



Diocesan Synod Meeting

Saturday 16 November 2024

John Wallis Academy Ashford

Draft Minutes

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 new members to Synod. It was reported that there were 15 apologies from the House of Clergy and 4 for the House of Laity.

2. Election Announcements

The Chair reported on the following elections:

Archbishop's Council for 2024 – 2027

Ashford Archdeaconry House of Clergy: **Revd Dr Andy Bawtree**

House of Laity: **Vacant**

Canterbury Archdeaconry House of Clergy: **Revd Simon Tillotson,**

House of Laity: **Neil Logan-Green**

Maidstone Archdeaconry House of Clergy: **Revd Gareth Dickinson,**

House of Laity: **Graham Codling**

Vacancy in See Committee

The Chair advised that the Diocesan Secretary was currently in consultation with Archbishop's Appointment Secretary and that the Synod would be updated shortly.

3. A Discussion on the Board's Strategy

Item discussion on the Board's strategy.

Financial Strategy

Anthony Richter (AR), Chair of the Board of Finance introduced the Financial Projections to 2030. The Projections outlined ways in which the Board could break

even by 2029 or 2030. He confirmed that while the Board took action to balance the budget there were likely to be deficits in the coming years.

He outlined plans to increase income and income streams to take away some of the pressure on Parish Share. This included pressing ahead with the sale of glebe land, an application for further funding to SMMIB, the sale of non-strategic assets and an expansion of the work done by the Generous Giving Team.

The NCIs review of Diocesan finances meant the Board could expect significant investment in the coming years including “cliff-edge” funding, an increase in funding to the most deprived areas and enhancements to clergy stipends and pensions.

Strategy

The building refurbishment work costs at St Luke’s, Maidstone had increased considerably, and would need additional resources.

Youth Ministry – there is provision for seven youth ministers. Four Youth Ministers were in place, with three still needing to be recruited.

National shortage of youth ministers, Jen Tobin is working on a pipeline of potential youth ministers.

Ignite – the Aylesham plant is going strong and All Saints, Canterbury are out to advert.

Net Zero Carbon

Funding and resourcing – National Church have produced an impact report. Working with Rochester, resource granted for a shared Programme Manager with Rochester. This post is currently out to advert, interviews will be held December.

The St Luke’s net zero demonstrator project has been successful and is being taken through to the next stage. The Growing Greener conference was well attended. The biggest challenge is the completion of the energy footprint tool.

Questions on the finance strategy

The Rev’d Michael Darkins (Elham Deanery) asked:

The Diocesan scheme for repayment of outstanding deficits of parish share, which is matched by the Diocese, is this still in place and in what way does this support the deaneries?

TR confirmed it would.

Questions on the Strategy

Samuel Keeler-Walker (Canterbury Deanery) asked:

What are we doing about younger people going into ministry and being ordained?

Within the work on vocations providing training for youth ministers working with CCCU was being developed. It was expected this would be part of any future funding bid.

Julian Hills (Thanet Deanery) asked:

Could there be lessons learnt from the Margate Resourcing Church Project? It had got off to a rather bumpy start, the churches do not always know what's happening, there could be better communication deanery-wide.

CE responded lessons learnt is a key part of our project management.

The Rev'd Chris Hogdkins (Romney Deanery) asked:

Where is rural in the Strategy?

The Archdeacon of Ashford confirmed that a Rural Strategy Group had just been convened and the Bishop's Rural Advisor would chair that group. It would report to the Strategic Programme Board.

The Rev'd Dr Canon Jeremy Worthen (Ashford Deanery) commented:

He had noticed that the item on deanery planning that we need to reimagine the process. Has that process started? Who is involved in that and what will it look like?

The Board had completed consultations with Area Deans and Lay Chairs. Further details would follow.

David Kemp (Reculver Deanery) asked:

What is our overarching strategy, what is our vision? The Three Bold Outcomes is not a strategy. What do they feed into? Deanery planning there is no place for this to fit into.

It was confirmed that the Board had an emerging strategy and that parishes and deaneries would help determine what that meant for Canterbury.

Carbon Net Zero

The Rev'd Rachel Webbley (Reculver Deanery) noted:

There is only a 30% return rate in the energy footprint tool. What were the barriers? Was there more strategic communication to sort that piece of the jigsaw out?

CE responded that there is a shortage and overuse of the volunteers. Lots of communication going out, offer of support from the diocese. Have discussed these challenges with our echo champions who are willing to help. We are looking at what we can do to assist in completion.

4. Consideration of the Diocesan Budget for 2025

Diocesan Synod was advised that it must either approve or reject the budget as brought to Synod under the Synodical Government Measure. No amendments were allowed. Synod does have the right to reject a budget in which case a new budget will need to be prepared, and a special Synod meeting will need to be convened for it to be approved once considered by Archbishop's Council.

TR briefed the Synod on the budget presentation.

The Archbishop's Council recognised the impact of raising share and has employed two full-time Generous Giving Advisers (funded by the NCIs) to assist parishes with fund raising and planning around giving. The DBF were supporting the financial strategy and providing a sustainable and flourishing future.

Julian Hills (Thanet Deanery)

Would like good communication about what we are spending our money on. The IT expenditure has increased to £83k, there is parish share contingency of 1.2% which will mean parish share will increase to 6%.

TR's response - the Diocese issues a leaflet on the income and expenditure and provides the facts about our expenditure. The headlines for 2025 are very similar and hopefully that will provide some more information for you.

The increase in IT expenditure was required as our outsourcing fees increased, we had to invest in Cloud software and also in services for parishes in particular parish safeguarding and hubs. The 1.2% contingency added to parish share is the proposal for next year.

David Kemp (Reculver Deanery)

The DBF is making a loss of half million pounds each year and we are running out money, how are we going to plug the gap? The church has not grown in the last 100 years. Certain Evangelical churches are withholding parish share. Money from central church has strings attached. The Church of England can't afford the Church of

England. We need to remodel the church. Contingency surcharge on parish share to balance the books up to 6.5% next year, four times the inflation rate, the whole burden will fall on the parishes that pay, not those parishes who don't pay.

David Kemp proposed Synod rejected the budget and proposed a new budget limiting the increase to 3%. The Chair advised David Kemp that he could not introduce another motion, it would need to go back to the Archbishop's Council and then back to Synod.

David Kemp recommended voting against the budget and sending it back to the Archbishop's Council.

TR's response, simply where we are at the moment, we are working hard to bring other sources of revenue to fruition but it takes time. We will need to take credible proposals to Archbishop's Council. There are quite a lot of issues we are working on and we will bring those back to this meeting as soon as we can.

+Rose commented that she wanted Synod to be aware every time we say to the Diocesan of Board of Finance of Archbishop's Council you have got to balance the books, we can only do that with what we receive, you see the challenges we are facing. The Finance Team provided information on income and expenditure, as well as parish share during the Deanery Roadshows.

TR recommended the motion to adopt 2025 budget. The motion was seconded by Revd Rachel Webbley.

Those in favour 28 - Those Against 26

The 2025 budget was carried.

5. FORMAL BUSINESS

- **The Minutes of the Meeting of Diocesan Synod held on 3 July 2024 were approved.**
- **There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of Diocesan Synod held on 3 July 2024.**
- **Synod received the draft Minutes of the Archbishop's Council held on 5 October 2024**
- **Tony Richter was appointed of the Chair of the Board of Finance**
- **Iain Blythe was appointed Secretary to the Diocesan Synod**
- **Members Questions and Answers**

Mark Wilson, LGBTQ+ Advisor to the Bishop, (Stour Valley Deanery)

Given the importance of the Vacancy in See Committee in the procedure for appointing a new Archbishop of Canterbury or Bishop of Dover, could the Synod consider the possibility of arranging hustings before the elections take place, to ensure that all those involved in the election process have a thorough and informed understanding of the candidates nominated?

Jon Baldwin, Winckworth Sherwood advised:

There is no obligation to run hustings for either the vacancy in see or archbishop's council

elections. Hustings can be a bit of a hostage to fortune, because (certainly for General Synod elections) there is a real emphasis on equality of treatment, meaning that all questions need to

be put to all candidates. One should not do a "BBC Question Time"-style event in which there is a general aim for approximate equal airtime between candidates.

Circulating short written statements is probably sufficient – a video might be an alternative to that, but you might run the risk of people having different technical abilities and equipment.

Supplementary Question:

Two other dioceses have held hustings for the Vacancy in See Committee, given our successful General Synod hustings can that be a consideration for future elections as statements can be very selective?

The Reverend Rachel Webbley (Reculver Deanery)

When will there be an opportunity for Diocesan Synod to engage with any of the five reports from the Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice since Spring 2022, and how can we as a Diocese and Synod take steps to create an anti-racist culture? What steps are already in place to support the well-being and careers of our GMH colleagues and those in our churches and communities?

The Bishop's Office replies

Bishop Rose, together with the Reverend Beatrice Musindi (Bishop's Adviser for BAME Affairs) has organised several bespoke events to support and listen to diocesan clergy from the UKME/GMH community. These have included dinners, seminars and recently an invitation to meet privately with the Revd Guy Hewitt (Director of the Racial Justice Unit). This dialogue is ongoing, and, through listening, other activities will be planned.

Guy Hewitt recently met with EST (Episcopal Staff Team) to discuss the work of the Racial Justice Unit and what support is available to dioceses to develop work in this area. EST acknowledges that this is an area that needs further

development. EST has also discussed this area with Quentin Roper, particularly relating to how we can work with the school's team to develop resources. An ongoing challenge is the method for collecting appropriate data to enable full inclusion.

Bishop Rose is a member of the Church of England Racial Justice Commission. In a recent communication from Lord Boateng (Chair, Racial Justice Commission), he wrote that 'There is a need for the Church of England to better understand how and why it has failed over many years to reflect in its membership a younger and more ethnically diverse population drawn from a broader socio-economic cross-section of the community. The UKME/GMH community has all too often faced indifference, neglect, and on occasion down-right hostility in its interaction with a Church which has failed to embrace them in terms of its governance, liturgy and practice.'

EST believe, as a diocese, we need to be more proactive in this area and welcome the opportunity for the Diocesan Synod planning group to find a future occasion when this can be discussed more widely.

Supplementary Question:

Thank you for this helpful response to my question; it's good to hear how much is already in place to support our UKME / GMH colleagues, and I look forward to chance to explore this in future. In the meantime, would it be possible to share information about AMEN – the Anglican Minoritised Ethnic Network – which is open to white allies as well as the UKME / GMH community. I have recently joined and look forward to learning more from this established network. Incidentally, my understanding is that it is the Archbishops' Commission on Racial Justice (ACRJ), rather than the 'Church of England Racial Justice Commission'.

The Reverend Bob Weldon (Elham Deanery)

Could we please have a Synod where there is no talk about the usual Money and Sex. Could we please have a Synod where there is more emphasis on Prayer

Specific thoughts around prayer are planned as a feature of the March Synod.

Revd Barney de Berry (Canterbury Deanery)

Canterbury Question 1

When was day zero for our bold outcomes? In other words when looking to double the number of children and young people when was that figure taken from and what is that figure?

Colin Evans replies

The baseline year for the Bold Outcomes will be 2023 as this was the year they were adopted. Our primary outcome measure will be “Worshipping Community.” This is in line with the attendance measure used within the national outcomes measurement framework for SMMIB- funded projects. An additional benefit is that the Worshipping Community measure also has a separate breakdown of ages 0-10 and 11-17. We will also track Usual Sunday Attendance as a secondary measure.

The baseline is therefore 1964 (1415 age 0-10 and 549 age 11-17).

Question 2

Recognising that discerning vision and delivering vision are two different things has any work been done to see if having brought us to the point of discerning our three bold outcomes we have the right people and gifts to deliver our vision, in our leadership, on boards and in our parish recruitment?

Colin Evans replies

The strategic theme of ‘Prioritising Young People’ was established some time before adopting our bold outcome. In the light of that we shaped our Youth Enabler role (Georgina Hedley-Smith) to focus on delivering a vision connecting young people, hearing their voice and equipping them as leaders (leading to Growing Young Leaders Course and Fuse Worship events to name two). Additional support to parishes in discernment of their vision has been enabled through Youthscape Launchpad.

We also have a Lead Officer for Children and Young People Ministry (Jen Tobin) who has been in post since September 2023. She provides expertise in this critical area and networks widely across the diocese.

The Children and Young People’s Framework (board) has been in place for a number of years. This has broad representation from practitioners across the diocese. The Framework helps to review and develop the children and young peoples’ strategy and any requests for funding for specific projects. New members are recruited as needed and the Framework would be keen to consider new members who can help with developing this agenda. The co-chairs are members of Archbishop’s Council.

The Strategic Programme Board deals with the day-to-day development and delivery of the strategy. A young peoples’ project board has recently been established reporting to the Strategic Programme Board to provide a greater focus on the SMMIB-funded Youth Minister programme and the development of pathways into children and young peoples’ ministry.

As noted earlier, the co-chairs of the Children and Young Peoples’ Framework are members of Archbishop’s Council which holds the overview of strategy

development and delivery as the standing committee of Diocesan Synod. Archbishop's Council is also supported by officers such as the Director of Education.

At the parish level, parish profiles would all reference our three bold outcomes and these form the basis of recruitment to clergy vacancies. For other positions, the Lead Officer for Children and Young People Ministry has supported parishes in the recruitment of youth ministers and "Future Youth" positions. The People Services Manager also provides advice to parishes on recruitment. There is certainly a need to consider the capacity of those that support this critical area as we continue to develop our strategy.

Julian Hills (Thanet Deanery)

I note from the papers supplied in advance of the Diocesan Synod that there are no elections from synod to the Finance and Assets Committee. I understand that there is a governance review underway but given the current serious financial predicament of the Diocesan Board of Finance is there not an urgent case for elected synod representation on this influential committee for the next triennium which would improve the sense of transparency around this important matter? Whilst I understand that there are Diocesan Synod members on the Finance and Assets committee, they are ex-officio members of synod, and none are directly elected by synod.

Membership of the Committee

The Terms of Reference for the Finance and Assets Committee are determined by the Archbishop's Council. They state that the following are members of the Committee:

The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance (Chair) The Bishop of Dover
The Archdeacon of Ashford
The Archdeacon of Canterbury
The Archdeacon of Maidstone
A representative appointed by the Board of Education
At least three lay members appointed by the DBF (there are currently four members serving)
The Committee is lay led and has a lay majority.

The reality of the Committee is that it makes recommendations to the Archbishop's Council and provides a helpful forum to discuss items in detail. Its minutes are discussed at Council meetings.

As Julian notes, there is a review of governance underway. It is expected to make significant recommendations to Archbishop's Council in 2025.

Supplementary Question:

Please can we ensure the governance review is expedited as soon as possible.

David Kemp (Reculver Deanery)

Bearing in mind that, following this meeting, the Diocesan Synod is likely to be taking a greater interest in the details of Diocesan Strategy than heretofore, could you please provide for the members of the Synod a single sheet summary of the various funding streams available from the central church, specifying such details as what can be funded, what conditions are usually attached and how applications are made. It would also be helpful to know, with details, what awards have already been made to the Diocese since 2020 and what applications are pending.

Colin Evans replies

The answer to the question about sources of funding has not really changed since the last time this question was asked at Synod. Our primary source is the Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) which is overseen by the Strategic Mission and Ministry Board (SMMIB). From the table provided below of past and present applications, it will be seen that there was an unsuccessful application to the national education team for limited funding for some Flourish pilots. Beyond that, there is also some national funding for Net Zero Carbon and church building support, but these are assumed to be outside of the scope of the question's intent.

There is no clear statement of what can be funded by the Diocesan Investment Programme. Nothing is specifically ruled out. However, there are some principles involved:

- The funding requests must align to the national vision and strategy. Our own Bold Outcomes mirror these well.
- The requests need to articulate clearly the “theory of change” i.e. how they are expecting to deliver the desired outcomes.
- How they will become sustainable over a period of time.

There is a lot of work involved in preparing these funding requests.

The process of preparing funding requests is an ongoing dialogue with our National Vision C Strategy Consultant and reviews of potential requests by other members of the national teams and other diocese to help refine them.

From a diocesan perspective, funding requests are developed by the Strategic Programme Board for discussion and agreement with Archbishop's Council prior

to submission. Archbishop's Council are kept informed on items that could potentially be included in future funding requests.

SMMIB can award grants subject to conditions. To date these have been adding extra detail on how the funded projects will be prosecuted.

Summary of funding requests to date and pending. This will be added to the strategy highlight report in future.

Application	Date	Amount	Status	Summary
DIP (SMMIB) 1	May- 23	£1m	Awarded	7 youth ministers, Ministry Experience Scheme, Programme Office “capacity” funding.
DIP (SMMIB) 2	Feb-24	£3.2m	Awarded	Resourcing churches at Margate and Maidstone.
Flourish	Apr-24	£92k	Unsuccessful	Three pilots in schools – now being funded by DBF
DIP (SMMIB) Change Request	Dec- 24	£340k-£531k	Pending	See details below.

The Change Request pending relates to a significant cost escalation and funding shortfall in the St, Luke's Maidstone refurbishment project which is part of the Maidstone Resourcing Church grant. The ranges reflect the three different options that are likely to be submitted to SMMIB. The change request is currently with the national teams for review prior to final submission to SMMIB.

+Rose closed the meeting with a prayer.

The meeting closed at 14.30