



MINUTES

A Meeting of the members of the Truro Diocesan Synod and The Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Limited was held in the Council Chamber County Hall, Truro on 28 September 2019

- 1 **The Opening Worship**, which included Eucharist, was led by the Bishop of Truro. He was supported by members of Transforming Mission Falmouth worship team, Mr Matt Parry, Mr Julian Briscoe and Mrs Jane Wheeler.
- 2 **Apologies** were received from 15 Clergy and 12 Laity.
- 3 **The Presidential Address** was given by the Bishop of Truro, a copy of which can be found on the Diocesan Website at: <https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/bishops-blog/presidential-address-to-truro-diocesan-synod-september-2019/>
- 4 **Introduction of new Archdeacon of Cornwall**, the Ven Paul Bryer. The Bishop of Truro explained that, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Ven Paul Bryer was unable to attend today's meeting. He will therefore be welcomed and introduced at the next meeting of Diocesan Synod on 16 November.
- 5 **Filling the See of St Germans**. Diocesan Synod members had been sent a copy of a paper, written by the Bishop of Truro and making a case for filling the vacancy of the See of St Germans following the departure of The Rt Revd Chris Goldsmith. The Bishop of Truro informed members that the Bishop's Advisory Group and the Diocese Commission had both agreed to the position being filled. This now needed to be approved in principle by Diocesan Synod, although there would be an opportunity to make changes to the job description. He also stressed that this post is financed by the Church Commissioners, not by the Diocese.

A question and answer session followed during which it was expressed that the paper is worthy of wider publication. The Bishop of Truro stated that he would be happy for the paper to be put into the public domain and the Registrar confirmed that this would be acceptable. It was therefore agreed that it would be uploaded to the Diocesan website.

The Bishop of Truro proposed that Diocesan Synod endorse the proposed appointment of a new Bishop of St Germans.

1 absention
Remainder in favour

- 6 **What is God calling us to do?** - Inspiring stories.

Revd Lee Chantler, Assistant Curate at Newquay, gave a presentation outlining how the church in Newquay is involved in meeting the needs of an area that has always attracted a large amount of surfers, hippies and van dwellers. These people can often be isolated and have various needs and St Michael's Church, together with other agencies in the area, aims to provide help and support.

Several agencies are involved, some of which use the church premises, including DISC (Drop in and Share Centre) and the Foodbank. Newquay Community Orchard works with the church and takes people from DISC and the Foodbank to teach them new skills, and St Petroc's works with all 3 of these agencies. Working together has the benefit of attracting funding schemes.

Other projects include beach meditation and prayer, and the Wave Project, a surf church, which has bases all over the country, including Newquay.

St Michael's Church has recently commissioned a statue portraying the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment. This inspires and upholds their vision to be a connecting place for all those who come to them for help, to be as the hem of Christ's garment for all these people.

Mr Paul Roskrow, the Acting Chair of the Board of Trustees of All Saints Church and Community Centre, Tuckingmill spoke about the history and missional work of the Centre. It was originally the vision of a former Vicar of Tuckingmill who set up the Centre some 20 years ago. After a difficult start, it is now established as a provision of help and support in the community. Trustees from the community and from Tuckingmill Church provide governance and management.

The aim of the Centre is to promote social justice and, in particular, to support vulnerable people such as the elderly and those with dementia.

The centre works alongside other agencies, including Foodbank and Coastline and is involved with, and hosts, many community and socially proactive groups. Typical activities include helping people find accommodation, helping women and children escape from domestic abuse, advice on Benefits, and mentoring and educating people so that they can return to employment.

They have recently received offers of two grants, one of £190,000 from the National Lottery, and one from the Foyle Foundation. These grants will fund new posts and help the Centre to expand, including a crisis café and a shop in town.

There are new projects on the horizon, including Space and Thyme, which will use the church grounds to set up a memory garden and a sensory garden. This project will be run in conjunction with other local groups.

All Saints Church and Community Centre, Tuckingmill was nominated this year for the Care and Support Awards and, although the Centre itself did not win an award, one of its volunteers, and one of the Community Police officers, did.

A question and answer session followed during which the following points were made:

- Engaging with the community in this way is not easy and can be fraught with difficulties. Volunteers and workers require a great deal of energy and need to give and receive support. Paul Roskrow emphasised the need to go forward in faith and he has been encouraged by the support given by the church community.
- The Bishop of Truro pointed out that the centre had not been fruitful during its first three years. This shows the importance of not giving up if things do not work out straight away and of being fearless and persistent.

Diocesan Budget for 2020 to 2022 and our financial challenges - introduction, group discussions and plenary.

The Chair of the House of Laity, Dr Mike Todd, explained that the draft budget for 2020 would not be considered at this meeting but at the next Synod in November. He paid



tribute to the finance team for the time they had spent preparing the draft. Synod members expressed their thanks with a round of applause, and Dr Todd asked Mrs Sophie Eddy, the Director of Finance and Assets, to pass these thanks back to the other members of the finance team.

Dr Todd explained that feedback from the group discussions would be taken to the next meeting of the Bishop's Diocesan Council on 24 October and would be taken into account when the draft budget is prepared, prior to it being presented at the Diocesan Synod meeting on 16 November.

The Bishop of Truro then set out the broader context for these discussions. Firstly, he asked members to consider whether they would be willing to endorse a deficit budget. If Synod cannot approve a budget in November then there would need to be an extraordinary meeting of Synod in the New Year to do so.

Secondly, he explained that the diocese is trying to address some of its deeper cultural issues, which manifest themselves in giving and which is itself a barometer of spiritual health. Our desire is to be a church of hopeful people that rejoice in the generosity of God and we need to believe that the resources we need will be available to us.

A short question and answer time followed prior to the group discussions during which the following points were made:

- Specific financial figures have not been made available to members for the purposes of these discussions, other than the £300,000 operating deficit predicted for next year's budget.
- The plenary after the group discussions will be for reporting purposes only, with debate taking place at the Synod meeting in November.

Group discussions then took place followed by a plenary session. Points arising from the plenary session included the following:

- There is a recognition that we need to grow the church and encourage people of all age groups to belong. There is an over-reliance on the parishioners who are willing and able to contribute.
- People can be reluctant to give on a regular basis to support the mission and ministry of the church. However, they can often be willing to give to a cause with which they are specifically engaged.
- We need to ensure that our thoughts and discussions surrounding the current financial issues we are facing as a diocese, are rooted in prayer, discipleship & theological reflection.
- Some groups were reluctant to agree to a deficit budget but would be willing to accept this if accompanied by a clear plan to correct the deficit within 2 - 3 years.
- It is important that church leaders see that their role includes enabling lay people into ministry.
- The cost-based approach to MMF can take away from the broader vision of the diocese and can focus on local concerns. However, it was agreed that it is early days and there should be more fruit evident as people become accustomed to the new approach.



- Giving is an indication of spiritual health. MMF needs to be seen not as a tax but as a response to God's generous love.
- The responsible approach to the current financial situation would be to recognise that there is an immediate need to cut costs. However, this would raise the risk of spiraling into decline and therefore should only be a short-term response. In the long-term, we need to hear God's word, to trust him and to give in response to His generosity.
- Concern was expressed that much energy is being expended by the diocese on expanding mission but the risk is that this is then followed by a time of retraction, as funding is no longer available.
- A plea was made for time to be spent listening and reflecting on what God has to say about the situation that is around us.

The Bishop of Truro thanked everyone for taking part in these discussions and for their creative thinking. He encouraged members of the working group that has been set up to look at the generosity of God, to think creatively. Are people being given the opportunity to give? How can we engage people to encourage them to give in a creative way? He emphasised that he does not want to make people feel guilty about giving; it is about having vision.

He endorsed the comments that Church growth is key. There are fewer people who are being asked to give more and more, and that is not fair or sustainable.

Concerning the new approach to MMF, he emphasised his belief that the decision to devolve to deaneries is the right one but the system needs to be improved; a tension has been set between a diocesan budget and local plans and this is a challenge.

He agreed that there is a danger that cost cutting can lead to a spiral of decline. He emphasised that, if cuts do take place, care needs to be taken to ensure that wise choices are made. There is a danger in focusing excessively on money - we need to remember to "Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness".

Finally, the Bishop of Truro endorsed the comments that we need space to hear what God is saying to us. We have to be willing to change and adapt and should be assured that God seeks the best future for us.

The Chair of the House of Laity, Dr Mike Todd, explained that the budget papers would not be available to send to members until after 25 October i.e. the date the agenda for the November meeting is due for circulation. He therefore asked members to approve a proposal that the papers be made available to members after 25 October but not less than seven days before the meeting. All in favour.

General Synod including Q&A session.

Richard Best, Communications and Media Liaison Advisor, facilitated a question and answer session on General Synod matters, with questions being answered by General Synod Representatives Revd Canon Anne Brown, Mrs Sheri Sturgess and Dr Mike Todd.

One of the motions from General Synod that several people feel strongly about is the Anna Chaplaincy motion. The Anna Chaplaincy offers spiritual care to older people living in care homes and sheltered housing complexes, their relatives and the staff who look after them. It also promotes the spiritual welfare of older people in the wider community. Their vision is to see an Anna Chaplain in every small and medium-sized community in the country, and for the Anna Chaplain name to become synonymous with spiritual care for older people. The motion carried by General Synod recognised and commended the work of the chaplaincy and requested all dioceses to raise the profile of



work with those diagnosed with dementia and their carers. It also called on Her Majesty's Government to report on progress on the achievement of the Prime Minister's "Challenge on Dementia 2020" and on what steps are being taken to join up health and social care to ensure the seamless transition from one to the other for people with dementia.

Q: Were examples of areas of particular concern in health and social care given to Synod, and of the action that might be expected at local Diocesan level to put pressure on Government to fulfil commitments?

A: A presentation given at General Synod on the role of Anna Chaplaincy focussed on how those with low to medium grade dementia should be integrated into society, and dioceses were asked to promote this. This is something we currently do quite well but we could do even more.

Debate that took place at General Synod was wider than just the Anna Chaplaincy, which has a church based emphasis. Our diocese has focussed on a wider, broad based, approach and is working in collaboration with other organisations. Bishop Phillip met with our diocesan group to look at how we can work with others in Cornwall regarding this. There are specific difficulties to be dealt with in the Cornish population.

Another General Synod motion concerned refugees who wish to carry out specific professions in this country but need to undertake appropriate training and placements before they can do so. The motion outlined ways that such refugees could be supported to help them into the workplace and the benefits that could come from this in terms of integration and community relations.

Q: Could one of you perhaps give us a flavour of the discussion there was around this and how the motion was received by synod, please?

A: Overall, the motion was well supported as we have a deficit of skills in these areas. In an attempt to make things practical and achievable, it suggested trying to help just one family. It is interesting to note that an amendment was put forward that pointed out that not only professional refugees are at a disadvantage. However, this was not passed because it would have watered down the main focus of the motion, which was to support those with professional qualifications.

DAC and revised constitution.

There were no questions or comments. Members were asked to approve the revised DAC constitution.

All were in favour.

Scheme for the representation of New Street Church on the Carnmarth South Deanery Synod within the Archdeaconry of Cornwall.

A Synod member expressed concern that this could be setting a precedent for other Transforming Mission places, and that this may not be the most co-operative way forward. It is possible for linked expressions of church to cooperate and to be represented by the same PCC. This approach could potentially set up a barrier between congregations.

The Bishop of Truro expressed sympathy with this point of view. However, he explained that New Street Church does not see itself as part of All Saints, Falmouth and, if it did, then young people would not identify with it, would not attend and would not be part of Deanery Synod.

Members were asked to approve the scheme for the representation of New Street Church on the Carnmarth South Deanery Synod.

2 abstentions

Remainder in favour



Promulgation of Amending Canon No. 39

The Diocesan Registrar, Mr Jos Moule, explained that this Amending Canon is part of the general simplification agenda. Full details are in the papers previously made available to members, but he drew attention to the most important aspect, which proposes changes in early morning and evening prayer, and Holy Communion, resulting in greater flexibility for benefices. Services will still be held with the same regularity but can now be held in different churches without requiring permission from the Bishop.

A report on the work of the BDC, the Bishop's Diocesan Council, was noted.

Questions (if any) - please refer to the Standing Order item XB18

The following questions were raised under Standing Order item XB18.

Question 1 from Revd Cathy Sigrist, East Wivelshire Deanery, on behalf of Revd Chris Painter, Rector of the Tamar Valley Benefice:

Would the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) please explain their decision not to support a new Ecumenical Church School at Broadmoor farm that has the full support of the East Wivelshire Deanery Synod and Methodist and Baptist colleagues?

A: Revd Simon Cade responded as follows:

“In the spring of 2018 the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) was invited by the governors of Bishop Cornish School to make a proposal to the Department for Education for a new Voluntary Aided School on the Broadmoor Farm development near Saltash.

Broadmoor Farm is a planned development of 1000 dwellings on the edge of Saltash with a site identified for a two-form entry primary school. The school is unlikely to be provided much before the 500th sale-point, which is still years away. Until that point there is no technical “need” for the school in the view of the local authority (Cornwall Council).

The Bishop Cornish invitation was for the DBE to publish a proposal for a new Voluntary Aided school to be run by Bishop Cornish as a joint Anglican/Methodist school.

“Publishing a proposal” is like making a bid for a school, the diocese would be undertaking to provide 10% of the capital cost of the school as well as to oversee some aspects of the project management for the new school.

In response to the invitation, the DBE through its officers did several things during 2018:

- We talked to Cornwall Council about the need for a new school and when it would be needed in their view
- We had regular contact with the Department for Education about this and other capital projects
- We talked to neighbouring schools, two of which are church schools, as well as to other school providers in the locality
- We made contact with local clergy and other church leaders, including offering to come to the deanery synod and to provide further information
- We visited two other diocesan teams that had managed new school projects to try and understand the capacity that would be needed locally for a successful bid and school opening
- We kept talking and listening with the Bishop Cornish governors to keep them informed and to understand their ambition



Finally, the DBE asked officers to undertake a formal “due diligence” to help the DBE to make a decision on the invitation, this was shared with the Bishop Cornish governors.

The due diligence recommended that the DBE should not publish a proposal, this was agreed by the DBE in November 2018; in other words, we said “no” to Bishop Cornish governors. The decision was communicated in writing and in person.

There were three reasons for the decision:

- The DBE has a simple priority, becoming a significant partner for raising standards in schools in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; this was agreed by synod in 2014. The proposal does not align with this priority; we need to make the schools that we already have better, before we start opening new schools.
- The proposal would require significant investment of officer capacity and capital funding that the DBE does not have. We worked with dioceses that regularly make successful new-school bids to understand what would be needed.
- The proposal would risk compromising key partnerships locally and beyond, particularly with neighbouring schools, including church schools, which did not support this approach to providing a school for Broadmoor Farm.

I realise that the decision of the DBE was disappointing to the Bishop Cornish governors. I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to their energy, enthusiasm and success in Bishop Cornish School, and for their ambition for the children of Broadmoor Farm.

I want to encourage all those invested in the future of our children to work together to promote education for wisdom, dignity, community and hope, the Church of England’s vision for education. To reject a culture of school providers competing for diminishing resources, and indeed competing for children, but to work together to find the best for all the children of the diocese of Truro whether they are in church schools or community schools.”

Question 2 from Mr Martin Saunders, Pydar Deanery:

Following on from your report for the Foreign Secretary into the persecution of Christians throughout the world, what actions do you think that the Church of England, its bishops and archbishops, and this diocese should take?”

The Bishop of Truro responded. He explained that he took on this piece of work as a Bishop in the Church of England, not as the Bishop of Truro. His concern was to ensure the government would take this issue seriously, not just for Christians but for all those with religious belief, and that this justified the work.

We should make sure that our MPs are on board with this issue and use our position of influence as voters. There are excellent NGOs who are engaged with this issue and we can show our support by accessing information about their work on the internet and by supporting them in prayer, both individually and as churches.

10 **The meeting closed with prayers at 1.50 pm.**

