

Minutes

Meeting on: Wednesday 10 July 2024

Time: 6.30pm

Location: All Saints' Academy, Blaisdon Way, Cheltenham, GL51 0WH

	Item	Action
1.	Refreshments	
	Members were invited to join the meeting starting with refreshments.	
2.	Worship	
	Bishop Rachel (+RG) led worship.	
3.	Welcome and Apologies	
	+RG noted 21 apologies had been received. She noted that this was Judith Knight's final Synod and gave immense thanks for her.	
4.	Notices and questions	
	None were noted.	
5.	Minutes of the previous meeting	
	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 February 2024 were proposed by Richard Neale (Cheltenham Deanery) and seconded by Chris Hill (Severn Vale Deanery) The minutes were approved <i>nem con</i> .	Approved: minutes of the Synod meeting held on 3 February 2024.
6.	Matters arising	
	None noted.	
7.	Promulgation of Amending Canon	
	Jos Moule introduced the item. He read out the Promulgation of Amending Canon No. 43:	Agreed: Members Agreed to accept the Promulgation of

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<p>“I give notice that, at its February 2024 group of sessions, the General Synod resolved that Amending Canon No. 43 be made, promulgated and executed.</p> <p>“Amending Canon No. 43 makes miscellaneous amendments to the Canons of the Church of England. It complements the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2024.”</p> <p>The item was agreed <i>nem con</i>.</p>	<p>Amending Canon No. 43 (DS24-31)</p>
<p>8. Motion brought forward by North Cotswolds Deanery Synod</p>	
<p>+RG introduced Katrina Scott (KS) (North Cotswold Deanery) and Robert McNeil Wilson (RMW) (North Cotswold Deanery) to introduce the item.</p> <p>KS introduced the item and explained that this was a good time to explore the redistribution of the Church Commissioners financial resources directly to the Diocesan Stipends Fund (DSF).</p> <p>RMW explained the origin for the motion. <i>Background paper (DS24-32)</i></p> <p>He shared that the Motion provides the Church with the opportunity to make a long-overdue, new settlement; the sufficient, strategic re-endowment of dioceses to address the acknowledged and critical deficiencies in DSFs and enable the revitalisation of its parish system possible by making significant and sufficient transfers from Church Commissioner funds to re-endow parish ministry via the DSF.</p> <p>He shared that this motion has already been passed in the Diocese of Hereford. The Motion has also been passed at deanery synod level in two dioceses, Gloucester and in London, where it will also go to diocesan synod. There are a further 17 dioceses working towards raising the Motion. It is anticipated that the final total number raising replica motions will amount to 75% of dioceses.</p> <p>He recognised that the Diocese of Gloucester does great things and hopes this will be supported.</p> <p>KS asked +RG to share her stance on this.</p> <p>+RG shared her full support for this motion, although stressed that she wouldn't want to get into a 'them and us' narrative, it is about how we work together.</p> <p>John Longuett- Higgins (JLH) (Severn Vale Deanery) asked how this money is currently spent?</p>	<p>Received: That this Diocesan Synod:</p> <p>(i) call upon the Church Commissioners and Archbishops Council to undertake everything necessary to effect a redistribution of financial resources directly to Diocesan Stipend Funds to reflect the value of contributions made by Diocesan Boards of Finance to the Church of England Funded Pension Scheme since it was established by the settlement of 1997 (£2.6 billion); and</p> <p>(ii) call upon Diocesan Boards of Finance to manage the funds redistributed as a result of the above to support parish ministry in the ways discerned locally to be most effective in enabling growth and sustaining the Church of England's commitment to be a Christian presence in every community. Supporting background paper - (DS24-32)</p> <p>(DS24-32)</p>

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<p>Jo Pestell (JP) (Gloucester City Deanery) noted that it doesn't say about how the distribution would be made to each DBF and wondered if it needs to be more explicit.</p> <p>Andrew Blyth (AB) (Cheltenham Deanery) highlighted the real challenge around values, and wondered if it will make wealthy dioceses more wealthy and some of the poorer ones just slightly better.</p> <p>KS responded to the questions, noting that the last two questions are helpful in terms of feeding that back to decisions around how redistribution could be made. She highlighted that fairness will be critical.</p> <p>RMW responded to the JLH question and how a lot of emphasis is towards grant funding, but also things other than parish ministry. Grants are useful for what they do, but we need to fund parish ministry.</p> <p>He explained how the wording of the motion did start off being more detailed, but that it has been a deliberate choice to avoid being too specific. This gives flexibility and latitude to the Archbishops' Council.</p> <p>He further described how his starting point was about raising dioceses equitably.</p> <p>+RG highlighted how the elements of justice and parity are key.</p> <p>Jennifer Fellows (Cheltenham Deanery) expressed her support, but voiced a concern that we don't talk negatively about the grants from the Church Commissioners, as they have funded some great ministry. She shared that the word 'parish' ministry concerned her as it is important to support wider mission and ministry in different ways.</p> <p>Roger Widdecombe (Cheltenham Deanery) highlighted item 2 in the Motion and felt there may be a danger of the redistributing of funds becoming less innovative.</p> <p>KS explained how giving the responsibility to the local community for discernment is key and how this is not a motion against mixed ecology but recognises that parish ministry is vital and currently underfunded.</p> <p>Jo Pestell (Gloucester City Deanery) asked if we need to say anything about pension contributions going forward and future actions.</p> <p>RMW explained that pensions are paid out of the Diocesan Stipend Fund, so is already linked.</p> <p>Karen Czapiewski (Cirencester Deanery) shared the national Church's vision to be simpler, humbler and bolder. Currently Dioceses pay funds into the national</p>	

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	<p>Church, which they then redistribute. She questioned why this more complex process happens? She explained how the Church Commissioners are encouraging us to be generous and to use funds being held for rainy days, but that they are not taking their own advice.</p> <p>+RG summarised what members have heard and RMW proposed the motion in his name.</p> <p>Members we asked for a show of hands in support.</p> <p>The item was agreed <i>nem con</i>. (There were roughly 65 Votes, none against and no abstentions)</p>	
9.	<p>Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education: Re-election of CIO Trustees</p>	
	<p>Bishop Robert (+RT) introduced the item describing the paper members had received and asked that they accept the recommendation that Diocesan Synod re-elects Matthew Andrews, Jon Millin and Sue Padfield as CIO trustees for a further term of three years, 13 July 2024 – 12 July 2027.</p> <p>He asked for any questions or comments.</p> <p>None were noted.</p> <p>The item was therefore proposed by +RT and seconded by Sue Cooke (Severn Vale Deanery).</p> <p>The item was agreed <i>nem con</i>.</p>	<p>Received: Members received The GDBE recommends that Diocesan Synod re-elects Matthew Andrews, Jon Millin and Sue Padfield as CIO trustees for a further term of three years, 13 July 2024 – 12 July 2027. (DS24-33)</p>
10.	<p>Annual Accounts</p>	
	<p>Karen Czapiewski (KC) welcomed Lisa Gardner (LG).</p> <p>LG introduced the item.</p> <p>She described an unqualified audit report and no control issues identified.</p> <p>She further described the consolidated balance sheet, noting most of the funds are endowed and therefore restricted.</p> <p>She described income, noting the decrease in parish share, but how the rest is quite consistent.</p> <p>She further explained the notes to the financial statements, highlighting the £8.4 million needed to resource ministry.</p> <p>She explained the various funds and how they are looking.</p> <p>She explained how the stipends fund is made up and what is available within that fund, noting that much of the fund is held in bricks and mortar, but also in the CCLA fund.</p> <p>She ends her presentation to members.</p>	<p>Received: Members received the Consolidated Accounts of Gloucester DBF for the year ended 2023. (DS24-34)</p>

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	<p>KC thanked LG and the work done by her and the finance team.</p> <p>KC asked for a show of hands of members willing to receive the accounts.</p> <p>All members agreed to receive the Annual Accounts <i>nem con</i>.</p> <p>KC suggested if anyone did think of any questions after the meeting, to be in touch with Lisa.</p>
11.	<p>Appointment of Auditors</p>
	<p>Carole O'Donnell introduced Karen Czapiewski (KC) to recommend the re-appointment of the auditors, Haysmacintyre.</p> <p>KC explained how we have a new audit manager, which has drastically changed the dynamic of the service we receive and how they understand church accounts. For that reason, she recommends the re-appointment for 2025.</p> <p>Members were asked to vote by show of hands. The item was agreed <i>nem con</i>.</p> <p>+RG echoed her thanks to LG and the finance team for their hard work.</p>
12.	<p>Drink and Pizza break</p>
	<p>Members shared hospitality provided by Emma Wilson and her team from The Welcome Café Matson</p>
13.	<p>Parish Share Model 2025</p>
	<p>+RG welcomed Karen Czapiewski (KC) to introduce the item.</p> <p>KC reminded members of the background consultation work that has happened.</p> <p>She explained how this feedback was then presented to Area Deans and then to Bishop's Council (BC) where there was broad agreement of direction of travel.</p> <p>BC particularly liked the underlying principles adopted in the proposed model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Clarity, Transparency and Simplicity • Mutuality • Well Informed Generosity.
	<p>Agreed: Members agreed the recommendation that Synod reappoint haysmacintyre as Gloucester DBF's auditors to hold office from 1 January 2025 until the end of the next financial period for appointing auditors under section 485(2) of the Companies Act 2006.</p>
	7.45pm
	<p>Conversation and further consultation on the Parish Share model 2025.</p>

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<p>However, while there was broad agreement with the principles, BC were concerned that not enough detail planning had taken place for the model to be rolled out in 2025. Because of this it was agreed to delay until 2026 for further work and consultation to take place.</p> <p>It was agreed that for 2025, parish share figures would be prepared based on the existing model but moving to a pre-pandemic base line and ensuring we have removed some inequalities. These figures will be discussed initially with Area Deans and Lay Chairs to sense check what comes out.</p> <p>Archdeacon Phil then highlighted the key message that there will be no new parish share model in 2025, but instead from 2026. He shared how the Parish Share Working Group spent a lot of time looking at principles and now needed to work on more detail.</p> <p>+RG asked if any BC members would like to comment and noted there have already been lots of comments at the previous Synod meeting.</p> <p>+RT noted that Bishop's Council felt more time was needed to develop the detail about the new parish share model and that it was agreed that the Archdeacons would work together with LG on this.</p> <p>He also highlighted how this review and work would happen alongside the Deanery Strategic Plans. He noted that this is not the place we hoped to be, but the right place we need to be.</p> <p>Members were asked for any questions or comments.</p> <p>Roger Widdecombe (Cheltenham Deanery) made two points. 1) Will fairness of distribution be taken into account 2) Is there any risk assessment on the LLF process and how that may affect giving?</p> <p>Nick Davies (Tewkesbury and Winchcombe Deanery) highlighted how we have seen papers on principles but not about the detail and that we are talking around a document that they haven't seen.</p> <p>George Collins (Cirencester Deanery) shared how most of Cirencester Deanery are confused and angry about the process. He felt it would benefit from a project manager to drive this through.</p>	

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<p>Karen Czapiewski (Cirencester Deanery) wondered if the 6 page paper to Bishop’s Council could be shared.</p> <p>+RT felt it wouldn’t be beneficial to share the document from Bishop’s Council as further work needs to be done for it to be helpful.</p> <p>Andrew Blyth (Cheltenham Deanery) echoed +RT’s comments and shared he is a member of Bishop’s Council and would agree that the process is not ready. He felt that this decision is good leadership and urged everyone to see this positively.</p> <p>+RG wanted to recognise that we take this seriously and acknowledge that this isn’t ready yet, but clarity needs to emerge.</p> <p>Katrina Scott (North Cotswold Deanery) noted that there has been progress, but there is still more to be done and wondered if it would be helpful to have a statement about where we have got to that can be shared.</p> <p>It was suggested that Archdeacon’s would lead on that with KC.</p> <p>+RG responded to Roger Widdecombe’s question and explained how it had been discussed at BST. She explained we need to look at how we hold the unity whilst discussions are still ongoing.</p> <p>+RG gave huge thanks to BC and KC and all others involved.</p>	
<p>14. General Synod Update</p>	
<p>Margaret Sheather introduced the item.</p> <p>She gave a brief summary of the last few days, how everyday began and ended with worship and all the papers are available to read online. She also highlighted that there are links in the Bulletin message this week.</p> <p>She described the Presidential address given by the Archbishop of York and then went onto share the session on hearing and responding to voices of children and young people. She shared how young people from two schools gave a presentation about how they felt the current position of Children and Young People were seen in the Church.</p> <p>Safeguarding update – there was no decision making at this stage, but there are two suggested new safeguarding</p>	<p>Received: Members received an update from Margaret Sheather of the recent General Synod meeting.</p>

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<p>bodies being reviewed; one taking up operations and one scrutiny.</p> <p>She explained how they were introduced to Lesley-Ann Ryder, the independent co-chair of the response group and how she brings lots of independence to that.</p> <p>LLF – experiences were shared through presentation and formal debate on the emerging proposals which are only in outline, and General Synod members were asked to agree to continue development of the ideas.</p> <p>She shared that the broad direction of travel was agreed, but by narrow margins from both houses of clergy and laity and that a further report in February would bring back more definite proposals.</p> <p>National Church Governance Measure – first consideration. This formalises the proposals to simplify the central structures of the church.</p> <p>Clergy Conduct Measure – at its second stage. This is a generally welcomed measure to replace the Clergy Discipline Measure and aims to ensure a clearer and more proportionate approach to various matters of Clergy Conduct.</p> <p>Abuse (Redress) Measure – also at its second stage. This is an important measure that has involved victims and survivors extensively in its preparation and will contract with an independent body (a firm of solicitors) to administer the redress, financial or otherwise.</p> <p>MS highlighted the large number of Diocesan Synod Motions and Private Members Motions addressed at this Synod illustrates that there is a route through to Synod from parishes and individuals.</p> <p>She shared how they tackled social issues: the Human Dignity of Disabled Children and Foodbanks and Inadequacies in Social Security and also how Katrina Scott made an excellent speech in the latter item highlighting the evidence of rural poverty in apparently prosperous areas.</p> <p>MS then noted the Archbishops’ Council budget for 2025 and apportionment and what that means. She spoke of this being challenged robustly, with dioceses asked to cover just over half of their expenditure (50.2%).</p>	

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	<p>She encouraged members to follow up and read papers online for more detail.</p> <p>+RG thanked Margaret Sheather, Katrina Scott, Robert McNeil-Wilson, Karen Czapiewski and Dana Delap for representing the Diocese of Gloucester as members of General Synod.</p>	
15.	Bishop's Council Update	
	<p>Carole O'Donnell introduced the item and noted it was shared with members for information. The digest has details of some of the discussion and items agreed at the last Bishop's Council.</p> <p>She invited members of Diocesan Synod to forward any questions to a member of Bishop's Council after the meeting.</p>	<p>Noted: Members noted a digest of the business conducted by Bishop's Council since the last Synod is circulated for information. (DS24-35)</p>
14.	Date of next Meeting	
	<p>The Date of the next meeting will be on Saturday 5 October 2024.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel thanked Karen Czapiewski as Chair to the DBF, Katrina Scott, Chair of the House of Clergy, Carole O'Donnell as Chair of the House of Laity, all the staff at College Green and Emma Wilson for providing the refreshments for today from The Welcome Café Matson.</p>	