



SUPPORTING PAPERS

DIOCESAN SYNOD

ON 22nd MAY 2021



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MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

AGENDA ITEM 2. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING ARRANGMENTS

Introduction

There have been a number of changes to the national framework for delivering safeguarding training in the Church of England over the last twelve months. As this remains a fluid environment, with a new consultation framework currently at consultation stage, this paper will not set out all of those changes. The most impactful change, by far, has been the shift from the old 'C2' training module, delivered face-to-face, to the new 'Safeguarding Leadership' module. This module has necessarily been delivered via Zoom during the Covid-19 lockdown but is likely to be delivered by either online or face-to-face methods as lockdown lifts.

The New Elements of Safeguarding Leadership

Safeguarding Leadership differs from the old C2 module in the following key aspects:

- It is delivered via two 90-minute sessions rather than a longer 3-hour session as with C2
- There is pre-course, mid-course and post-course work to do. This requires participants to complete pre-course reading and written work and post-course reflective written work. These are essential elements of the course, without which participants cannot be said to have completed the training.
- Safeguarding Leadership should be delivered by two trainers to a maximum of 12 participants. This is essential part of the 'learning pathway' model which is intended to underpin the training approach. 'Fidelity' to this model of training includes keeping to this ratio of trainers and participants.
- Safeguarding Leadership intends to generate a 'facilitative' and 'transformative' model of participant-learning. This model is contrasted to what, it is claimed, was the 'chalk-and-talk' model of learning which characterised previous training methods.
- Safeguarding Leadership is intended to be an essential part of the 'culture change' vis-à-vis safeguarding which it is believed the Church of England needs.

The Impact of Safeguarding Leadership in Chichester

What is set out below is not the result of an empirical evaluation, of which none exists. It is, however, a reliable report of the range of impacts and reactions to Safeguarding Leadership across the Diocese.

- Safeguarding Leadership places far higher demands on the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, in terms of both administration of training and delivery. An early estimate within the Team found that there was a four-fold increase in administration and delivery time for the same number of course participants, compared with C2.
- Some of this increase has since been mitigated by streamlined administrative processes, but the demands of Safeguarding Leadership continue to weigh much more heavily on the Team than C2 did.
- There has been an order-of-magnitude increase in complaints from participants about the demands of Safeguarding Leadership. This is difficult to quantify in any empirical sense, but anecdotally we have gone from four or five complaints a year to between five and ten a month. Complaints revolved almost entirely around the level of work expected of participants, especially the pre-course written work.
- There have been a number of resignations, particularly of Readers and Parish Safeguarding Officers, citing the extra demands of Safeguarding Leadership as the reason. Given that these resignations have included PSOs it is not possible to ascribe these resignations to an opposition to safeguarding *per se*.
- *However*, feedback from trainers has noted a number of positive aspects of the new training. In particular, some of our very experienced trainers have noted that participants arrive at the first session, having completed the pre-course work, much better to engage with the subject of safeguarding than in the previous C2 module. All trainers have noted that participants value the peer-to-peer model of learning that is central to Safeguarding Leadership.

Chichester Responses to date

- The Safeguarding Team have incorporated a number of streamlined administrative processes (e.g. using the registration function within Zoom). This has had a quantifiable although limited effect.

- The Safeguarding Team have re-written the workbook which accompanies the Safeguarding Leadership course, in response to the complaints from participants about the original, nationally-provided workbook. (The National Safeguarding Team have said that they will incorporate many of the elements of Chichester's new workbook in a forthcoming national revision).
- The Safeguarding Team are working with the National Safeguarding Team to develop a Learning Management System for the delivery of all safeguarding training, including Safeguarding Leadership, which should greatly reduce the administrative workload for training delivery. However, it will not reduce the demands for participants.

Proposals

These proposals have been placed before the Safeguarding Advisory Panel for scrutiny and amendment as necessary and have been approved by the Bishop's Staff and the Bishop's Council. Rather than set out a comprehensive safeguarding training programme for the Diocese containing all possible elements, the list of approved proposals below focuses on particular choices that should be made by the Diocese at this point.

Approved Proposals:

1. All relevant church officers in Chichester will be required to complete Basic Awareness (formerly 'C0') and Foundation (formerly 'C1'). This will include all clergy (licensed and PTO), all Readers (licensed and PTO), parish safeguarding officers, churchwardens, all those working or volunteering with children and 'vulnerable adults', and PCC members.
2. All licensed clergy, licensed readers, parish safeguarding officers, and those taking leading roles in working with children or vulnerable adults, will be required to complete Safeguarding Leadership.
3. PTO clergy and PTO readers who have a clear leadership role in their parish will be required to complete Safeguarding Leadership.
4. PTO clergy and PTO readers who do not have such a role (i.e. who periodically take services but do not contribute more broadly to the leadership of their parish) will not be required to complete Safeguarding Leadership.

5. Churchwardens will not be required to complete Safeguarding Leadership.
6. The Safeguarding Team will produce a 'handbook' for churchwardens which sets out the role vis-à-vis safeguarding. This will be produced in collaboration with a small team of experienced churchwardens across the Diocese.
7. This 'handbook' will be incorporated as a specific item in Simple Quality Protects, to ensure that existing and newly-elected churchwardens make use of it.
8. Individuals in roles which are exempt from the *requirement* to complete Safeguarding Leadership will nevertheless be *permitted* to complete it should they wish. Larger, more active parishes with substantial work with children and vulnerable adults will be encouraged to make local decisions regarding whether those in such roles will be required, under the authority of the PCC, to complete Safeguarding Leadership.

Colin Perkins
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor

AGENDA ITEM 3. REPORT FROM DIOCESAN OVERSEAS COUNCIL (DOC)

Over the last year Bishop Ruth has taken over the Chairmanship of the DOC. In taking stock of the links that we have, we are conducting a comprehensive review of the funds that we hold and the use to which they are put. This is a work in progress but we want to report to the Diocesan Synod that there are considerable sums of money that have accrued in a number of accounts, which are restricted towards particular uses in particular areas of the world church.

We have spent time over the winter liaising with other Church of England Dioceses so as to hear their models of best practice. In all cases, Dioceses in the CofE are moving away from the old model of being charitable fund-awarding bodies to the global south, and to a new model based firmly on the footing of fellowship and prayer and not a flow of funds. The DOC seeks to make that transition too.

Rev Christine Keyte, our Diocesan Companion Links Officer, writes:

“The reality now in 2021 is that the work of the DOC has faced some challenges over the last eight years. The links are meant to be primarily about Christian friendship and companionship and about Christians who live in very different contexts praying, supporting each other, and learning together. Although financial support has not supposed to have been the primary focus of the links, our relative affluence means that we are able to help our partners especially in church based projects that are difficult to fund from other sources. However, this has also been somewhat complicated by history and attitudes residual from ideas about mission from the past.

The complexities and challenges we face in terms of charity law and accountability are continuing to increase, as well as looking to meet expectations of donors, and the essential aspect of being sensitive to cultural and contextual differences mean administering the funds is a highly complex task. Although financial support for projects will continue to be a factor in Companion Links, for as long as unjust economic and political structures perpetuate the North/South divide, it is particularly a point of concern that the guiding model in many instances continues to be that of donor/recipient.

Here at Chichester Diocese, in our long term history with our Companion Links, we are well positioned to the work of building continued co-operation and friendship with our links in Africa. It is going to take some rethinking and revisioning, but it is possible that it can be more about the mutual sharing of wisdom and experience within rich theological reflection, and fellowship that is lifegiving for all concerned.”

A summary of the funds we hold is below:

Name of Fund	Closing Cash Balance 2020	Value of investments as at 01/01/2019	Value of investments as at 31/12/19
Harvest Appeal	60,603		
World Church Experience Fund	43,203		
Friends of Nakuru	26,676	80,167	91,053
Inter-Diocesan West Africa Link (IDWAL)	8,704	24,935	28,925
Missionary Studentship	13,459	31,318	35,657

The mind of the DOC is to reduce the funds we hold by making some substantial one-off donations this year, in the light of the covid crisis. In addition, we seek to reignite and, in some cases, re-imagine the purpose of some of the funds.

In summary,

- World Church Experience Fund: we seek to reimagine this fund to enable clergy to receive bursaries to engage in ecumenical theological dialogue overseas, and to enable some training curates to experience a pilgrimage to the Holy Land
- Friends of Nakuru and IDWAL: we seek to focus these funds on supporting theological colleges, with bursaries for students in training for ministry
- Missionary Studentship Fund: a fund restricted to the training of ministers for overseas mission; we are exploring a new bursary relationship with All Nations Theological College

The Harvest Appeal - decisions for this Synod

The Diocese of Chichester has partnership links with six Dioceses in the Province of West Africa and five Dioceses in Kenya. Over the past years, funds have been raised by churches, schools and individuals in Sussex through the Diocesan Harvest Appeal to help church-based projects in West African and Kenyan Dioceses.

Funds have been raised with the goals of: aiding reconstruction, agriculture, training and education, the empowerment of women, and food security. Money has clearly accrued in this account to the sum of £60,603 and it needs to get out to those in need, especially at this time of global crisis.

Our proposal is to make 3 x £15k gifts to:-

- **Mother's Union**
- **Tearfund**
- **USPG**

Working with each of these trusted Christian partners to ensure the funds are put to projects that honour the motivation of the givers.

1) **Does the Synod support this proposal?**

The DOC are also reviewing the role of the annual Harvest Appeal, given that funds have accrued for so many years. **We propose that we cease Harvest Appeals for 2021 and 2022 and parishes look to their own charitable fundraising for their own overseas links.** We review in 2022 whether to re-start the Harvest Appeal in 2023.

2) **Does the Synod support this proposal?**

+Ruth Horsham
Revd Christine Keyte
May 2021

AGENDA ITEM 5. SCHEME UNDER THE ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION AND CARE OF CHURCHES MEASURE 2018

Revised Diocesan Scheme for the Inspection of Churches

There is a requirement for Church of England churches to be inspected every five years. The quinquennial inspection is a thorough survey of the fabric and aims to identify issues that have arisen since the previous inspection and to establish priorities for repairs to ensure the long-term preservation and safety of the building. The quinquennial inspection must be carried out in accordance with the current Church of England legislation and the Diocesan Scheme for the Inspection of Churches.

Through the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2020 (Section 7), which came into force on 1st September 2020, the General Synod made some changes to the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, which covers the process for appointing Quinquennial Inspectors and who may be appointed. The revised Diocesan Scheme for the Inspection of Churches is intended to ensure that the system is our diocese is compliant with the new legislation.

Under the new legislation and the revised Diocesan Scheme, the diocese will no longer keep an 'Approved List' of architects and surveyors but will maintain a Register of all those currently working as Quinquennial Inspectors and those interested in getting involved in this work. Parishes wishing to appoint a new quinquennial inspector will need to consult the DAC before making the appointment, and the DAC will advise on suitability of the proposed candidate. The DAC's advice will generally be in line with the Church Buildings Council's guidance on Quinquennial Inspections, and will aim to ensure that a suitably qualified person, who has the experience and expertise needed to work on the particular church building, is appointed.

Further reading

For further information, please see:

- [Church of England \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Measure 2020, Section 7](#)
- [General Synod paper GS 2104X - the Explanatory Memorandum](#)
- [The Church Buildings Council's Guidance on Quinquennial Inspections](#)
(this includes some helpful resources for parishes, including a draft Letter of Appointment and scoring criteria for use during the tendering process for appointing a new inspector)

For decision:

The Diocesan Synod is invited to consider the following motion:

"That the Scheme on pages 9-10 of the supporting papers be made".

**Dr Emma Arbuthnot (Senior Church Buildings Officer)
The Revd Paul Doick (DAC Chair)
29th April 2021**

DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER

Diocesan Scheme for the Inspection of Churches

(under the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018 (“the Measure”) as amended from time to time)

1. This Scheme is established by the Chichester Diocesan Synod by a Resolution dated [insert date]. The Scheme shall come into effect immediately and supersedes all previous Schemes made under the Measure.
2. As required by the Measure (as amended), all parish churches, any other consecrated church or chapel and any building licensed for public worship (except institutional and cemetery chapels) shall be inspected at least once in every five years by a suitably qualified person.
3. Before making any appointment of such a person, the PCC must consult the DAC.
4. The Diocesan Advisory Committee “DAC” shall maintain a register of current Quinquennial Inspectors within the diocese and those who have expressed an interest in becoming Quinquennial Inspectors, and this register is available to parishes on request. It may also be possible for a suitably experienced and accredited professional who is not presently on the register to be appointed as Quinquennial Inspector.
5. The DAC Secretary will also maintain an internal list of Quinquennial Inspectors that the DAC has agreed may be appointed as Quinquennial Inspector for any church in the diocese. If the proposed Quinquennial Inspector is not on the pre-approved list, the DAC Secretary will add the proposed appointment to a DAC agenda for discussion at a DAC meeting. If the proposed Quinquennial Inspector is not known to the DAC, they may be invited for an informal conversation with the DAC Architects’ Panel, before the appointment is considered.
6. When advising on the appointment of Quinquennial Inspectors, the DAC must have regard to the guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council.
7. The responsibility for appointing, and the terms of the appointment of, a Quinquennial Inspector to carry out the survey and to supervise any subsequent repair work shall rest with the Parochial Church Council (“PCC”). The PCC must be satisfied that the person to be appointed has the necessary qualifications and experience.
8. The Diocesan Board of Finance shall delegate to individual PCCs the responsibility for establishing a fund to pay the fees for inspections undertaken under the Scheme. It shall therefore be the responsibility of each PCC to agree the amount and basis of the fee with its appointed Quinquennial Inspector. It is recommended that the fee should be calculated taking account of the recommendations in the latest guidance issued by the Church Buildings Council (“CBC”) and the conditions of engagement of the adviser’s professional body.
9. The inspection shall cover all items listed in guidance issued from time-to-time by the CBC. For the avoidance of doubt, this shall include not only the fabric and fixtures of the building but also (a) any movable article in the church deemed to be of outstanding architectural, artistic, historical or archaeological value, of significant monetary value or at special risk of

being stolen or damaged; (b) any ruin in the churchyard which has been designated (“Scheduled”) as being of outstanding architectural, artistic, historical or archaeological value; and (c) any tree in the churchyard for which a Tree Preservation Order is in force.

10. The inspection is to be visual, made from ground level, ladders and any accessible vantage points. Only selected areas are examined in detail; parts of the structure, which are inaccessible, enclosed, or covered, need not normally be opened up unless specifically requested. The inspection is to include so far as practicable all features of the building, and to cover all aspects of conservation and repair, but does not include organs, for which a separate system exists.
11. The PCC should provide (at its own cost) ladders, scaffolding and attendance as necessary in accordance with all applicable health and safety legislation. The Quinquennial Inspector will recommend what is required to complete the survey, including any uncovering of concealed spaces which is considered prudent, subject to the obtaining of any necessary authority.
12. From the notes taken at the inspection, the Quinquennial Inspector shall prepare a report based on the format in “*A Guide to Church Inspection and Repair*” (or such successor guidance as may from time-to-time be approved by the DAC).
13. Within three calendar months from making the inspection, the Quinquennial Inspector shall send a copy of the report to the PCC of the parish in which the church is situated, and an electronic copy of the report to both the DAC and the relevant Archdeacon. A further copy is to be retained by the Quinquennial Inspector.
14. The Secretary of the DAC shall be responsible for keeping a register of those buildings which are covered by the Scheme. The register shall also include dates of inspections and reports.
15. Nothing in the Measure or this Scheme detracts from the responsibility of every PCC for the proper care of each church under its authority and for applying for a faculty before any work is put in hand.
16. Nothing in this Scheme shall alter the powers of an Archdeacon to ensure the inspection of every church in his Archdeaconry once in five years, as laid down in Sections 47 and 48 of the Measure, as amended.
17. Any questions which may arise concerning the interpretation of this Scheme shall be referred to the Bishop’s Council, the decision of which shall be binding.
18. This Scheme shall be subject to amendment only by means of a further Resolution of the Diocesan Synod.

AGENDA ITEM 8. REPORTS FROM GENERAL SYNOD

General Synod November 2020

This was a meeting of the General Synod via Zoom which lasted three days! The staff at Church house Westminster had worked hard to ensure that everything was in place and apart from a few hiccups with the voting system we were able to proceed once we were accustomed to the inevitable time lag from being called to speak and unmuting.

The Standing Orders for Remote Meetings of Synod were carried as was the enactment of Canons 40 and 41. This was followed by a Presidential address (from both Archbishops). Archbishop Justin talked of the effects Covid-19 has had on the country and in particular on our parishes, but he also spoke of the incredible ways in which Churches have helped their communities. He spoke of the economic challenges we all face, of the results of the IICSA report and the present debate over international funding. He mentioned the immigration problems and climate change, but in all of this we should act in Faith and look to Christ. Archbishop Stephen explained how the various groups had been set up for the 'vision and strategy' work. He said that we should trust in God and love each other as difficult decisions would have to be made.

We had a presentation on the Living in Love and Faith project. The resources have now been produced and parishes are expected to engage with the process over the next year. A debate followed on a response to Covid-19. It was noted that those living in poverty were more likely to contract the virus. Home working is not always possible, space is limited and finances are lower. Within our Church communities use has been made of technologies leading to a 'mixed ecology of Church'. Amendments to the motion included disabled people, children living in poverty, those denied equal access to health care and those in residential care. Another amendment from the Archbishop of York called upon HMG to preserve the 0.7% of GDP foreign aid budget. The amended motion was easily carried. The Business Committee's report on the Agenda attracted some criticism – a desire for more debate on the future of the Church, closed churches, finance and the concern over the parish system. although the motion was carried there were a significant number of votes against taking note of the report. Question time ended the day.

Tuesday began with a presentation on the Vision and Strategy project. The Archbishop of York had led a consultative process which included hundreds of people of all ages and from all parts of the Church and from outside the Church. The main theme was that the Church must be Jesus shaped and Christ centred. The Church needs to resource Missionary Disciples, to use a 'mixed ecology', to have diversity in unity, to be younger and more diverse and to invest in the virtues of simpler, humbler and bolder.

The Cathedrals measure was presented for final approval. John Spence presented the Archbishops' Council Budget and Apportionment for 2021. He said that in spite of financial concerns there are signs of hope. Questions were asked about the funding of lay ministry training which he said was in mind for the future. Numbers have fallen significantly over the last five years and it is up to us to help growth and invest in the future of the Church. Looking to the sustainability of churches he said we need to be radical and not conservative in our approach.

Safeguarding was an important item on the agenda. We considered an amendment to the 2016 Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline measure. This included mandatory reporting, a crucial code of practice and request that there should be a Discipline Measure for the Laity. A presentation on Safeguarding was held on the following morning. The final IICSA report had been published in October and this was partly in response to its recommendations. We heard from some of the survivors of abuse – a sensitive and moving presentation. One of those who was part of this group suggested that the recommendations did not go far enough and urged the Church to be as stringent as possible. The recommendations in the report include: renaming Safeguarding advisors as Officers, information sharing, introducing a national policy for victims and survivors, continue with external auditing. The Church, Bishops, Safeguarding Team and everyone is to be held to account. In debate it was suggested that there is a need for independent scrutiny and redress. Survivors must be at the centre of response. There needs to be a change of culture and a challenge to a misuse of power and secrecy. Process and structures need challenging, the clergy Discipline Measure needs updating, speed is important but investigation must be thorough. Above all there must be repentance and redress.

A Diocesan Boards of Education measure was debated for final approval. Whilst it was welcomed there was some concern that it still allowed for ‘unincorporated’ boards to continue. However, it gained approval and will produce a measure that is flexible and easier to modify. The setting up of a National Ministry Register has been more than 400 years in the making since the initial request from James 1 (VI)! This would make it easier to see who has a licence in the Church of England. An amendment requiring the Archbishop of the relevant province to register bishops was passed. The whole motion was passed and should make it simpler in the future.

A debate was called on the payment to the Church’s Conservation Trust. This trust cares for many of our closed churches and especially those of historical interest. However, there was a question on how some of the money was spent and why so many were employed by the trust when similar trusts employed fewer people. Payment to the trust was agreed by Synod but the questions remain!!

It seems as though the February sessions will also be held on Zoom – necessary but very tiring!

After prorogation of the Synod Archbishop Justin gave us his blessing.

General Synod February 2021

On Saturday 27th February synod experienced a one-day meeting of the General Synod, which could only be described as bizarre.

The meeting was held via Webinar. Although members could hear what was happening, we could only see the main speaker and not each other. We were not allowed to take any part, not even points of order. At times, we could ask questions, but we could not see the questions of others, so members have no way of knowing how many questions there were, their content, or whether or not the chair was fair in his or her choice of questions.

The meeting began with prayer led by the Chaplain, the Revd Michael Gisbourne (recently of this diocese). The two archbishops then held a discussion between themselves about the effects of Covid, adding in a couple of chosen speakers, and its effect on parish life.

The Archbishop of York then updated on his new Vision and Strategy. Replying to previous criticism, he stated that they were not disabling the parish system, but expanding into other areas. They were encouraging the flourishing of lay ministry - ministry of the whole people of God. It was called a mixed ecology church. A new diagram emerged, of his christocentric concept, but it still had no mention of the Trinity.

Other matters were interspersed with 'Story of hope and salvation'. These included a lady who had started a bakery in Coventry: an East London priest delivering meals: a hospital chaplain working with other faith communities and a mental health café, with a mindfulness programme.

There was an item on Safeguarding concerning the Church of England's response to IICSA (independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse). We were assured of a thorough review of all aspects of the Church's work and a need to rebuild trust. Safeguarding is to be called learning, not training; policies are to be updated. There is to be a 3 person independent Board and Diocesan Officers are to be called Officers not Advisers.

Final item was concerning the Archbishop's Commission on Housing. This is called 'Coming Home' and can be found on the Church of England website. It raises some interesting legal questions which no doubt will at some point be addressed by the Synod.

The meeting closed with worship.

Mrs Mary Nagel

AGENDA ITEM 9. REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

Since the last Diocesan Synod in November 2020 the Bishop's Council have met twice in November and April both by zoom.

At the November meeting Council received the Apostolic Life Annual Report. Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer spoke to her paper on **Self-Supporting Ministry** and explained that most of the recommendations were to tighten up or develop current practice. The focus related to the first of the diocesan strategy 'four mores' of being 'more open, a sign of being one', which will mean reimagining ministry and opening up SSM ministry to wider groups of people. Key recommendations related to communication, accessibility and discernment and to local training which will take place within the diocese. The final key ministry was assistant incumbents (focal ministers) who will build on the learning and experience of the wider church and in multi parish benefices engage with particular needs of the community.

Colin Perkins spoke to his paper on **Safeguarding**. There were no significant changes in casework in Chichester but nationally there has been an increase in cases since the IICSA report and Past Cases Review. The Chichester Past Cases Review was well underway with 99% of parish returns completed and none revealing new cases. There was considerable concern about the new training frameworks which have been implemented in the diocese since September and delivered online. The virtual leadership training is much more intense and is more challenging and time consuming for both participants, trainers and administrators. Colin had received many complaints about the new safeguarding training and reported that the Safeguarding team were trying to ease the burden of work required.

Council received a report from the **Operating Committee** and discussed how the financial value of closed churches was calculated, and their future use.

Council then discussed **Parish Share arrears** that in some cases had built up over many years. Due to the huge impact of the Covid-19 virus on parishes, and bearing in mind that parish share is a promise and not a binding debt, it was suggested that we should be generous and lift this burden by ceasing to circulate details of these sums. Much discussion followed and concern was shown that this would discourage parishes striving to pay their parish share. It was agreed that this was a unique offer and that plans were in place to work with parishes who built up parish share debt and to improve the perception of parish share generally.

The Finance Director spoke to his **Five Year Outlook paper** and emphasised the importance of future planning to avoid an annual deficit. The Diocesan Secretary spoke about **Planning for the future**. The Planning for the Future Project would be picked up again after the pause due to Covid. A committee had met to plan how to engage with deaneries with a focus on raising income and particularly communicating issues around parish share, and looking at how pastoral provision and mission would work if increased giving did not prove possible.

The **Risk Register** was reviewed and will continue to be watched with regard to the effect of the pandemic.

During a review of the **Diocesan Synod ethical investment** was discussed and will be brought back to the next physical synod. There is a group looking at green issues, environmental concerns, General Synod environmental targets and on ethic investments.

Council received the Audit Plan for 2021, appointed the Chair of the Finance Committee from time to time as the authorised representative of the DBF on the **Diocese of Chichester Education Trust**, and noted the Variations to Schools Instruments of Government.

The April Zoom meeting began with prayers during which Bishop Martin remembered the late Duke of Edinburgh and all those effected by the Corona Virus.

Council received the **Annual Education Report** from Trevor Cristin, a year of Challenges and Opportunities. He talked about the effect of the Pandemic on his department and on church schools. Significant pastoral and practical support had been offered to head teachers and feedback was extremely positive. The team had worked closely with the Apostolic Life Department on the Growing Partnership Project connecting schools with their local worshipping communities. Ofsted inspection have been suspended but they are continuing to do monitoring visits, particularly to schools which are not performing well. 91% of the diocesan church schools are now good or outstanding in Ofsted terms.

Colin Perkins presented a **Training and Safeguarding** update. The 2020 training figures are the best the diocese has ever produced and some of the best in the country. Following the concerns from the autumn, the team had adapted the course to make it more user friendly. This had been universally welcomed, resignations have eased and the adaptations will be adopted by the national safeguarding team. The team are producing a 'handbook' for wardens which will set out their role re safeguarding. The team are working on a number of cases at present; none involve abuse within the context of churches within the Diocese.

Council noted the Annual Reports of the **Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committees**, the **Parsonages and Houses Committees**, **Assets Committee** and **Audit Committee**.

The Finance Director presented the **Statutory Accounts and Red book**, and praise was given to parishes who have strived to pay their pledges; the reduction has been less than anticipated for which everyone is extremely grateful. The Diocesan Secretary spoke to a **Five Year Outlook** paper. A considerable deficit is projected for 2022 but it is hoped this will reduce by 2023, and by 2024 there are realistic prospects that the budget will balance, though the challenges of achieving this were considerable.

Council discussed how the diocese would engage with **Living in Love and Faith**, a process of teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. The project will start with a taster day for clergy on 7th May; Deanery Synods are then expected to engage with the LLF material in Autumn 2021, feeding back to the diocese in December 2021 ready for a special Diocesan Synod in February 2022.

The **Diocesan Synod Agenda May 2021** was agreed.

The Archdeacon of Brighton & Lewes spoke about **Together in Sussex**, a joint venture between the Church Urban Fund and the DBF. The Council approved a restructure.

Council agreed a timetable for various **elections**: General Synod, Diocesan Synod and the various sub-committees, and also agreed an **Infectious Disease Policy** ready for publication.

Mrs Sara Stonor