

- That this Synod approves the method of calculating appropriate Parish Share contributions proposed by the Parish Share Review Group, with full implementation to be phased in over the 3 years from 2027-2029 and the next banding recalculation taking place in 2028/9.

The aims of this review were:

- To develop the best parish share system which will meet our common goal i.e. a system that pays for the clergy we want

AND

- To respond to the new national requirements to:
  - Be able to tell parishes supported by LINC that they are supported, and by how much
  - Demonstrate that LINC funding is mainly supporting parishes in the bottom 25% by IMD

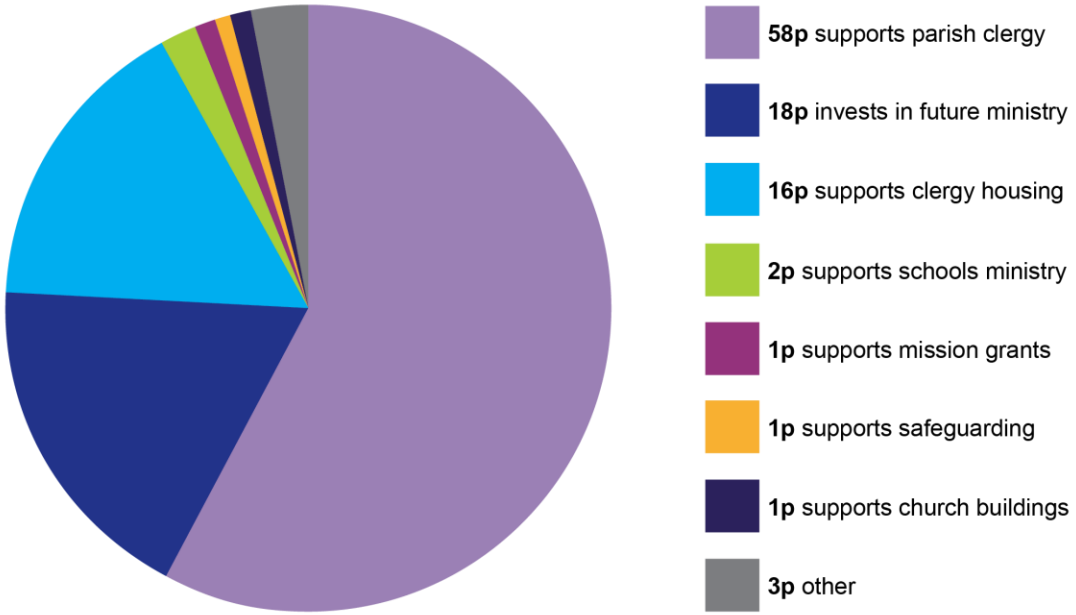
We also had these aims:

- To be a sustainable system that can be in place for up to 10 years
- Mindful of parish budgets so that we don't introduce volatility.
- To be as simple and transparent as possible
- To be widely owned as a fair system

Share is how parishes contribute to provide ministry across the diocese.

- Share is a result of the 1976 the Endowment & Glebe Measure This radical law stopped clergy being paid more in richly endowed parishes and less in poor parishes. Instead, it made the Diocesan Board of Finance responsible for paying a standard stipend to all stipendiary clergy in a diocese.
- Because Liverpool is a new diocese with very little historic glebe, almost all the cost of stipends has to be raised from parish giving.
- The DBF is a charity which can only pay for ministry for which funds can be raised. The covenant that parishes make when a vicar is appointed is to contribute at the level agreed by Deanery and Diocesan synods.
- Parishes don't 'pay for their vicar' – we contribute to a common fund in proportion to our means

Where does parish share go?



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Our common fund income comes from:

- £7 million from parish share
- £2.5 million from the Church Commissioners Lowest Income Communities funding
- Small amounts also come from rentals (eg unoccupied vicarages) and wedding and funeral fees

The basic concept we proposed in March received broad support.

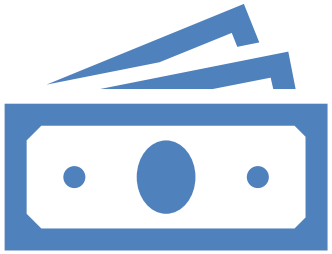
- Over the past 6 months detailed modelling has been carried out, further input has been received, and various proposals have been tested to refine the system that is now proposed.

There are two key elements:

Banding by index of parish share capacity to give a parish share 'benchmark' for each parish/church. **If each parish contributed at this level then the diocese would be self-sustaining in the long term. This is the long term aim of the Diocesan Impovement Plan investment.**

2. Adjustment by Index of Multiple Deprivation with LiNC funding part-funding the contribution otherwise requested from the 40% of our parishes which are in the bottom 25% by IMD nationally

Each parish is banded by their relative capacity to contribute. Two factors contribute to this index, slightly modified from March:



Unrestricted Income in £1000s

(from Parish Return of Finance)

Note that this is usual income, excluding items coded in the accounts as one-off items such as a legacy, sale of assets, and excluding restricted grant funds.



Adult Sunday Attendance

We are now using the 'middle 28 weeks' average count. We are also **half weight attendance**, so that income is a greater driver of capacity than numbers attending.

Banding by capacity to contribute

The bands and band boundaries (details on the next slide) have been mathematically modelled to minimise the number of churches close to the boundaries. They have also been sense checked with area deans.

They describe 7 clear types and sizes of churches in the diocese, from the most abundant (A1) to the most delicate (D).

They describe the reality we are working with. In time, the aspiration is that our churches grow stronger both missionally and financially. This is the purpose of Missional Planning and Review.

The bands are:

350+

Abundant 1

The 6 Churches with the greatest capacity in the diocese; outliers in terms of missional and financial strength

Top 3% by capacity

230-349.9

Abundant 2

11 of our largest churches, in a class of their own and distinct from the 6 very largest

Top 7-10%

170-229.9

Buoyant 1

11 Churches with notably greater capacity than the norm

Top 11-16%

115-169.9

Buoyant 2

18 churches which are more robust in terms of finances and numbers than the average in the diocese

'bottom half of the top third'

90-114.9

Core 1

24 Churches likely to feel they are only just managing, but just about sustainable

Around the middle

45-89.9

Core 2

64 Churches and the largests single group – the centre of gravity in the diocese. We aim to move churches up within this band/ into Core 1

About a third of our churches

0-44.9

Delicate

Our 30 smallest or most struggling churches. A varied band including struggling churches, but also festival churches, specialist churches, small rural parishes.

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Parish Share Benchmarks

Before LINC is applied. If all contributed at these levels, the diocese would be self-supporting. It is a long standing principle of share in Liverpool diocese, and an expectation of LINC funding, that the least deprived parishes will contribute more to support the most deprived areas: LINC alone cannot provide all the support any diocese would require.

	Least deprived 10% (+£7k)	10-25% least deprived (+£3.5k)	Standard benchmark
A1	£118,104.35	£114,604.35	£111,104.35
A2	£111,160.33	£107,660.33	£104,160.33
B1	£97,272.29	£93,772.29	£90,272.29
B2	£86,856.25	£83,356.25	£76,856.25
C1	£76,440.22	£72,940.22	£69,440.22
C2	£66,024.19	£62,524.19	£59,024.19
D	£59,080.17	£55,580.17	£52,080.17

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Lowest Income Communities Funding (LINC)

LINC increased last year by 1/3. In 2027, it will provide c. £2.5M of support to parish ministry in Liverpool Diocese, which together with c. £7M of share contributions will allow us to support ministry across all our communities.

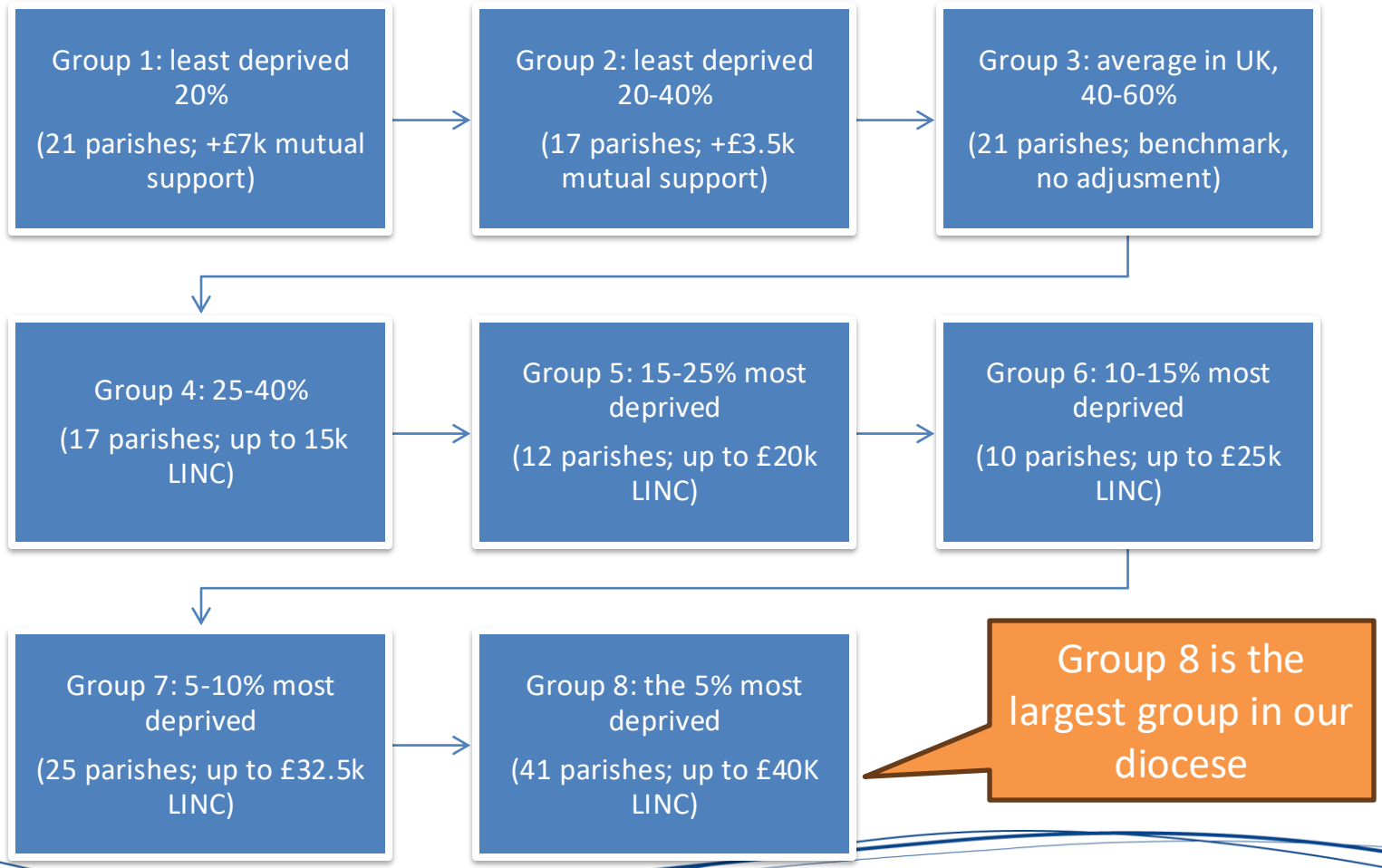
When LINC was increased,reporting requirements also increased. This is a major driver of this new system. We now have to be able to demonstrate that LINC:

- Is primarily being used to support parishes in the bottom 25% of parishes in the country by IMD (40% of our parishes) and
- Each parish supported by it knows both ***that*** it is being supported by LINC, and ***by how much*** it is being supported.

The second dimension: LINC

- LINC funding is allocated on this new system on a sliding scale by IMD group (details on next slide)
- LINC supports a parish in reaching their share benchmark, up to a maximum of the amount allocated to their IMD group
- The maximum amount will be allocated in most cases. This is slightly modified in some cases by the floors and ceilings that we have put in to increase fairness and smooth out volatility (see slide 18)

Parishes are also grouped by IMD according to their relative ranking in the Church of England.



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Case study: our highest IMD parish

- 6th most deprived in the CofE by IMD, most deprived in the diocese
- Adult Sunday attendance trimmed mean: 40
- Unrestricted income: £24,000
- Capacity index is 0.5(40) + 24 = 44
- Capacity band is D
- Share benchmark is £52k
- Lowest IMD band, so up to £40k LINC applies, (to a floor of 33% of income, or £12k minimum, if relevant)
- Appropriate contribution is £12k. The parish can see that they are being supported by £40k LINC to reach their benchmark.

Case study: A very large church

- Adult Sunday attendance trimmed mean: 248
- Unrestricted income: £301,000
- Capacity index is 0.5(248) + 301 = 425
- Capacity band is A1, one of the most flourishing 6
- Deprivation band is 3, so their benchmark is standard and there is no LINC or IMD adjustment
- Share benchmark is £111k
- Appropriate contribution is £111k
- This is almost exactly the same as now – a reduction of c.£1k

Floors and Ceilings

As a result of feedback and modelling, these refined propsals add in 3 ‘floor and ceiling’ parameters:

- **Share contribution capped at a maximum of 66% of income.**

No parish will be asked to contribute more than 2/3 of its unrestricted income, even if the formula would suggest they should or could be contributing more. In the medium term, we want to reduce this ceiling, as the New Income work increases parish incomes and so reduces the proportion taken up by share.

- **A minimum contribution of £12k per parish.**

A very few places are currently contributing at unrealistically low levels. This floor is what is produced by the smallest benchmark and the largest amount of LINC as in the first case study. We believe it is unfair for any parish to be contributing at less than that level. This does not affect many places, and their viability will be assessed.

- **LINC support won’t be allocated to below 33% of income**

To be fair to churches paying a high proportion of their income, LINC support will be capped in the few instances where the maximum allocation would take a parish’s assessed contribution below 1/3 of their income.

Ceiling Case study: a small-medium suburban church

- Adult Sunday attendance trimmed mean: 44
- Unrestricted income: £57,000
- Capacity index is 0.5(44) + 57 = 79
- Capacity band is C2, the median band
- Share benchmark is £59k
- IMD Group 5, so up to £20k LINC support
- But that would give a share contribution of £39k, which is over 2/3 of unrestricted income.
- Their appropriate contribution is therefore capped at £37,600, 66% of income.

Clergy allocation & proportionality

- The share benchmark is per stipend, rather than per church or per parish
- Where a parish or church has a proportion of clergy allocation, their benchmark is proportionally adjusted
- This is particularly relevant where parishes or churches are grouped together in teams, hubs or single larger parishes; or in some cases where Deaneries have committed to sharing additional post(s) across several churches.
- Area Deans or Lay Chairs have been consulted and where clergy are shared across parishes or across deaneries, agreed proportions have been applied.

What about Single Larger parishes and Wigan?

We have many different configurations of parishes across the diocese of Liverpool. A principle we worked to was the configuration of parish that a church happens to be in should not affect their appropriate contribution. So if a parish that is currently a single church benefice joins an SLP in the future, their share allocation according to this formula would not be affected (unless their clergy allocation changes, depending on their local decisions).

After discussion with SLP Team Rectors, we have calculated share for FfM SLP churches on the basis of their local areas IMD. This allows each SLP to have a robust statistical basis on which to make local decisions about any changes to share allocation (as Deaneries might). It also allows LINC to be allocated on a more granular level. (IMD data is available per ward so the dissolution of previous parish boundaries does not mean it will be unavailable in the future, although it will require slightly more work in future to collect it).

For Wigan, and a few older established Team parishes where data is not disaggregated, each Hub has been treated as a single parish, with total income and attendance averaged between churches.

Deanery adjustments

- These figures are subject to local adjustment by Deaneries, honouring the decision previously made by this Synod to devolve allocation of Deanery Share to local decision making, to encourage local missional thinking and the principle of subsidiarity.
- The system proposed here will give clarity on benchmarks, and calculates the appropriate contribution per place, giving clarity and transparency about how the total is reached
- Deaneries will be aware of local factors which are beyond the scope of a diocesan-level system, given the clear wish of Synod members to have a simple formula that was universally applied
- In particular, we have not taken into account reserves. Deaneries may well wish to adjust the appropriate contributions to take account of reserves: eg, Huyton allocate 10% of share proportional to parish reserves
- Deaneries are encouraged as now to plan missionally and strategically for ministry deployment, taking into account both missional ambition and realistic ability to contribute. Note that there is unlikely to be much scope to *increase* stipendiary allocations in this triennium, given the current low numbers of clergy available across the Church of England.

Deanery adjustments

- Deanery leadership teams have been asked to arrange a meeting to confirm local figures a week or two after Diocesan Synod, so that parishes can receive their final figures as soon as possible

- For that reason, the figures shared with Synod members should be treated as confidential and indicative only at this stage. Appendix A lists each parish (or church: SLPs have requested to have the figures broken down by church) by Band and IMD Group giving an indication of likely share benchmark and LINC support

- Please note that where a Deanery total has increased, it is likely to be because it has a larger proportion of the least deprived parishes. Because of the changes to the funding requirements, LINC can no longer be allocated to these places.

Vacancies

We were particularly asked to look at how we handle vacancies in our share system.

Currently, the overall amount of share requested is reduced by a percentage to reflect a typical vacancy rate. Eg, roughly every parish has a one year vacancy every ten years, and this burden is shared by all our parishes – like an insurance policy.

Although we heard and discussed lots of different views on this, we concluded that the existing practice should continue.

Our main reasons for this were:

- If we introduced a rebate system, parish share totals would have to increase by over 10% across the board (as the total requested now takes vacancies into account).
- It avoids volatility in parish budgets – whilst a saving in vacancy is attractive, it would make parish and DBF budgeting nearly impossible, given how long a vacancy lasts is outside our control
- A rebate system would have the unintended consequence of richer parishes receiving more financial benefit from a vacancy than poorer parishes, which was clearly unfair
- On the other hand, a flat-rate rebate would disproportionately favour parishes contributing the least, so be unpalatable to parishes contributing more
- And changing this would reinforce the mindset of share 'paying for our vicar' rather than the principle on which our Common Fund Contributions are based, that we all contribute according to our capacity to do so to the whole cost of current and future ministry across the whole diocese.

Health and viability assessment in vacancies: recommendation



A next stage, beyond the scope of this review, will be to develop a tool for assessing the health and viability of parishes, especially in vacancies. We recommend that the diocese should adopt a health & viability framework and commend this as a future stage of work.



When a vacancy comes about, this Health & Viability assessment will be made as part of the process by which the Deanery and Diocesan Mission and Pastoral committees consider the appropriate stipendiary allocation and shape of a future post.



The aspiration is for each parish to reach in the medium term to be able to contribute at the level of their Share Benchmark, with appropriate LINC support where relevant. Those parishes able to do so will require a much lighter touch process of assessment.



Decisions on filling vacancies and on stipendiary allocation will not be taken entirely on share payment, of course. This will simply form part of the overall Health & Viability assessment of a parish in vacancy, and feed into missional thinking about revitalisation where appropriate.

Transition and phasing

To help parishes budget, to encourage growth, and to minimise volatility and staff time, these bands will remain fixed for a 3-years phase-in period.

1/3 of any increase or decrease arising from the change to this system will be applied in each of 2027, 2028, 2029.

In 2028 and 2029, there will also be a cost of living increase which will be set at the stipend increase that year plus ¼%. The stipend increase is set by synod and capped at a max of 5%

In future years

In 2028-9, parishes will be re-banded to reflect changes in capacity for the next triennium. We hope around ¼ of parishes will have moved up a band as MPR begins to gain traction, increasing parish incomes. An extra check will ensure that no parish close to a band boundary is disproportionately affected by rebanding.

For this year, due to the Covid effect, we have just used 2025 figures. In the future, banding calculations will use a 3 year weighted average to take into account income and attendance over the past 3 years.

For each year, share will increase by ¼% above the annual cost of living increase. This will enable the DBF to fully meet the cost of ministry, eg with increased investment in housing.

Banding Cohorts and targeted interventions



A side effect of this system is that it gives clear cohorts of types of churches. In the future, this can inform targeted training and action learning sets, with clergy in similar churches providing peer groups and clergy in adjacent bands learning together about growing churches of that type.



The most delicate 30 churches will each be individually assessed in the coming months, and where appropriate targeted interventions will be offered.



The next category, C2, is the largest group. This shows the underlying vulnerability of the diocese as a whole. C2 churches should be assessed next, and MPR resource targeted in those places it is likely to have most impact.



We may well wish to develop targets for, e.g., a third of churches to move up a band over the next 5-7 years of DIP funding. Establishing appropriate targets will require further modelling and research.

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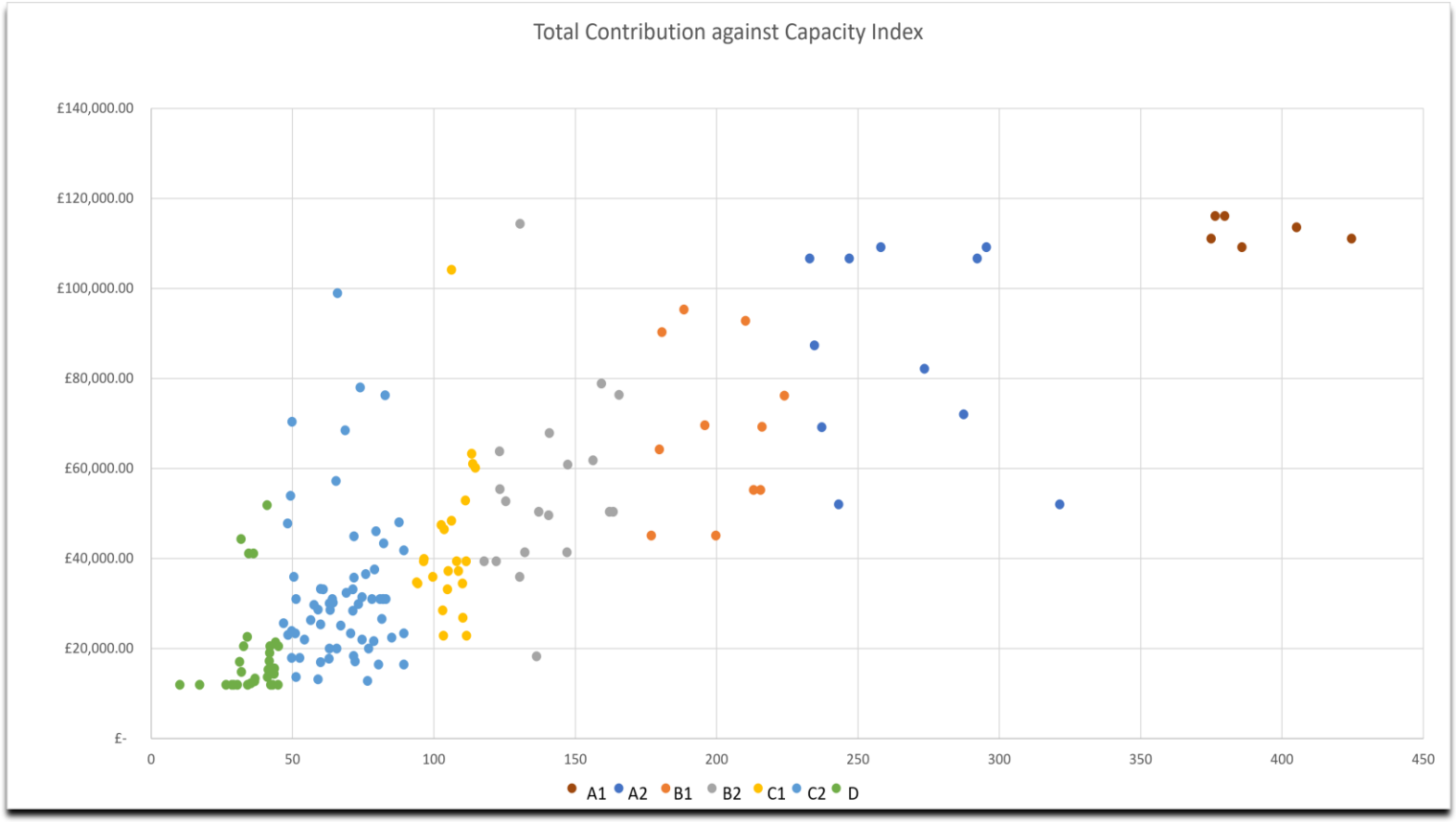
Appendices

- These appendices give the bands & groups of each parish and a graph indicates the spread of contributions by parishes in different bands
- Whilst an approximate share can thus be worked out for each parish (benchmark per band, with IMD adjustment, proportionate to clergy allocation), these are subject to deanery adjustment so these appendices do not include those figures explicitly at this stage

Contributions by capacity band

This graph is indicative of the spread of contributions across the capacity bands, as modified by LINC, floors and ceilings



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Appendix: Parishes by band
A1 parishes (6):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Our Lady and St Nicholas	Liverpool North and Walton	4
Childwall All Saints	Liverpool South - Childwall	1
Penny Lane St Barnabas	Liverpool South - Childwall	3
Much Woolton St Peter	Liverpool South - Childwall	3
Aughton Christ Church	Ormskirk	1
Burscough Bridge St John	Ormskirk	2

Appendix: Parishes by band
A2 parishes (11):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Formby Holy Trinity	Sefton North	1
Formby St Peter	Sefton North	1
Great Crosby St Luke	Sefton North	2
St James in the City	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
Allerton All Hallows	Liverpool South - Childwall	1
Mossley Hill St Matthew and St James	Liverpool South - Childwall	2
Southport Christ Church	North Meols	8
Rainford All Saints	Ormskirk	2
Haydock St Mark	St Helens	5
Warrington Holy Trinity	Warrington	7
Penketh St Paul	Warrington	1

Appendix: Parishes by band B1 parishes (11):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Formby St Luke	Sefton North	1
West Derby St Mary the Virgin with St James	West Derby	4
Toxteth St Philemon	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
Ainsdale St John	North Meols	3
Birkdale St James	North Meols	2
North Meols St Cuthbert	North Meols	2
Southport Holy Trinity	North Meols	8
Aughton St Michael	Ormskirk	1
Rainhill St Ann	St Helens	2
Warrington St Elphin	Warrington	6
Great Sankey St Mary	Warrington	1

Appendix: Parishes by band
B2 parishes (18):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Blundellsands St Nicholas	Sefton North	2
Thornton and Crosby All Saints with St Frideswyde	Sefton North	4
Aintree St Giles with St Peter	Sefton North	3
Anfield St Columba	Liverpool North and Walton	8
St Andrews	West Derby	8
Aigburth St Anne	Liverpool South - Childwall	1
Grassendale St Mary	Liverpool South - Childwall	3
Prescot St Mary	Huyton	7
Southport St Philip and St Paul with Wesley	North Meols	6
Southport St Simon and St Jude with All Souls	North Meols	6

Appendix: Parishes by band B2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Maghull St Andrew	Sefton North	2
Skelmersdale St Paul	Ormskirk	6
Up Holland and Dalton	Ormskirk	7
Parr Mount Holy Trinity	St Helens	7
Haydock St James	Winwick	6
Lowton St Mary	Winwick	3
Newton in Makerfield St Peter	Winwick	3
Padgate	Warrington	1

Appendix: Parishes by band C1 parishes (24):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Bootle Christ Church	Sefton South	8
Widnes St John and St Paul	Widnes	8
St Annes	West Derby	8
Wavertree St Mary	Toxteth and Wavertree	7
Whiston St Nicholas	Huyton	7
Huyton Quarry St Gabriel	Huyton	7
St Helen St Helen	St Helens	5
Eccleston St Luke	St Helens	7
Southport All Saints	North Meols	5
Halewood St Nicholas and St Mary	Liverpool South - Childwall	5
Liverpool All Souls Springwood	Liverpool South - Childwall	5
Toxteth Park St Michael in the Hamlet with St Andrew	Toxteth and Wavertree	5

Appendix: Parishes by band C1 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Wavertree Holy Trinity	Toxteth and Wavertree	4
Wigan West	Wigan	3
Southport Emmanuel	North Meols	3
Winwick St Oswald	Winwick	3
Birkdale St John	North Meols	3
Great Crosby St Faith	Sefton South	3
Halsall St Cuthbert	Ormskirk	2
Lydiate and Downholland St Thomas	Ormskirk	2
Lowton St Luke	Winwick	1
Newchurch	Winwick	1
Hightown St Stephen	Sefton North	1
Blundellsands St Michael	Sefton North	1

Appendix: Parishes by band C1 parishes (64):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Everton St George	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Bootle St Matthew and St Leonard	Sefton South	8
Toxteth St Bede with St Clement	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
Walton Breck Christ Church and Holy Trinity	Liverpool North and Walton	8
West Derby St Luke and Stockbridge Village St Jude	Huyton	8
Tuebrook St John	West Derby	8
Liverpool All Saints	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Earlsfield St Mary with St George	Huyton	8
Garston St Michael	Liverpool South - Childwall	8
Orrell Hey St John and St James	Sefton South	8
Wavertree St Bridget and St Thomas	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
The Good Shepherd	West Derby	8

Appendix: Parishes by band C2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
All Saints	West Derby	8
Christ Church Norris Green	West Derby	8
St Cuthberts	West Derby	4
St Davids	West Derby	4
Gateacre St Stephen	Liverpool South - Childwall	8
Orford St Andrew	Warrington	7
Fazakerley Emmanuel	Liverpool North and Walton	7
Netherton St Oswald	Sefton South	7
Warrington St Ann	Warrington	7
Wigan Central	Wigan	7
St Helens St Mark North Road	St Helens	7
Warrington St Barnabas	Warrington	7

Appendix: Parishes by band C2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Wigan Town Centre	Wigan	7
Eccleston Christ Church	St Helens	2
Parr St Paul Blackbrook	St Helens	4
Sutton St Nicholas	St Helens	3
St Helen St Andrew	St Helens	3
Ravenhead St John	St Helens	7
Huyton St Michael	Huyton	7
Walton St John	Liverpool North and Walton	7
Ditton St Michael with St Thomas	Widnes	7
Wigan North West	Wigan	7
Litherland St Philip	Sefton South	6
Orford St Margaret	Warrington	6

Appendix: Parishes by band C2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Widnes St Ambrose	Widnes	6
Hale St Mary	Widnes	6
Liverpool St Luke in the City	Toxteth and Wavertree	5
Golborne St Thomas	Winwick	5
Knotty Ash St John	West Derby	5
Toxteth Park St Agnes and St Pancras	Toxteth and Wavertree	5
Eccleston St James with St Matthew	St Helens	5
Roby St Bartholomew	Huyton	4
Newton Le Willows All Saints	Winwick	4
Hunts Cross St Hilda	Liverpool South - Childwall	4
Banks St Stephen in the Banks	North Meols	4
Birkdale St Peter	North Meols	4

Appendix: Parishes by band C2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Burtonwood St Michael	Winwick	4
Sefton St Helen	Sefton South	4
Birchwood and Woolston	Warrington	3
Wigan South	Wigan	3
Scarisbrick St Mark	Ormskirk	3
Crossens St John	North Meols	3
Altcar St Michael and All Angels	Sefton North	2
Bickerstaffe Holy Trinity	Ormskirk	2
Westbrook St James	Warrington	2
Ormskirk St Peter and St Paul & Lathom Park Chapel St John	Ormskirk	2
Westhead St James	Ormskirk	1
Westbrook St Philip	Warrington	1

Appendix: Parishes by band C2 parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Newburgh Christ Church	Ormskirk	1
Croft with Southworth Christ Church	Winwick	1
Farnworth St Luke	Widnes	1
Maghull St James	Sefton North	1

Appendix: Parishes by band D parishes (30):

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Anfield St Margaret	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Widnes St Mary	Widnes	8
Kirkdale St Lawrence with St Paul	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Parr St Peter	St Helens	8
Toxteth St Margaret	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
Kirkdale St Athanasius with St Mary	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Everton St Peter with St John Chrysostom	Liverpool North and Walton	8
The Team Parish of Walton	Liverpool North and Walton	8
Speke St Aidan with All Saints	Liverpool South - Childwall	8
Dingle St Gabriel and St Cleopas	Toxteth and Wavertree	8
Kirkby St Chad	Huyton	8
Waterloo Christ Church with St John	Sefton South	8

Appendix: Parishes by band D parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Litherland St Paul	Sefton South	8
Earlestown St John	Winwick	8
Toxteth Park Christ Church	Toxteth and Wavertree	7
Carr Mill St David	St Helens	7
Eccleston St Thomas	St Helens	8
Parr St Philip Derbyshire Hill	St Helens	8
Sutton All Saints	St Helens	7
Sutton St Michael and All Angels	St Helens	8
Newton in Makerfield Emmanuel	Winwick	7
Wigan East (Chapelfields)	Wigan	6
Waterloo St Mary	Sefton South	5
Southport St Luke	North Meols	4

Appendix: Parishes by band D parishes continued:

Parish/church	Deanery	IMD group
Wigan North East	Wigan	4
Melling St Thomas	Sefton North	4
Kew St Francis of Assisi	North Meols	3
Hollinfare St Helen	Winwick	3
Glazebury All Saints	Winwick	3
Maghull St Peter	Sefton North	2

FAQs These slides gather the questions asked at the 3 webinars.

Q: What if we want to add a stipend in our Deanery? How will we know what the additional cost would be?

A: This system has been carefully modelled and balanced based on what Area Deans/Lay Chairs have told us are the numbers of stipends planned for this next 3 year period.

Adding a stipend will require a proposal to DMPC explaining how it will be funded, as all the LINC is fully allocated for 2027. This will need to be discussed on a case by case basis, but the basic principle is that at least the full marginal cost to the DBF of a stipend, pension, NI and housing would need to be funded. It should be noted that adding a stipend is likely to be difficult not because of this share system but because there is for the next 10 years going to be a church-wide shortage of ordained clergy, due to a large cohort reaching retirement age together and under-recruitment over the past 10 years.

A few posts are currently under active discussion; we are aware of these and will discuss them with the deaneries concerned individually, but mainly they have already been built into this system.

FAQs

Q: What if we are thinking about decreasing a stipend in our Deanery? How will we know how much we'll save?

A: The simple answer is that the relevant contribution would be saved. Any associated LINC funding would in principle be available to the DBF to reallocate to support ministry elsewhere. However, this would be a matter for individual discussion with the parish(es) or deanery concerned. LINC is there to support mission and ministry not only stipends, so the parish may well put in a proposal for the LINC element to be reallocated to eg a lay post, youth minister, schools worker etc, and all such proposals would be assessed on their individual merits.

Because this system introduces an element of proportionality between benchmark and stipendiary allocation, it will enable much greater transparency about a cost-benefit analysis of changes in stipendiary allocation that are proposed. For example, where two or three parishes propose sharing a vicar, they would see a direct reduction in their assessed contribution.

Its important to remember that the DMPC makes decisions about ministry not primarily on financial grounds, although overall affordability is of course a factor. Any such proposals must consider the appropriate provision of priestly ministry for the parish(es) concerned.

FAQs

Q: What about fee income from weddings and funerals?

A: Whilst historically fees were paid directly to clergy and formed part of their income, since the 1976 legislation equalising stipends they have mostly been assigned to the DBF to avoid complex stipend adjustments. All clergy in post since 2011 are on new Common Tenure terms and conditions, so almost all fees are now legally the property of the DBF, except in a very few cases where clergy remain on Freehold.

Like parish share contributions, fees income is pooled as part of our common fund, and provides a small contribution to the overall cost of ministry.

Q: How many parishes are looking at a more than, say, 20% change?

A: Before Deanery adjustments based on local factors, currently 38 parishes are predicted a more than 20% decrease in their share contribution, and 44 a more than 20% increase. These are largely a result of the changed funding approach to LINC which we have to implement, while some are the result of an outdated formula having been used for many years. For example, one of the six A1 churches was only being asked to contribute £31k prior to this exercise. Some of these changes we expect to be the subject of local offsetting adjustments within deaneries.

FAQs

Q: How does IMD data work for Single Larger Parishes, where the data is no longer available for the previous parish boundaries?

A: IMD data is available at the ward level; what is no longer readily available for SLPs is the parish-level overlay provided by CUF. This means that it will be possible in future years to recalculate IMD groups if appropriate. However, we are not expecting IMD groups to change significantly over the next 10 years.

Q: Is it fair to share vacancies evenly when poorer parishes often find it takes longer to fill vacancies?

A: We don't think that overall diocesan and national statistics show a significant difference between vacancy lengths by IMD, but we know that averages can mask large local variations. We did look at lots of different ways of handling vacancies, but the issues on slide 25 prevailed. As LINC increases over time and as, we hope, share contributions increase as parishes develop new income streams, we hope that freed-up LINC will enable us to look at further ways of supporting mission and ministry in our most deprived areas in the future.

FAQs

Q: Is this going to be part of a wider whole, so that parishes which are preaching and teaching about giving don't end up subsidising parishes which don't try to increase their income?

A: Yes. Whilst this particular review was tasked with looking specifically at the share system, it forms part of the much wider Diocesan Improvement Plan which Synod approved two years ago and which the national church is investing in. This includes missional and financial strands. Over the coming years, Missional Planning and Review will be rolled out to all parishes, with four main strands – refreshing the mission of our existing congregations; identifying opportunities for planting new worshipping communities; encouraging generous discipleship; and growing new income streams.

All parishes are expected by the bishops to participate in this programme of missional planning and review, in ways which will support and enable the particular mission and context of each place.

It is an explicit outcome of this work that all parishes will engage with appropriate next steps in each area, to ensure that our parishes are as missionally effective and well supported as possible for the work of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom in every community.

FAQs

Q: How have you taken into account that some parishes pay additional staff?

A: We received two different perspectives on this in the consultation in February. On the one hand, that staff costs reduced the capacity of large churches to contribute to share. On the other, that it was not fair for a church to choose to prioritise providing itself with additional staff over contributing at a level that meant all parishes could have some ministry. Some suggested 'taxing' staff headcount, others that the cost of staff should be accounted for.

On balance, we have taken the view that many parishes employ some staff in some capacity, broadly in proportion to their means, from a part time cleaner to a youth worker, administrator or operations manager. This is therefore 'business as usual' and we would expect PCCs to be employing people at a level that was sensibly affordable, taking appropriate parish share into account. We have not therefore taken staff into account in our very simple formula.

We don't expect this to cause disproportionate issues, but it is one factor, like reserves, which a Deanery might choose to take into account in adjusting share according to local factors.

FAQs

Q: Is this a baseline against which deaneries then apply deanery mission planning?

A: Yes, this system doesn't change the expectation that Deaneries will be thinking stragically and missionally about future ministry deployment.

After eight years of Deanery Share planning, we are working on the principle that the current stipendiary allocations in Deanery Plans are considered about right for now. However, Deanery Plans are working documents, and the Diocesan Synod, through the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee, expects Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committees to be strategically planning for the future. DMPCs are charged with making recommendations to strengthen the mission and pastoral care offered across all their parishes, ensuring that priestly ministry is available to all and that the mixed ecology of the Church can flourish in every place.

The formula presented here gives deaneries clarity about the benchmarking of each parish and a snapshot of current missional strength. Deaneries are encouraged to then consider whether local factors apply which might smooth out any large increases or decreases, such as the existence of large reserves in a particular parish which gives them a greater ability to contribute than their income alone would indicate.