



## DIOCESE OF SALISBURY

### SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD MINUTES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT ST PAUL'S CHURCH, FISHERTON ANGER, SALISBURY ON WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2015

#### 1. **Opening Worship and Presidential Address**

Members took part in the Liturgy of the Word and the Bishop delivered the Presidential Address. Main points included:

- He had written to all the newly elected MPs after the election to tell them about this diocese and help them to see the significance of the Church and faith in their constituency. It was important to give a positive account of who we are in our communities.
- The recent Magna Carta pilgrimage and what Magna Carta represents to the Church and wider society.
- The launch of the Lambeth Declaration on the Environment on the eve of the publication of the Pope's Encyclical on the Environment and the sense of people coming together over an issue that affects the whole world. Christians in this country have a significant public voice on such issues because we are seen as being concerned with our communities.
- The appointment of the Revd Canon Sarah Mullaly, Canon Treasurer of the Cathedral, to be the new Bishop of Crediton.
- Progress report on the appointment of a new Bishop of Sherborne. It was expected that interviews would take place in September with the hope that a new Bishop would be in post in early 2016.
- A brief reflection on what had been achieved over the triennium and thanks to the outgoing members and chairmen. Thanks also to all others who contribute to the running of the diocese, including diocesan officers and staff.

The Bishop concluded by asking God to lead, encourage and sustain us. A full copy of the presidential address is available from the web site at [www.salisbury.anglican.org](http://www.salisbury.anglican.org) or from [fiona.torrance@salisbury.anglican.org](mailto:fiona.torrance@salisbury.anglican.org) at the Diocesan Office.

#### 2. **Approval of Minutes of last meeting, Notices, Co-options and Apologies**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2015 were approved. There were no matters arising. There were no notices or co-options.

Apologies were received from 19 clergy, 18 laity and 1 bishop.

#### 3. **Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow**

The Bishop had now visited all the deaneries and there had been energised conversation in most of them. He had met nearly 2,000 people and distributed c 20,000 prayer cards. He was now very interested in the way in which conversations continued to run locally. He stated that the diocese needs to make a commitment, including financial, to work towards growth and that local church plans will be key because one size does not fit all. Synod considered practical suggestions from Bishop's Council under the headings Pray, Serve, Grow.

The Bishop of Ramsbury and the Director of Learning for Discipleship and Ministry gave a presentation explaining the plans being put in place to help achieve growth in discipleship and vocations. Synod noted that jobs had been created by re-structuring the Learning for Discipleship and Ministry department, not by increasing Share:

- The diocese needs to ordain 60 more clergy on top of those it would normally ordain in order to offset the number of clergy coming up for retirement.
- These additional clergy will need to be resourced.
- A new Discipleship Co-ordinator will be recruited as our current co-ordinator is moving to be available to help parishes and deaneries in developing and implementing their own plans.
- This should nurture vocations and a full time, rather than part-time, Vocations Co-ordinator post has been created.
- They will be supported in their work by a House for Duty Spirituality Co-ordinator.
- The diocese currently has three Young Vocations Champions and is planning for another three.
- There are plans to work with teachers and sixth formers in our Church Secondary Schools.
- A new training course has been created for lay worship leaders. Details are available on the diocesan web site. There is a gap in support for ministry in rural contexts so special consideration is being given to developing training and resources for this. There is also exploration into the possibility of creating a new leadership training programme for both clergy and laity.
- The Energising Local Ministry programme continues to be developed.
- New and experimental forms of Church continue to be explored and a part-time Ministry for Mission Resource Officer is being recruited to continue the work initiated by the Revd Penny Joyce as M4M Support Officer.
- There will also be things to learn from other dioceses.

The Chairman DBF explained the financial implications of the above measures using the scenario of 30 stipendiary priests above the current projection by 2019, a new Housing Co-ordinator post to address new housing developments in the diocese and three additional clergy per year coming on-stream in the period 2020 - 2024. This would suggest an increase in Share of 4.5% over inflation by 2024, this figure continuing for 4 – 5 years before declining somewhat. These costs assume that we are maintaining, rather than growing, the number of clergy in order to off-set the effect of the imminent bulge in retirements. A diocesan stewardship campaign will need to be launched by 2018. Of course, if the diocese starts to grow its Church membership (instead of the current slow decline) then the effect on Share will be proportionately lower. It's really up to us.

In the subsequent discussion, the following comments were made:

- The issue for the Church is the huge number of clergy coming up for retirement which means that many more are needed to come to ordination just for the numbers to stand still.
- There is no restriction from the Sheffield formula on the numbers of stipendiary posts in a diocese. The formula is largely discounted by dioceses now anyway.
- The best way to enthuse people is for them to see actions being delivered.
- The focus on training for rural ministry is to be commended but it needs to be reflected in the Continuing Ministerial Education programme, not just training for new ordinands.
- It would be very helpful for clergy coming new to rural ministry and multi-church benefices to be allocated mentors.
- Placement opportunities would also be helpful.
- Mission-minded ministers from any flavour of theological college should be encouraged.
- Will initiatives be from the Centre or would initiatives be welcomed from individual incumbents? Largely bottom-up is desirable, but there will be a mixture of approaches.
- Standards should be maintained for both clergy and lay training. It is quite hard to define what standards are, but you know when you are in a community which has got it right.
- A sense of mutual responsibility and care is essential. The more we do things successfully together the more trust grows.
- We need to monitor this work and the risks over the coming 3-5 years and see how our plans progress.

#### **4. Annual Report and Accounts 2014**

The Chairman of the Board of Finance reported that although the diocese was not immune from external forces, overall its finances had remained balanced and stable. 2014 results had been positive with over 99% of Share paid and more parishes paying their Share in full than ever before so thanks were due to all. Diocesan investments had performed well and there was relatively strong growth in the UK economy although the recovery was not yet robust and it was wise to remain cautious.

The Chairman DBF then introduced the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2014. The gross positive spending variance, largely due to a stipends underspend, was down to £144,548 which was a big improvement on previous years. The net Share shortfall was the lowest ever at £80,636. He referred Synod as DBF to the SOFA, balance sheet and cash flow which all demonstrated that the cash position remained healthy. The Auditors had again given an unqualified report. The Chairman DBF, on behalf of Synod, thanked parishes for their continuing efforts and colleagues in the Accounts Department, on the Finance Committee and at the Diocesan Office.

In response to queries the Chairman DBF reported that about half of all parishes benefit in some way from the Share discount scheme for early or staged payments. Some were A category or saved up but a few who paid early claimed to be category D which was clearly not possible. Such parishes are referred to the Archdeacon and he hoped that the deanery leadership teams would speak to them also. The poor performance of CCLA investments pulled down the overall returns, but the DBF was gradually disinvesting from them. Where loans were made available to parishes, these were not always spent in one lump; if they were not spent then, after a while, the money ceased to be ring-fenced. The DBF is still holding onto too many houses. It would be good to invest more in ministry and mission. Mr Roger Holehouse, Dorchester Deanery, commented that Salisbury is an exceptionally well run diocese.

The Chairman Diocesan Board of Finance then 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 2014.”

Synod as the DBF approved the Motion unanimously.

#### **5. Appointment of Auditors**

The Chairman Diocesan Board of Finance 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.”

Synod as the DBF approved the Motion unanimously.

#### **6. Diocesan Budget for Share Assessment 2016**

The Chairman of the Board of Finance introduce the Budget for Share Assessment 2016. Recent budgets had all been underspent, inflation was at 0% and investment income reduced Share by 8.1% therefore the proposed budget increase for 2016 was 0% (£9,787,385). He drew attention to the following significant factors:

- The grant to the DBE had been arrived at after much hard work on the part of the DBE and Mr Michael Armstrong who now chairs their finance committee, so thanks are due to them.
- Regarding risks, the most difficult to quantify is clergy numbers.
- Some initial funding for the growth strategy had been included.

He reflected that some parishes are growing in a healthy way so if the declining parishes stopped declining then the diocese would begin to grow. He suggested that when money was endowed “for church buildings”, that someone in the parish should ask the donors if the wording could be changed to “for building the church” which would enable the parishes to use the money for both mission and the building. He reiterated that if any parish needs help, it should ask. In response to a question he explained that the average length of a

clergy vacancy was one year but the DBF was not trying to control the number of vacancies, it was simply trying to budget for what it believed the number might be.

The Chairman Diocesan Board of Finance then moved on behalf of the DBF Executive:

“That the Diocesan Board of Finance/Synod approves the annual Budget for Share Assessment 2016.”

The Motion was approved with one abstention. The Budget will be available on the diocesan web site. Synod thanked the Chairman DBF.

## **7. Elections 2015**

Due to previous items running slightly over time, Synod agreed, with 3 members against, to extend the meeting by 20 minutes under Standing Order 43 if necessary.

The Diocesan Secretary gave details of the General Synod, Diocesan Synod, Board and Committee elections being held this year. She encouraged Synod members to consider standing themselves and to seek people with relevant skills in their communities and encourage them to put themselves forward for election. She asked that deaneries seek to fill the remaining vacancies on the new Diocesan Synod. She hoped that young people in particular could be encouraged to get involved and speak up at both Diocesan and National level. Regarding General Synod, she reported that resources and a link to the General Synod information site are available on the diocesan web site at <http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/whos-who/synods/gs2015>. Encouraging a broad range of people to stand for both Synods is important to making Synod as representational as possible.

## **8. Reflections on the Triennium**

Because of the lateness of the hour it was decided not to proceed with a group reflection on Synod meetings of the past triennium or considerations for the new triennium.

The Bishop introduced Mr Robert Key who was standing down as Chairman of the House of Laity. Mr Key observed that Salisbury is a happy, strong and focussed diocese, aware of its faults and sensitive to difficulties, fearless of its faith and prepared to take risks for Christ. He believed that in Bishop Nicholas God had sent the person we wanted and that the Cathedral led by the Revd Canon June Osborne was a strong community. Salisbury Diocese is in many ways better equipped than it has ever been. He then made three points:

- We need to cherish our bishops, priests, deacons and lay readers, and their spouses and families.
- We have to make far better use of our laity – we are very bad at asking people to do things.
- We have to measure the right things; what matters is what individual Christians are doing in our communities.

Mr Key then thanked Synod members for giving him the opportunity to serve the Church he loved. There was prolonged applause.

The Bishop thanked those now stepping down from Synod at the end of the triennium. He thanked the Ven Stephen Robbins who was retiring from his role as Bishop's Chaplain. He gave special thanks to Mr Robert Key for being an outstanding Chairman of the House of Laity and he awarded Mr Key the Aldhelm Cross. Such an award would not normally be made at Synod, but the Bishop felt that it was a fitting occasion.

Synod presented the Bishop with a tee shirt advertising a specialist ale called “Bishop Nick”.

## **10. Questions**

There were no questions.

**11. Any other business**

There was no other business.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

Synod will next meet from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday 7 November at a Wiltshire venue to be confirmed. Any Motions, proposals for business or other matters should be with the Diocesan Secretary by 15 September.