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1. **Welcome & Introduction** – Revd Liz Palin, Assistant Area Dean warmly welcomed everyone to our Deanery Synod meeting, particularly new members attending for the first time, Vicky Southby from Frampton and Peter Gould from Harescombe, and we look forward to welcoming Revd Natalie Jennings in due course, following her Licensing in July to Amberley, Cherrington & Avening. 20 members attended the meeting, as per the Register and apologies were received from: John Dawson, Sharon Samaroo, David Groom, Henry Parker, Revd Sarah Haslam, Barbara Freeman, Julian Elloway, John Thompson, Cliff Smith, Pam Smith, Revd Kim Trinder, Revd Dave Bishop and Revd John Hunnisett.
  2. **Opening Prayer** – led by Revd Canon Howard Gilbert  
There were special prayers and a moments silence to remember the life of Iris Trask, long-standing and committed Deanery Synod rep for St Laurence. Iris’ funeral will be on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 12 noon at St Larence Church, Stroud.
  3. **Minutes** - Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May at St Laurence Church Hall were accepted as a true and accurate record.  
**Matters Arising** – To note that the role-out of the new Parish Share model has been postponed to 2026. There was a Deanery Treasurers and Incumbents meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October when allocation of the 2025 figures was discussed. It highlighted many threads of concern common across many DSPs
  4. **The Deanery Strategic Plan**  
At the recent DLT meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, a paper ‘Deanery Strategic Plans – Next Steps’, prepared by the Diocese was discussed. Having studied all the DSPs, it highlighted common areas of concern across many parishes and what further help might be needed to aid the process and support Deaneries to achieve the things they aspire to do. College Green staff want to work more collaboratively together with wider groups and have set up a Strategic Implementation Board, who will aim to come out to Deanery Leadership Teams in due course to provide individual, practical help to move our goals into actions. Our next meeting is now confirmed at Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January, 7-10pm at the Porch Room, Minchinhampton with the members of the new SIB Team. Eventually, lay people from across the Deaneries will be part of this team. Our DSP – a paragraph has been added to the first page, in the top box, reflecting feedback from parishes. *SW to re-circulate updated DSP to all members.*  
**Action: SW**
  5. **Parish & Benefice Update**
    - **Stroud Team** – We are delighted to confirm that Revd James Turk has now been appointed as Team Rector for the Stroud Team of churches. There remains a full-time Team Vicar vacancy and the process to fill this post will begin shortly. Please pray for the Team as they move forward with this process.
    - **Minchinhampton** – New Associate Priest to Amberley with Avening and Cherrington Revd Natalie Jennings is settling in well in her new .5 post. We look forward to meeting Natalie in due course.

- **Beacon Benefice** – Revd Andrew Leach has now retired following many years in the Beacon team. We send our very best wishes to Andrew for a very well-deserved retirement, he will be greatly missed. SW to send note of thanks on behalf of Deanery Synod. **Action: SW**

## 6. Reports

**6.1 Report from General Synod to Deaneries** – *As circulated.* Two of the main issues for debate, same sex relationships (*hopefully closer to a final document at the next meeting in February, following lots of follow-up work*) and Safeguarding independence. General Synod members for the Diocese of Gloucester confirmed as:

### **House of Clergy:**

Rev Canon Dana Delap [dana@delap.org.uk](mailto:dana@delap.org.uk)

Rev Canon Katrina Scott [krgscott@hotmail.com](mailto:krgscott@hotmail.com)

### **House of Laity:**

Karen Czapiewski [karen.czapiewski@btinternet.com](mailto:karen.czapiewski@btinternet.com)

Jennifer Fellows [jenniferfellows41@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferfellows41@gmail.com)

Robert McNeil-Wilson [rmw@unisonprojects.co.uk](mailto:rmw@unisonprojects.co.uk)

Margaret Sheather [m.sheather@btinternet.com](mailto:m.sheather@btinternet.com)

General Synod elections will take place again in 2026, do please encourage people from our neck of the woods to stand and vote for them.

## **6.2 Report from Diocesan Synod** – July & October - *As circulated*

### **6.3 Stroud Deanery Financial Update** – *As circulated*

**Parish Share 2024** – Mike Lambert confirmed we have received Parish Share figures up to Month 7 from the Diocese – again, they are slow getting the figures back to us.

**Parish Share 2025** – We are being asked to pay more and it is going to be challenging for everyone. At the Treasurers meeting last Monday allocation of the figures was discussed. It does pay for our ministry so do please think carefully how much you can offer for 2025.

*A point of clarity was raised concerning the first paragraph of MLs recent letter to Treasurers following the meeting – can you confirm that ‘Cergy are paid by the Diocese not by the Deanery’?*

*It was confirmed that we do pay for our Clergy from Parish Share – contributions from around the Diocese are paid to a central pot, this is then shared out around all of the parishes; that covers not only stipendiary posts, but ministry across the Dioceses in all its forms, encompassing clergy housing, Pensions, central services, school work, training, safeguarding and legal advice. Part of the new proposal is that funding central services should not fall on parishes, but will be covered by investment income from other sources.*

**Deanery Administration Function** – Thanks to all those parishes who have made their contribution to the Deanery Administration function for 2024. Do please check with your Treasurer that your parish has made its contribution.

## 7. Deaner Eco Ambassador

Presentation by Jennie South. *Please see the attached written report*

## 8. Meeting Dates and venues for 2025 confirmed as:

<b>Standing/Pastoral Com. 9.30am-12 noon all at The Porch Room Minchinhampton</b>	<b>Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm <i>Coffee served from 7pm</i></b>	<b>Suggested Speaker/Topic</b>
<b>February Tuesday 4th</b>	<b>February- Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> Lakefield School, Frampton</b>	<b>Tbc</b>
<b>April Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>May – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May St Laurence Church, Stroud</b>	<b>Tbc</b>
<b>September Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>October – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Holy Trinity, Minchinhampton</b>	<b>Tbc</b>

***If there are speakers you would like to see, or topics you would like covered, do please let us know***

## 9. Chair's Announcements

- **Diocesan Synod Elections**

Results of the elections confirmed as follow:

**House of Laity 3/6:** Canon Margaret Sheather, Elaine Venning, Gerald O'Brien

**House of Clergy 5/7:** Sue Murray, Area Dean, Peter Francis, Coral Francis, Caroline Bland, James Turk.

Do let us know if you would like a voice in that forum.

- **Lay vacancies on the Deanery Standing & Pastoral Committee**

We have 2 lay vacancies - 3 meetings per year, plus a role on the Deanery Leadership Team. We would be very pleased to hear from you if you are interested. We are very keen to fill to these vacancies so do please think about anyone who might be a good fit in your community, perhaps with strategic planning skills.

Margaret Sheather confirmed that, after 10 years, she will be standing down as Deanery Lay Chair during course of next year, with the May Deanery Synod being her last meeting. Do please look around your lay colleagues and think about who might take on that role. Please contact Margaret if you would like an informal chat about exactly what it entails.

*Email: [m.sheather@btinternet.com](mailto:m.sheather@btinternet.com) Tel: 01453-834961*

## 10. Presentation by The Very Revd Andrew Zihni – Dean of Gloucester Cathedral.

Dean Andrew began by saying that it has been his absolute joy and privilege to be part of the mother church at Gloucester Cathedral – he has now been in post for 1.5 years.

A detailed Power point presentation followed, outlining in detail the Vision, Purpose and Strategic Priorities focused around day-to-day life at the Cathedral. *Please see the attached Power Point document.*

As part of that vision aimed at 'Extending Hospitality', you are always welcome at YOUR Cathedral, as a place of refreshment that offers a real sense of belonging for everyone.

Some of the key areas highlighted for Deaneries, as part of future initiatives will include:

- A programme of Deanery Evensongs

- Choirs visiting parishes for special events

- School Tours and education programmes

- In Tune music outreach programme through Organ and Singing academies

- Lectures and exhibitions, enabling connections between life and faith.

- More opportunities for Quiet Days.

- Net Zero programme

- More joined-up working with the Diocese, and exploring new ways of collaboration

So, a brief whistle-stop tour of how we see the Cathedral moving forward. Focusing more on local partnerships with other organisations, sharing experience and expertise. This includes work around social responsibility, community engagement, working more closely with other groups in the Gloucester City, such anti-social behavior, mental health and wellbeing – a voice that brings together all different aspects of life to the Cathedral.

There following a time for questions and observations, which included:

- Observation: Points that appear to be missing, the really important Christian priorities of Mission, Discipleship and the Bible,  
*Everything we do encompasses mission; to provide enriching spiritual engagement for everyone where ever they might be on their spiritual journey – 'every visit is a pilgrimage' within the rhythm of life of the Cathedral. To be 'In tune with Heaven and in Touch with Daily Life'*  
  
*Benedictine tradition of hospitality and Gospel principles – encouraging 'rules of life' that build on community, inspire personal development, enabling connections between life and the Christian faith through everything that we offer at the Cathedral.*
- 'Our' Cathedral – a place for everyone - *really good to hear this terminology used.*
- Priorities and next steps  
*To review and evaluate as we work to build future patterns, with conversations and feedback, with a constant sense of 'how are we doing' as we develop our goals.*

Grateful thanks to Dean Andrew for coming to speak to us after such a busy day and for everything that he does at the Cathedral. Volunteers are always welcome, do please see the weekly Bulletin for more information. More information will be coming out to parishes in due course.

**11. Closing Prayer** - meeting closed with prayer led by Dean Andrew