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| **EMPLOYER: Chester Diocesan Board of Finance**  **JOB DESCRIPTION: Diocesan Chancellor** |  |  |  |

**BACKGROUND**

The Diocese of Chester is led by the Bishop of Chester, the Right Reverend Dr Mark Tanner.

The diocese spans from Wirral and the Welsh border in the west to the limestone hills of the

Derbyshire Peak District in the east. The north of the diocese reaches up to the rivers Mersey and

Tame and the conurbations of south and east Manchester, and south to the towns of Crewe,

Sandbach and Nantwich on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent and Shropshire.

It has a population of around 1.6m and is served by around 265 parishes, 345 Churches and 215

benefices. Electoral rolls are around 31,000 and average weekly attendance of around 23,000.

**PRIMARY PURPOSE**

The Chancellor sits as the independent judge of the Consistory Court of the Diocese and will preside over the faculty jurisdiction process relating to the use of, and alterations to, church buildings and land. They will work closely with the Diocesan Registrar and Registry Clerk, the Archdeacons and the Diocesan Advisory Committee. They will act as Vicar General of the Diocese to grant marriage licences. They may on occasion be consulted more generally by the Bishop.

**RESPONSIBILITIES & PRINCIPAL TASKS**

* The Diocesan Chancellor will act as the independent Judge of the Diocesan Consistory Court with jurisdiction as laid down in s7 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018. As such they will determine proceedings which relate to the use of and reordering of church buildings and land, applications for grave reservations and exhumations and other legal matters as specified in the Measure. They will work closely with the Diocesan Registry, the Archdeacons and the Diocesan Advisory Committee.
* The appointment is for a named individual, but it is anticipated that the person appointed may wish to appoint a Deputy Chancellor to assist them in the performance of their duties, subject to the approval of the Bishop.
* The Diocesan Chancellor is expected to provide the professional services set out in The Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order. The retainer for this work is laid down in the Order and for 2025 this is £17,283. The retainer covers the remuneration for the Chancellor, any Deputy, secretarial and assistant support as well as all office overheads.
* There may be exceptional circumstances, particularly when the Bishop or senior staff or the Registrar may need urgent response to business, when evening and weekend work may be required.
* The Chancellor will be an ex officio member of the Diocesan Synod.
* A Chancellor’s appointment normally ceases on resignation in writing to the Bishop, or upon attaining the age of 70, as is more fully set out in the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

The Diocesan Chancellor is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and will be a person who holds or has held High Judicial office, or who holds or has held the Office of Circuit Judge or is a barrister or solicitor who has the qualifications required for holding that office.

* The person appointed as Chancellor may hold or have held the role of Chancellor of another Diocese or have acted as a Deputy Chancellor.
* The person appointed may be lay or ordained but if a lay person is to be appointed, the Bishop must be satisfied that that person is a communicant member of the Church of England.

The Chancellor will:

(a) have expertise in Ecclesiastical Law

(b) have judicial experience or similar experience

(c) be familiar with the online faculty system of the Church of England

(d) be a wise advisor to the Diocesan Advisory Committee and to the Diocesan Registrar

(e) be able to communicate by email/ text and phone and Teams / Zoom as needed and be reasonably accessible

(f) have the ability to think pragmatically, creatively and pastorally

(g) have sensitivity, wisdom, patience and sound judgement

(h) be able to discharge his or her Judicial duties conscientiously and independently, adjudicating on matters in the Consistory Court.

(i) be required to take and subscribe the prescribed Oath of Allegiance and the Judicial Oath and (if a Lay person) a Declaration of Assent.

**Working Practices**

The post-holder may be required to travel to sites within the Diocese in fulfilling their duties. As public transport to outlying areas is limited, a current driving licence and access to own private transport is preferable. Evening and weekend work may be required on rare occasions.

**AUTHORITY**

Oversight of the casework for the Diocesan Advisory Committee and Faculty related Diocesan legal matters.

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE & RELATIONSHIPS**

**Key Collaborations:**

* Diocesan Registry
* DAC Secretary
* Archdeacons
* DAC Chair

June 2025