

**SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD  
MINUTES OF THE 101<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT  
ST PAUL'S CHURCH, FISHERTON ANGER ON TUESDAY 22 JUNE 2010**

**1. Prayers and Presidential Introduction**

The Bishop spoke of the themes connecting recent meetings. In respect of the theme of mission, he commented that it is not something that we do to other people, it is something that we do together. This would have particular relevance to item 11 on the agenda and the vision we have for the diocese's future.

Prayers were led by the Bishop.

**2. Notices and Apologies**

Apologies were received from 11 clergy and 16 laity.

The Diocesan Secretary asked members to note the different venue for the autumn meeting of Synod.

**3 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**4. Becoming a Fair Trade Diocese**

The Social Responsibility Officer for Dorset, Mr Colin Brady, reported. In October 2003 Synod had approved a policy and made a commitment to becoming a Fair Trade Diocese. After much hard work by individuals and groups, the diocese had been awarded Fair Trade status on 14 April 2010. We are one of the largest denominational areas to achieve this. Mr Brady asked that members continue to encourage yet more churches to register directly with the Fair Trade Foundation. The range of Fair Trade products is increasing all the time and he commented that it would now be good to actively pursue the other part of the diocese's policy which is to use our purchasing power to bring about greater justice in the world.

**5. General Synod Election 2010**

The Diocesan Secretary outlined the timetable for the General Synod election:

By 20 July	Notification to electors
3 September	Closing date for nominations
17 September	Issue of voting papers
8 October	Closing date for return of voting papers
11 October	The count

There will be major decisions made by the General Synod over the next five years and the diocese is looking for nominees holding a broad range of views to be part of this process. Synod members were asked to spread the news that this is important. They were also asked to encourage candidates with suitable skills to stand for election and the electorate to vote. There will be five clergy (proctorial) seats to fill and six laity. The lay election will take place by Electoral Area, with three to be elected from the north of the diocese and three from the south. This division is by virtue of the numbers to be elected and to ensure a proper spread of representation. It is not affected by either the old Area Scheme or the Episcopal Ministry Scheme.

It was hoped that at least two hustings would take place and that modern technology would provide an on-line discussion forum. Electors should quiz candidates carefully on the issues that matter to them.

Outgoing General Synod members commented that membership of General Synod was inspiring and fun and that it was certainly possible to balance the workload with a full-time day job. Expenses are covered by the diocese.

Diocesan Synod thanked those General Synod representatives who are standing down at the end of this quinquennium.

Further information is at [www.generalsynodelections2010.org](http://www.generalsynodelections2010.org)

## **6. Diocesan Board of Finance Annual General Meeting**

### **6.1 Annual Report and Accounts 2009**

The Chairman DBF presented the annual Report and Accounts 2009 which had been circulated to members in advance. Despite the turmoil in the financial markets and difficulties with the pension schemes, the financial strength of the diocese had been enhanced during the year. Share receipts continued the improving trend of recent years with 96.4% collected for 2009 and members were asked to help achieve the desired 99% collection by the end of 2010. Property values accounted for substantial movement in account values in recent years, but these only matter at the point at which any property is bought or sold. DBF investments are chosen to provide above-average annual income and this is expected to continue. Overall Salisbury diocese's financial position is the envy of many other dioceses and thanks were expressed to all those in the parishes and elsewhere who made this possible.

The Chairman DBF commented that the Report and Accounts was a public document which should show the wider community what the Church is doing and whether it is worth supporting. This applied to individual parish Reports and Accounts as well as those of the DBF.

Mazars, the Board's auditors, had given an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. The Diocesan Accountant was thanked for his work in achieving this excellent outcome.

The Chairman DBF moved, on behalf of the DBF Executive:

"That the Diocesan Board of Finance approves the Directors' and Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2009."

This was approved by the Board of Finance.

### **6.2 Appointment of Auditors**

Canon John Holbrook, Wimborne Deanery, declared an interest and abstained from this item.

The Chairman DBF moved, on behalf of the DBF Executive:

"That the Diocesan Board of Finance approves the re-appointment of Mazars LLP as the auditors for the Diocesan Board of Finance."

This was approved by the Board of Finance.

### **6.3 Diocesan Budget for Share Assessment 2011**

For the purposes of this item, members acted as both the Board of Finance and Synod.

The Chairman DBF presented the Diocesan Budget for Share Assessment 2011. The nation was on the long path to financial recovery and things could still go wrong so it was important that the diocese proceeded with care. The clergy pension contribution rate is 45% in 2010 but will reduce to 42% in 2011 when, subject to adoption by General Synod, the clergy will receive reduced benefits. The proposed budget

increase for 2011 was 1.46% which would still ensure that every diocesan spending priority would be fully funded.

It was noted that since 2004 diocesan budget increases have totalled 14.9% whereas RPI over the same period has been 22.6% and CPI, 18.1%. These low diocesan increases have provided a stable base for parish mission as well as the care and development of our clergy and our Church schools. The cost of diocesan administration remained extremely low at just 3.6% of budget. The national budget would impact on the diocese's finances in both positive and negative ways and there were some things that could not be known until October and therefore could not be factored in. Parishes should contact the Diocesan Office if they anticipate any particular problems with their own finances.

The Chairman DBF moved on behalf of the DBF Executive:

"That the Diocesan Board of Finance/Synod approves the annual Budget for Share Assessment 2011".

This was approved by the Board of Finance and the Synod.

## **7. Questions**

Malcolm Read, Alderbury Deanery, asked:

"The DBF vice-chairman recently restated that the principle underlying Fairer Share is that it – "is not a contribution to buy a bit of a stipend; it is a pooling of resources to enable the mission of the church to flourish and to respond to changing circumstances"

With clergy numbers falling, and with the consequently ever widening gap between what parishes give in Share, and what they actually receive in terms of clergy time, will the principle outlined above not become unsustainable?:"

The Diocesan Secretary had provided a written response which had been circulated to members. This referred to the strategy for diverse ministry as well as the low budget increases which sought to keep ministry provision financially sustainable. The Fairer Share Review Group believed, and the evidence in share collection confirmed, that Fairer Share provides a more sustainable solution to funding the diocese's joint work than other methods of apportionment and that the deployment strategy provides a more sustainable ministry than simply relying on a reducing number of stipendiary clergy.

As a supplementary Mr Read asked: "In the view of the diocese, why is the tried and trusted principle of parishes (or teams) paying for what they get – and getting what they pay for – in terms of clergy time, so wrong?"

The Chairman DBF responded that the old scheme resulted in a huge imbalance in the Share requested per person between parishes. Fairer Share spreads the mission and ministry costs equally and this principle had been accepted by Synod when Fairer Share was originally proposed and implemented.

## **8. Episcopal Ministry**

The Bishop introduced a Motion to amend the Episcopal Ministry Scheme in order to close a loophole and ensure that the instrument of delegation is able to continue during the vacancy following his departure from the diocese.

The Bishop moved:

"That this Synod approve the amended associated instrument of delegation under the Dioceses Pastoral and Mission Measure 2009."

This was approved by Synod.

## **9. Transformed Lives, Transformed Communities**

The Bishop of Sherborne introduced proposals that had been developed by a working group following the discussions at Diocesan Synod in February 2010. He spoke of interweaving evangelism and social responsibility under the “umbrella” of mission and he introduced two case studies which illustrated this approach.

- a) The Archdeacon of Sarum reported on the Ramsbury Area pilgrimage in Pewsey Deanery. He described this as an intensive week of living amongst the people we are journeying with; a holistic engagement meeting people where they are; an example of God coming alongside us, sharing our lives and then changing us.
- b) Mrs Christine Corteen reported on the Sherborne Area pilgrimage in Rossmore, Poole. They had spent time with children, the elderly, council workers and people from all walks of life. Their engagement had been on many different levels including practical assistance and “pub evangelism”.

The following comments and observations came out of the ensuing debate on the proposals and the draft terms of reference for a proposed Council of Mission:

- Mission encompasses many things
- The working group will take advice on the membership of the Council and will seek not to over-burden individuals
- An audit of mission activity has already begun in a small way. To audit the whole diocese is a large task and cannot be done all at once, but it is good to have something to aim for
- The ecumenical dimension already exists but needs to be developed
- The structure of the new arrangements should not be emphasised at the expense of the big picture – it is most important to be out in the diocese alongside people
- The Ramsbury and Sherborne pilgrimages were continuing work that had been going on already, so these were not short visits that would be quickly forgotten
- How do we help all our churches catch a glimpse of this vision?
- The Council of Mission should include outsiders who can speak for and represent those who are not Church members and who therefore do not necessarily understand what we are saying and trying to do

The Bishop of Sherborne then proposed:

“That this Synod

1. Establish a Diocesan Council of Mission with Terms of Reference agreed by Bishop’s Council
2. Task the Council with:
  - a. Undertaking an audit of current activity in Social Justice and Evangelism across the Diocese
  - b. Bringing forward a costed strategy for mission to Synod by November 2011
  - c. Liaising with the Learning for Discipleship and Ministry Council to ensure a co-ordinated response in resourcing the strategy

The Motion was approved by Synod.

## **10. Close of Synod**

The Bishop thanked Synod members at this, his last Diocesan Synod. He reflected on his time in the diocese and the positive changes that had taken place which included greater cohesion and teamwork between clergy, parishes and deaneries and a major change in how the diocese perceives ministry. He also spoke of the value of the Sudan link which drew the diocese into a wider relationship. The Chairman House of Laity, Mr Richard Southwell QC, thanked the Bishop and Sarah Stancliffe on behalf of Synod.

The Bishop then closed Synod.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

10am on Saturday 6 November 2010 at **Market Lavington Community Hall**.