



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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DIOCESE OF SALISBURY

**SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD  
MINUTES OF THE 125<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT  
ST FRANCIS CHURCH, SALISBURY  
ON WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 2018**

**1. Opening Worship and Presidential Address**

Members took part in the Liturgy of the Word led by Canon Tom Clammer. The Bishop delivered the Presidential Address. He reflected that we may not have turned Fairer Share numbers around yet, but there are definite signs of growth in many areas of diocesan activity. This being the final meeting of the current triennium, he thanked Synod members for their service. One of the diocese's representatives on General Synod had resigned on moving from the diocese so an election would be required to fill the casual vacancy. The Bishop also reported on staff changes, particularly the departure of the Communications Director who had been accepted for ordination training from September and the Diocesan Secretary who would be retiring in November. Synod responded with prolonged applause for all they had contributed. Finally the Bishop encouraged parishes to engage with EcoChurch and his hope that Salisbury might be the first to achieve EcoDiocese status. "The care of God's creation should be a priority for the Church throughout the world".

A full copy of the presidential address is available from the web site at [www.salisbury.anglican.org](http://www.salisbury.anglican.org) or from [fiona.torrance@salisbury.anglican.org](mailto:fiona.torrance@salisbury.anglican.org) at the Diocesan Office.

**2. Approval of Minutes of last meeting**

Synod approved the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2018. There were no matters arising.

**3. Notices, Co-options and Apologies**

The Diocesan Secretary promulgated Amending Canon 36 and Amending Canon 37.

There were no co-options.

Apologies were received from 25 clergy, 19 laity and 1 bishop.

**4. How Will We Grow?**

**4.1 Re-Shaping our Support for Mission and Ministry**

The Bishop introduced proposals to simplify the oversight of mission and ministry and improve connections between diocesan, area and archdeaconry levels. These came with the strong support of Bishop's Council. Synod considered the proposals and provided the following comments and observations:

- Mission and Ministry are inextricably connected so it is good to merge them into one Council.
- Anything that helps communications and networking is commendable.
- The local focus on parish development is welcome.
- The work of the laity in this, as well as the clergy, is hugely important.
- The plans seem a little complicated with the mission oversight groups appearing bureaucratic so we must guard against paralysing ourselves with meetings.
- It is good to see that review of the new structure has been built into the plan.

The Bishop then moved:  
"That the Diocesan Synod

1. Disbands the Learning for Discipleship and Ministry Council and the Mission Council at the end of 2018.
  2. Forms the Mission and Ministry Council with terms of reference agreed by Bishop's Council. The new Council to begin operations in January 2019.
- Tasks the Bishop's Council to
3. Form two Mission Oversight Groups according to the terms of reference agreed by Bishop's Council. The new Groups to begin operations in January 2019.
  4. Review the effectiveness of these new arrangements in 2020 and report back to Diocesan Synod during that year."

The Motion was carried unanimously.

#### 4.2 Rural Hope Update

Synod noted the latest newsletter on Rural Hope. More copies will be available at the Clergy Day on 11 July so these should be taken to parishes and shared.

### 5. The DAC Awards 2018

The DAC Chairman, Mr John Seaford, reminded Synod of the enormous privilege of Ecclesiastical Exemption and the great responsibility that goes with it. He paid tribute to the work of the DAC Secretary and her assistants. He then presented awards from the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC) to representatives from three parishes for outstanding applications and schemes.

Alton Barnes St Mary for an extensive programme of repair and conservation whilst retaining the intrinsic character of the ancient building. The award was received by Major and Mrs Edward Ferguson and Canon Deborah Larkey.

Milton on Stour St Simon and St Jude for major repairs to the floor including installing under-floor heating as well as an extension to and re-configuration of the church, all providing community benefit. The award was received by Mrs Christine Alexander, the Revd Peter Greenwood and the Revd Eve Pegler.

Salisbury St Francis for a sensitive extension to the church enabling it to become a community hub. The award was received by Mr Colin Reed.

### 6. Annual Report and Accounts 2017

The Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) began the Annual General Meeting of the DBF and introduced the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2017. Following positive feedback from the previous year, a review document had again been distributed to all members containing information distilled from the full Report and Accounts. This would be publicised widely around the Diocese and put on the web site with the intention of improving clarity and accessibility.

The Head of Finance presented the Report and Accounts. The trustees report identified positive stories of hope. Vocations and confirmations were up; the Rural Hope Budget has been successfully launched; the Board of Education has launched new initiatives; a new mission policy has been adopted for new housing areas.

Overall funds as described in the Statement of Financial Activities had increased by £2.48m in the year of which £2.31m was a non-cash increase in portfolio investments. Net income had increased by £169,000.

Total income for the year was £13.71m of which parish share accounted for 72%. Total expenditure was £13.54m of which clergy costs account for 64%. There was a small surplus against the share budget of £23,000. To this is added

- Reduction of pension deficit £688k
- Gains on investments £1.24m
- Revaluation of Investment Property £1.04m

- Capital repairs £509,000
- To get to total funds increase of £2.48m

The Balance Sheet at 31 December was £124m, £92m of which was tied up in property. Investments sat at £32m of which £12m was Investment Property. £119m was restricted or endowed. This was the first year of the property trading company – project managing repairs to schools and academies. It grants its profits back to the DBF explaining the need for consolidated accounts.

Cash had decreased by £354,000 even after sale of investments at £832,000.

This was the first year of Haysmacintyre as auditors. The audit report was unqualified – there were few management points and the figures were largely unchanged from the drafts presented.

The Chairman DBF observed that the Board is incredibly well supported by the parishes, 91% of whom had paid Share in full in 2017; he asked Synod members to pass on heartfelt thanks to all. He thanked those who help to minimise Share by finding alternative sources of income, with especial thanks to the Diocesan Secretary for her valuable contribution to overall budget and cost control.

Responding to questions, the Head of Finance confirmed that if anyone would like greater detail on any aspect of the Report and Accounts she would be very happy for them to contact her.

The Chairman DBF moved on behalf of the DBF Executive:

“That the Diocesan Board of Finance approves the Directors’ and Trustees Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017.”

Synod as the DBF approved the Motion with none against and three abstentions.

## **7. Appointment of Auditors**

The Chairman DBF moved on behalf of the DBF Executive:

“That the Diocesan Board of Finance approves the appointment of Haysmacintyre as the auditors for the Diocesan Board of Finance.”

Synod as the DBF approved the Motion unanimously.

## **8. Diocesan Budget for Share Assessment 2019**

The Chairman DBF introduced the Budget for Share Assessment 2019. The proposed Share increase was 2.5% which had been achieved by subsidising the budget with £100,000 from Reserves. Synod as DBF then considered the Budget. Comments and observations included:

- The clergy stipend increase is set at 2% because we benchmark other dioceses and follow advice from the Archbishops’ Council.
- It may be harder proportionately for a small church to pay Share than a larger one; conversely, some large churches have additional costs associated with being tourist attractions.
- Fairer Share is largely understood and supported by the parishes, but they can only give what they can afford; conversely plenty of people in the parishes don’t understand how the Share system works, particularly the concept of “membership”. If people have ideas about how to explain the system better, please let the Chairman DBF know.
- It can be helpful to arrange meetings of the parish treasurers within a benefice or deanery so they can discuss and understand their Share and ensure that everyone is

declaring in the same way. The Chairman DBF and other diocesan staff are willing to speak at such meetings which can be very helpful.

- The cost of training curates is borne by dioceses, but we may receive some financial help from the National Church in future.
- It was considered better to utilise Reserves rather than raise Share above 2.5% which may have proved unpalatable before a wider debate about finance had taken place.
- Good communication will be hugely important because there is sometimes a disconnect between what Synod members understand and support and what is understood and supported at deanery or parish level.

The Chairman DBF then moved on behalf of the DBF Executive:

“That the Diocesan Board of Finance/Synod approves the annual Budget for Share Assessment 2019.”

The Motion was approved with none against and two abstentions. The approved Budget Guide for 2019 will be available on the diocesan web site.

## **9. Finance Strategy**

9.1 Synod noted the comments collected from the finance discussion at the February Diocesan Synod.

9.2 The Head of Finance introduced the 10 year Plan. This was a discussion paper identifying the financial challenges ahead and outlining the objectives. There were 2 main areas:

1) There is an imbalance of income against expenditure with 3 items not covered by income:

- Share deficit – we currently budget for 100% collection of share
- Capital repairs and ingoing works – £550,000 per annum currently
- Clergy rentals £120,000 per annum

These items alone will cause a cash drain of £10.4m over the next 10 years.

2) There are additional costs principally associated with the appointment of 4 more curates per annum from 2020. These total £6.8m over 10 years. Some possible solutions had been identified:

- Help from Church Commissioners
- Review of Property and Investment property portfolio
- Review of the Assumptions
- Possible more income from the new property trading company- income realised in 2017 £270,000 over budget
- Share increase/ Stewardship campaign

The aim was to gather feedback and present a revised plan later this year or early in 2019.

The ensuing discussion and feedback session included the following comments and observations:

- To reduce the proposed number of additional curates from four to two would be a false economy.
- We need to have more clergy and have them more visible because this is what people in parishes want to see.
- Our current clergy and congregations are ageing and any increase in young people in our congregations and amongst our clergy may not keep pace.
- Many curates in other dioceses do three rather than four years' training, which is usually ample and would save money.
- If we can achieve growth in church membership we should see increased funding.

- Stewardship should be seen as an annual activity not just a one-off campaign. It may also be helpful to consider legacy campaigns.
- Parishes also have to undertake their own stewardship campaigns, in various ways, to maintain local mission.
- There are parishes who find it genuinely difficult to raise money – nevertheless the reality is that costs keep increasing.
- Is it worth mortgaging houses to raise income?
- Perhaps parishes should be contributing incrementally to the cost of their curates as they develop in their curacies.
- We should review what we are doing rather than assuming that we will continue with everything.

**10. Questions**

There were no questions. Mrs Margaret Morrissey observed that, having served on Bishop's Council for the past triennium, she now understood what happens to the money collected through Share and how carefully it is all managed and spent. It was important to communicate this message to the laity in the parishes.

**11 Any other business**

There was no other business.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

Synod will next meet from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday 3 November at a Wiltshire venue to be confirmed. Any Motions, proposals for business or other matters should be with the Diocesan Secretary by 14 September.