

Facilitated Discussion on the Diocesan Strategy

Notes from facilitated discussion groups are attached.

Meetings of the Houses of Clergy and Laity

It was officially confirmed at the meeting of the House of Clergy that Revd Canon Estella Last was elected, unopposed, as the Chair of the Clergy.

It was officially confirmed at the meeting of the House of Laity that Canon Miranda Ford was re-elected, unopposed, as the Chair of the House of Laity.

Meeting of the Diocesan Synod (closed session)

1. Welcome, Apologies and Notices

The Chair welcomed members to Synod. It was reported that there were XX apologies from the House of Clergy and XX for the House of Laity.

2. Diocesan Finances

The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance gave an update on the finances. This included details on the four strands of financial strategy designed to take pressure off Parish Share: the balanced budget; increasing other income; the cliff-edge funding being finalised by the National Church Institutions, and; the SMMIB grant the Diocese would be submitting later in the year.

The update included information on the draft 2024 financial year, the budget for 2025 and the continuing work of the Projections Group.

Papers:

2024 Year-End Forecast

Management Accounts

Updated Cashflow

Meeting the Financial Challenge

The Chair of the Board also announced a comprehensive budget consultation in 2025 which would include various ways for Synod members to help shape that debate.

3. Strategy Reimagined

The Archdeacon of Canterbury gave an introduction, detailing the new focus of **empowering the local church to deliver its mission**. PCCs would be supported in developing Mission Action Plans which would be used to inform Deanery Plans.

The Strategic Programme Manager gave an update on likely date for submission of a funding request and provided details of the current work.

The two new Net Zero Carbon staff members (funded by the NCIs) were introduced to Synod.

Papers:

Synod Strategy Overview

Strategic Programme Report

Net Zero Carbon Report

4. The Report of the Diocesan Board of Education

Synod received a report from the Director of Education. The report included the priorities for 2025 and beyond which included evolution of work with leaders around SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), creating professional connections for church schools and their senior leaders to work collaboratively, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice (EDIJ) and the well-being of leaders.

Paper:

Annual Report

5. Safeguarding

Synod received a report from Fiona Coombes, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer which included details of governance, the number of enquiries received, an outline of the team and the work done.

Paper:

Safeguarding Report

6. FORMAL BUSINESS

Synod received an update on the Vacancy in See Process

Synod noted the Minutes of the meeting of Synod held on 16 November 2024 and received the Minutes of the meeting of Archbishop's Council held on 9 December 2024.

Synod also noted the Draft Agenda for Diocesan Synod on 2 July

Questions, answers and any supplemental questions and answers are produced in an addendum to these minutes.

+Rose closed the meeting with a prayer.

The meeting closed at 3.15