

716: Ian Hughes



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The President of Tribunals

The Rt Revd Peter Forster,
Bishop of Chester,
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**The Right Honourable
Sir Andrew McFarlane**

2nd May 2014

**Section 30 of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003
Rule 68 of the Clergy Discipline Rules 2005**

Dear Bishop Peter,

The Revd Ian Hughes

Thank you for your letter of 10th March 2014 in which you have consulted me, under the terms of the CDM 2003, concerning the appropriate penalty to impose upon the Revd Ian Hughes following his recent conviction for making and possessing indecent images/photographs of children. Your letter describes offending which is at the top end of the spectrum for cases of this nature and you correctly identify that the Guidance on Penalties advises that removal from office and prohibition for life should normally be imposed.

I am grateful to you for your observations both about the particular distinction that may be drawn between those who commission and view material of this nature, yet who may be totally unwilling to perpetrate such abuse themselves, and, secondly, as to the lack of any mechanism for review of a life-long prohibition. The second of these points leads me to agree with you that, given the age of Mr Hughes and the other positive reports that you make of him, this may be a case where, in a long time to come, it could be appropriate for him to return to public ministry in some form or context. A life-long prohibition, with no mechanism for review, may not therefore be appropriate in this case.

The Guidance on Penalties is, in my view, a most useful guide, but it should not be a strait-jacket. In this case your suggestion of a prohibition in the order of 20 years, with there being an opportunity, should Mr Hughes make such a request, for a return to ministry to be considered at that stage is, in my opinion, entirely appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

DPA

The Right Honourable Sir Andrew McFarlane

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