



The Representative Church Body

CHURCH OF IRELAND

RB EXECUTIVE STRATEGY

2026 – 2028





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Foreword

The Representative Body (RB) of the Church of Ireland is an unusual, perhaps even a unique body. Its business is largely occupied with financial, legal and regulatory affairs. Yet its members are fully aware that the Church which it serves is, first and foremost a spiritual reality.

However, there is a grace in the good management of everyday affairs, and good management requires a common purpose which this Strategy document lays out in a manner that both complies with the Church of Ireland's regulatory obligations and its wider spiritual and charitable purposes.

The Strategy has been the fruit of many hours of patient debate and discussion, particularly by the Executive Committee of the RB, and I wish to thank all of those who have been involved in its development under the leadership and searching eyes of our Chair, Ms Hilary Prentice. It is, of course, a living document which will continue to evolve as the Church itself and the world around it changes, but it provides us with a clearly articulated datum from which to develop.

I commend it to you.

The Most Reverend Francis John McDowell
Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland
and Metropolitan





Introduction

As Chairperson of the RB Executive Committee of the Representative Body of the Church of Ireland, I am pleased to introduce the Strategic Plan for the next 3 years, 2026 to 2028.

A review group was set up in early 2025 which examined the various themes, priorities and high-level goals of the Executive Committee. In addition, the Executive Committee met in October 2025 for a special strategic planning Away Day. The agenda included an in-depth review of a survey of the entire RB membership. This resulted in the development of strategies in response to the survey.

In relation to financial priorities, the current priorities were agreed in 2023 and are on-going over a number of years, save where expressed to be completed.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am grateful to all parties who participated in the formulation of this plan. Our thanks are also extended to the Chief Officer, David Ritchie, Dermot Burns, Project Manager, and Kevin Bowers, Business Consultant who all facilitated the process.

Hilary Prentice
Chairperson of the Executive Committee
December 2025



To support the mission and ministry of the Church of Ireland

RB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S VISION:

To be well structured and resourced to support the current and future needs and ambitions of the Church of Ireland





RB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S VALUES

OUR VALUES:

What we stand for – our core principles

Integrity

Knowledge

Legal Observance

Probity

Moral Standing

Ability to control and maintain standards

Ownership for resolving conflict



Ensuring:

Our representation
mirrors the diverse
nature of our
constituency

We are configured
to encourage,
facilitate and include
the contribution of
RB members

We have the required
mix of skills and
experience to reach
our potential

We remain
connected and
relevant

We maintain our
sense of belonging
amid a broad and
dynamic agenda

Priorities

In June 2023, the RB Executive Committee identified priorities to be implemented over the next one to three years, these are:

Priority	Purpose	Owner	Status
Funding of Curacies	To provide continuation of stipendiary ministry to parishes	Stipends Committee (HOB/Standing Committee)	Completed with ongoing monitoring and reporting
Chaplaincy	To develop a comprehensive funding strategy for third level chaplaincy	Executive Committee (HOB/Standing Committee)	Completed with ongoing monitoring and reporting
Integrate Pioneer Ministry	To support parishes and dioceses to develop new forms of mission	Executive Committee (HOB/Standing Committee)	Completed with ongoing monitoring and reporting
MindMattersCOI Phase 2: Mental Health Strategy / programme	To promote positive mental health across the Church	Executive Committee (HOB)	Completed with learning to be reflected in future initiatives
Property Strategy Develop an all-island property inventory and strategy including the Campus Review	To optimise the use of physical resources of the Church for mission	Property Committee (Diocesan Secretaries / parishes)	In-Progress
	Develop a bespoke campus incorporating CITI, RB Library and Church House	Executive Committee (CITI/RB Library)	In-Progress
Library and Archives Strategy	To protect the historical resources of the Church and improve public access	Executive Committee (Library and Archives & Property)	In-Progress
Committee Governance	To support the Executive Committee to provide effective and efficient strategic governance	Executive Committee (RCB Leadership Team)	In-Progress
Committee Succession Planning	Ensuring continued collective memory, diversity, and appropriate skills	Executive Committee	In-Progress
Clergy Development	To empower clergy to consider CITI training, post ordination CME, peer support, and mentoring	Executive Committee (CITI Governing Council, HOB, Diocesan Secs)	In-Progress

Strategies

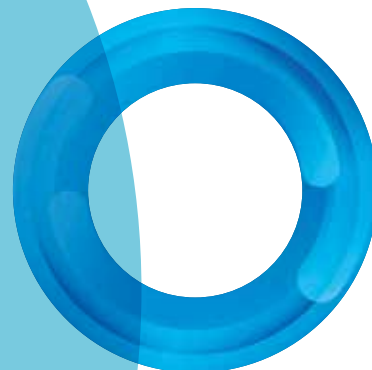


Strategies with actions in support developed in response to Survey of RB Membership and to support High Level Goals, developing the Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028 for publication.

Purpose	Principles	Programme	People
The Executive Committee will <u>communicate</u> the role and activities of the RCB, so as to improve the perception of the RCB	Objective is to improve the standing and reputation of the RCB	Proactive communication - Issue (one page) articles publicising the decisions, activities, and initiatives of the RCB through the Church of Ireland Gazette, Diocesan magazines, e-zine, Instagram (for youth) - Articles should be focused and appropriate to the target audience - Articles should be focused on maximum 1-3 themes, eg. Campus Update - Staff and committee members to attend diocesan synods, diocesan councils - Staff to arrange thematic roadshows inviting target audience ie. parish treasurers - The RCB should develop a comprehensive communication strategy Website functionality - Improve the website search function to allow information to be found easily - Ensure that information is concise and easy to understand/apply Language - Use consistent and constructive language for example contribution rather than levies	Chair of RB Executive Committee with support from Chief Officer
To enable RCB improve the perception that <u>legal/property decisions</u> and service are slow	Objective: to ensure that the RCB processes are perceived as speedy and appropriate	- The Property Department should document and consider approval process/thresholds - Legal Department should be required to report on activities - Ensure dioceses are aware of Property Committee meeting dates - Need to consider authority level for approval of routine decisions - There is a need to reconsider charging for legal services - Hold a workshop with diocesan glebe committee representatives to discuss processes and approvals	Chair of Property Committee with support from Chief Officer
The Executive Committee will encourage RB member participation	Objective is to empower RB members in decision making and to advocate on behalf of the RCB	- Intentionally include RB members in decision making and to solicit their views - Request RB members to suggest topics for discussion/debate - RB members to communicate on behalf of dioceses and to communicate to dioceses, ie both directions - Review RB member induction to clarify role and encourage members to join committees - Consider room layout, preferably where all members have a table in front of them	Chair and Deputy Chair of RB Executive Committee

Strategies

Purpose	Principles	Programme	People
The Executive Committee will improve RB member diversity	To improve decision making by broadening considered perspectives	- The size of the Executive Committee means that diverse skills are a priority - RB co-opted member appointments should address skills, gender, age and ethnic diversity - The RB encourages dioceses to nominate RB members considering skills, gender, age, and ethnic diversity - Also need to consider succession planning and progression from member to chair	Chair and Deputy Chair of RB Executive Committee
To identify other suggestions that could improve communications and decision making	To identify other suggestions that could improve the governance of the RCB	- There may be times with Standing Committee, and the RB could meet together to address Church wide issues (led by 2 Honorary Secretaries, and Executive Chair and Deputy Chair) - It was noted that the suggestions should be developed into an action plan noting who would be responsible for delivery - Following a review of the Executive Committee priorities it was noted that further consideration was required for (i) Chaplaincy (by HOB), (ii) Pioneer ministry, and (iii) the development of a comprehensive property strategy	Chair and Deputy Chair of RB Executive Committee, with support from the Honorary Secretaries of General Synod and Chief Officer





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RB Executive Committee

