

Minutes

Diocesan Synod

Meeting Date:	17th February 2024
Times:	1000 - 1500
Venue:	St Paul's Church, Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP2 7QW

Item	Description	Action/Outcome Initials
1	Welcome and Opening worship	
	Opening worship was led by The Rev'd Canon Andy Perry	
2	Presidential Address	
	+Stephen welcomed all with his presidential address: <i>What we need isn't more things, more stuff, but relationship with Jesus Christ, says Bishop Stephen in his address to diocesan synod....read the whole address HERE.</i>	
3	Introduction	
	Minutes from the 07 th October 2023 meeting were approved. No conflicts of interest were raised. Apologies were received from 1 Bishop, 33 clergy and 40 laity meaning Diocesan Synod is quorate.	
4	Questions	
	<p>Questions were received and responded to prior to the meeting and shared with all which can be found HERE with written answers taken as read.</p> <p>Additional questions:</p> <p>Gillian Verschoyle – what proportion are not paying in full? Antony MacRow-Wood (AMW) said this information is being collated and will be shared with Diocesan Synod in due course.</p> <p>Andy Bousfield – Importance of working at local level and reaching out to younger people; what plans are in place to do this? Aspiration is vital, but broader conversation and implementation around Vision and Strategy needs to continue in our Growing Faith work and the importance of engaging at local level.</p> <p>Peter Breckwoldt – Feel there is a need to 'mend the tear' in the Church of England. +Stephen stressed we need be part of the solution and not the problem along with finding ways to disagree well.</p> <p>Veronica Batchelor – no follow-up question.</p>	

5	<p>Making Jesus Known</p>	
	<p>Engagement Process - Rebecca Paveley (RP) shared with Synod the new visual identity for the diocese; this included a short video which you can watch HERE and these will be shared more widely on our social media platforms. The work for this began over 6-months ago with lots of focus groups from 8-80 year olds being listened to; designs were tested and the chosen one was overwhelmingly supported. There was a banner at the front of the meeting which illustrated the flexibility of the new design which RP is looking into finding part funding for anyone who is interested.</p> <p>+Andrew spoke around the messaging and some changes to terminology and framing in light of period of consultation; following a consultation with church leaders – Climate Justice is now to be referred to as Climate Action.</p> <p>Missional Pathways - Creative Partnerships in Local Mission forms one of the 5 strategic priorities that underpin the Diocesan vision to <i>Make Jesus Known</i>. A key element of this strand of the vision is to explore new ways of working together at a local level across traditional boundaries, recognising both the strengths and vulnerabilities of the current ways of being church. These will trial different ways of working that will inform our thinking and generate learning. The aim is to develop good practice, enable cultural change, and increase the missional impact of our mission and ministry across a wider landscape.</p> <p>Missional Pathways will be encouraged to consider what additional resources are needed or how resources could be deployed more creatively to bring about the desired change. Any additional resource will come from national funding.</p> <p>6 Missional Pathways have been identified by the Bishops and supported by Bishop’s Council from across geographically diverse contexts with development support rolled out over the next 3 years. Next steps will include identifying local leadership (including church/school/trust/children and young people), local mission vision development and identifying available additional resources and finally a bid to the Strategic Mission Ministry Investment Board (SMMiB).</p> <p>Introduction to the new Share System - Towards the end of the last decade there was increasing dissatisfaction with Fairer Share. Research showed various factors were at play including the old system was designed for a different era with higher regular church attendance, deficit budgets are not sustainable and the old scheme being heavily weighted by number of worshippers – disincentivising growth.</p> <p>What does and doesn’t share pay for – No – Bishops or Cathedrals Yes – All mission and ministry in the diocese and some support services.</p> <p>Antony MacRow-Wood (AMW) thanked all those whom pay share, but stressed now is the time for change. Consultations have taken place, and the new proposal is a system that faces up to total costs of being church. We need to ask ourselves what ministry we want and can we afford it?</p>	

	<p>AMW also emphasised that we will no longer be setting deficit budgets as a diocese.</p> <p>So what will be different – the new system will be a hybrid system calculated partly by costs and partly by membership: 60% of share request allocated to benefices according to the ministry deployed there and 40% according to worshipping community (WComm). This aims to enable mutual support as #TeamSalisbury, which was a value affirmed in the feedback research.</p> <p>Assistance will be available to parishes who are in difficulty including rebates and support for fundraising and outreach projects.</p> <p>Synod were encouraged to share views on the new system as change needs to happen.</p> <p>Questions were raised around areas such as looking at areas with differing numbers of clergy, would the scheme possibly move to parish level rather than benefice, as well as concerns around WComm definition (it was confirmed we are using the National Church definition) and the worry around the count. The panel heard all concerns and answered where they could and assured Synod that further discussions will be happening.</p> <p>+Stephen highlighted we need to challenge and look our realities and face-up to the challenges.</p> <p>Synod were asked to endorse the direction of travel – For – 69 Against – 2 Abstain – 6</p> <p>Handouts were shared with Synod around the new visual identity, and further information on the share scheme will be a new booklet is available on-line. Synod were then encouraged to continue the discussions over lunch and introduced to SLACK – an on-line forum.</p>	<p>Supported</p>
6	DBE Annual Report	
	<p>Katie Fitzsimmons (KF) was welcomed to present the DBE Annual Report which outlined the strategic plan for the next five years.. <i>An update on our work, January 2024 Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education, SDBE, supports 192 Church of England schools in securing their Christian foundation and enabling them to flourish. Our principal objects are:</i> read the full report HERE.</p> <p>KF asked for any questions to be emailed to her if further information is required.</p>	
7	Safeguarding Annual report and Audit update	
	<p>GC welcomed Suzy Fatcher (SF) (Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor) and Paul Barton (Independent Chair) to the meeting to discuss the annual report, audit feedback and questions from the floor.</p> <p>Annual report: In September this year the National Safeguarding Team published a set of Safeguarding Standards and Quality Assurance Framework covering the 5 most important dimensions of the church’s safeguarding work:</p>	

- Culture, Leadership and Capacity
- Prevention
- Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk
- Victims and Survivors
- Learning, Supervision and Support.

Please find the full report [here](#).

Salisbury Diocese has adopted these standards as a framework for defining and measuring the effectiveness of safeguarding across the diocese, so the annual report and priorities for 2024 will follow this structure.

Audit feedback: We were the first diocese to undergo the audit and the initial feeling is that it had been a positive experience. The auditors were pleased with the leadership, particularly senior (BLT and DBF) and stated that if this was an Ofsted report we would be classed as outstanding. They were impressed with the Safeguarding team in terms of multiskilled background and the support it can offer. Concern over the need to increase capacity and need for more support for PSO's; they were complimentary over the PSO network but highlighted there is a need to provide supervision and wellbeing support. DSAP – it was advised to increase levels of scrutiny and create a learning and development framework. Further recommendation was given around records/data/systems – with the need for a more robust evidence and data system to inform training and decision-making equipping people through needs analysis. The plan is to use the official report to further the action plan for safeguarding and continue the journey and level of understanding. +Stephen gave his recognition and thanks to the safeguarding team particularly to the lead of the team for all the hard work that this audit has entailed. It was noted that the capacity issue around PSO's is due to the amount and level of responsibility required and we must commit to sustain the high bar for safeguarding and not become complacent. Also noted that the mission focus will have an impact on safeguarding as we become a younger and more diverse church, we need to prepare for this. SF emphasised risk management – we are NOT determining guilt; we need an informed approach to everyone which is trauma informed. Collaborative partnerships are very important. In closing – SF stressed we are safer but not safe.

8	Church Warden Roles	
	AdSarum led a discussion on the role of Church Wardens (CW) of which there is currently a high vacancy rate. Several serving CW's spoke at the meeting to provide insight into the role which is for 1-year and elected at the annual parochial meeting. CWs may serve 6-terms. This role is vital to the health, mission and wellbeing of the church community and routine matters so very important to address this shortage. Synod discussed and approved the motion:	

	<p>‘This Synod affirms and values the central role that Churchwardens have in each parish across this Diocese and recognises the important legal responsibilities of their office.</p> <p>This Synod also understands the office also has a vital spiritual, pastoral and mission dimension – the duty is to be foremost among the laity in the life and mission of the Church in the parish. Therefore, this Synod requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That resources are offered to Churchwardens to equip them for this spiritual, pastoral and mission dimension. 2. That Archdeacons, Rural Deans and Diocesan staff work together to develop resources for Churchwardens as leaders in mission. 3. This Synod receives a report in the summer of 2025, detailing the programme for resourcing Churchwardens.’ <p>For – 59 Against – 3 Abstain – 9</p>	Motion Carried
9	Governance	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online meetings. The Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2024 – this measure allows for meetings to be conducted in a hybrid/virtual nature. • Parsonages Board Scheme Motion: “This Synod approves the revised Parsonages Board Scheme.” • Triennium election process – all members were asked to think proactively about this process 	Approved Approved
10	AOB and Closing Prayer	
	<p>The next Diocesan Synod will be the last of this triennium and will be held at: St Francis Church Hall Beatrice Road, Salisbury SP1 3PN On 18th June 1750 – 2030.</p>	