

# Minutes

Meeting on: Saturday 1 February 2025

Time: 9am

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

Item	Action
1. <b>Refreshments</b>	
Members were invited to join the meeting starting with refreshments.	
2. <b>Welcome and worship</b>	
Members were invited to join worship led by the Revd Jo Pestell and Carole O'Donnell.	
3. <b>Bishop Rachel's Presidential address</b>	
Bishop Rachel gave her Presidential Address. A link to the website where you can read the address can be found here <a href="#">Message from Bishop Rachel, 3 February 2025 – Diocese of Gloucester</a> This was also recorded at the meeting and can be viewed here: <a href="https://youtu.be/ZBtHj256Bbw">https://youtu.be/ZBtHj256Bbw</a>	
4. <b>Apologies</b>	
Bishop Rachel noted 34 apologies had been received.	
5. <b>Notices and questions</b>	
None were noted. Notices – Bishop Rachel announced Katrina Scott's new role as Archdeacon of Cheltenham and her induction service on Sunday 30 March at the Cathedral. All are welcome.	
6. <b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	

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	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2024 were proposed by Chris Hill (Severn Vale Deanery) and seconded by Revd Susan Cooke (Severn Vale Deanery) The minutes were approved <i>nem con</i>.</p>	<p><b>Approved:</b> Members approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2024.</p>
7.	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p>	
	<p>Benjamin Preece Smith announced the uncontested elections which were also circulated ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>He encouraged others who may be interested in filling the outstanding vacancies to be in touch with him.</p>	<p>As accepted by the chair.</p>
8.	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p>	
	<p>Carole O'Donnell introduced the item and invited Bishop Robert to speak in his role as Deputy Lead in Safeguarding for the Church of England.</p> <p>Bishop Robert shared a current overview of the national safeguarding picture and how his national role held a focus on Theology and Safeguarding.</p> <p>He referred to the Scolding Report, and urged members to read it if they haven't already done so. He continued to share how the Makin report is a devastating read of cover up and deception in the life of our Church.</p> <p>Bishop Robert described the five key safeguarding focus areas - Culture, prevention, recognising and assessing risk, ensuring the voices of victims and survivors are heard and taken seriously, and a church where there is learning, supervision and support.</p> <p>He noted it was clear from recent events that this culture was not being lived well in many places across the Church, but that none of this should undermine the excellent work in this diocese led by Brett and his team.</p>	<p><b>Received:</b> Members received a verbal update on the 'national picture' from Bishop Robert in his role as Deputy Lead Bishop for Safeguarding for the Church of England.</p> <p>Debbie Innes-Turnill Chair of the Safeguarding Advisory Panel, and Safeguarding Manager Brett Riches, gave an Annual Safeguarding Update. (DS25/1)</p>

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<p>Bishop Robert introduced Debbie Innes-Turnill.</p> <p>Debbie started with some thank you's, especially to our safeguarding team who are passionate in their work for prevention and our Parish Safeguarding Officers for all they hold and do.</p> <p>She shared how we find ourselves in uncharted territory which undoubtedly will have a ripple effect. She explained how media stories are thick and fast and how there are proposals for significant change to safeguarding taking place at General Synod.</p> <p>She talked about our INEQE audit that took place this time last year which highlighted how safeguarding in the Diocese of Gloucester is strong, but noted that we always want to improve and do even better.</p> <p>Debbie described that Brett Riches had started his new role as Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Manager, and invited Brett to speak.</p> <p>Brett Riches introduced himself to Synod and then the rest of the team. Contact details can be found here - <a href="https://gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/safeguarding/contacts/">https://gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/safeguarding/contacts/</a></p> <p>He highlighted some of the key strengths identified in the INEQE audit, which includes collaboration and partnership, strong safeguarding leadership, high quality casework, high quality training delivery and strong engagement in national developments.</p> <p>He also highlighted the Makin Review and the direct impact of that in our diocese with six named individuals.</p> <p>He then talked through the Safeguarding options being presented to General Synod. (10-14 Feb)</p>	

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<p>Debbie Innes-Turnill then asked members to discuss in small groups the impact they feel the Makin review has had on the diocese and what worshipping communities need and want to support safeguarding in their local context.</p> <p>Debbie then summarised the discussions. She described how she was hearing that lack of PSOs and volunteers coming forward was a big issue and that many current Parish Safeguarding Officers no longer feel able to continue in their role due to expectations.</p> <p>She also highlighted a need for some work around making sure everything we do is 'trauma informed.'</p> <p>Communication was highlighted and questions were raised around how do we communicate more with our parishes and with the wider community about the positive role of safeguarding in our diocese.</p> <p>Andrew Smith, Severn Vale Deanery shared how he found the discussion really good and positive, but how his group felt that the Parishes have been left to develop their own approach to safeguarding independently.</p> <p>Brett was surprised to hear he felt that way. He shared how much process and guidance is produced from the NST and that this is all available and expected in the delivery of safeguarding locally and that the training provided all of this information. There is a Safeguarding Handbook available to all parishes and policy pro formas readily available too. He also highlighted how we have the Safeguarding Dashboards and they continue to be rolled out.</p> <p>Dana Delap, North Cotswold Deanery shared a moving account as a survivor. She felt that there are some brave people out there who would speak about their personal experiences, which can make safeguarding more relevant to many people.</p>	

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<p>Debbie thanked Dana for sharing her personal experience and for being so brave.</p> <p>Carole thanked members for the questions and comments and directed any further questions to be forward to Debbie and Brett after the meeting.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel asked for members to take back the report to their deaneries. She highlighted that the Safeguarding Team, Bishops and Archdeacons are always happy to answer any questions or concerns.</p> <p>She gave immense thanks to members, to Debbie, Brett and all the team.</p>	
<p>9. <b>Break</b></p>	
<p>Members were invited to break for refreshments supplied by The Welcome Table Café.</p>	
<p>10. <b>Environment</b></p>	
<p>Archdeacon Hilary introduced the item sharing her pleasure in being able to give an update to Synod on our work on the Environment within the Diocese, giving life to all the marks of mission in the work that we do.</p> <p>She explained how the Net Zero Action Plan will come to Synod later this year and how there is already lots happening across our worshipping communities.</p> <p>Archdeacon Hilary handed over to Erica Siddal, and thanked her for her energy and her commitment, along with all our colleagues for their commitment on this work.</p> <p>Erica introduced herself, explaining how her area of focus is on clergy housing and how the roles she and her counterparts in Worcester and Hereford have are mainly funded by the National Church.</p>	<p><b>Received:</b> Members received a Net Zero Carbon update from Erica Siddall, Net Zero Carbon Project Manager and Archdeacon Hilary.</p>

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<p>She presented her PowerPoint explaining the current work happening around Net Zero. She reiterated the development of the Net Carbon Zero Action Plan being led by a strategic group.</p> <p>Sandra Millar shared that she is exploring how we resource parishes more widely around environmental engagement.</p> <p>She described how herself and her team are meeting with the Deanery Eco Ambassadors and the work the Communications Team do to share good news stories and practice.</p> <p>She urged people to invite members from the Mission and Ministry Team to speak in parishes.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel thanked Archdeacon Hilary, Sandra Millar and Erica Siddal for their work, noting there are lots of other people out there doing great work too.</p>	<p><b>Received:</b> Members received a verbal update on the wider Environment work across the diocese from Sandra Millar, Director of Mission and Ministry.</p>
<p>11. <b>Financial Update</b></p>	
<p>Jo Pestell introduced Lisa Gardner and David Roberts to Synod.</p> <p>David gave an update on the Parish Share Model. He shared how himself, Lisa and others are meeting with deanery teams over the next three months for further discussions.</p> <p>Lisa gave a brief overview of our financial position. She urged members that if they know they have outstanding Parish Share Returns to send them in as soon as possible.</p>	<p><b>Received:</b> Members received a verbal update on the GDBF's initial financial outturn for 2024 from David Roberts Chair of the DBF and Lisa Gardner, Chief Financial Officer.</p>

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<p>She further described a summary of the figures with members and how grateful we are for all the contributions made.</p> <p>Jo Pestell thanked Lisa and her team for all their hard work.</p>	
<p>12. <b>Bishop's Council Update</b></p>	
<p>Carole O'Donnell shared that the update has been circulated for information only, and any points of clarity should come to Benjamin Preece Smith.</p>	<p><b>Noted:</b> Members noted a digest of the business conducted by Bishop's Council since the last Synod is circulated for information (DS25/2)</p>
<p>13. <b>Date of next Meeting</b></p>	
<p>Bishop Rachel highlighted how there was an additional scheduled Synod meeting on 27 February, to further discuss Living in Love and Faith, but how all the components for that meeting are not yet complete.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel suggested that we postpone the proposed meeting from February, to either May or June. A new date will be circulated as soon as possible.</p> <p>The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 2 July at All Saints Academy from 6.30pm.</p>	