



SUPPORTING PAPERS

**DIOCESAN SYNOD
ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2023**



**SUPPORTING PAPERS FOR DIOCESAN SYNOD
ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2023**

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MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

AGENDA ITEM 3. EDUCATION UPDATE

Please see the following recently published “Growing Partnerships for Maintained Schools” initiative which runs alongside the “Growing Partnerships” project for Church of England schools and their linked parishes.



Growing Partnerships

Building a relationship with Maintained Schools in your Parish



DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



LEARNING WITH MEANING AND PURPOSE
TO KNOW GOD AND SHAPE THE WORLD

This initiative is designed to equip our church communities to initiate and grow a relationship with the maintained schools in their locality as part of our shared outreach to our communities.

Key Aims

1. We seek to grow a love and a desire for God within our localities.
2. In working with schools, our church communities demonstrate a desire to “serve the common good” and be role models for how Christians should live a life based on love and care for others.
3. In working with schools, our church communities seek to support schools to offer families a sense of a “life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ” (Going for Growth 2010).
4. At the core of any successful partnership is a meaningful relationship with individuals within the school context. This includes developing relationships with Governors, school leaders, teachers, students and families.

How will these be achieved?

Maintained schools have no obligation to welcome churches into their schools and any external organisation is there with the permission of the Headteacher. That permission can be withdrawn at any point.

This sets the tone of the relationship and we would urge clergy and their teams to remember the following:

- Safeguarding will always be a top priority and the school’s leadership of this must be accepted.
- Our role is one of service and the starting point needs to be a focus what the school needs.
- Any relationship of substance will need to be built on trust.
- Trust takes time and care to build so do not rush.
- Collective Worship remains a legal requirement and this could be where some are grateful for any support or expertise they can access.
- This is a mission field with great potential and we can share what life in all its fullness can look like.

The relationship will be most effective when the church community is offering something unique that the school genuinely needs. This resonated when it is a free resource to schools whose budgets are tight but their need is high.

How do we measure success?

Success is not easily measured. Obviously a fully supportive and open relationship where the church and school have a warm and trusting partnership is the ideal. However, there will be markers along the way that will highlight success and these points may be as far as your journey goes. These targets might include:

- Annual services such as the school coming to church for Christmas.
- Regular services around key festivals such as Christmas, Easter and the end of the school year.
- Church visits and clergy input as part of the RE curriculum.
- Regular involvement in Collective Acts of Worship.
- Weekly involvement in Collective Acts of Worship.
- Corporate partnership where the church and school community work regularly together.
- Individual pastoral support and where appropriate support in times of crisis such as bereavement in the school community.
- Involvement in school extra curriculum programme such as Lunch Clubs, After School Clubs, Summer Schools or enrichment weeks.
- Develop staff Prayer or Reflection Spaces in Schools (generally in a time limited model).
- An ongoing relationship based on active dialogue where individuals are properly known and mutually valued.

These markers are not necessarily linear and may be subject to ebb and flow.

Success may not only be measured in what the church gives the school as there are many ways in which all schools seek to serve their local communities and this offers opportunities for further partnership. These could include:

- Providing volunteering opportunities for accredited schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards and the Archbishops' Young Leaders Award.
- Supporting at cross generational groups and events.
- Volunteering in a church's children and young people settings.

The Tools of Partnership

Each locality is different and we must avoid seeking a "one size fits all model". Individual circumstances are different but as a congregation you might decide to explore some of the following opportunities.

The Church community can:

1. Pray for the school regularly.
2. Help to lead Collective Worship as regularly as appropriate.
3. Offer support and the church building for key Christian and school celebrations.
4. Ensure the church building is accessible and safe whenever used by the school.
5. Create a warm and hospitable environment that encourages the children to belong if they visit.
6. Partner with the school on local or global issues of social justice such as foodbanks and appeals.
7. Offer practical support such as a "Warm Space" After School Club with appropriate safeguarding protocols.
8. Provide pastoral and/or spiritual support to the children, families, staff, leadership and friends of the school when invited.
9. Take on School Governor roles when available.
10. Use resources within the church congregation to get involved with listening to readers schemes, After School clubs and formal initiatives such as Open the Book. (Safeguarding guidance will need to be given).
11. Share life skills and practical talents. The school community goes beyond the student body and includes members of staff, volunteers and families and support is often appreciated.
12. Ensure that engagement with the school is a regular agenda item at PCC Meetings and ensure the congregation are aware of the ongoing work with the school.
13. Provide congregation members for discussion sessions in classes i.e. interesting professions, cross generational history or PHSE projects or testimonies on how faith impacts on work-life sessions.
14. Devise a shared plan on an annual basis to outline and develop partnership work.

Organisations that Can Help

We aware of the following partners who carry out effective work with schools but there will be more known to you in your area. Please let us know so that we can update this resource.

Family Support Work-

<https://www.familysupportwork.org/>

Off the Fence

<https://www.offthefence.org.uk/>

Brighton and Hove City Mission

<http://www.bhcm.org.uk/>

Open the Book

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/>

Splash for Schools and Communities (Crawley area)

<https://splashschools.org.uk/>

Prayer Spaces in Schools

<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/>

Festive (working with Christian Unions in Sixth Form Colleges)

<https://www.festive.org.uk/>

A Covenantal Relationship

Our initial Growing Partnerships document was based around a covenant between the parish and their linked Church of England School. This relationship will be different with maintained schools, but this example is offered as a starting point for reflection. Each situation is unique and everything needs to be adapted but we hope this offers a useful blueprint:

As a mark of the shared commitment between:

[Church]

_____ and

[School]

_____ we both agree to the following actions:

1. A commitment to regular engagement, at least on a weekly basis.
2. The school will lead on safeguarding and the control of access to their pupils and the parish must comply with this.
3. The church community will offer pastoral support in the form of (locally agreed) and any other urgent requests.
4. The church community will willingly offer support in the worshipping life of the school and the school will identify opportunities to include the parish at appropriate points.
5. The church community will explore all ways of practical support for the school.
6. The school and the church community will engage together in at least one agreed campaign to serve the common good each year.
7. The church community will provide support in Governance as both able and required.
8. The school and church community will devise a shared plan to outline and develop their partnership work and review it annually.
9. The church and school relationship will be highlighted in the parish profile during the recruitment process of a new priest.

Signed

_____ (on behalf of)

Signed

_____ (on behalf of)

Date

Education Department

Diocese of Chichester

Diocesan Church House, 211 New Church Road, Hove, BN3 4ED

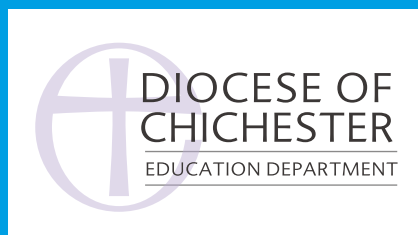
Tel: 01273 425687

Education Department website:

<https://schools.chichester.anglican.org>

Education Department Twitter:

@ChiDioEducation



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AGENDA ITEM 5. DIOCESAN SYNOD ELECTIONS

1. Elections to the diocesan synod will take place in 2024, and under the provisions of the Church Representation Rules the synod is required, not later than 31 December 2023, to determine the number of members to be elected by both houses of the deanery synods to the diocesan synod (CRR r.37(1)).
2. There are a number of ex-officio members of synod and the Bishop has the right to nominate up to 10 members, who may be clergy or lay. The numbers elected are required to be related, for the house of clergy, to the number of members in the house of clergy in the deanery synods, and for the house of laity to the number of names on the electoral rolls of the parishes in the deaneries as certified to the Diocesan Secretary by 1st July 2023 (CRR r.10). In addition:
 - a. the total is to be not less than 100, and not more than 270, the latter to include the maximum number of nominations and co-options;
 - b. the numbers in each house are to be approximately equal; and
 - c. at least 2 members are to be elected by each house of every deanery synod.
3. The total number of members of the houses of clergy in the deaneries as at 31 May 2023 (as per CRR r.37(4)) was **358**, distributed as follows:

Arundel & Bognor	20	Battle & Bexhill	12
Chichester	26	Dallington	10
Midhurst	9	Eastbourne	25
Petworth	7	Hastings	15
Storrington	13	Rotherfield	17
Westbourne	8	Rye	7
Worthing	20	Uckfield	9
Cuckfield	17	Brighton	38
East Grinstead	25	Hove	21
Horsham	22	Lewes & Seaford	24
Hurst	13		

4. The total number of electoral roll members certified as at the date of this paper was **36,926**. Diocesan records do not disclose how many had been certified by 1st July 2023 and how many were certified after that date. 15 parishes have still not provided their electoral roll number for 2023.
5. At the September meeting of the Bishop's Council, a proposal was approved to use 2022 figures for any which could not be obtained rather than using 0, despite the fact that inclusion of previous year's Electoral Roll figures is not strictly provided for in the Church Representation Rules, and nor is the inclusion of figures submitted late. Were the 2022 numbers to be included, the figure would be **37,999**, distributed as follows:

Arundel & Bognor	2,843	Battle & Bexhill	1,257
Chichester	2,362	Dallington	1,341
Midhurst	1,074	Eastbourne	2,562
Petworth	1,116	Hastings	1,118
Storrington	1,499	Rotherfield	2,186
Westbourne	1,364	Rye	912
Worthing	2,251	Uckfield	1,558
Cuckfield	1,877	Brighton	2,293
East Grinstead	2,001	Hove	1,882
Horsham	2,533	Lewes & Seaford	2,483
Hurst	1,487		

6. Synod has in the past decided that, as far as practicable, the maximum number should be elected to the diocesan synod. No change to that is proposed.

Diocesan Synod Elections 2024 – Proposed Scheme 270 members

7. To achieve a total diocesan synod of 270, the composition would be identical to that in 2021, namely:

	Laity	Clergy	
House of Bishops	0	3	
Ex-Officio	2	6	
General Synod	8	5	
Co-options	5	5	
	15	19	
Elected	115	111	
	130	130	260
Bishop's Nominations (either house)			10
Grand Total			270

8. On the basis of the electoral roll figures submitted to date plus the 2022 figures for parishes who did not submit, the numbers to be elected by each deanery synod would be¹:

Deanery	Laity	Clergy
Arundel & Bognor	9	6
Chichester	7	8
Midhurst	3	3
Petworth	3	2
Storrington	4	4

¹ The figures yielded by the calculation have for the most part been rounded to the nearest whole number. However, Hurst, Lewes & Seaford and Storrington laity were rounded down to 4, 7 and 4 from 4.5, 7.51 and 4.54 respectively in order to give a total of 115 rather than 118.

Westbourne	4	2
Worthing	7	6
Battle & Bexhill	4	4
Dallington	4	3
Eastbourne	8	8
Hastings	3	5
Rotherfield	7	5
Rye	3	2
Uckfield	5	3
Cuckfield	6	5
East Grinstead	6	8
Horsham	8	7
Hurst	4	4
Brighton	7	12
Hove	6	7
Lewes & Seaford	7	7
Total	115	111

9. Were the calculation to be done on the basis only of parishes who have submitted 2023 electoral roll figures, whether by 1 July 2023 or later, the distribution would be the same, except that Storrington's allocation of laity would be reduced from 5 to 4 and Uckfield's increased from 4 to 5². It is impossible to assess what the allocation would be on the basis only of parishes who submitted their figures by 1 July 2023.
10. For comparative purposes, the 2021 scheme is at Appendix A.
11. In addition, CRR r.42(2) requires the Diocesan Synod to decide which form of voting paper is to be used by deaneries in the election: a simple majority voting paper or one for a single transferable vote. Historically a simple majority voting paper has been used and it is not proposed to change that.
12. Unless anyone wishes to speak in favour of an alternative scheme, Mr John Booth will move at Synod *'that this Synod resolves to adopt the Scheme set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 in the Elections Paper for the Diocesan Synod elections in 2024'* and *'that this Synod resolves that a simple majority voting paper shall be used for the elections'*.

Gabrielle Higgins
24 October 2023

² The figures yielded by the calculation would all be rounded to the nearest whole number with no adjustments required

Appendix A

Diocesan Synod Elections 2021 – Scheme 270 members

To achieve a total diocesan synod of 270, the composition was:

	Laity	Clergy	
House of Bishops	0	3	
Ex-Officio	2	6	
General Synod	8	5	
Co-options	5	5	
	15	19	
Elected	115	111	260
	130	130	
Bishop's Nominations (either house)			10
Grand Total			270

The numbers to be elected by each deanery synod were:

Deanery	Laity	Clergy
Arundel & Bognor	8	6
Chichester	7	8
Westbourne	3	2
Worthing	7	7
Battle & Bexhill	4	5
Dallington	4	4
Eastbourne	8	10
Hastings	3	4
Rotherfield	7	5
Rye	3	2
Uckfield	5	3
Cuckfield	6	5
East Grinstead	6	8
Horsham	8	6
Hurst	4	3
Midhurst	4	2
Petworth	3	3
Storrington	5	5
Brighton	7	11
Hove	5	5
Lewes & Seaford	8	7
Total	115	111

AGENDA ITEM 6. RACIAL JUSTICE UPDATE

RACIAL JUSTICE VISION

1, Why do we do what we do?

1, To alleviate pain and hurt. We need to be involved in this work simply because the time has come to say, 'enough is enough'. People of colour have gone through so much cruelty, abuse, discrimination and harassment for many years. The pain and hurt which many minority ethnic people in this country and elsewhere have gone through cannot be ignored anymore. We need to learn from the history of racism and racial discrimination which GMH/UKME people were put under unnecessarily. The emotional (and sometimes physical and spiritual) wounds and scars which GMH/UKME people carry for no reason and no fault of their own other than their skin colour attest to the iniquity of racism and make the total unacceptability of the scourge of racism evident and pronounced. In other words, racial justice is about safeguarding people, irrespective of their racial origins, and their right to live with dignity. Racial Justice ministry is joining God in his work of healing the wounds and hurt of those who have been despised, discriminated against and dehumanised because of their ethnic origins. It is about working to wipe racism off the face of the earth.

2, The church has discerned. Racial justice ministry is something that the church itself has discerned for itself. We believe that God works through the discernment of the church. As we know the church has discerned that the work of racial justice cannot wait any longer. It has produced the 'Lament to Action' report. It is a recognition of the persistence of racism and responsibility of the church to become a part of the fight for racial justice. Our vision is to take this as our call and implement its action plan.

3, God loves justice. To work for racial equity is to work for justice. We do this work because God loves justice. God weeps when we act unjustly. We act unjustly when race becomes a consideration in our relationships with other people. God wants and expects us to treat not people of one ethnicity but people of all ethnicities, colours and backgrounds impartially and fairly and empathize with them all. Racial justice work might involve developing policies and practices to ensure that no harm befalls another, and that, where harm is alleged, a remedial action is taken. Some people might feel a moral obligation to get involved in racial justice work as it is working for justice. Such people are most welcome to join in the fight for racial justice.

4, Theological basis. Racial justice ministry has solid biblical, theological and ecclesiological foundations. For instance, the scripture is clear that humanity is created in God's image. The glory of God has to be beheld in black, brown, white and people of all colours and features. Theologically speaking, God loves all people equally. God so loved 'the world' - the 'world' representing the entire humanity - and not people of this race or that race. The church must do the same. St Paul sees the church as the body of Christ. And, we too should. Sadly, some parts of the body were deemed and treated as superior, and the other parts as inferior in the past. Racial justice ministry seeks to put this right.

To be racially just is not just about not being racist but actively involving in the fight against racism. With migration on the rise, we know that inter-cultural churches are the churches of the future. Some questions to ask ourselves are - are we ready for what truly pursuing

intercultural church looks like. Are we ready for our structures, habits and worldviews to be challenged? Are we ready for the messiness and beautiful chaos that weaving people of different views, voices, colours and different approaches to time and community brings?

5, We want to be on the winning side. For many (including me) Revelation 7 is the motivation for their involvement in racial equality work. It is foretold in the book of Revelation that people of all nations, tribes and languages will dwell in heaven eternally. In the recent past, some people have asked me what churches with only white people can do for racial justice. In this context we need to be clear about the purposes of the church as stated in the Bible. The focus of Jesus' teaching in the gospel of Mathew is on the Kingdom of Heaven. It follows that churches have a role to perform in preparing congregations for the kingdom.

It should dawn on mono-coloured churches that the kingdom will not look like their church. We should ask ourselves what we can do for our churches to get a glimpse of heaven. We should endeavour to do our best to make the church look like a 'rehearsal' for the Kingdom of Heaven. Monocultural congregations must be aware of this eschatological reality and become more and easily accessible to people of colour and accommodate them. They should join in with those championing and advancing the cause of racial justice. It would fit very happily with our calling and God's eternal plan for us.

In the light of Revelation 7 we can say for sure that the fight for racial justice is bound to win. The win is foretold in the Bible. We are fighting a winning battle. Racial justice is a done deal in relation to the everlasting life which we are invited to by God in Christ. Now is the time to make friends among those who don't look like us 'in a project of sharing our common humanity', to coin a phrase. Now is the time to join the winning side.

2, What can we do to promote racial justice?

First, we can all pray. We can pray that God guides us in this work. We have to start with God and end with God and make sure that we work with God all the way.

Second, education has a significant and transformational role to play in this. There are several books available which talk about racism and racial justice. Seminars and conferences are beginning to be held across the country. We can offer training events in our diocese. The message in the Bible is clear and unambiguous - we are all one in Christ. It could not have been put better than this - the verse reads, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3.28) We can see teaching about and advocacy for racial justice embedded into the regular teaching and preaching life of our Diocese throughout the year, for example through the Year Of / Lent Courses / The Department for Apostolic Life Programmes / IME Training.

Third, we can increase visibly where this is possible. Church leaders can actively seek to involve Minority Ethnic People in Church Leadership and unlock their potential as they often shy away despite having great potential. They can bring a different perspective on faith and social matters.

Bishop Martin hosted Bishop Leon from the diocese of Jamaica for a week to mark the 75 th anniversary of Windrush. They both visited churches, schools and a NHS trust together and sent out the message that it is God's will that all people come together and actualise God's wish to see all people as one family. It is hoped that we will have more and more similar events in the coming months and years.

Fourth, we have to be sensitive to people's feelings while dealing with the issue of racism, but at the same time we must have the courage of conviction and be bold enough to talk about the injustice inherent in racism. We can do it persuasively. We need to conscientize people about the importance of racial justice for a better and fairer world. We can resource parishes, schools and chaplaincies to create safe spaces for open, honest, frank and amiable conversations about race. We talk about racial justice today in the hope that one day there wouldn't be a need for it. We have to form a better understanding of the issue of racism and make tireless efforts for the emergence of a society free from racism.

Fifth, this work is not limited to churches. We can think in terms of ensuring the participation of our Church Schools (and other schools) and our young people in the fight against racial inequality and for racial equality and strive to make it possible. A sense of respect for all, irrespective of their racial origin, needs to be inculcated in children in churches and schools in the formative years of childhood. It is important to ensure that race consciousness does not creep into children at an impressionable age. School (many schools are doing this already) as well as Sunday school programme should lay greater emphasis on racial equality and the need to repudiate all past notions of superiority and inferiority on the basis of 'descent' and replace them with the Christian ideals of fraternity and fellowship.

3, How do we do it?

First, our diocesan racial justice team with the support of the National Racial Justice Unit will be organising study days and seminars within the diocese in the new year 2024. Please look out for publicity (the details of schedule and venues) soon.

Second, working initially with the Diocesan Senior Leadership Team and with the DDO and the Discernment team we hope to attract and retain UKME/GMH individuals into (a) the discernment process, and (b) roles of ordained ministry as well as lay ministry across the Diocese.

Third, work with the education department to see that at least 5 Growing Partnership schools have diversity days. This will aid in raising awareness and encouraging needed culture change for facilitating racial justice in their communities.

Fourth, we plan to continue to host an annual Black History Month service of celebration at Chichester Cathedral or another venue within the diocese and increase the number of Racial Justice Sunday services offered in parishes/chapels each year.

Fifth, every culture has unique gifts to offer. We are all God's gift to each other. We will encourage people of different ethnic origins to offer their gifts at inter-cultural events. Whether we are black or brown or white we are gifts of God to each other. What more could (we need to) enrich our lives!

Godfrey Kesari, Diocesan Racial Justice Officer

AGENDA ITEM 7. REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD

Report on General Synod meeting in York- July 7th – 11th

This synod was particularly busy and urgent, focussing on key areas of our Church's life where changes are necessary to ensure competent governance, safety for those who have suffered abuse, the LLF process and how we can contribute to halting climate change.

Presidential Address

The Synod was opened with an address by the Archbishop of York focussing on the 'Our' in the Lord's Prayer as a focus for unity, not a side comment about God as Father which featured in many press reports.

Youth Representation- Private members Motion

A young synod member from Chester diocese led an impassioned debate on encouraging the church to "grow younger and more diverse" with a suggestion for a Youth Synod. A majority of us supported many measures to increase young people in our church including hearing their voices in synod.

Questions

As always there were many written questions submitted (206 in all) and an opportunity to review the written answers including a question from Rev Martin Poole about the Churches' national investment bodies (NIBs) withdrawal from investing in oil and gas companies asking how individual dioceses could follow this.

Rehabilitation of Prisoners debate- Worcester Diocesan synod

Another debate was carried by a large majority focussing on the many ways faith and belief can be protective factors in reducing reoffending and how we can work in partnership with prisons to aid rehabilitation. The motion included an amendment by Rev Andrew Cornes to call on all dioceses to nominate a contact person or office to aid this and help ex-offenders find a welcoming church subject to appropriate safeguarding procedures.

LLF

All of Saturday afternoon was given over to an informal update about LLF presented to us by the three working groups; liturgy group looking at the drafting of the prayers; Pastoral Guidance looking to replace *Issues of Human Sexuality*; and the third group named Pastoral Reassurance discussing freedom of human conscience. Rev Arwen Folkes spoke about the positive effect the LLF discussions have had for her parish. We will have an opportunity to debate and vote on this in the November synod.

Safeguarding – 3 sessions

Main debate and much media attention had been given to this just prior to our sitting with the sacking of the two Independent Safeguarding members. Both of them were in the chamber and were eventually allowed to give their side of the narrative after some procedural wrangling resulting in formal suspension of the sitting of Synod so that they could speak as they were not members of synod. All of us are looking for a fully

independent safeguarding body to oversee our church. This was a highly charged set of discussions resulting in the resignation of some members of Synod after the session. (Post synod Prof. Jay has been appointed as the new independent lead so we hope for a calming of the situation)

A Redress scheme for survivors was welcomed unanimously in all the Houses with just one abstention. A Safeguarding Practice Reviews Code of Practice was also passed easily.

National Governance Reform

Reform of national church bodies is vital as distrust pervades them according to Sir David Lidington who chairs the project. The number of National Church Institutions (NCIs) will be reduced from seven to four and a new charity Church of England National Services (CENS) will replace the Archbishop's Council among other key changes. Draft legislation will come before the synod in February 2024.

Archbishop's Council

The budget was explained and passed. Discussion focussed on the allocation of the money and in particular how richer dioceses could support poorer dioceses. Regular giving had fallen by 15% during the years 2019-2021. Catherine Butcher gave a maiden speech during this debate. A very warm tribute was made by Rt Rev Stephen Cottrell to John Spence-the retiring Chair of Finance.

Climate change motion

Oxford Diocese brought a motion encouraging the church to uphold its 5th Mark of mission - to steward the earth - with many initiatives. Revd. Martin Poole moved an amendment requesting that all dioceses' environmental policies be kept up to date. The amendment and the motion were overwhelmingly supported.

Removal of Wedding Fees

The Archdeacon of Blackburn put forward an idea to remove the fees for church weddings to halt the decline in church weddings, an amendment was agreed for a trial period to see if more couples would be keen to marry in church as it is too expensive for some. This amendment and motion was carried and a report on the trial will be brought back to synod.

Other items for debate and passing for the revision stage of legislation included; revision of the Clergy Discipline Measure to set up a three-tier process, legislation to allow the use of electronic registers for parishes who wish to do this, revitalisation of parishes within the Church's Vision and Strategy, review of Mission and Pastoral measure.

Tina Nay
Revd Martin Poole

AGENDA ITEM 8. REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

The Bishop's Council met on July 13th 2023 and on 28th September 2023.

The July meeting received the annual report from the Church Buildings and Pastoral Reorganisation department. Membership of the DAC was reviewed in 2022 and the terms of reference are now aligned with the Diocesan Synod triennia. Two longstanding members of the DAC retired, Zoe McMillan and Vivienne Coad. Between them they have served the DAC for over fifty years. During their report, the DAC Chair updated Council on the requests for advice received (17) and faculties granted (79) by the Chancellor as well as the List B applications (197) processed by the Archdeacons. The Online Faculty System is working well. It was noted that the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules had been revised in 2022 to support the transition to the Church of England net zero target by 2030.

Mission and Pastoral work was also reported on. 10 Schemes have been made since the start of 2022 with an additional 15 Schemes in progress. Two churches are legally closing in 2023, the first closures in the Diocese since 2018. There is significant revision of the Mission and Pastoral Measure being worked on nationally at the moment, and this will work its way through the General Synod. We will continue to engage in the consultation process.

Council received the annual update on Strategic Development Funding, highlighting the two projects in Brighton and Hove and in Crawley. Work is being undertaken to assess these projects, learning from the successes as well as the challenges.

An update was given on Safeguarding and compliance with the required training for clergy and laity. A great deal of work has been done on assessing the required levels of training for PTO clergy as well as ensuring that those newly elected at APMs and APCMs as Wardens and PSOs received the necessary training. There are also some parishes who have not engaged with SQP and this is being followed up with parishes on an individual basis.

Reports were received from sub-committees: operating committee and the DBE.

The operating committee had provided parameters for the 2024 budget, and the Finance Director presented a paper to the Council for discussion. It was noted that the 2023 budget has been kept under constant review as parish share pledges were below budget and others were struggling to fulfil the pledges made. The budget for 2024 includes a stipend rise of 5% and a staff pay rise of 6%. Consideration was given to the impact of inflation, our capacity to support clergy through welfare funds and the challenges of vacancies and appointments. The budget for 2024 was agreed.

Following the recent General Synod debate on LLF, Council had the opportunity to note concerns about that. The need for continued work on building relationships and trust across the theological spectrum was identified, alongside an acknowledgement that this remains a divisive issue. All were encouraged to be attentive to one another, causing as little harm as possible, and to pray for the Archbishops, Bishops and General Synod.

The September Bishops' Council meeting attended to an update on management of conflicts of interest and of loyalty for those who sit on more than one body as a Trustee. Council also received the annual safeguarding and serious incident report. Bishop Ruth, as lead Bishop for safeguarding in the Diocese, updated Council on matters of Domestic Abuse and Safer Recruitment training being promoted through MDR. The apparent low level of training for parish officers is due to the number of new people coming into post after the round of APCMs. SQP was discussed, and the need for parishes to review annually as part of their preparation for the annual report to the APCM. The National Church of England has launched Safeguarding Dashboards for PCCs and this is an online tool that PCCs will be asked to transition to using in due course. Martin Richards has now retired as the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Panel after 9 years of service. He was thanked for all that he has brought to this important role. A recruitment and appointment process for his successor is underway.

The Budget for 2024 was reviewed in anticipation of the forthcoming autumn deanery finance briefings and the Budget being presented to this Synod.

Ongoing consideration was given to ethical investment. The National Investing Bodies have decided to direct their time and energy away from monitoring fossil fuel companies, having concluded that their strategy of engagement work is not moving fast enough. The DBF's investments are not of comparable size to the NIBs and the Assets Committee has previously agreed that the DBF will remain invested in BP and Shell as engaged investors long as they both remain committed to the Paris Agreement, which they both are. Divesting would likely see a reduction of about 1% income for the DBF p.a. Shell and BP are the largest investors in wind turbines and so are part of the transition and solution. The DBF investment portfolios also invest in renewables, new technologies and companies to reduce carbon emissions. More widely, an update was given on the Church of England's commitment to reaching net zero by 2030. Grant funding has been made available to assist with resourcing the work of a consultant who will prepare a report for Diocesan Synod. The total cost of works required across the DBF (schools, churches and parsonages) is in the region of £50m and this will need to be raised from external sources. It was agreed that the motion on the agenda for this Synod be put.

The Diocesan Secretary updated Council on further funding applications made to the National Church, additional to the Net Zero development work, relating to Racial Justice, the appointment of a Church Buildings Support Officer and a Capacity Bid for roles covering SDF monitoring, children and youth strategy and finance and data analysis.

Council was invited to elect a lay person from among its number to serve on the selection panel for the appointment of the new Dean of Chichester.

Finally, Bishop Martin reported the appointment of a new Diocesan Secretary to succeed Gabrielle Higgins.

The Venerable Luke Irvine-Capel