

Minutes

Present	The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin (Chair)	<i>(Bishop of Dover)</i>
	The Very Revd David Monteith	<i>(Dean of Canterbury Cathedral)</i>
	The Ven Darren Miller	<i>(Archdeacon of Ashford)</i>
	The Ven Andrew Sewell	<i>(Archdeacon of Maidstone)</i>
	The Ven Dr Will Adam	<i>(Archdeacon of Canterbury)</i>
	Iain Blythe	<i>(Diocesan Secretary)</i>
	Dr John Moss	<i>(Chair of the Board of Education)</i>
	The Revd Dr Andy Bawtree	<i>(Chair of the House of Clergy)</i>
	Canon Miranda Ford	<i>(Chair of the House of Laity)</i>
	The Revd Canon Estella Last	<i>(Vicar, the Bridge Benefice)</i>
	The Revd Gareth Dickinson	<i>(Vicar of St Luke's, Maidstone/Area Dean)</i>
	Canon John Morrison	<i>(Reader, Treasurer Canterbury Deanery)</i>
	Graham Codling	<i>(Lay Chair, Weald Deanery)</i>
	Attending	The Revd Richard Braddy
The Revd Dr Jonathan Arnold		<i>(Exc Director The Social Justice Network)</i>
Orla Garratt		<i>(Head of Media & Engagement)</i>
	Joanna Manser	<i>(EA to the Diocesan Secretary)</i>

1. Opening Prayers

+Rose opened the meeting with reading and a prayer.

2. Apologies and Notices

- (a) Apologies were received from Amanda Boucherat, Quentin Roper, Neville Emslie, Jeremy Worthen, Natalia Olszewska and Colin Evans.
- (b) Members might wish to know that from 2025 there will be no Saturday meetings of the Council – this will move to Tuesday evenings – and we are avoiding the summer half-term, Advent and the week before and two weeks after Easter for meetings generally.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None Declared.

4. Minutes of the Meeting of 27 April 2024

The minutes were approved and adopted.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of 27 April

There were no matters arising

6. Safeguarding

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers, were asked about the regulations which were coming into effect and confirmed their job descriptions aligned with the new requirements.

There remain concerns over some church officers refusing to do the required Safeguarding training. The Safeguarding Team would continue to work with PCCs to ensure the maximum take-up.

The Safeguarding audit was due in 2026 and preparations were beginning. Work on the audit will be time and resource consuming so the Board will need to look at providing support for the Team.

It was agreed that Safeguarding would be a recurring item on Archbishop's Council agendas.

7. Financial Reporting for Year End

Approval of Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

The accounts provided a true and fair representation of the DBFs position.

Account control systems were now sufficiently robust to meet the recommended requirements. Two "B" governance and risk requirements remained over bank reconciliations and debtors.

During 2023 a review of property had taken place. This resulted in the re-classification of around thirty houses and resulted in an unrealised loss of £1.1m, largely driven by the differences in the way benefice and DBF houses are accounted for in the statements.

It was noted that:

- 83% of income comes from Parish Share which shows the generosity of the people in this part of Kent is extraordinary
- The Board was overly reliant on Parish Share and needed to address that
- LInC funding now makes up for ten per cent of the Board's income
- There was £2m less income in 2023, largely due to the sale in 2022 of housing and a fall in grant income

8. Financial Projections to 2030

The Board recognised the need to balance the budget. It was hoped that the paper would provide sufficient clarity while recognising that to achieve the aims by 2030 would require contingency in budgets, a focus on generosity as well as assistance from the NCIs and a commitment to use resources to demonstrate good stewardship.

The figures in the projections were based on inflation/RPI/CPI but with the recognition that a contingency, while unlikely to be popular, might need to be factored in. It was important that we work towards building one diocese with clergy, PCCs and Synod.

The modelling had been based on strategy and finance and used three basic presumptions; continued decline; moderate growth, and; flourishing growth.

Some changes were recommended and there was a recognition that the document needed to better show the context of our Christian faith – what are congregations giving for?

It was noted this paper was one of two in response to the requests from Synod. The second, on strategy and the Board's response to the Botting/Jackson report, had been aimed at the November Synod meeting (solely because the two-hour July Synod did not leave sufficient time for both issues to be discussed in sufficient detail).

The fact remains that the DBF had no flexibility in our finances whatsoever. Tentative approaches to the NCIs about funding issues had been made and there was a recognition of the issues faced.

The Committee approved extending the remit of the Projections Group to work on wider solutions to the issues this analysis had presented.

9. Flourishing Schools

The CYPE report for Archbishop's Council on 27th April 2024 advised that an application had been submitted to the Church of England Education Office (CEEO) to join the two-year pilot phase of the 'Flourish' network of worshipping communities in/through schools, requesting a total of £92,000 in funding.

Proposals included:

- A Lay Chaplain role in New Romney, focused on the transition from primary to secondary school, with additional resource for nurture/discipleship with St. Nicholas CE Primary, particularly pupils and adults baptised/confirmed in the school's annual service
- A part-time Family/Community Worker in Walmer to bridge church and school communities and create opportunities for families to worship together
- Part-time Family Worker in Grove Green/Boxley, building relationships with families, developing a nurture group for parents and carers and adding capacity for leading fortnightly Café Church at St. John's CE Primary.

The project was relatively low-cost with considerable support locally and funding could be met from existing strategy budgets.

The proposals were approved subject to clarification as to the process for future selection of projects for funding.

10. Strategy and Net Zero Update

The highlight report was broadly the same as the April highlight report with any recent updates noted on the report (and discussed below). Whilst not explicitly stated in the report, the Board had received indications from the NCIs that we cannot bring a further funding proposal until January 2025 at the earliest. We are expected to demonstrate progress on the items funded in the first two grants.

There is a particular focus on getting the Maidstone grant condition signed off as soon as possible with a target of mid-June at the latest. The Board would also need to urgently consider our way forward on the Youth Ministers programme.

St. John's, Swalecliffe

The proposal to provide support to children's ministry and expand into youth ministry was being considered and the PCC had requested support for this encouraging ministry whilst working towards financial sustainability.

It was agreed that a team would convene to work on the proposal and establish what is needed is to show how missional and financial growth might happen and become sustainable. Findings would be distributed (and decisions taken by ABC) would be done by email.

The highlight report would be presented to Diocesan Synod.

11. National Redress Scheme

Council noted this paper which updated members on the proposed financial award framework for the Church of England's national Redress Scheme. If approved, the framework would be used to calculate offers of financial redress to survivors and victims of Church-related abuse.

12. Draft Diocesan Synod Agenda

A major issue was the Synod motion aiming to discuss strategy "at the July Synod". It appeared that there was not sufficient time to discuss that and the financial projections at this Synod. The Council aimed to work with Synod with the intention of using the longer November Synod for further discussions on finance and budget plus facilitated discussions on strategy.

13. Draft Annual Report for 2023

The aim had been to repurpose what can sometimes be quite a dull and disjointed document. A small group had set out what it had hoped would be a high-quality digital document which;

- met statutory requirements
- provided information and celebrated success
- was a tool for communicating the growth strategy and the Three Bold Outcomes
- was well designed, readable and accessible for our audiences including our parishes and schools
- talked about the collective work across the diocese

This is very much in draft form and will be laid out with photos, infographics and links to videos and further information where needed. The Committee noted on record its thanks to Orla and Charlie.

14. Framework Reports

Mission and Ministry:

A full report had been provided on the work of Mission & Ministry Team, re-emphasising their work in line with the Three Bold Outcomes.

The Social Justice Network

The Council received an overview of the new Social Justice Network website.

The Council expressed thanks to the Team. All members of the Council were invited to attend the official launch of SJN on 13 June at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge.

Children, Young People and Education

It was reported that the DBE were having their Strategy Day on Tuesday 4 June.

15. Dates of Next Meeting

Saturday 5 October at St Paul's Parish Centre

The meeting concluded at 11:48.