

## 30/14 Church Land Acquisition Levy

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key points

- There remains an urgent need to purchase land for future church sites.
- A recent wide-ranging review did not identify any significant sources of additional funding for the purchase of future church sites other than the current church land acquisition levy.
- It is intended to include the church land acquisition levy as part of the Synod's funding arrangements for at least the 2016-2018 triennium.

### Purpose

1. To provide the Synod with the mid and long term views of the need for the Mission Property Committee "Church Land Acquisition Levy".

### Recommendation

2. Synod receive this report.

### Background

3. Synod passed resolution 30/14 in the following terms –

'Synod requests the Standing Committee to provide the 2015 Synod session with a report of the mid and long term views of the need for the Mission Property Committee (MPC) "Church Land Acquisitions Levy".

Synod requests that this report should also outline possible future strategies for raising these funds from parishes and other sources so that parishes may be informed of expected financial commitments for mid and long term planning purposes.'

4. At its meeting on 10 November 2014 the Standing Committee requested the Diocesan Resources Committee to prepare, in consultation with the Mission Property Committee and the Strategic Research Group, a report addressing the matters in resolution 30/14.

5. After consulting with the Mission Property Committee and the Strategic Research Group, the Diocesan Resources Committee prepared this report on behalf of the Standing Committee.

### Response

6. The Mission Property Committee has repeatedly demonstrated there is an urgent need to purchase land for future church sites.

7. It is evident that, on its own, the Mission Property Committee lacks the resources to meet this need. Even together with the very welcome contributions coming from donations by individuals, parishes and other organisations, together with the application of a portion of the sale proceeds of parish property as a result of the Large Receipts Policy, the amount of new funds received each year is clearly insufficient.

8. A significant, on-going and reliable source of funds is needed to enable the Mission Property Committee to adequately address the need to purchase land for future church sites.

9. It is apparent there is no easy source for such funds. A recent wide-ranging review of potential sources of funds did not identify any significant new sources of funds. Furthermore –

- (a) there is no appetite to appropriate funds from the Diocesan Endowment,
- (b) the funds available annually to the Synod are limited and are already fully allocated to other requirements and mission commitments, and
- (c) Synod agreed in 2013 to a levy on parishes for the purpose of assisting the Mission Property Committee to purchase land for future church sites, and in 2014 the Standing Committee affirmed and continued that levy for a second year.

10. The Diocesan Resources Committee acknowledges the appropriateness of direct fundraising as a contribution to meeting the cost of new ministry buildings; encourages parishes to continue to raise their own funds for local initiatives; and encourages individuals and parishes to give generously to support the acquisition of land for future church sites. We also note the Archbishop's initiative for fundraising for New Churches for New Communities which seeks to raise funds for new ministry centres on land acquired by the Mission Property Committee.

11. The Statement of Funding Principles for 2016-2018 prepared for Synod in 2014 indicated “a levy on parishes of 2% of their net operating receipts should continue to be used to assist the Mission Property Committee to fund the acquisition of land for future church sites”.

12. The Diocesan Resources Committee intends therefore to include such a levy in the draft ordinances it prepares for Standing Committee and Synod for the 2016-2018 triennium, and indicates that while the situation should be reviewed at the beginning of every triennium, on present indications it would envisage the need for such a levy would continue at least for the mid term, and possibly longer.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BISHOP PETER HAYWARD

*Chair, Diocesan Resources Committee*

2 March 2015