

Diocesan Synod MINUTES

Meeting Date:	Saturday 04th February 2023
Times:	1000 – 1530
Venue:	Amesbury Baptist Centre

Item	Description	Action Outcome / Initial
1	Welcome and Introduction	
	<p>The Rev'd Canon Andy Perry (AP) opened the meeting welcoming all. A particular welcome was extended to the Deans and diocesan synod representatives of the Bailiwicks of Jersey and Guernsey attached to the diocese</p> <p>The Very Reverend Michael R Keirle of Jersey and The Very Reverend Tim Barker provided PowerPoint presentations for the members.</p> <p>Jersey Slides</p> <p>Guernsey Slides</p>	
2	Opening prayer and Presidential Address	
	<p>Bishop Stephen (+S) spoke of the Peace Pilgrimage to South Sudan, by Pope Francis, Archbishop Justin and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland Dr Ian Greenshields, which was underway while synod met. He said: "My contacts with both Archbishops of the Sudan's continues to be frank, honest and committed to on-going partnership, recognising that especially for their people, there really are bigger issues at stake.</p> <p>Pope Francis talks of mercy before doctrine, because God can cope. And yesterday he called us, through the greatest Ecumenical Pilgrimage since the Reformation, to a better way, whether this is in the war-torn newest country in the world South Sudan, or in our discussions today, here and now. He said: 'Overcome evil with good. May you be the ones who transform society, the one who turn evil into good, hatred into love, war into peace.'"</p> <p>The full text of his address can be found HERE</p>	
3	Minutes from previous meeting	

	<p>Synod approved the minutes of the meeting on 24th September 2022. There were no matters arising.</p> <p>Apologies were received from 14 clergy and 15 laity. The houses of bishops, clergy and laity were quorate.</p> <p>Notices- Revd Pip Martin advertised the diocesan cricket team, inviting new members to join.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
4	DBE Annual Report	
	<p>Synod received the Annual Report (paper provided in advance) introduced by the Director of Education, Mrs Joy Tubbs (JT) and the Chair of DBE, The Ven Antony MacRow-Wood.</p> <p>Synod was told that our DBE is a leader among dioceses in negotiating the changing landscape of academisation, so much so that the National Church is learning from our Mixed multi-academy trusts (MAT) economy and programme for Church Schools Flourishing.</p> <p>In the summer of 2022, an external review was carried out as DBE came to the end of their 5-year strategy to reflect on effectiveness and what could be improved moving forward; the conclusion was clear – the influence of the Board of Education is far beyond the traditional reach of Church of England schools, but how does the DBE shape the future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-think foundation governance through recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced governors • Community Hubs to have a greater impact • Weave children and young people into the core of our future diocesan priorities • The new diocesan vision and strategy must recognise the interdependence and co-dependency of schools and parishes to build vibrant, intergenerational communities • Empowering both headteachers and clergy to recognise the unique contribution that church and school can make together • New thinking around missional communities • Team Salisbury – all three organisations (DBF, DBE, DSAT) working together <p>Members raised questions exploring local examples of mission in church and school collaboration with multi-disciplinary teams; the importance of collaborative work with Winchester Diocese where Academy Trusts reach across diocesan boundaries; the length of tenure for foundation governors and the opportunity to reapply.</p>	<p>Received</p>

	<p>Joy concluded the report by emphasising that the multi-academy trusts were a secure future in which church schools can flourish and encouraged any needing to talk about the issues arising to come forward as soon as possible.</p>	
5	Living In Love and Faith	
	<p>Synod were briefed with document going to the forthcoming General Synod from the Bishops.</p> <p>Bishop Karen opened the discussion on Living in Love and Faith, as a member of the national Next Steps group. Both she and Bishop Andrew spoke of their own personal responses to the draft proposals put forward by the College of Bishops, which are being discussed by General Synod this week. Bishop Stephen also “apologised unreservedly to LGBT+ people for the Church’s ongoing and worsening rejection”. Synod members spoke personally and movingly of their own responses to the proposals to offer prayers of blessings to same sex couples.</p> <p>Bishop Stephen promised to support clergy who for reasons of conscience will be unable to offer prayers of blessing for same sex couples.</p> <p>The session ended with everyone sharing the Eucharist together.</p>	
6	Eucharist	
	<p>Eucharist was led by +S.</p>	
7	DBF Financial Update	
	<p>The session was opened by DBF Vice-Chair Rev’d Peter Ostli-East in the absence of the DBF Chair – Jane McCormick..</p> <p>The Diocesan Secretary (DP) was invited to provide the financial update and noted that the operating deficit at the end of 2022 was anticipated to be £1.4m, which was much higher than the expected/budgeted £999k. The importance of talking about long-term financial strategy and sustainability in the vision and strategy process was highlighted, rather than just talking about a new parish share system; however, parish share remains central to economy of the diocese along with fundraising and accessing national funding.</p> <p>As of end of 2022, 87% of parish share has been received; even if the full 100% of parish share request was received, this will not cover the gap in the actual costs (direct and indirect) of ministry provision as set out in the approved Budget Guide for 2023. In effect, the share request is 17% below what it would need to be to cover that cost.</p>	

	Church House – sales is progressing (in negotiation with a preferred buyer) but the sale will not raise as much money as many had hoped.	
8	Strategy Workshop	
	<p>Following the introduction of the session by the Chair of the house of Laity, +S shared his view of a need for speed with the Vision and Strategy process (V&S) and highlighted the funds available to us from National Church to be used at a local level.</p> <p>+S introduced Steve Tarpey (external facilitator from Human Dimensions) to explain the journey so far.</p> <p>The aim of this session was to share progress to date and discuss the draft V&S framework which is merely a planning tool to aid the process. Members were asked to give feedback on first impressions and ask clarification questions via the administrator for V&S (jennifer.bollands@salisbury.anglican.org). The facilitators outlined an ambitious timescale which includes extensive thematic working groups with wide range of stakeholders during the coming months, with a view to launch in June 2023 when the ++ABC visits Salisbury, followed by our next Diocesan Synod meeting.</p>	Received
9	Instrument of Delegation	
	<p>+S introduced explaining this is a legal document that allows the suffragan Bishops to ‘get on with their job’. He pointed out there had been an error in the communication around it being approved by Bishop’s Council. It has not been and does not need to be approved by Bishop’s Council.</p> <p>+S moved that Synod approved the Instrument of Delegation to Suffragan Bishops. The motion was approved unanimously.</p>	Approved
10	Questions	
	<p>Questions and answers were shared with the Synod prior to the meeting. <u>Gill Verschoyle asked:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> has the diocese yet had a payment from the £3.6bn fund (over 3 years) from the central church? If so, how does the diocese intend to use it? <p>In May 2022, the Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners’ Board agreed their joint spending plans from 2023 onwards.</p> <p>The Church Commissioners for England intend to distribute £1.2 billion between 2023 and 2025, up 30% from £930 million in the previous three-year period, and plan to maintain this level of funding in the subsequent six years. In total, this would mean the Church Commissioners plan to distribute £3.6 billion to frontline work of the Church of England between 2023 and 2031.</p> <p>The purpose of the Mission and Ministry part of this funding is to help dioceses with their plans as they enable the bold outcomes and strategic priorities of the national Vision and Strategy to become a reality in local</p>	Received

<p>parishes and communities, prioritizing investment in the most deprived and resource poor contexts.</p> <p>All dioceses are eligible for funding, but different dioceses will need different types and levels of support depending on their mission capacity and financial circumstances. Distribution of the funding therefore is a partnership between the national Church and dioceses wherein funding levels are determined in the light of on-going dialogue. The Board to allocate the first round of funds is meeting later this month and there will be a phased and rolling distribution- not applying early does not disadvantage us.</p> <p>Applications for investment must be framed by and against the diocese’s overall strategy in line with the priorities of the national vision for the 2020s, including a people plan and a finance plan. The priority of the Bishop’s Council is therefore now to prepare a diocesan strategy (purpose and plan) in order to be able to apply for funding to support the implementation of this. Synod will be briefed on the progress of this process at the meeting.</p> <p>Once we have a diocesan strategy in place, the Bishop’s Council will be able to prepare a proposal to access funds. We will be working closely with Nick Shepherd who is our Diocesan Support Consultant from the national team to do this: Nick is also closely supporting the development of our diocesan strategy. Meanwhile, the costs of the current process to create a shared purpose and plan (facilitators, meetings, administrative support) are being funded by the national church up to a total cost of £130k.</p> <p>In addition, there are further smaller funding allocations for which we can apply in support of work towards Net Zero, work on Racial Justice and in the development of Buildings for Mission.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2. In view of the huge fund of £100 million from the central church for slavery reparations, can we assume that the central church is rich enough to be able to subsidise the parish share in future?</p> <p>The Church Commissioners announced the establishment of a £100m fund over the next nine years to help right the wrongs caused by its historic links to transatlantic slavery, through the Queen Anne’s bounty, a fund established in 1704. The full announcement can be read on the Church of England website.</p> <p>This £100m is not new money nor is it taken from donations via parish share, but part of the overall fund that the Commissioners already manage for pension and investment purposes to support the mission and ministry of the Church. Neither is it the case that this £100m will be</p>	<p>Received</p>
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simply given away. This money would have been invested more generally (and responsibly) anyway. Some of this new money will be used for grants and research, but the majority of it will still be invested in order to make a profit. It is just that the criteria for where the Commissioners make investments from this new fund will change – they’ll be investing to try to make a positive social impact, especially with communities impacted by historic slavery.

Regarding the future of parish Share, this is under discussion by the Bishop’s Council. Decisions regarding the future will need to be aligned to changes in mission and ministry which are developed in the diocesan strategic plan.

The Review of Share has shown that 67% of those PCCs which responded are willing to fully contribute to the costs of parish ministry and in addition to provide a basis for mutual support across the diocese. On the basis of the 2022 year end, the Share request would need to increase by 17% if the costs of ministry (direct and indirect, as set out in the Synod approved Budget guide for 2023) are to be covered by these funds in the future. If this is seen as unrealistic, then we need a meaningful plan to reduce costs or increase income. Proposals in light of this will be part of the implementation of the diocesan strategy.

Revd. Beth Hutton asked:

In what ways, if any, will the establishment by the Church Commissioners of a £100m fund to address past wrongs of slavery impact Diocesan or Parish budgets, and in what ways can parishes act pastorally, practically or liturgically to address past wrongs at a local level?

This £100m allocation is in addition to the funds made available to support mission through the dioceses in the next 9 years.

The £100m is not new money or taken from your donations via parish share, but part of the overall fund that the Commissioners already manage for pension and investment purposes to support the mission and ministry of the Church. Neither is it the case that this £100m will be simply given away. This money would have been invested more generally (and responsibly) anyway. Some of this money will be used for grants and research, but the majority of it will remain invested. However, the criteria for where the Commissioners make investments from this new fund will change – they’ll be investing to try to make a positive social impact, especially with communities impacted by historic slavery.

Appropriate actions need to be relevant to local circumstances. Some churches with historic links to transatlantic slavery are already addressing this issue. For example, St Peter’s, Dorchester have been granted a faculty for the removal of the memorial to John Gordon and its loan to the Dorchester Museum. They are working with DAC on a suitable replacement for the memorial, and are planning a display within the church telling the story, so new generations do not forget the sins of the

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past. Such story telling is relevant to other churches who have memorials and other links to those involved in historic slavery. A number of projects are beginning to take shape.

The DBE, Mothers Union and The Social Justice group have partnered with The Clewer Institute, to start to address issues of Modern Day Slavery.

This project is mindful that slavery is not just an historical issue, but in different forms continues to blight lives to this day.

A working group was set up, chaired by the Archdeacon of Wilts, to work on a response to the Lament to Action Report. As a result of this a small group are preparing some appropriate liturgies. Rev Canon Rachma Abbott, Bishop's Advisor for United Kingdom Minority Ethnic Concerns, is working with the Wellbeing Group to embody the recommendations of 'Living Ministry Focussed Study 3: "If it Wasn't for God": A Report on the Wellbeing of Global Majority heritage Clergy in the Church of England' within the clergy wellbeing provision.

Alasdair Kay asked:

I seem to recall there was an undertaking at the last synod to report on a review of stipends. Has this happened? If so, what are they to be set at?

The national church reviewed all stipend levels at a meeting of the Archbishops Council in December 2022. These were published to the dioceses. In light of these figures, the Bishop's Council considered recommendations for changes from the Finance Committee when it met mid-January. It has done this conscious of its decision in the 2023 budget to not reduce clergy numbers this year and with the year-end forecast being a deficit in 2022 of £1.4m.

For incumbent status clergy, the national benchmark salary from April 2023 will be £28, 634 and the Diocese of Salisbury stipend will be set at £29,214. This means that Salisbury will pay £600 above the national stipend benchmark.

Stipends for curates will increase to £27,337 which is above the national benchmark of £26, 794.

Stipends for senior clergy are also set nationally and Salisbury will follow national benchmarks for these levels.

Secondly what uptake has there been for the support of Clergy in terms of coping with crippling energy costs. Have those Clergy households that only have the stipend in terms of support been able to access the additional funds set aside for them? I would like reassurance as a House of Clergy Member that my colleagues are ok.

The national Church provided the Diocese with a grant to help clergy (and others as per the categories suggested by the national Church and shown in the table below) with energy costs and the high level of inflation. The grant was made in two tranches: an initial sum of £66000 and a further top up of £13000. In an ad clerum dated the 6 October 2022, clergy were

invited to apply for help and a number of clergy did so. The Bishop took advice from the Diocesan Surveyor as to those parsonage houses which were most difficult to heat and from the archdeacons who know their clergy best. As a result, other clergy who had not applied for a grant were nevertheless offered one. Four clergy declined a grant when it was offered.

From the initial tranche of £66000, the following grants were made:

	Category	No of grants	Value
i	Stipendiary clergy, including curates	57	55750
ii	Self-supporting ministers with a provided house ('House-for-Duty')	8	8000
iii	Salaried lay workers employed by the diocese or parishes such as youth and children's workers	3	2250
iv	Retired clergy carrying out a specific role in support of Diocesan ministry as agreed by or at the request of a Bishop or Archdeacon	0	0
		68	66000

From the second tranche of £13000, (as at the 27 January 2022) nine grants totalling £6500 have been made to clergy in category i above.

Everyone who has applied for a grant has received one.

In addition to the funds made available by the national Church, the Bishop does have limited discretionary funds at his disposal and clergy are regularly encouraged to apply for help whenever they may feel a financial pinch - see, for example, the ad clerum letters of the 14 June 2022, the 6 October 2022 and the 13 December 2022.

11 AOB and closing prayer

There was no other business raised.
+S closed the meeting prayer

12 Dates of Future Meetings

Tuesday June 20th 6-9pm – St Francis Church, Beatrice Road, Salisbury.
SP1 3PN
Saturday October 07th 10-3pm – Gryphon School, Bristol Road, Sherborne,
Dorset. DT9 4EQ.