

THIS IS AN EXTRACT FROM A PAPER DISCUSSED BY THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL IN JULY 2019; IT GIVES SYNOD MEMBERS A CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING SINCE JULY SOME POINTS ARE CLEARLY BEING NOW TAKEN FORWARD.

Bishop's Council July 25th 2019

Taking the next steps in Renewing Hope, following feedback to the Bishop John Gladwin Report.

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4 Taking forward the Bishop John Recommendations

With regard to the recommendations, the Council is asked to endorse the following a-z as actions and directions of travel in light of the feedback received.

Recommendations

Renewing Hope requires addressing change and moving the culture and character of the diocese forward

- 1. Shape and deliver ongoing communication of Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow so that all in the diocese and joining it from elsewhere are engaged with the programme and participate in the ongoing conversation and widening vision.*

Proposed actions a-t

- a. Once the high level framework (see above) is adopted, there will be a communications programme to ensure ongoing opportunities for engagement and awareness. Action by the Director of Communications.
- b. Adoption of this within the induction programme for new ministers.
- c. Adoption of this within the recruitment packs for clergy and employees.

- 2. Develop the approach to ministry and mission which is lighter and more flexible and even conducted on the basis of less traditional resources of ministry*

Feedback affirmed the need for a focus on mission. Feedback affirms the need for radical fresh thinking in our approaches to mission and ministry including a collaborative style of leadership, a focus on discipleship and to seek to change lives and change communities. It is important that our new framework creates opportunities for innovation in our changing culture.

- d. This to be taken forward in the Mission and Ministry, church and school review and the new framework will become a guiding light in the work of the Mission and Ministry Council and Mission Oversight Groups, DBE and DBF work in this area.

- 3. Include schools, café's, foodbanks and other new initiatives in our communities and ministries in how we see the life of the church for the future*

- e. DBE and the Social Justice Programme Manager are motivating, resourcing and engaging churches and schools in social action, local partnerships, the environment and how to link with the community. The diocese is working towards becoming a Silver Eco diocese with a clear environment strategy. The support and resourcing of this work will be developed as part of the mission and ministry, church and school review.

- f. Refreshed approach to 'numbers' will include measures of impact in this area to ensure that such activity is valued as core.

4. *Encourage deeper reflection on faith and life – crucial to growth. The Bishop and his team need to provide accessible and imaginative resources and support to both individuals and groups in this critical aspect of Christian ministry in our time.*

Feedback affirms the importance of deepening discipleship and growing faith, including praying together.

- g. Council should note that the Lent series has been widely affirmed in the feedback, however it is NOT planned to repeat this in 2020. We could consider whether there is an alternate point in the year in which there is a shared commitment to praying together as this has been a central part of the experience of Renewing Hope for many so far. A clear communication for the reasoning will be needed- Director of Communications to action with Communications Group.
- h. Encouraging deeper reflection on faith and life will be an important part of the work of the pathfinder deaneries, so that we learning how best to ensure the local church is resourced. Signposting resources on the website and offering appropriate training in the best locations will remain important.

5. *Go local by developing the deaneries as living centres for mission: the future is often shaped from the boundaries and the fringes rather than from the centre. Create places where clergy and laity together can see things differently – share, reflect, pray and grow in confidence and understanding. Focus resources, training and support on helping make the deaneries lively and effective, based on sharing, learning from experience and communicating this.*

Going local is strongly affirmed in the feedback.

- i. Adopt this recommendation and develop this approach through a 'test and learn' methodology- see paper on Pathfinder deaneries. [February 2020 Synod note; this not yet in action, it will be part of the repatterning ministry discussions]

6. *Travel light by reviewing governance and management arrangements so that there is clarity regarding who is responsible for what decisions and efficiency and transparency in making them.*

Travelling light is strongly affirmed in the feedback, at both local and diocesan level.

- j. The Diocesan Secretary is already tasked with a review of governance arrangements and is undertaking this work in August with the support of the Registrar.
- k. Management arrangements within the DBF will be a consideration during early 2020 as part of the implementation of the agreed framework and priorities for the diocese.
- l. Proposals on both of the above to come back to Council later in 2019/early 2020.

7. *Travel light by building a deeper partnership between the DBF and DBE, and for the Bishop, Diocesan Organisation, Cathedral and Sarum College to consider how they might be more effective in their contribution to the vision and the ministry.*

The relationship between DBE and DBF has developed since early 2019 with wide ranging collaborative discussion between the Director of Education and the Diocesan Secretary. A joint

day of DBF and DBE colleagues was well received in April and the next step will be a joint workshop of October 3rd to look at the draft framework of priorities. Proposals for future deeper collaboration are likely to form part of the proposed framework.

Feedback rightly notes that Sarum College is an independent body; the proposed approach is therefore one of deepening partnership with Sarum, within the context of the future framework of priorities and resources.

- m. As a direction of travel, Council is asked to affirm ever deeper collaboration and integration of work, and the deepening of partnerships which enable us to be more effective and efficient.

8. *Travel light by the Diocesan Secretary reshaping diocesan administration to better respond to the local perspective through a fundamental review of the diocesan administration and order. He will need help and support in carrying this through.*

- *reconsider the needs for diocesan offices. The present offices are not conducive to flexible, light and collaborative working.*
- *Support all multi parish benefices to move quickly to having one PCC, one pair of Churchwardens and treasurer.*
- *Review the faculty process to make it easier and more friendly to what parishes would like to achieve*
- *Help, training and support for clergy and laity in the conduct of business. People leaving meetings need to feel they have achieved and spent their time constructively*
- *Encourage, support and train local initiatives in ministry and service to the community. Sharing good practice and lessons gained from things that work and things that do not.*
- *Develop good communication systems and structures of help and support which serve to remove isolation in ministry.*

There was significant feedback on multi parish benefices, the DAC and communication.

Council will be asked to consider the future of Church House in 2020. Feedback by several strongly questioned the promotion of Multi Academy Trusts and these have been passed to the DBE for dialogue with those concerned. The isolation of those in ministry is recognised in the feedback- the ongoing provision of opportunities for peer support, good communication and individual support will be important in our approach including in pathfinder deaneries; Rural Hope is helping to build systemic responses to this challenge.

Feedback in the area of moving multi parish benefices to a single PCC was extensive (25 responses) and strongly worded! There is a clear sense of ownership and engagement through the current structure for many. However, there have been a minority (5 responses) welcoming this.

- n. proposed that we communicate clearly that moving to single PCC is NOT a requirement.
- o. and that we share the experience of those who have already made this change in ongoing communications and that we put in place support and peer learning to enable this to take place where it is the wish of the local church.

Feedback in the area of Faculty/DAC was strongly worded with a clear desire to make things simpler and more accessible. Charles Hutchins of St Mary East Knoyle calls for a 'more

partnering approach by the DAC'. Chris Strain gives a summary which is the character of much of the feedback:

The Faculty process is a legal process and this needs acknowledging – things must be done well and the care of premises is paramount. We value the DAC. However, from anecdotal and personal experience I sense there needs to be a more supportive and understanding approach. Many parishes are seeking to manage their premises etc for the good of the community and their few willing officers at times, but not always, feel tested. If the DAC is seen to be problematic then it maybe that churches which need to be sensitively developed could be neglected (and even closed) as local people do not have the appetite for a mindset which can be more about preservation than resourcing.

The appointment of new staff and a new chair since the Gladwin Report is opening new conversations and approaches. We need to review the roles and capacity of DAC staffing to ensure the strategic and operational support needs of the local church are met. The Property Review will consider options to provide project management support to parishes working with the DAC. As the diocese responds to the climate emergency we will need to look carefully at the carbon footprint of church buildings. The Faculty system is moving on line from July 2019. Further progress updates will be shared with Council in the autumn.

Feedback from Holy Trinity Fonthill Gifford PCC is comprehensive in listing the administrative burden felt by volunteers and post holders and the urgent need to find ways to 'travel light'. Andy Muckle describes such a burden as 'sucking the life out' of those attending church. Tarrant Hinton PCC describe the administrative structure as 'stuck in the 17th century'. Many point to the burden of administration on clergy taking them away from the core purpose. Marlborough deanery responses point to digital tools needed.

- p. 'Travel light' to be the mantra of the diocese and Church House in particular; and the scope of the IT investment within our financial framework will need to reflect these priorities.

Feedback by Weymouth and Portland deanery synod and others, links the need for improved communication with the very low quality of the diocesan website.

- q. A scoping for the refresh of the website is currently being undertaken and costings will come forward in the IT Review.

9. Balance the budget and review Parish Share to strengthen the understanding and commitment locally to the need to resource the ministry of the diocese at all levels.

Feedback affirms the need to balance the budget and to update the Fairer Share scheme.

- r. This will be delivered through the 2021-23 sustainable financial framework and Fairer Share review process. The Fairer Share review will report to Finance Committee and Council in September and October.
- s. Feedback regarding Fairer Share has been forwarded to Rosemary Cook, leading the FS review group.

10. Shift the approach to numbers, focusing on measures of impact.

Feedback (19 responses) affirms the importance of this and the risks of the current connection between the Fairer Share scheme and counting of numbers. A move towards a focus on impact is supported in the feedback. Harnham Parish says-

"We need to move away from judging our mission on an increasingly narrow method of counting of numbers and focus on our impact in ministry and mission, engaging with both the church and the wider community." All churchwardens and the treasurer and Mission and Vision committee are in agreement with this. The question is how to measure things differently?

- t. Introduce a new framework of measures and simplification of processes. We need to look across the year as a whole and all the measures currently in use. A new approach to numbers will be part of the roll out of changes in light of the new framework for Renewing Hope. We plan to focus on measures of impact and not just on regular Sunday attendance. We plan to incorporate measures of participation in new worshipping communities. We plan to simplify the range of numbers required through the year. We plan to align diocesan and national measures. We plan to move recording of numbers into self-service online tools as soon as practicable.

11. Renew our journey of faith. We need to talk and share on how our service to the community can enable God the Holy Spirit to bring people into a life of discipleship. All the agencies in the diocese - need to ask, 'what can we do that we alone can do or are best fitted to do to give people that liberating experience of encounter with God?'

Through all of this, the feedback affirms the central importance and focus upon renewing faith and this will be the heart of a refreshed framework for Renewing Hope.

Among the feedback, George Moody highlights that 'a growing church is a healthy church'. Not all responses to the Report agreed that enough is being done to focus on this goal, for example Andrew Corke of All Saints Swanage:

You can't argue with some of the comments in it. But it basically reads like someone has been asked to come in and help us function better as a church with ever declining congregations, fewer clergy and less money. But it doesn't address how we can grow. The words Gospel, Jesus, Bible and evangelism get no mention at all - discipleship gets only two mentions with no solutions offered about how to disciple.

Many feedback responses included commitments to local action in renewing faith and building discipleship. Some point to the importance of signposting resources for discipleship and mission and the need to look carefully at programmes such as LLM which are not seen to be meeting needs at scale. Others point to the importance of understanding community needs and to community engagement in responding to the mission challenge, including an approach which is both church and school such as community hubs. An outward focus on transforming lives and communities is supported by many.

Many affirm the need for a collaborative response, clergy and laity working together. Our Rural Hope programme is helping us to develop practice in this area. There is a call to resource work with children and young people more fully and the diocese will have an important opportunity to do this as a Trailblazer diocese of 'Growing Faith'.

Having considered the feedback and prior discussion of the Gladwin Report in Council, Synod and other forums, Council is asked to endorse/amend the actions listed above as the basis for an action plan.

David Pain July 11th 2019