

THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ELY DIOCESAN SYNOD

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON Thursday 24 September 2020

Via video conference

Present: The Bishop of Ely (in the chair), the Bishop of Huntingdon, Mr Donald Ashmore, Revd Canon Brian Atling, Very Revd Mark Bonney, Revd Canon Mike Booker, Revd Canon Adrian Daffern, Mrs Sue Freestone, Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Canon Simon Kershaw, Mrs Elaine Levitt, Mrs Diana Lucas, Mr Martin Macfarlane, Mr Steve Mashford, Revd Canon Anna Matthews, Canon Peter Maxwell, Ven Hugh McCurdy, Revd Canon Nick Moir, Revd Carol Nicholas-Letch, Canon Janet Perrett, Dr Arvan Pritchard, Mrs Sarah Robinson, Revd Simon Talbott, Ms Lizzie Taylor, Mr Stephen Tooke, Canon Tim Walters.

In attendance: Canon Paul Evans, Mrs Sheena Bridgman, Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh, Mr Adam Evans, Mrs Lorraine Orbell, Mr James Owen, Mr Andrew Read, Ms Rebecca Boswell, Mr Jon Chapman

**Dwelling in the Word** was led by the Ven Dr Alex Hughes

**Apologies** were received from Mr Francis Burkit, Revd Martin Dale, Revd Canon Alison Myers, Mr Rob Needle and Mr George Lynn

The **Minutes** of the Bishop's Council meeting on 8 July 2020 were agreed and signed. **Matters Arising:** There were none.

Revd Canon Adrian Daffern's advised conflict of interest (his wife, Revd Megan Daffern, is a contracted member of EDBF staff) was noted as a standing declaration.

**Bishop's Business:** Bishop Stephen advised a re-assertion of the Ely2025 Strategy and confirmed that the Ely2025 Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) has been formed, chaired by the Bishop of Huntingdon, and will meet bi-monthly. The Ely2025 SIG will collaborate with the Changing Market Towns Programme Board and will submit a report to each Bishop's Council meeting.

The Bishop Ely and the Bishop of Huntingdon are leading numerous ordination services across the Diocese through the end of September, together with the Admission of LLMs by Zoom.

The Agenda item on Clergy Wellbeing was postponed due to bereavement and will be brought to Diocesan Synod in March 2021.

**Deanery Planning Task Group:** The Archdeacons of Cambridge and Huntingdon & Wisbech, together with the Deanery Planning Task Group are to prepare criteria to provide the framework for deanery forward planning, to work alongside the Rural Deans and Deanery Lay Chairs. These criteria will be presented at a November meeting of Bishop's Council for endorsement and approval. Bishop's Council unanimously accepted the submitted as work in progress, with the expectation of approving a fuller iteration at a subsequent meeting.

Cambridge Holy Trinity submitted a plea for early consideration of their new incumbent's appointment. Following lengthy debate, this plea was declined pending the agreement of criteria on which to determine prioritisation for filling vacancies. This will be revisited at the next meeting of Bishop's Council.

Approval to accept the request from Cambridge Holy Trinity to ease the moratorium on clergy appointments

For 4 Against 14 Abstentions: Bishop of Ely, Bishop of Huntingdon, The Dean, Archdeacon of Cambridge, Ms Lizzie Taylor.

Approval was not granted.

**Ely Diocesan Board of Finance (EDBF):** Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA), Chair of the EDBF, confirmed that the anticipated deficit at year end 2020 was in the region of £1m, with a similar anticipated deficit for 2021 - both of which remain manageable in the short term. BA advised that income flows would be easier to assess in Spring 2021. BA repeated his preference that there should not be a deficit budget for 2022.

Ministry Share contributions have held up incredibly well, with very grateful thanks to parishes for their hard work.

All but essential Diocesan Office staff had been furloughed and Government Furlough Scheme contributions used to offset the 2020 deficit. Diocesan Office operations are being further reviewed with savings being made as appropriate. Revd Canon Linda Church is not being replaced at present. Andrew Read, Director of Education, has been seconded to cover both roles and he is currently carrying out a review of the Mission and Ministry Department.

Bishop Woodford House Retreat and Conference Centre has been closed with the majority of staff made redundant. The premises have subsequently been let to Kings Ely for two years, with a rental income of £100k per annum.

The Sustainability Fund announced by the National Church will receive an application in the autumn.

There is currently a pause in clergy appointments in order to get numbers down to 104 as agreed two years ago. The programme of revised Deanery Plans will identify long-term ministry needs.

### **Formal voting**

That Council accept the 2021 budget

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling                      Seconded:      Revd Simon Talbott  
Agreed unanimously

That Council approve there should be no increase in clergy stipends or salary rise for Diocesan staff

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling                      Seconded:      Mrs Sue Freestone  
Agreed unanimously

That Council approve there should be no increase in Ministry Share across this Diocese for 2021

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling                      Seconded:      Canon Tim Walters  
Agreed unanimously

**Safeguarding Annual Review and Future Plans:** Ms Rebecca Boswell, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and Mr Jon Chapman, Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group, presented the Annual Review and plans for 2021-23. Council expressed their grateful thanks to both speakers and to the wider Diocesan safeguarding team for their work.

**Archdeacons' Business:** The Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech requested Bishop's Council approval for the appointment of two interim, time-limited, common tenure posts, one in each in of Littleport and Whittlesey. Both these towns are within the Changing Market Towns programme, therefore any appointment is exempt from the temporary moratorium.

Approval was granted unanimously.

The Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech advised Bishop's Council of the foundation of the Ely Building Coordinating Group which will be answerable to the Ely2025 SIG and thence to Bishop's Council

He presented the Terms of Reference which were approved unanimously and approval was granted to seek membership of the group.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.15pm

**Dates of next Bishop's Council meetings:**

2020: 29 October (SGM), 18 November

Dates of Diocesan Synod meetings:

2020: 7 October and 8 December