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Summary of main points emerging from the mid-term consultation

What is affirmed - There is a strong support for the basic thrust of the plan in terms of prioritising our gospel mission and promoting the participation of all the baptised in that mission. There is a recognition of work achieved in the last two years and a desire that this work be built on and these priorities be given new impetus in the coming years.

What is criticised - The mid-term evaluation identified five points of weakness in relation to the plan and its implementation:

- The plan lacks an implementation structure – a concrete programme suited to the needs and capacity of the parishes
- The implementation lacks a visible, energising leadership that can encourage committed people on the ground and reach out to and engage the wider community
- The coordination of implementation is overly structured and ineffective – there needs to be greater integration, freedom and flexibility
- The pressures experienced by priests over the last couple of decades have not been adequately recognised and addressed in the plan
- Financial planning for the implementation needs to be developed in the context of a review of the whole funding model in the diocese

What is proposed – There are four basic recommendations

1. An annual implementation plan to be developed based around needs and opportunities in parishes, and a realistic assessment of capacity in the diocese.
2. A new and simpler leadership structure to be put in place for the implementation of the plan. This includes the appointment of a fulltime priest director and assumes the full support of the bishop when the appointment is made. The leadership, including the bishop will have two roles. Firstly providing a much stronger and more personal profile for the plan – supporting those involved in the parishes and also reaching out to the wider community. Secondly managing the implementation in a more integrated and strategic manner.
3. A programme of outreach to priests that recognises the pressures that they have been experiencing, and that seeks to identify how best they can be supported in the coming years throughout the implementation of the plan.
4. An exploration of a new model of diocesan funding that can provide a realistic and sustainable funding base for the implementation of the plan.

1. Introduction

1.1 Terms of reference

Following a substantial process of listening and consultation across the diocese *Builders of Hope*, the Killaloe Diocesan Pastoral Plan for 2013-2020 was published in September 2013. A number of structures to develop and manage the implementation of the plan were put in place and work commenced in 2014. These included a management committee, an implementation committee, a part-time director, and four staff including a fulltime pastoral worker, two part-time pastoral workers and a part-time administrator. In 2016 it was decided that a review of progress should be undertaken involving a consultation with stakeholders on their reading of the impact of the plan to date and their views on how implementation could be further progressed up to 2020.

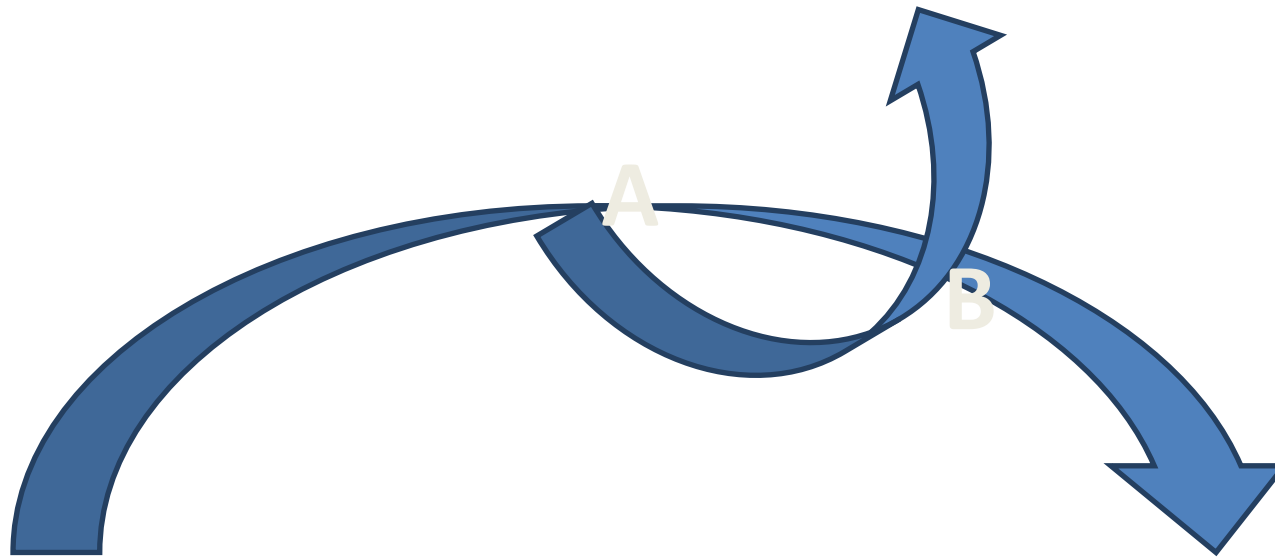
1.2 Methodology

The preparation for this report followed three stages of consultation of stakeholders. Firstly a questionnaire was circulated to priests, chairpersons of Pastoral Councils, and Religious (appendix 3). A copy of this was posted on the diocesan website for anybody else that wished to participate in the evaluation. Approximately 100 people and groups responded. I wrote a report on the main findings from that response (appendix 1). The second stage was a series of conversations with some 45 individuals, most of whom were involved in the preparation and/or implementation of the plan (appendix 4). I circulated the first report to them in advance and invited them to share with me on their own experiences with the plan and their interpretation of the questionnaire responses. I wrote a second report on the main recommendations coming out of those conversations (appendix 2). Finally a gathering of people with diocesan roles was convened on June 29th to discuss the two reports, and to affirm, challenge or add to the main findings and recommendations (appendix 5). This 3rd report offers my reading of the key points emerging from that meeting and my final recommendations.

1.3 Model utilised for interpreting the feedback

In my introduction on the 29th I offered the following model as a framework for appreciating and thinking about the pastoral plan and the feedback received. (Adapted from Charles Handy's *The Empty Raincoat*, Random House Business Books, 1995). This represents an approach to managing organisational change, and it certainly helped me to form what I hope is a coherent read of the feedback I received. The large curve

represents the mainstream thrust of the organisation. It develops in a particular time and if it is well adapted to its environment will rise and thrive. However as time moves on and the environment changes the impact and effectiveness of the mainstream approach declines. The organisation may go out of existence unless it seeks to adjust itself to the new environment. It does so by developing a second experimental curve (A) whose purpose is to explore new approaches. Through trial and error wisdom and experience is gained on what can work in



the new environment and this in time becomes the new rising curve (B) that allows the organisation to thrive into the future. The rising curve is a mixture of what has been learned during the experimental period and also what persists in value from the old – in that sense it includes elements that are both old and new. The period between A and B is a time of duality in the organisation, when the past co-exists with the future in the present. The relationship between the people on the two curves is crucial to the effectiveness of the approach. The mainstream leadership needs to give time, space and support to those on the experimental curve. Those on the 2nd curve need to relate well to those whose primary commitment is to the 1st curve. They need to appreciate the values of the mainstream and recognise what is of enduring value there. They need to communicate their learnings from the 2nd curve in a manner that can be heard and understood.

2. Feedback from the three stages

My overall sense is that the insight gathered across the three stages is cumulative and not contradictory. Stage 2 affirmed but also deepened the reading of stage 1 and widened the recommendations. Likewise I believe the main points from the meeting on the 29th added further to the recommendations.

a. Questionnaire returns

The following summarises the main elements in the feedback as detailed in Appendix 1:

i. Mixed picture

The overall picture that emerges at this point in the consultation is a mixed one, with positives to build on in regard to commitment and energy at local level and elements of implementation delivered to date. But there are also some questions about the overall design and delivery of the pastoral plan in how it relates to and supports the local. It seems clear to me that by and large in the parishes the priests and involved laity share some of the basic understandings in the plan – the need for partnership and the need to reach out, especially to those who have disconnected from church. They are busy keeping the parishes going and trying at the same time to make inroads in regard to the operation of partnership and the challenge of reaching out. They do not feel very self-confident in regard to these – they feel they need a lot of help. And while elements of the implementation of the plan have been helpful a majority feel that it has missed the mark in terms of where they are at, and the kind of support they need.

ii. Strategic capacity at parish level

As I read it the crux of the matter is around strategic space and capacity. By and large the priests and lay leaders do not see themselves as strategic leaders with time and space to reflect on and address the major pastoral challenges. Mostly they are ‘hands on’ people who are struggling to cope with immediate pressures. They don’t have the time or energy to design responses – they need help in terms of practical projects they can get stuck into that in one way or another address pressing issues. And here they see the plan as one step above that and above them. They see it as a highly aspirational document with too many ideas and lacking in an implementation structure. By this is meant a set of projects which would translate the key elements of the plan into a set of concrete targets and actions, rolled out over a number of years, which with support they could take on at cluster and parish level. On the whole they see the language and complexity of the plan as too academic for them, too up in the air, too difficult to read and engage with.

iii. Different style of leadership needed

A second related issue is leadership of the diocesan plan which they see as very low- key or even invisible. There is a strong call for a much more upfront and inspirational leadership that boosts the morale of parish groups and communicates more effectively with the diocese as a whole. Here I have the clear sense of foot soldiers looking for a general. An image from one of the interviews captures this. We are being asked to venture into uncharted waters. We need somebody at the helm of the boat leading the way and looking out for the rest of us on the boat. While obviously the extended absence of a bishop is relevant here there is also some critique coming through of the profile of the implementation groups in the diocese.

iv. Disconnected manner of implementation

A third issue relates to the coordination of the implementation. Given the above structural critique the respondents are not in the main criticising those responsible for the strands, especially the pastoral workers. While there is some unease about the level of practical pastoral experience there are far more positive than negative comments about their work. The criticism is more to do with the dispersed and disconnected manner of implementation – too many strands and resources too thinly spread.

b. One-to-one interviews

These interviews as detailed in appendix 2 strongly affirmed the desire for a more concrete form of implementation and a different leadership structure for the implementation. They also developed two other points – one relating to priests and the other to financial planning.

i. Priests under pressure

In my summary of the questionnaire returns I noted the low level of response from priests. In checking that out the initial sense I picked up was that the priests are busy, and detailed questionnaires not a priority. Also a number had chosen to fill in the questionnaire with their pastoral councils. However during the subsequent one-to-one interviews I picked up a strong sense of something deeper. The accumulation of a number of major shocks in the lives of clergy has been traumatic for them – the fall off in vocations, the fall-off in regular religious practice, and especially the revelations of clerical child abuse and related cover-ups. This impact was named variously in the conversations – a crisis of identity, a grieving for what has been lost in terms of trust, a state of shock. (An article in the then current June 2016 *Furrow* by priest-therapist Barry O Sullivan, *Priests under Pressure – the less heard voices*, offers an analysis of the general situation of priests that I find resonates strongly with this element of feedback.) There was a strong call coming through in these conversations for attention to be paid to how the priests are in the midst of this situation. As I hear it this isn't only about how priests are engaging with the pastoral plan – it is about attending to how they are in themselves as a

condition for exploring their engagement with the plan. It seems to me that this question of specifically attending to priests does not and was not intended to take from the continued promotion of partnership and co-responsibility with lay people.

ii. Financial pressures and planning

The second issue that was more clearly developed at this stage was financing of the implementation. The strong sense was that the plan which is essentially about the future of Christian faith in the diocese is too important to be marginalised by current financial constraints. Two points were made here – the need for an exploration of a more viable funding model for the diocese as a whole, and the need for specific financial planning and budgeting for the implementation of the plan.

iii. Recommendations from one-to-one conversations

Four recommendations crystallised from the conversations.

a. **A concrete implementation plan.** *People are looking for a translation of the plan into concrete projects addressing priority concerns that could be run in the parishes with the support of the diocese. This would mean for example in the coming year that a 'menu' of practical programmes and supports would be offered for parishes to choose from. These programmes would be built on already existing capacity.*

Examples suggested include the following:

- *Lay- led liturgies initiative*
- *Youth ministry programmes such as John Paul II Awards run in parishes*
- *A Trocaire justice programme involving young people that could be a feature of the John Paul II awards*
- *A programme for young parents linked to Grow in Love*
- *Local pilgrimages involving local sacred spaces*
- *An adult faith development programme (in cooperation with such as the Mary Immaculate Pastoral Institute)*
- *Prayer and spirituality programmes*

The kinds of diocesan support suggested include the following:

- *These initiatives are promoted by the diocese and where applicable focussed on a particular time of the year*
- *There is a commissioning of volunteer leaders for such as youth, liturgy and prayer initiatives – so that these experience themselves as being mandated by the diocese*
- *Information and training events at cluster level are supported by the pastoral workers*
- *At the end of the year there is an opportunity to celebrate and review the work done by all involved*

- b. A fulltime pastoral director should be appointed to work with pastoral workers and volunteers in an integrated way, promoting, leading and supporting the implementation of the plan across all the strands.** It is clear from my consultations that those involved in the management of the plan implementation have committed huge amounts of time and energy to their roles, often in ways not visible to the wider diocesan community. It is clear also that a different form of leadership for the plan is now desired in the diocese, personalised and made more publically visible in the form of a fulltime director. Recommendations in relation to this appointment include the following:
- Put in place a simpler accountability structure such as is the practice in Kerry and Limerick dioceses, with the pastoral workers accountable to the director and the director to the Bishop.
 - There is a strong sense that the director, for now at least, should be a diocesan priest.
 - Consideration should be given to the skill-set required for the role of director – vision for faith and church in keeping with the pastoral plan, human relations and communication skills, strategic ability.
 - An advisory group to provide support for the director and workers in regard to strategic planning and review.
 - The director to identify with the workers the pastoral priorities for the year and the programme of implementation.
- c. An engagement with the priests of the diocese** in relation to their support needs for the coming years. It is evident from the 1st report of this consultation that shared and collaborative leadership across the diocese is a primary concern, and there is a strong desire for continued work in developing and supporting the role of lay people. But there is also, in this context, a strong sense of the need to give space to the question of the role and identity of the priest. Concrete actions were not identified for this work but a number of points were made:
- This should include a focussed engagement with those who are likely to be in positions of responsibility over the next ten years or more.
 - This work should be part of the responsibility of the pastoral director and integrated into the implementation plan.
- d. A commitment to financial planning for the period of the plan, with a view to seeking realistic and imaginative options for a serious funding of implementation.** While people recognise that there are financial constraints there is also a strong sense that these should not be assumed as a fait accompli. The main thrust of this point is that the goal of the pastoral plan is too important to be left without an adequate financial base. A number of points were made on this.
- The current model of diocesan funding belongs to a different age, when parishes were strong in terms of mass attendance and financial support, and dioceses had minimal funding requirements. Today there is a much larger and more expensive diocesan structure and a weaker parish base. There needs to be a fundamental review of the funding model with a view to identifying how diocesan level initiatives and structures can be resourced in a sustainable manner.
 - A financial planning exercise should be undertaken in regard to the lifetime of the pastoral plan, identifying the costs entailed in a realistic resourcing of the plan and the possible sources of funding.

c. Consultation meeting June 29th

My reading is that this meeting, the third stage of the process, affirmed the overall thrust of the analysis and recommendations emerging from the first two stages. But it also made some points that seem to me to enhance these. I heard three calls in that regard that I have sought to integrate into the final recommendations.

i. Make encouraging contact with the wider population

While this point emphasised a communications strategy, it intended far more than the electronic communication of information. Parishes and committed people there who are being asked to embark on ‘second curve’ activities need a supportive and encouraging backing at diocesan level – one that reaches out beyond them and establishes contact with the wider community. The example of the leadership style of Pope Francis was given here – leadership as a personal face, a personal voice that speaks to people. There was a desire that the teachings of Pope Francis be more explicitly part of the outreach menu of programme. There was also a desire that the bishop (whenever the appointment is made) be strongly and publically supportive of the plan, be a missionary man in the ilk of Pope Francis, a man who reaches out to and communicates effectively with the masses of the people across the diocese. This echoes very powerfully a point that had emerged from the questionnaire returns. There was a third point made here in regard to reaching out to the masses of the people – one not developed in the set of recommendations above. The concrete implementation programme will need to include some models of popular outreach – whether parish mission, outreach to parents or others – ones that can effectively connect with and inspire a wider audience, which in turn will widen the pool of volunteers available for further work.

ii. Strengthen ‘2nd curve’ leadership

I think there was a clear call for the implementation to have strong visionary leadership, one given its head to get on with its task and given the necessary supports. The proposal for a fulltime director with the right vision, skill-set and resources was strongly supported. I believe that the meeting connected with Handy’s model of change management above. There was a recognition that ‘2nd curve’ is a different space to the main curve. It is about risk taking, trial and error, reflection and action and in all this drawing learnings that can become the mainstream future. It can’t be managed from a distance in a way that mainstream activities can – it needs the intense, hands-on leadership of people with a vision for and engaged in the process. A second aspect of this call was in relation to the training of people at parish level to grow as visionary leaders. There was a concern here that the proposal on a concrete implementation plan that focussed mainly on actions might not include sufficient formation, and might result in shallow actions with no long term benefit. I think that is an entirely valid point. But I was struck also by the strength of feedback from the questionnaires which indicated on the ground a desire now for action opportunities. The two aren’t contradictory. Actions can be the occasion for learning and for many people may be the gateway into deeper and longer term

formation. One of the strategic challenges that those leading the implementation need to face is how best to tap into the energy for action and utilise that as an opening for formation.

iii. Seek unity

This call seems to me to be hugely relevant going forward. It acknowledged tensions and conflicts within the diocese in relation to the development and implementation of the plan. In my interviews I encountered those tensions and heard directly the feelings and views of people from ‘both sides’. My understanding of conflict in general is that there are normally two dimensions to its causes – personal and structural. The personal dimension is rooted in human frailty and is of course always present. The structural dimension exacerbates the personal, and can be lost sight of in the heat of personal battles. My own sense is that there are enough structural difficulties with the plan to occasion conflict irrespective of personal issues. These include the following:

- **Cultural tension between mainstream and 2nd curve**

If we accept the appropriateness of Handy’s model for the Killaloe situation it is clear that there will be very major differences in how people see change – from people holding firm to old ways with little regard for the new, to others eagerly pursuing the new with little regard for the old. Needed here are people who can keep the channels open between the two curves which do not represent two churches – but the one church operating in two modes.

- **Absence of implementation structure**

The plan was widely criticised as being too theoretical and not connected sufficiently to the reality of where parishes are at, specifically in the sense that it lacked an implementation structure suited to the parishes.

- **Inappropriate leadership model**

It seems to me that the structure of leadership opted for in the implementation is more suited to an already streamlined scenario than the reality of the experimental, trial and error nature of 2nd curve activities. There is a clear call for a different style and structure of leadership. This is not a reflection on those in the leadership role.

- **Late in the day**

According to Handy the ideal time for striking out with a 2nd curve is when the mainstream is still strong. The later it is left and the further the mainstream is weakened the less it will be able to support a 2nd curve. While efforts at renewal in this diocese as in others dates back to the 2nd Vatican Council there is also a sense that this current initiative was launched at a time of real crisis for the mainstream.

I believe that any approach to creating a greater unity around the plan will need to acknowledge these structural issues. I'm not in any position to address the personal dimensions of the tensions and conflict. All I can affirm from my conversations is that there is a great deal of commitment and generosity among people on all sides, and significant levels of hurt. My sense is that this time of evaluation may offer an opportunity for some coming together of those who have been affected. I think it will be particularly important that the strategic support group is one that represents the unity of the diocese. By this I mean that it includes people in the diocese who have a strong '2nd curve' background and experience. This was a strong call on the 29th. But also it needs to include people representing the mainstream leadership of the diocese. And there is an onus on all to work together so that real progress can be made along the 2nd curve and real communication maintained with the mainstream.

3. Final recommendations

3.1 Key themes

As I noted earlier it seems to me that the three stages of consultation produced a progression in terms of analysis and proposal. The four main recommendations that were presented at the June 29th meeting held, but I think were deepened and given extra coherence. I believe that the model of change as developed by Charles Handy was accepted by the meeting as appropriate for the situation of the diocese in its current efforts at implementing the plan. A key feature of that model is its recognition of a *transition phase* – change does not happen everywhere at once. It occurs over time through a process of trial and error that while often initially a minority pursuit, succeeds ultimately in winning the trust and confidence of the majority. Managing change according to this model involves managing difference, creating conditions for what is best in both the old and the new to coexist into the future.

It seems to me that there were a number of key themes emerging from the consultation,, some of which are in tension with one another.

- The strategic plan to be augmented by a concrete implementation plan suited to conditions and capacity on the ground
- Formation to build effective long term leadership in the parishes
- A visible energising leadership that both encourages those who are committed but also reaches out to the wider community
- Effective '2nd curve' leadership structures that hold the confidence of the mainstream
- The need to address pressures experienced among priests
- The need to address in a fundamental way the funding model of the diocese

The four recommendations that follow seek to respond to these themes. All four have been named in the consultation in one form or other. What I have tried to do in my role as an outside consultant is to seek a coherent framework to hold the key themes together.

3.2 Annual implementation plan

A key tension that I picked up was the desire for quick actions on the one hand and the desire for serious formation for long-term leadership on the other. My strong sense is that these will have to be managed together. A point noted in the consultation is that in the Irish church context the main tradition for lay involvement is action oriented - for example the Legion of Mary and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In these organisations formation accompanies action (apprenticeship model) rather than precedes it (student model). I think there is a popular resonance with this apprenticeship style and it will be important in the coming year that action opportunities are offered.

- An annual implementation plan is developed based on offering to parishes and clusters a menu of concrete action programmes
- This menu (such as in Report 2 and added to at the June meeting) to be developed under the leadership of the pastoral director and to include a range of options according to opportunity, capacity and demand. The first report indicates priorities for the future in terms of leadership and partnership – but these need to be given concrete expression in areas such as liturgy, youth outreach, adult faith formation etc. The fact that considerable formation has already been delivered to groups of people in some of these areas obviously is a very positive factor to be built on.
- The menu to include options for reaching the wider population (parish missions, parent outreaches etc.) with a view to touching their lives and engaging their energy.
- A diocesan support structure to be offered with this menu, including such elements as promotion, commissioning, information and training at cluster level, celebration events and learning events. A core function of this structure is to attend to the formation needs of the emerging leadership in the parishes and clusters.
- As ‘2nd curve’ actions it is more important initially that these are done well rather than widely. Their first purpose is to discover what works.

3.2 Different structure of leadership

Two points have been made throughout the consultation that this recommendation addresses. The first is in relation to a visible, energising leadership for the implementation. The appointment of a bishop is not within the remit of the diocese itself and it is clear that whenever it happens it will have a crucial bearing on how the plan goes forward or not. The consultation clearly indicates that the delay in the appointment has had a negative impact on the morale in the diocese in general, and in particular on the impetus for the implementation of the plan. Here it is envisaged that the appointment of a fulltime coordinator with the active support of the bishop when appointed will be crucial in terms of generating a stronger profile and energy for the plan. The second point is in relation to how, in the language of the change model above, 2nd curve activity is managed. According to the model a balance has to be struck between keeping the 2nd curve integrated into the mainstream and giving it the freedom and flexibility to develop. This balance will avoid the extremes of either submerging the 2nd curve in mainstream structures on the one hand or disconnecting it from those structures on the other. The feedback from the consultation is that the current structures have not achieved that balance – they have erred on the side of submerging the plan. The recommendation here is that now is the time to change the

structures. The central proposal is for a simpler structure consisting of two elements. Firstly a pastoral team under the direction of a fulltime pastoral director with operational responsibility for the delivery of the plan in an integrated manner. Secondly a single strategy group, including the bishop and pastoral director, whose task is to support and maintain the strategic focus of the implementation. Given the range of the plan which includes various pastoral development strands, and also safeguarding, justice and peace, communications and resourcing this strategy group will need to hold these elements together.

- Fulltime pastoral director committed to the vision of the plan, with the necessary skill set, staff and resources to drive the implementation forward.
- The director to be a priest with an accountability structure similar to that operating in Kerry or Limerick.
- Strategic planning group to work with director and staff consisting of people with the necessary vision and background, and strongly involving the general diocesan leadership. Its task will be to identify the main priorities for the coming years in light of the plan, and the main learnings from the experience of implementation.
- Diocesan bishop in contact with the people of the diocese, supporting and advocating the implementation of the plan.

3.3 Addressing pressures on priests

- It is evident from the 1st report of this consultation that shared and collaborative leadership across the diocese is an ongoing concern, and there is a strong desire for continued work in developing and supporting the role of lay people. But there is also a strong sense of the need to give space to the question of the role and identity of the priest, especially in view of the very difficult recent decades that priests have endured.
- This should include a focussed engagement with those who are likely to be in positions of responsibility over the next ten years or more.
- This work should be part of the responsibility of the pastoral director and integrated into the implementation plan.

3.3 Financial planning

There are two values involved here that need to be balanced. On the one hand the need to recognise the reality of financial constraints, and to work in a way that is financially responsible and sustainable. On the other to press forward with the implementation of the plan as a diocesan priority and to adequately resource it. Holding these two values together is obviously a huge and very difficult challenge. The sense in the recommendation is that the challenge of financing of the plan should not be explored only within the existing financial model for the diocese which relies heavily on dwindling parish incomes. There needs to be fresh thinking about funding models in the context of the current situation. Here there may be a value in pulling together a financial think-tank made up of people in the diocese who have a conviction about the value of the gospel vision for society and have entrepreneurial and financial expertise, with a brief to advise on a range of possible solutions.

- The current model of diocesan funding belongs to a different age, when parishes were strong in terms of mass attendance and financial support, and dioceses had minimal funding requirements. Today there is a much larger and more expensive diocesan structure and a weaker parish base. There needs to be a fundamental review of the funding model with a view to identifying how diocesan level initiatives and structures can be resourced in a sustainable manner.
- A financial planning exercise should be undertaken in regard to the lifetime of the pastoral plan, identifying the costs entailed in a realistic resourcing of the plan and the possible sources of funding.

Overview

1. The overall picture that emerges at this point in the consultation is a mixed one, with positives to build on in regard to commitment and energy at local level and elements of implementation delivered to date. But there are also some questions about the overall design and delivery of the pastoral plan in how it relates to and supports the local. It seems clear to me that by and large in the parishes the priests and involved laity share some of the basic understandings in the plan – the need for partnership and the need to reach out, especially to those who have disconnected from church. They are busy keeping the parishes going and trying at the same time to make inroads in regard to the operation of partnership and the challenge of reaching out. They do not feel very self-confident in regard to these – they feel they need a lot of help. And while elements of the implementation of the plan have been helpful a majority feel that it has missed the mark in terms of where they are at, and the kind of support they need.
2. I'll outline here the broad details of the critique, and relate it below to summaries of the questionnaires received. As I read it the crux of the matter is around strategic space and capacity. By and large the priests and lay leaders do not see themselves as strategic leaders with time and space to reflect on and address the major pastoral challenges. Mostly they are 'hands on' people who are struggling to cope with immediate pressures. They don't have the time or energy to design responses – they need help in terms of practical projects they can get stuck into that in one way or another address pressing issues. And here they see the plan as one step above that and above them. They see it as a highly aspirational document with too many ideas and lacking in an implementation structure. By this is meant a set of projects which would translate the key elements of the plan into a set of concrete targets and actions, rolled out over a number of years, which with support they could take on at cluster and parish level. On the whole they see the language and complexity of the plan as too academic for them, too up in the air, too difficult to read and engage with.
3. A second related issue is leadership of the diocesan plan which they see as very low key or even invisible. There is a strong call for a much more upfront and inspirational leadership that boosts the morale of parish groups and communicates more effectively with the diocese as a whole. Here I have the clear sense of foot soldiers looking for a general. An image from one of the interviews captures this. *We are being asked to venture into uncharted waters. We need somebody at the helm of the boat leading the way and looking out for the rest of us on the boat.* While obviously the extended absence of a bishop is relevant here there is also some critique coming through of the profile of the implementation group in the diocese.
4. A third issue relates to the coordination of the implementation. Given the above structural critique the respondents are not criticising those responsible for the strands, especially the pastoral workers. While there is some unease about the level of practical pastoral experience there are far more positive

than negative comments about their work. The criticism is more to do with the dispersed and disconnected manner of implementation – too many strands and resources too thinly spread.

Table 1	Total number responded	Priest	PPC	Rel	Other			Priest	Chair	Rel	Other
InisCathaigh 15	Carrigaholt					RadharcnanOiléan2	Ballynacally (Clondegad)				
	Cooraclare (Kilmacduane)	1*	1				Coolmeen				
	Doonbeg (Killard)						Kildysart	1	1		
	Kilrush	1*		1		Scath Na Sionnaine 8	Castleconnell				1
	Killimer and Knockerra		1		1		Clonlara	1			
	Kilmihil	1			3		Killaloe (& Bridgetown)	1*	2		
	Cross (Kilballyowen)						O'Callaghan's Mills		1		
	Kilkee (Kilfearagh)	1	1				Ogonnelloe	1*	1		
	Kilmurry McMahon		1		2	CoisDeirge 7	Borrisokane	1*			
Críocha Callan 6	Inagh and Kilnamona	1	1				Cloughjordan		1		
	Inch and Kilmaley						Terryglass&Kilbarron		2		1
	MiltownMalbay (Kilfarboy)		1*	2			Lorrha and Dorrha		1		
	Mullagh (Kilmurry-Ibrickane)		1				Portroe (Castletown Ar)				
ImeallBoirne 4	Corofin						Puckane				
	Crusheen (Inchicronan)	1		1			Youghalarra	1			
	Dysart & Ruan					St. Cronan 5	Bournea (Couraganeen)		1		
	Tubber (Kilkeedy)	1	1				Dunkerrin				
Abbey Cluster 13	Clarecastle		2				Kyle and Knock		1*		
	Doora and Kilraghtis	1*	2				Roscrea		1	1	1
	Ennis		1	4	2	St. Odhran 6	Killanave&Templederry	1*			
	Quin		1				Nenagh			3	
Tradaree 4	Newmarket-on-Fergus		1*				Silvermines	1			
	Shannon			2			Toomevara		1		
	Sixmilebridge	1				St. Brendan 5	Birr	1	1	1	1
East Clare 5	Bodyke						Kilcolman				
	Broadford						Kinnitty				
	Feakle						Shinrone	1*			
	Killanena and Flagmount		1*			Unidentified 24		8	4	4	8

	Mountshannon (Clonrush)	1*	1							
	Scariff and Moynoe	1*								
	Tulla			1		Total 104 (*14interviews)	29	36	20	19
Analysis of returns										

5. Table 1 above details the responses received to the questionnaires among four categories – priests, chairs of pastoral councils, religious and other parishioners. (Not all respondents answered all questions, so the tables below will reflect that.) An immediate issue for me was the low level of response from the priests. Only 19 out of over 90 who received the questionnaire responded (8 of whom did not identify their parish). Why was that and were those who responded representative or not of the clergy as a whole? I made contact with a further 19 picked randomly across the clusters above and had a conversation with 12 of these (included above and marked with *). I found that very helpful in terms of drawing out some of the patterns in the clergy responses, and getting a feel for where the rest of the men might be at. Broadly they sustained and probably amplified the critique in the questionnaires. That left me with the strong sense that had I made contact with all the rest of the men the overall picture would not have changed very much. Two points were made about the questionnaire itself. Firstly they say that they and most of their colleagues are busy men, and questionnaires generally are not high priority for them. But secondly, given the perception of the pastoral plan being too academic and removed from their reality, the questionnaire itself looked like more of the same. One man mentioned that he filled one out with his pastoral council but would have dreaded the prospects of having to fill one out by himself.
6. PPC chairpersons in just under half the parishes responded. While that is reasonably representative I was struck by what seemed to me to be a certain level of difficulty in dealing with the questions. Sometimes the boxes were ticked erratically – sometimes the questions seemed misunderstood. Opportunities for comments were sometimes not availed of and there seemed to be inconsistencies between scoring and comments. And there was a broad pattern of scoring the impact of the plan in the parishes more highly than the delivery at diocesan level. On the face of it that seems contradictory. Again the telephone calls with priests and PPC chairs helped my interpretation. But what came across for the most part was a sense of a group of very committed church people, with busy lives, who in the normal course of their lives are not used to dealing with academic texts or academic questionnaires.
7. Overall the picture at parish level is broadly one of an ageing priest, supported by some (slightly younger) laity and in some cases by (older) religious - all doing their best to keep the faith and church alive. Their focus is often on the liturgical year and their concern often about the absence of younger generations – both parents and youth. Table 2 shows the age range of respondents – none under the age of 35 and nearly half over 65.

Table 2 – Age of respondents	Total answers	Priest	PPC Chair	Religious	Parishioners
Under 35	0	0	0	0	0
35-50	15	2	9	0	4
51-65	29	7	14	1	7
Over 65	39	9	5	19	6
Total	83	18	28	20	17

8. Table 3 below offers a broad assessment of satisfaction levels with the implementation to date. It shows 1 in 8 respondents very satisfied with the implementation, half partly satisfied, a quarter dissatisfied and a further 1 in 8 answering ‘I don’t know’. One of the questions raised for me was what people meant by ‘partly satisfied’. Was that a positive assessment or not? My sense from comparing it with the written comments is not. It indicates a recognition of some good things done, some progress made. It indicates an unwillingness to write off everything, but overall it views the outcomes to date as less than satisfactory. There was a strong sense of the religious feeling ‘out of the loop’, with almost half answering ‘I don’t know’.

Table 3 - Overall, how would you describe your sense of how implementation of the plan is progressing in the diocese?	Answers	Very satisfied	Partly satisfied	Not satisfied	I don’t know
Priest	17	1	12	4	0
Pastoral Council chair	32	5	16	8	3
Religious	20	2	4	5	9
Parishioner	16	3	7	5	1
Total	85	11	39	22	13

9. Table 4 summarises the main thrust of the written comments both from the questionnaires and from interview notes. These provide the basis for my overall summary at the outset. People are glad that there is a plan, that there are pastoral workers and that some progress has been made. But the underlying critique is very strong. As noted above that primarily centres on a call for more practical supports rather than more strategic meetings. The next two categories indicate a strongly felt need for a leadership drive and visibility at diocesan level that supports and advocates on behalf of local work. While this doesn’t discount the need for managerial leadership it certainly calls for inspirational leadership. The fourth category indicates

the positive regard for a lot of the work done – and table 5 below indicates the strands that are perceived as strongest. The issue of parish clusters was not raised very widely, but always strongly and positively. There was a strong sense especially among the priests of the value of the structure and the need to further develop it. People involved in youth ministry saw the cluster as offering a viable unit for developing local youth ministries. The issue of clergy resistance to the broad thrust of the plan was not raised a lot, and then mainly by clergy themselves. That seems to indicate that while there is some level of resistance it is not the default position of clergy – most are working away with lay people as best they can.

Table 4 – summary of main comments	<i>Need for a more practical and concrete implementation plan</i>	<i>Need for better communication with and engagement of more people</i>	<i>Need for more visible & supportive leadership</i>	<i>Positive references to workers & delivery</i>	<i>Need for better coordination & delivery</i>	<i>Value of clusters</i>	<i>Clergy resistance</i>
Priests (29)	18	9	12	11	11	8	6
Chairs (35)	17	19	12	9	3	6	2
Religious (20)	4	9	8	6	1	0	1
Parishioners (20)	5	7	5	4	0	0	0
Totals (104)	44	44	37	30	15	14	9

10. Table 5 summarises the review of the plan on a strand by strand basis. (This doesn't include Adult Faith Development). There are some strong patterns and tensions within the figures. At a diocesan level 39% of all responses were 'I don't know'. This underscores the issue raised earlier of the low profile of the plan and its leadership. There is a level of frustration associated with that figure in the comments. 29% of all scores at diocesan level were 'good' which again underlies people's recognition of work done. What stands out here is safeguarding which scores on a different level to all the others. Excluding that strand the average 'good' for the other 8 is at 23%. The majority of people with criticisms of progress generally opted for the 'fair' rather than 'poor' option. Here the relatively high 'poor' figure for communications is noteworthy. The low profile of JPIC is also evident. On the parish side it is clear that the assessment of progress is more positive. As noted earlier this appears contradictory. My reading of it from the comments and from conversation notes is that the respondents are rating how they see their parishes doing, irrespective of whether or not they attribute that situation to the implementation of the plan. So they could be critical of supports in any one strand and at the same time affirm the situation in their own parish.

Table 5 - Progress on strands	Across the Diocese progress in the plan has been ...					In my parish the impact of the plan has been ...			
	<i>Answers</i>	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	<i>Answers</i>	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Leadership	76	22	25	4	25	60	40	20	0
2. Partnership	76	19	20	5	32	60	30	26	4
3. Liturgy	79	25	20	4	30	69	35	29	5
4. Prayer & Spirituality.	74	18	18	9	29	69	31	22	16
5. Youth Ministry	71	14	18	9	30	62	15	26	21
6. JPIC	76	8	20	3	45	51	6	24	21
7. Safeguarding	67	52	1	0	14	61	61	0	0
8. Communications	76	13	24	21	18	55	23	22	10
9. Management	61	17	3	7	34	53	30	11	12
Totals	656	188 (29%)	149 (23%)	62 (9%)	257 (39%)	540	271 (50%)	180 (34%)	89 (16%)

11. Table 6 summarises the final question on strand priorities going forward. Respondents didn't always follow the instruction of 1-10 in order of preference, and used instead a variety of ways of identifying priorities. What I have done here is pulled out and summarised where it is definite what strands fall into their top 3 priorities, and also their top 5. It is clear that people see the future of parishes very much in terms of partnership-leadership, and are concerned that the preparation for parishes with non-resident priests should continue. Youth and liturgy were the two areas of ministry and outreach that received highest priorities. Here there may be opportunity for exploring how these might be a focus for pastoral projects at parish and cluster level. It seems clear at the other end of the table that JPIC does not (for now at least) represent a pastoral priority on the ground. The relatively low priority given to safeguarding needs to be interpreted in light of occasional comments made in the questionnaires. Respondents see it as a well-established priority in the life of the diocese, they assume it will remain so, and are indicating what else they feel should be given priority in the coming years. It is apparent that while prayer-as- liturgy is a strong priority prayer-as-spirituality is less so.

Table 6 - Strand priorities for the coming years in order of preference										
	Leadership	Partnership	Youth	Liturgy	Adult Faith	Communications	Prayer	Safeguarding	Management	JPIC
Top 3	40	36	29	22	21	19	12	13	6	3
Top 5	52	51	46	46	31	22	26	18	6	8

2nd Interim report on consultation re implementation of Killaloe Diocese Pastoral Plan 23/06/16 Martin Kennedy

The first report (May) was based on responses to a questionnaire. This report is based on conversations with some 40 people – including priests, pastoral workers and volunteers – with a view to identifying some directions forward in light of the questionnaire responses.

Implementation to date

The diocesan pastoral plan maps out a picture of how the Christian community can flourish in Killaloe diocese in the coming years in the light of enormous changes in both church and society. It represents a courageous and visionary commitment to a pro-active response to these changes in a manner faithful to our gospel mission. This review of the plan after two years is in keeping with that commitment, and indicates a desire that the implementation from now to 2020 benefit from the experience to date.

It is clear that the implementation of the plan over the last two years has entailed a great deal of work by pastoral workers and volunteers. The following lists some of the main features of this work:

- Delivery of a development programme to members of all pastoral councils across the diocese
- Delivery of a talk about the plan to congregations in all parishes across the diocese
- Training of a group of volunteer leaders for prayer and spirituality ministry
- Liturgy training, including for liturgical music and lay-led liturgies
- Youth ministry programmes including pilgrimages, a diocesan youth council, justice work and the training of volunteer youth ministry leaders
- The maintenance of a strong safeguarding programme
- Preparation of parish financial management to comply with new Charities legislation
- Miscellaneous work with individual parishes and clusters

Questionnaire feedback on implementation

The report last month on an assessment of the implementation to date ‘on the ground’ noted recognition for and appreciation of work done. At the same time it highlighted a strong and consistent critique of structural elements of both the plan itself and its delivery, especially in three areas:

1. A sense that the plan is too aspirational and theoretical, and (for the most part) lacking a concrete implementation structure that could support parishes where they are at. Parish personnel, including priests and PPC members, do not see themselves as having the kind of strategic space and capacity assumed by the plan.
2. A sense that the plan is lacking in a visible, energising leadership at diocesan level. The absence of a bishop for most of the implementation period to date is clearly an issue here, but also the lack of a fulltime person who functions as the face and champion of the plan – communicating with and offering leadership to the people on the ground.
3. The third structural weakness is to do with coordination of resources – it is perceived that there are too few resources too thinly spread across the strands, working in parallel lines rather than in an integrated way.

Proposals on a direction forward from here

Following on the questionnaire returns I spoke to some 40 people around the diocese on their sense of how the implementation could be developed in light of the above critique. The following four points attempt to summarise the main thrust of their response.

- e. **A concrete implementation plan.** People are looking for a translation of the plan into concrete projects addressing priority concerns that could be run in the parishes with the support of the diocese. This would mean for example in the coming year that a ‘menu’ of practical programmes and supports would be offered for parishes to choose from. These programmes would be built on already existing capacity. Examples suggested include the following:
 - Lay- led liturgies initiative
 - Youth ministry programmes such as John Paul II Awards run in parishes
 - A Trocaire justice programme involving young people that could be a feature of the John Paul II awards
 - A programme for young parents linked to *Grow in Love*
 - Local pilgrimages involving local sacred spaces
 - An adult faith development programme (in cooperation with such as the Mary Immaculate Pastoral Institute)
 - Prayer and spirituality programmes

The kinds of diocesan support suggested include the following:

- These initiatives are promoted by the diocese and where applicable focussed on a particular time of the year
- There is a commissioning of volunteer leaders for such as youth, liturgy and prayer initiatives – so that these experience themselves as being mandated by the diocese

- Information and training events at cluster level are supported by the pastoral workers
 - At the end of the year there is an opportunity to celebrate and review the work done by all involved
- f. **A fulltime pastoral director should be appointed to work with pastoral workers and volunteers in an integrated way, promoting, leading and supporting the implementation of the plan across all the strands.** It is clear from my consultations that those involved in the management of the plan implementation have committed huge amounts of time and energy to their roles, often in ways not visible to the wider diocesan community. It is clear also that a different form of leadership for the plan is now desired in the diocese, personalised and made more publically visible in the form of a fulltime director. Recommendations in relation to this appointment include the following:
- Put in place a simpler accountability structure such as is the practice in Kerry and Limerick dioceses, with the pastoral workers accountable to the director and the director to the Bishop.
 - There is a strong sense that the director, for now at least, should be a diocesan priest.
 - Consideration should be given to the skill-set required for the role of director – vision for faith and church in keeping with the pastoral plan, human relations and communication skills, strategic ability.
 - An advisory group to provide support for the director and workers in regard to strategic planning and review.
 - The director to identify with the workers the pastoral priorities for the year and the programme of implementation.
- g. **An engagement with the priests of the diocese** in relation to their support needs for the coming years. It is evident from the 1st report of this consultation that shared and collaborative leadership across the diocese is a primary concern, and there is a strong desire for continued work in developing and supporting the role of lay people. But there is also, in this context, a strong sense of the need to give space to the question of the role and identity of the priest. Concrete actions were not identified for this work but a number of points were made:
- This should include a focussed engagement with those who are likely to be in positions of responsibility over the next ten years or more.
 - This work should be part of the responsibility of the pastoral director and integrated into the implementation plan.
- h. **A commitment to financial planning for the period of the plan, with a view to seeking realistic and imaginative options for a serious funding of implementation.** While people recognise that there are financial constraints there is also a strong sense that these should not be assumed as a *fait accompli*. The main thrust of this point is that the goal of the pastoral plan is too important to be left without an adequate financial base. A number of points were made on this.
- The current model of diocesan funding belongs to a different age, when parishes were strong in terms of mass attendance and financial support, and dioceses had minimal funding requirements. Today there is a much larger and more expensive diocesan structure and a weaker

parish base. There needs to be a fundamental review of the funding model with a view to identifying how diocesan level initiatives and structures can be resourced in a sustainable manner.

- A financial planning exercise should be undertaken in regard to the lifetime of the pastoral plan, identifying the costs entailed in a realistic resourcing of the plan and the possible sources of funding.

The purpose of the gathering on the 29th of this month is to consider the points emerging from the two reports to date. This meeting will engage with the broad thrust of the findings with a view to discerning and making recommendations on how best the diocese can realistically move forward with the implementation of the plan over the next four years.

end

Appendix 3 - Looking back since the launch of the Killaloe Diocesan Pastoral Plan in September 2013...

The name of my parish is... <i>Please tick box of your choice for following strands of the plan</i>	Across the diocese... ...progress in plan implementation has been <i>Good (G), Fair (F), Poor (P), or Don't know (DK)</i>				In my parish... ...the impact of the plan so far has been <i>Good (G), Fair (F), or Poor (P).</i>			My role in the parish is... Priest/Religious [] Chair of Pastoral Council [] Parishioner involved in a church group [] Parishioner not involved in a church group [] Other [] Please specify –	My age is... Under 20 [] 20-35 [] 36-50 [] 51-65 [] Over 65 []
Strand	G	F	P	DK	G	F	P	Comment (please use additional space as required)	
1. Leadership in local church renewal - build a sense of identity, commitment and inclusion among people in the local churches.									
2. Partnership in Ministry - Develop partnership in leadership between priests and people to animate local Christian communities into the future.									
3. Liturgy – develop capacity of liturgy groups to provide a range of quality liturgies that connect with lives of the people.									
4. Prayer & spirituality – Develop local capacity to provide experiences of different traditions of prayer & spirituality									
5. Youth Ministry - develop faith									

outreaches connected to their life circumstances.								
6. Justice, Peace & Integrity of creation - empower people to explore the scope and tasks of this ministry.								
	Across Diocese				In my Parish			
Strand	G	F	P	DK	G	F	P	Comment <i>(please use additional space as required)</i>
7. Safeguarding - acknowledge the central role of children in the life of the Church and provide maximum safety for them.								
8. Communications - implement a strategy that facilitates effective communication across the diocese.								
9. Resource management - financial planning to secure sufficient and accountable resources for Diocesan needs.								
10. Overall, how would you describe your sense of how implementation of the plan is progressing in the diocese? <i>(please tick box of your choice)</i>					<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Partly satisfied</i>	<i>Not satisfied</i>	<i>I don't know</i>
11. Overall, what is your sense of the main strengths of how the plan is being implemented across the diocese?								
12. Overall, what is your sense of the main weaknesses in the implementation?								
13. Any other comments on implementation to date?								

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A.Looking ahead...to the remaining period for the implementation of the Pastoral plan from now to 2020

(Please write in 2nd column below your order of priority for the strands, giving No. 1 to your top priority, down to No. 10 to your bottom priority.)

14. Strand priorities	My priorities for implementation from 1 to 10	Please indicate what you would most like to see achieved under this strand.
Leadership in local church renewal - build a sense of identity, commitment and inclusion among people in the local churches.		
Partnership in Ministry - Develop partnership in leadership between priests and people to animate local Christian communities into the future.		
Liturgy – develop capacity of liturgy groups to provide a range of quality liturgies that connect with lives of the people.		
Prayer & spirituality – Develop local capacity to provide experiences of different traditions		

of prayer & spirituality.		
Youth Ministry- develop faith outreaches connected to their life circumstances.		
Strand priorities cont.	Priorities 1-10	Please indicate what you would most like to see achieved under this strand.
Adult faith development – a range of faith development programmes for adults in local & diocesan settings.		
Justice, Peace & Integrity of creation - empower people to explore the scope and tasks of this ministry.		
Safeguarding - acknowledge the central role of children in the life of the Church and provide maximum safety for them.		
Communications - implement a strategy that facilitates effective communication across the diocese.		
Resource management - financial planning to secure sufficient and accountable resources for Diocesan needs.		

15. Any other recommendations or comments you wish to make about the implementation of the pastoral plan over the coming four years?

Questionnaire be returned to Pastoral Development Office, 45 Garden View, CreggaunnaHilla, Clarecastle, Co. Clare or emailed to pastoraldevelopment@killaloe-diocese.ie . Please return at your earliest convenience – not later than Monday, April 18th. Thank you.

Appendix 4 – People spoken to on one-to-one basis

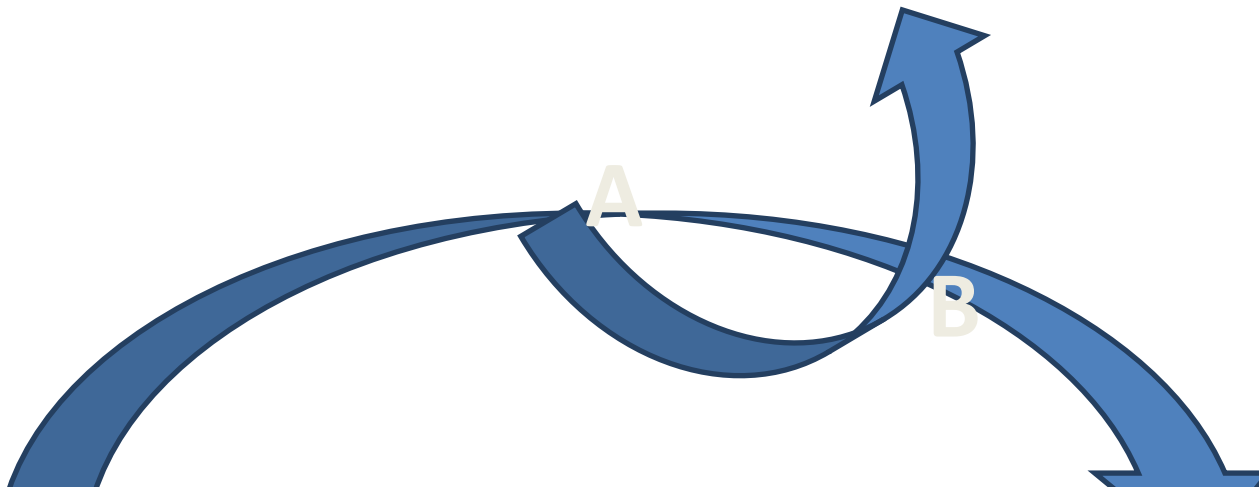
1. Pat Larkin	2. James Grace	3. Peg
4. Michael Cooney	5. Tom O Halloran	6. Colm Hogan
7. Willie Teehan	8. Jerry Carey	9. Dan O Connell
10. Albert McDonnell	11. Tom Hogan	12. Martina Fox
13. Pat Malone	14. Joe McMahon	15. Sean Conlon
16. Donagh O Meara	17. John Jones	18. Leonard Cleary
19. Ignatius McCormack	20. Tony Casey	21. Willie Healy
22. Brian Geoghegan	23. Ger Nash	24. Marie Costello
25. Des Hillery	26. Fran Meehan	27. GerHoey
28. Harry Bohan	29. Cora Guinane	30. Taghd Quinlan
31. Tom Fitzpatrick	32. Maureen Kelly	33. Tom Larkin
34. David Carroll	35. Lorina Burke	36. Ger Godley (Kerry)
37. Michael Collins	38. Marie O Connell Quinn	39. Eamonn Fitzgibbon (Limerick)
40. Brendan Kyne	41. Jean Gaynor	42. Michael Sheedy
43. Fionnuala Moran	44. Ger Fitzgerald	45. Ger Jones

Appendix 5 - Introduction to June 29th consultation

a. Introduction

- Brief to gather a sense of what people on the ground are thinking and feeling about the implementation to date, and how best to move forward in light of that
- Have listened to the parishes through questionnaire and follow-up calls.
- Have listened to those involved in the development and implementation of the plan
- Have tried to pull the feedback from all this into a set of recommendations that I think represents a feasible programme and one that would have the support of the parishes in general.
- Part of the purpose of that meeting is to check out with you what I have come up with. I have three questions that I hope to explore.
 - What do you affirm about the proposals?*
 - What do you think is unwise?*
 - What's missing that you want to see included?*
- For this overall process to work we need direct feedback. Don't be hesitant on my account. I've been around the block a few times. Sometimes I gotten things right and other times I have made a bags of things...

b. Interpretive framework for feedback



This represents an approach to managing organisational change, and it certainly helped me to form what I hope is a coherent read of the feedback I received. The large curve represents the mainstream thrust of the organisation. It develops in a particular time and if it is well adapted to its environment will rise and thrive. However as time moves on and the environment changes the impact and effectiveness of the mainstream approach declines. The organisation may go out of existence unless it seeks to adjust itself to the new environment. It does so by developing a second experimental curve (A) whose purpose is to explore new approaches. Through trial and error wisdom and experience is gained on what can work in the new environment and this in time becomes the new rising curve (B) that allows the organisation to thrive into the future. The new curve is a mixture of what has been learned during the experimental period and also what persists in value from the old. The period between A and B is a time of duality in the organisation, when the past co-exists with the future in the present. The relationship between the people on the two curves is crucial to the effectiveness of the approach. The mainstream leadership needs to give time, space and support to those on the experimental curve. Those on the 2nd curve need to relate well to those whose primary commitment is to the 1st curve. They need to appreciate the values of the mainstream and communicate their learnings from the 2nd curve in a manner that can be heard and understood.

C. Vision - core elements of pastoral plan (Bishop Kieran)

1. Share the faith that we profess
2. All baptised members are given the opportunity to share their gifts to the full

Quote from Introduction to Pastoral Plan

We now know, for example, that in a very short time it will simply not be possible for each local community to have a weekly celebration of the Eucharist. While we pray for more vocations to the ordained priesthood, we still have to prepare for a changing situation, ensuring in so far as possible that each of these local communities is resourced to proclaim the Gospel, to assemble its members and to pray as a community. This means that each one of us will take more seriously our baptismal responsibilities to listen to God's word, to apply it to our lives and to celebrate it in liturgical prayer especially when celebrations of the Eucharist may not be possible. We now have to plan for a situation where handing on the faith will be done not just by families and schools, but also by catechists or other ministers in the local area. We have to plan for a situation where members of the local community will lead liturgical celebrations on weekdays and also on Sundays when no priest is available. Others

will work with families in preparing children for the reception of the sacraments. Lay ministers will visit the sick, bring communion to the housebound, receive funerals at the church and officiate at the graveside. Pastoral Councils will be even more actively engaged in coordinating these various ministries in their areas and finance councils assume greater responsibility for ensuring the provision of the material resources required for the Church's ministry. Various educational and training programmes will be put in place for all those involved in developing and supporting the faith life of these communities. The priests of the Diocese, with openness and commitment to these new challenges, will continue to act as guides and mentors to these communities.

D. The implementation

Management, implementation and strand groups working with pastoral workers, priests, volunteers

- Workshops with pastoral councils
- talks to congregations
- volunteer leaders for prayer and spirituality ministry
- Liturgy training
- Youth ministry programmes
- Safeguarding programme
- Parish financial management
- Work with individual parishes and clusters

D. Main elements of the critique

- Aspirational document lacking an implementation structure
- Need for more visible leadership boosting morale of committed and communicating with the wider community
- Dispersed and disconnected manner of implementation

E. Main recommendations

- Concrete implementation plan
- fulltime pastoral director working in an integrated way

- Engagement with priests
- Financial planning

1. Concrete implementation plan

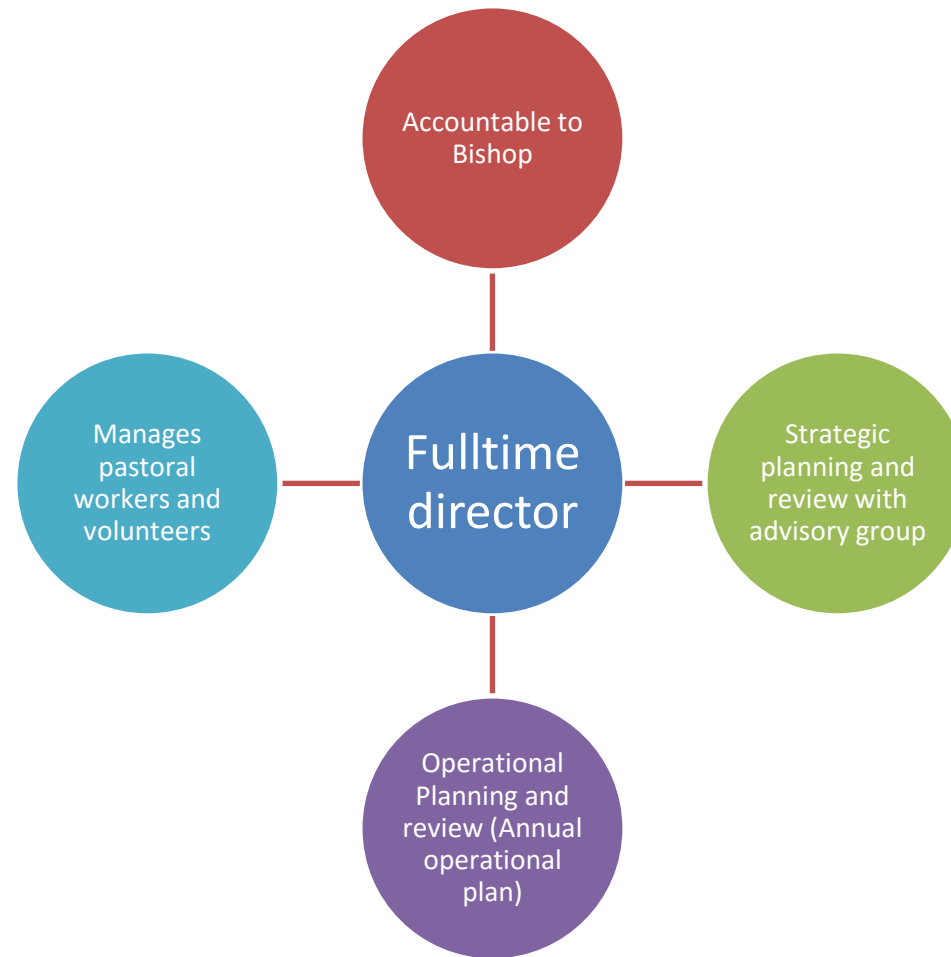
Menu of options to choose from that are responsive to demand and built on existing capacity, such as

- *Lay- led liturgies initiative*
- *Youth ministry programmes such as John Paul II Awards run in parishes*
- *A Trocaire justice programme involving young people that could be a feature of the John Paul II awards*
- *A programme for young parents linked to Grow in Love*
- *Local pilgrimages involving local sacred spaces*
- *An adult faith development programme (in cooperation with such as the Mary Immaculate Pastoral Institute)*
- *Prayer and spirituality programmes*

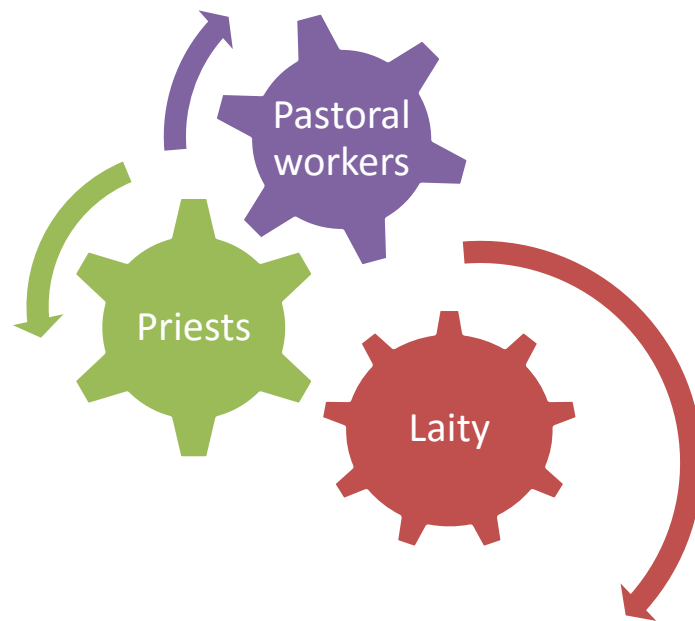
Supportive diocesan framework such as



2. Fulltime director working in a reflective and integrated way with pastoral staff and volunteers



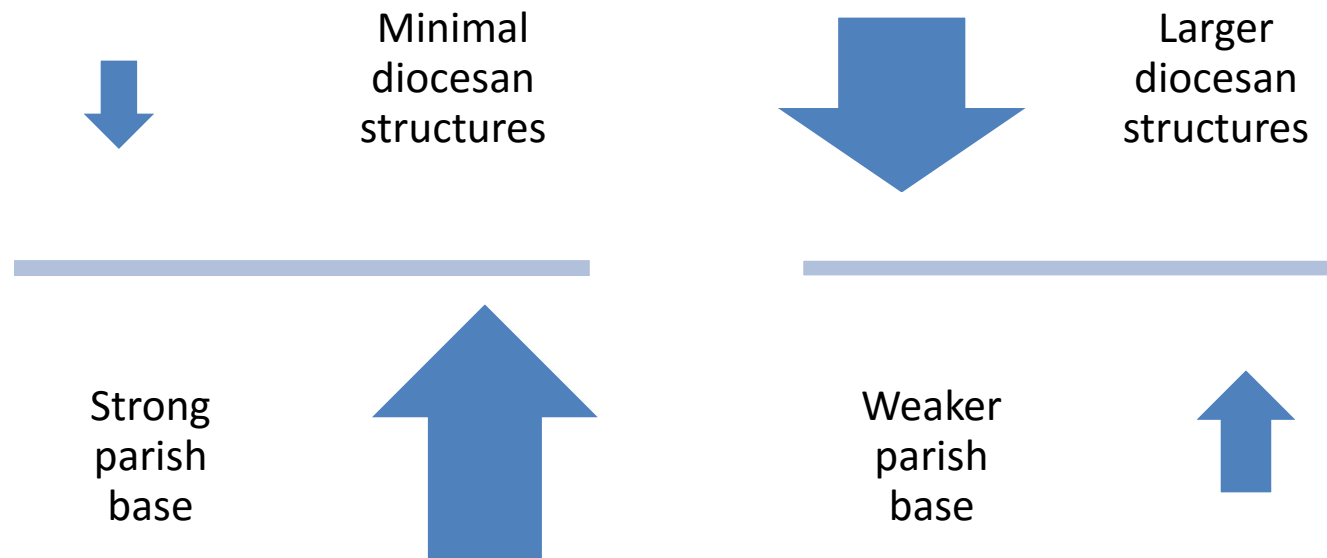
3. Support needs of priests



- In context of support and formation for all involved in the church
- Need for specific attention to questions of identity and support for priests in emerging church
- Give space for those who will be in role for many more years

4. **Financial planning** - *Our situation moving from ...*

to...



- Plan too important to be under-funded
- Explore appropriate and achievable funding models
- Financial plan up to 2020