

## Guidance on Writing Role Descriptions

### Introduction:

Under Common Tenure, all clergy appointments should be underpinned by:

- Statement of Particulars which sets out the details of the appointment and the particulars under which the office is held, including information on remuneration, housing, time off and leave
- Role Description
- Diocesan guidelines and policies e.g. the Diocesan Guidelines for Clergy, a copy of which can be found at <http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-ministry/hr-employment/guidelinesclergy/>

The Role Description is an essential document which describes the expectations of the officeholder and the work to be done. To be effective role descriptions need to be realistic, relevant, contextual and consensual. The role description is intended to be helpful in a number of ways providing:

- A framework of reasonable expectations and priorities
- A basis for ongoing discussion about the role and priorities between the minister and for example churchwardens, the PCCs or appropriate colleagues. It is recommended that ministers liaise with their PCCs around any significant changes.
- A focus for further development and improvement of skills and abilities to enable the person to fulfil their ministry and therefore to be used in conjunction with Ministerial Development Review and updated as necessary.

This document provides information, guidance and examples to help begin the process of creating a role description. Please read this thoroughly before completing each section of the form. Where possible, try to make answers short and to the point. The role should be described as it is now and for the foreseeable future, not as it should or might be.

A role description is intended to be an evolving document. It should be reviewed and refreshed occasionally in order to ensure that it remains relevant. Amendments should be made if circumstances significantly change. It should also be reviewed at the time of a Ministerial Development Review to ensure that it is still current.

Other documents which may be helpful in drafting a role description will include (these will vary according to the situation):

- Benefice/Parish Profile and Statement of Needs
- Parish Spotlights (used as the basis for section 3, role context)
- PCC Mission Statement or similar statement of purpose

The role description is first and foremost the minister's document but is most effective where there is ongoing consultation with others. Appendix 1 provides a suggested process to complete a role description. For clergy in IME Phase 2 the learning agreement acts as the role description.

Guidance on completing the template is provided below. Further advice can be sought from the relevant Archdeacon or the Diocesan HR Adviser.

## **Completing the template**

### **Section 1 – Details of the Post**

Please enter the 'role title' and include any major responsibilities, such as Area Dean, that are not separate appointments together with the rough proportion of time allocated to each. If it is a part-time or dual-role post, please include the amount of time given to this role.

For clergy who hold all or part of their responsibilities under a contract of employment, then a Job Description will be provided by the employer instead or in addition.

### **Section 2 – Role purpose: generic**

This should be a concise statement summarising the overall purpose for this role. We have set out two options, one for Incumbent status and the second for Associate Ministers. Please choose the relevant option for your role.

### **Section 3 – Role Context**

The context of the role is given in the Parish Spotlight available on the Diocesan website. If you wish to include anything else please list in this section.

### **Section 4 – Role purpose: specific**

This should set out the tasks and challenges that are specific to the individual role. It should describe the key areas in which responsibility must be taken in order to fulfil the overall purpose of the role and address its key challenges. The focus is on the role's responsibilities and not on what the post-holder does personally. Use different headings if that is helpful, but not more than eight. Where this role has formal connections with other roles, for example within a Team Ministry, these connections should be made clear here and in the following sections. For those that are new to a role, this section is likely to reflect the parish profile in the first instance and then should be reviewed in the first six months.

For associate ministers, careful consideration will need to be given to the specific areas of work outlined in conjunction with the hours offered and other details given in the Statement of Particulars.

See appendix 2 for further details on completing this section.

## **Section 5 – Key Contacts and Relationships**

This is the list of people locally and at diocesan level who are the key links and contacts for the church in that place. This has split into two groups:

- Deanery and Diocesan Contacts – should be included in every role description
- Benefice Contacts – should be updated as appropriate; the template role description gives examples to help get you started.

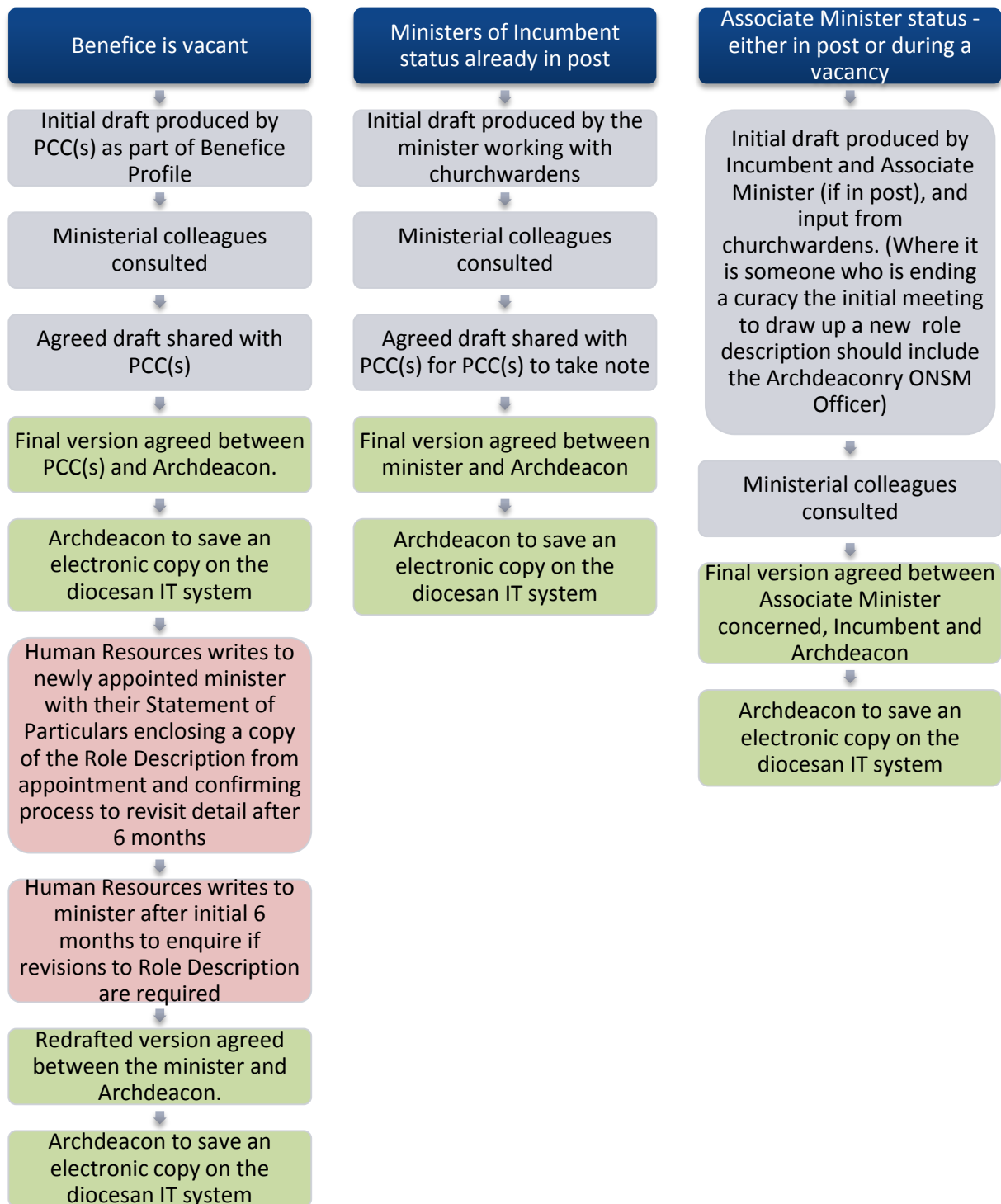
## **Section 6 – Benefice Summary**

This section should provide relevant factual, quantitative information that describes the responsibilities and scope of the role. For those in team ministries please note where the specific responsibilities of the post-holder are located if these are for a specific church or congregation rather than the whole benefice.

## **Section 7 – Sign Off**

Once the document has been finalised it should be dated, signed off by the Minister concerned, by the Incumbent (in the case of an Associate Minister) and by the Archdeacon. The form can signed off in electronic form, such as electronic signature or a copy of an email confirming agreement. A copy should be saved electronically and this will be done by the Archdeacon's office. This should also be done with revised documents each time there is a major update.

Appendix 1: Suggested process to draw up a role description



## Appendix 2

The following is intended to assist in the writing of section 4 – the specific role purpose. The process for completing this section is as follows:

- a) List the relevant key areas of the role
- b) For each of these key areas, produce statements setting out the desired outcome
  - What is done and to what/with whom. Describe each main activity and state the role holder’s responsibility in connection with the activity; then set out
  - What the end-results ought to be. Describe the reasons for them, in other words, answer the “so that...” question.

The following examples are in a tabular format, but this is not required. A narrative statement, such as “supporting existing Christians in evangelism and service to the community **so that** members of the parish and deanery are encouraged to show God’s love in word and action” is equally appropriate.

	<b>What is done to what/with whom</b>	<b>With what end result</b>
<b>Working Collaboratively</b>	Encouraging and enabling clergy colleagues, churchwardens, PCC, staff and volunteers, to participate fully in planning and decision making, tasks and activities	to ensure that gifts and talents are identified and used effectively to encourage and build up the community of faith
<b>Worship</b>	Planning, organising and conducting a programme of worship with others (e.g. Ministry Leadership Team) making appropriate use of resources, music, teaching and preaching,	to give glory to God and support the vision and needs for ministry.
<b>Leadership</b>	Inspiring, motivating and empowering members of the church, individually and collectively	so that the whole community of faith is encouraged to participate more fully in God’s mission to the world

- c) When you have drafted the statements, check that:
  - Together they represent the key responsibilities of the role (although the relative importance of each of these may change from year to year);
  - They incorporate the specific local and diocesan issues;
  - They focus on addressing the role purpose and key challenges of the role, and are not simply tasks or activities;
  - Each one is distinct from the others, and describes a specific area in which results may be achieved;
  - They relate specifically to this role;
  - There is an appropriate balance between chaplaincy to the congregation; pastoral care and mission in the community; wider ministerial interests; and care of self.

#### Sample statements that may be included in Section 4:

Taken from the national guidance 'Writing Role Descriptions and Person Specifications' issued by the Archbishops' Council, October 2009 this gives possible ideas of statements to be included; however it will be important to ensure specific local and diocesan issues are picked up and included where appropriate.

#### **1. Mission and outreach**

Possible ways this might be expressed include.....

- developing a ministry that encourages new people to Christian faith
- supporting existing Christians in evangelism and discipleship so that members of the parish are encouraged to show God's love in action
- developing relations with community and external organisations to promote positive links with the church
- making full use of opportunities for outreach and service to the community, collaborating where appropriate with other parishes and agencies, so that assistance is provided to the community as effectively as possible
- Working with other churches in the deanery to assist in implementing the diocesan mission strategy.

#### **2. Leadership and working collaboratively**

Possible ways this might be expressed include.....

- leading the Church in setting and holding its vision
- inspiring, motivating, challenging and empowering members of the church, individually and collectively, to achieve that vision
- sharing ministry as appropriate and working collaboratively with others, (including clergy colleagues, churchwardens, PCC, staff and volunteers), so that individuals' gifts and talents are identified and used effectively in any given situation or task
- Encouraging and building up the community of faith.

#### **3. Worship and preaching**

Possible ways this might be expressed include.....

- leading worship that gives glory to God, prayerfully, competently and confidently
- planning, organising and conducting a programme of worship that supports the church's vision and needs for ministry including appropriate use of resources, music, teaching and preaching
- planning, organising and conducting a programme of teaching which supports the Church community, develops its faith and responds to the needs of different ages and levels of faith or knowledge
- Reflecting, interpreting and preaching the gospel in a way that will encourage faith development, adapting content and style for different audiences, occasions and purposes.

#### **4. Pastoral care**

Possible ways this might be expressed include.....

- identifying pastoral care needs and ensuring appropriate structures and skills to provide this to the community (including parish visitors, pastoral assistants and other teams)
- giving support to those in need of pastoral care as appropriate, including baptism

and marriage preparation, care to the sick and dying, bereavement, individual support and visiting

- Communicating effectively and appropriately in both written and verbal form with people of all ages and situations in society, inside and outside the church.
- Demonstrating active listening and empathetic behaviour.

#### **5. Stewardship and parish organisation**

Possible ways this might be expressed include.....

- working with the PCC and churchwardens to ensure that structures and resources for parish organisation are appropriate, including clear boundaries and accountabilities of roles
- ensuring that structures, processes and policies in relation to services, weddings, baptisms and funerals, health and safety, financial, fabric, staff management, etc. meet diocesan and legal requirements.
- managing his or her time effectively through personal administration, planning and organisation, working in a team, chairing meetings, interpersonal skills and taking appropriate breaks
- Following an appropriate pattern of work that enables a full spiritual and personal life, as well as meeting the demands of ministry.

#### **6. Personal development and spirituality**

This might include.....

- continually developing personal skills and knowledge in relation to ministry through courses of study, reading, consultancy, training courses and workshops
- maintaining a prayerful spiritual life with appropriate support networks (including spiritual director or equivalent and regular retreats)
- recognising that s/he is on a life journey involving development of theological understanding and spiritual reflection
- inspiring growth in others through learning and example and by acting as a model of the love of God in action
- care and development of themselves and their personal relationships, including adequate time for family life, friendship, recreation, renewal and personal health, through taking a weekly day off and their full holiday entitlement.