

MINUTES

DIOCESAN SYNOD AND DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

Meeting Date:	6 November 2021
Times:	10 am – 2.45 pm
Venue:	St Paul’s Church, Fisherton Anger, Salisbury, SP2 7QW

Item	Description	Action
1	Opening worship	
	Opening worship was led by the Bishop of Ramsbury. The Presidential Address was delivered by the Acting Diocesan Bishop. The Address is available on the Diocesan website here: 2021-11-presidential-address (anglican.org)	
2	Approval of Minutes of the last Meeting and Matters Arising	
	Synod and DBF approved the minutes of the meeting on 15 September 2021. There were no matters arising.	
3	Notices, Co-options and Apologies	
	Apologies were received from 13 clergy and 14 laity. The Board of Finance welcomed Mrs Jane McCormick as the recently appointed Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee.	
4	Finance	
4.1	The DBF Chair introduced the item. A review the system of Fairer Share had been suspended at the beginning of the pandemic but had now re-started. Mrs Rosemary Cook, again leading this work, informed Synod/DBF that a consultation questionnaire would be sent out with the request for 2022 Share and results will be shared at the February 2022 meeting of Synod. PCCs will be asked to respond collectively to the survey. Synod/DBF members were asked to consult as widely as possible in their parishes.	All
4.2	Insurance is a major item of expenditure for parishes. The DBF Chair announced that he would therefore be working with an external consultant to lead a review on behalf of all parishes.	
4.3	The DBF Chair introduced the budget for 2022. He reported that Diocesan leadership remained committed to the principle of maintaining a Christian ministry	

in every parish and that this Diocese has one of the highest ratios of clergy to churchgoers of anywhere in the country. Nevertheless, for many years Share was kept below inflation which had led to increasing divergence with both the Retail Price Index (RPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and a major operational deficit which must be addressed. 2022 would therefore be another year of transition as the Diocese moves towards balancing the books. The budget now presented took account of feedback from the recent budget consultation which had started at the September Synod. Members were thanked for expressing their views and encouraging others to do this during the consultation process.

Mrs Jane McCormick spoke to the 5% Share increase proposal. This aimed to reduce the deficit to under £1 million during 2022. External costs had increased, but internal costs had been reduced and efforts continued to find further savings. These central savings do not, however, greatly affect Share because central administrative costs account for such a small percentage of the whole. 74% of Diocesan income comes from parish Share and 87% of Diocesan expenditure directly supports ministry in parishes. Temporary solutions to increase cashflow are being considered, such as use of Total Return and the DBF's ownership and use of Church House. Nevertheless, the only long-term way to maintain clergy in the parishes is for income from parishes to increase to pay for them.

Mr David Robinson, Deanery Treasurer of Bradford Deanery, spoke to his tabled paper entitled "Generous Giving as an Investment". This sought to inform people across the Diocese about what Share does and does not pay for. He emphasised the need to educate the church membership about the actual cost of ministry in the 21st century because if people understand where the Share is going they are more likely to pay. He called for a change in the parish mindset so that people would no longer view Share as optional or a tax but as an investment in people. His speech was greeted with applause.

The ensuing discussion included the following comments and observations:

- There is certainly a great need to provide good education on the Diocesan finances.
- Support and thanks for Diocesan staff who had undergone major reorganization and cuts in order to reduce costs for parishes.
- SDBF Building Consultancy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the DBF which gifts all its profits back to the DBF. These amounted to over £200,000 in 2020.
- Safeguarding costs continue to mount. We need to have the courage to challenge the National Church where demands for extra resources for this area do not appear to be directly linked to keeping people safe.
- Those parishes seeing a reduction in deployment will see a reduction in Share. There will be plenty of opportunities for consultation and feedback.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any recommendation to use Total Return will need to go to Bishop’s Council before a final decision is made. It was noted that care would be needed if choosing to pursue this option. - Some parishes are already using reserves to meet the current Share request. - The link between high church attendance and high clergy to population ratio is important. If people understand this they may be prepared to pay more in order to maintain clergy numbers. - Please clarify in the budget the £309,000 for work with children and young people and what this represents (it is the grant from DBF to DBE). <p>The Chair had also received some questions from Synod members unable to attend the meeting. Responses were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, those setting the budget do understand where every bit of expenditure comes from because they too are ordinary parishioners trying to raise funds locally. There is therefore a very deep awareness amongst all the people who volunteer on the boards and committees or who work at the Diocesan Office. - Rural Hope is a project funded externally by the Church Commissioners and running from 2017 to 2022. It aims to support the work and mission of the rural Church and information goes out regularly in Grapevine and is on the website. - 2022 Share has been based on out of date data from parishes because it was not possible to run the parish Count during the pandemic, but a new Fairer Share consultation is now underway. - Regarding the proposed reduction of 13 stipendiary clergy posts, and whether there should not also be cuts to Diocesan Office staffing: there has already been a 7.6% reduction in the staff salary costs and further reductions are being sought. <p>The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance then moved: “That the Diocesan Board of Finance/Synod approves the annual Budget for 2022.”</p> <p>The motion was carried with 109 members for, 5 against and 1 abstention.</p>	
5	Chaplaincy	
	<p>The Acting Bishop introduced the item and observed that chaplains are a gift to the Diocese and none are paid for through Share. Mr Steve Inglis, Mission Co-ordinator, showed a brief video on the work of chaplains and then introduced a Q and A panel of chaplains led by the Revd Ruth Wells in conversation with the Rev Canon Simon Evans, the Revd Canon Dr Stella Woods and the Revd James Taylor. The panel discussed how they saw chaplain roles fitting with the wider ministry of</p>	

	<p>the Church and the learning they had acquired from working in the chaplaincy context. They also commented on occasions when they had been well supported and considered how Synod might support chaplains and help them to flourish. Synod members were invited to speak to the chaplains informally over the lunch break.</p>	
6	Cathedral	
	<p>The Dean presented the annual Cathedral report. 2020 had been the 800th anniversary of the Cathedral’s foundation but much of the planned programme of events had been cancelled due to Covid as the Cathedral, along with other places of worship, had to learn how to be Church when people could no longer gather in person. Nevertheless, there had been much to celebrate. The Dean concluded his report by playing to Synod a recording of the anthem which had been commissioned for the anniversary celebrations. Synod applauded the Dean and Cathedral team for their response to both Covid and the earlier Novichok crisis.</p>	
7	Diocesan Board of Education	
7.1	<p>The Director of Education, Mrs Joy Tubbs, introduced the Board of Education (DBE) annual report which had already been received by Synod. She emphasised the strategic nature of the DBE’s work, the supportive and collaborative ethos, the work around Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and the efforts the DBE was making to reduce its own expenditure at the current time.</p>	
7.2	<p>Mrs Lizzie Whitbread, Mrs Mandy Christopher and the Revd Canon Jonathan Triffitt described a major piece of work being led by the DBE working closely with the DBF. This aimed to build a network of Community Hubs across the diocese focussed initially on market towns and their surrounding rural areas.</p> <p>Synod saw a short film featuring pupils and others from the Gryphon School which emphasised the importance of inter-generational support networks within these Hubs. Synod also heard from two parishes embarking on Community Hubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A film presentation was seen from Southbroom St James. - Mrs Sarah Beach, Calne Deanery, addressed Synod in person regarding Royal Wootton Bassett. <p>Synod learnt that there is capacity to build this work in the Diocese due to a successful funding bid to the AllChurches Trust. Recruitment is currently underway for three Community Hub Advisers with a view to 12 Hubs being in place by 2021. The model is, however, still evolving. Synod members were challenged to consider what they would now feed back to their deaneries, how the deanery might begin to respond and how the DBE and DBF might help them to respond.</p>	All
7.3	<p>Mr Giles Pugh, Deputy Director of Education, introduce the national Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 2021 and the associated new Salisbury DBE Scheme to replace the now out-dated one.</p> <p>The Acting Bishop of Salisbury moved:</p>	

	<p>“That this Synod:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - notes the new national DBE Measure 2021 - approves the proposed Scheme for the SDBE - resolves that it is ready to make the proposed Scheme and passes a resolution that, conditional on the proposed Scheme being certified by Archbishops’ Council, the Scheme will be made on the date on the certificate on which the Scheme comes into operation (1st January 2022).” <p>The motion was carried with 81 for, none against and 2 abstentions. It was noted that the Scheme will now go to the Archbishops’ Council for approval and will come into effect in January 2022.</p>	
7.4	Synod noted the DBE Trustees for the triennium 2021 – 2024.	
8	Questions	
	<p>The Revd Gerry Lynch, Devizes Deanery, asked:</p> <p>"Clergy aged under 50 without clinical vulnerabilities are not currently scheduled to receive a Covid booster, although they regularly come into close contact with elderly people, including those in care homes. Does the diocese have any plans to ensure all clergy receive a booster dose as key workers?"</p> <p>Archdeacon of Sherborne responded: Clergy are not considered key workers under the national definition, however, Clergy can apply individually as a key worker to receive the booster early, by contacting their GP or the NHS vaccine centre and stating their case, but it will depend on their GP or the NHS in their area whether or not this self-assessment is accepted.</p>	
9	Closing Prayer and Blessing	
	Led by the Acting Diocesan Bishop who also asked Synod members to pray for eleven individuals being confirmed in the Cathedral that evening.	All
10	Dates of Future Meetings	
	<p>Meetings in 2022: 12th February 10am-3pm; June 21st 6-9pm; September 24th 10am-3pm</p>	