

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALARIED WORKERS

Introduction. A "Terms and Conditions of Salaried Workers" survey was carried out during the first quarter of 2019. A total of 637 salaried children's, youth and families workers completed the survey. While the participants were drawn from across the major denominations in the United Kingdom, 67%, at the time of completing the survey, were working at Church of England parishes (the remaining 33% included Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed, Pentecostal, Church of Scotland, New Frontiers, Vineyard and Ecumenical Partnerships). 55% of those who took part were in full time roles, 45% considered themselves part time (with a range of hours from 4 - 30+ a week). The survey finished at the end of February 2019 and a basic analysis of the responses has revealed the following ::

Time Served. When asked how long they had been in their current role, 34% said they had been in post for less than two years (rising to 53% for less than 3 years) while just 8% have been in their current role for 10 years or more. When asked how long they had been in salaried ministry, 24% said less than two years; rising to 38% for less than three. 50% of our salaried workers have been in salaried ministry for less than 5 years. 24% have been in salaried ministry for longer than a decade.

- Turn over is quite high, with more than half our salaried workers being in their posts for less than three years at the time of completing the survey. It is commonly agreed, at least among youth ministry professionals, that it often takes three years in a role to see things begin to develop and grow. With post often not lasting longer than three years, how can we determine effectively the impact of these workers?
- Half our workforce are relatively new to salaried employment in the church.

Qualifications. We have some very well qualified children's, youth and families workers - with teaching degrees, theology degrees, Phd's and 81 of those who completed the survey were JNC qualified.. However, 30% of our salaried workers had no qualifications (or did not answer the question about qualifications) related to their ministry role (whether that was a children's or youth ministry degree or a theological qualification).

- How might we offer "in service" training that helps to develop skills and knowledge in : the theology of children' and youth work; faith formation; reflective practice? CPD is offered, piecemeal, depending on the diocese a youth worker might be in - unless they seek their own development, and pay for it themselves, few are afforded the kind of training they might value and that would enhance their ministry work.

Pay and Benefits. There is a huge discrepancy in pay between roles of similar hours, in some cases individuals are earning as much as twice as others in similar roles. For those on part time, doing 16 hours a week, the lowest amount earned (pro rata) was £16,000 whilst the highest amount earned was £30,000. Just 4% of salaried workers were on 'stipend style" benefits (i.e. being paid approximately £23K + accommodation + water rates + council tax). The lowest full time

wage, without these additional benefits, was £16K whilst the highest was £37K. Separately from accommodation being provided, just 13 full timers were given a housing allowance as part of their remuneration.

Diocesan Recognition. 71% said they did not have formal recognition of their role from their diocese (or diocesan equivalent, if a different denomination). Just 5% of salaried workers are licensed. Questions ::

- What does this tell us, if anything, about the value placed on these roles beyond the local parish? Some of these workers are, for example, licensed as Readers - but not as children's, youth or families workers.
- What does it tell us, if anything, about the relationship between parish and diocese? With parishes autonomously employing workers, there is no requirement for licensing or commissioning to take place.

Line Management and Supervision. While most salaried workers have a line manager, when they might meet with them varies considerably - with 21% meeting weekly; 41% monthly; 30% less frequently than that. When asked if their line manager had received any training in managing and supervising staff, 75% of salaried workers said "no". In addition, 63% of salaried workers do not have a mentor or external supervision. Where they do, 66% of salaried workers arrange that themselves. The implications ::

- Line Managers, who are often clergy / vicars, incumbents are poorly equipped to lead and manage staff.
- Whilst clergy are REQUIRED to have training if they are to take on a curate, there is not the same / similar requirement for clergy when they start employing staff. what can we do to improve this kind of support for clergy, so that what is offered to their workers, is on a par with that offered to those who are ordained?

Vocational Call. A hugely encouraging stat comes from the question, "Would you remain in children's, youth or family ministry until retirement if you could?" 74% of those who answered the question said "yes". Despite the lack of stability, short term roles and - at times - inadequate line management and supervision, among salaried workers there is a commitment to children and young people, a love for the work and a desire to stay in ministry for the long haul. For many, this is a vocational call, meaning ::

- The church needs to recognise these ministry roles as potentially life long "callings" akin to be called to ordained ministry, how will this work receive the profile and value it deserves beyond the locally employing churches?

Some of the comments from those answering YES :

"It's what I'm called to do."

"I'm passionate about young people."

"It's what I've been put on earth to do."

"I can't imagine doing anything else."

"Only 6 years to go!"

Some of the comments from those answering NO :

"Too much strain on family life, no progression."

"Not part of the real decision makers, unable to shape broader vision."

"Five years ago I would have said yes, but now with a young family - the hours are very anti-social."

"I feel called to ordained ministry."
