

Minutes for a meeting of Truro Diocesan Synod 1 February 2025 at St Erme Community Centre, Trispen.

**Meeting as Members of Truro Diocesan Synod:
Chaired by Revd Laura Bushell Hawke, Vice Chair of the House of Clergy**

09:25 Welcome, housekeeping

Revd Canon Simon Cade (SC), Diocesan Secretary, welcomed everyone to St Erme Community Centre and gave housekeeping details. SC apologised on behalf of Paul Zaphiriou, Chair of the House of Clergy, who is unwell.

SC handed over to Revd Laura Bushell Hawke (LBH). LBH welcomed everyone, including The Rt Revd David Williams who, following the election by the College of Canons, is now the Bishop of Truro. LBH said we are meeting as Truro Diocesan Synod and introduced the worship team from St Martin's Church, Liskeard.

09:30 Opening Worship lead by the worship team from Liskeard Church

Nicky Carter (NC) and the Liskeard team led us in worship and prayer. They performed songs of worship.

NC invited Ruth Marriott (RM), Director of Change and Renewal, to read "Mark 4: 35-end".

NC thanked RM for her reading and invited members to pray in triplets, each praying for the following:

1. Pray for the agenda
2. Pray for parishes/diocese
3. Pray for the world

All prayed "The Lord's Prayer".

NC and the Liskeard team closed with a final song.

LBH thanked NC and the Liskeard team, noting that if members would like to suggest musicians or liturgists who might lead us in worship to let either Simon Cade or Kate Cortez know.

10:00 Introduction to The Rt Revd David Williams, Bishop of Basingstoke

LBH invited The Rt Revd David Williams, Bishop of Basingstoke, to address Synod.

Bishop David thanked LBH and expressed what a privilege it was to be elected. He asked what else we are unless we're underpinned by a life of prayer. He voiced his belief that prayer is the way forward.

He explained the election process, highlighting that the election has to be confirmed by the Archbishop in London. On the 28th March 2025, he will officially become the Bishop of Truro. He brought everyone's attention to Bishop Hugh and his service to the Diocese and for acting as Bishop of Truro. Bishop David expressed his excitement to be collaborating with Hugh and to be serving Cornwall.

Bishop David shared that he has been part of "Thy Kingdom Come" for the last 10 years, and talked of a time when he was in the Republic of Congo with them. He expressed his amazement by their commitment to pray with us.

Bishop David spoke of his background, schooling, and upbringing. He spoke of both his and his wife's dedication to putting down roots in Cornwall and being the Bishop of Truro, and at the same time expressed sadness about uprooting from Basingstoke.

Bishop David moved on to talk about what brought him to God. Whilst in the Republic of Congo he saw a boy kneeling by his bed. He asked him what he was doing and the boy replied: "I am asking the Lord Jesus Christ to be at the centre of who I am". Bishop David said that this was when the "penny dropped" for him.

Bishop David spoke of the moment he received a letter from Truro asking him to interview for the Bishop of Truro position. He was asked to write a reflection. He admitted that the letter was unexpected, but well received. Historically, he said, you would get a letter saying "you are the..." rather than asking if you would like to interview.

Bishop David said he felt called by God - he wanted to lead kindness and good behaviour, and expressed that we do the same for the rest of Cornwall and partner wherever we can and serve wherever we can.

Bishop David referenced 'Elaine' and the meal she put on for 27 people at St Petroc's over Christmas for those with additional needs.

He expressed his excitement for being here in Cornwall and invited members to pray for him, Bishop Hugh, and each other.

Bishop David invited the Crowns Nomination Committee members and The Acting Bishop of Truro, Hugh Nelson, to pray for him.

The Crowns Nomination Committee members and Bishop Hugh prayed for Bishop David. Bishop Hugh asked members to join in if they wished to do so.

LBH thanked Bishop David and encouraged him to stay to hear what else is going on - and promised a pasty.

10:30 Address by Kate Kennally (KK), CEO of Cornwall Council

LBH welcomed Kate Kennally (KK) the CEO of Cornwall Council. LBH provided to background information on KK: As CEO Kate oversees a budget of more than £1.2 billion employing more than 5,800 full time equivalent staff. Kate came to Cornwall from London and the South-East nine years ago, with a strong background in "place leadership," and in 2023 she won a national "CEO of the year" award.

KK thanked Synod for allowing her to be here today. KK expressed her fascination at how representative bodies come together (referencing the recent election of the Bishop of Truro). KK explained that she would be speaking on Cornwall's opportunities, and the risks and part we play here in our life in Cornwall.

KK stated that they have over 2,000 statutory responsibilities, which she admitted is hard to deliver all of the time. In her opinion, it's about leadership of place and Cornwall Council's responsibility to serve those in Cornwall - not losing stewardship. It's important to serve those needing support and to respond to the immediate.

KK moved on to talk about challenges - short, medium, and long-term. The medium term challenges are ensuring that the democratic institutions remain legitimate.

Long term challenges: KK said that you can't focus on the economy without having focus on the strength in the community. In other words, it has to remain balanced. KK said that the challenge is staying sustainable. KK feels that Cornwall's population pyramid is not a pyramid, but a tube and it influences whether Cornwall flourishes or struggles.

2011 - 2021 Census

- 1.7% increase in people aged 16 - 64.

- 21% increase in people aged 65 - 90.
- The biggest falls are those aged under 18.

KK said that the strength of population is stable and we have strong communities. People are connected and want to give back. The consequence is rising house prices (10x average incomes). Young people think that Cornwall may not be for them.

KK explained that when you add up wealth through taxes, it comes to £12,264 per head and the cost of society is £19,925 per head. The point, KK suggests, is that sustainable places need to have a balance of social and environmental investments, which led to the question *“have we got it right in our society?”*

A big feature of the discussion, KK continued, is *“how should Cornwall respond to challenges?”* In the news, the Government is keen to go for growth. In Cornwall they deliver 200 homes a year - some are welcomed, some less so. The figure now that is asked of them is 4,421 but *“who are the homes for, and where do the homes go”* KK asked.

KK said that in the absence of a clear approach of the fundamental population issue in the UK, the Government relied on international workers. Since the last census, those that do not identify as being white in Cornwall has gone up to 3.2% from under 2%. Some communities are not from Cornwall (not even Devon), but further afield such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, etc. Racism is still very much a challenge KK admitted.

In terms of risk to the planet, KK continued, there were 300+ call outs due to recent storms. In 2024, Cornwall Council were the first Local Authority to publish a Cornwall Wide Climate Risk Assessment (in collaboration with Exeter University). This can be found on the website *‘Let’s talk Cornwall’* (link below). KK said that currently there is a risk of coastal erosion, and drought. The climate crisis is due to industrialisation (since the 19th century). Since then there has been a 1.2 degree increase. Overall, we need to show we have done our part in helping to address the crisis.

Let’s Talk Cornwall: <https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/>

The good news, KK highlighted, is the fantastic mineral wealth, marine renewables, offshore wind, solar, and hot rocks geothermal. There is time for Cornwall’s economy to have a renaissance KK stressed. But, she feels that we will have to invest and secure investment, find the skills, as well as support local communities to be a part of it, including the homes to support the unlocking of economic potential. KK said that to achieve *Net Zero*, we need to change how we lead our lives, so there’s an opportunity here.

In the Council, KK added, *“how do we balance building on the community and spirit and how might they resonate for each of us?”*

1. What we are doing on the three time horizons - short term, medium term, long term.
2. Balance - people, planet, money - remain sustainable to work.
3. Trends and strengths - Cornwall is a series of connected communities - a polycentric model.

KK said that we need to share power, ask communities to support each other, shop local, eat local so we’re not travelling. KK asked *“how do we utilise our strengths to share the narrative that this is the place to be for future generations?”*

Cornwall Council’s Mission is: Working WITH communities for a carbon neutral Cornwall where people connect well, live well, and age well.

KK explained that they are working on increasing the voice of young people.

KK thanked Synod for inviting her here today.

LBH thanked KK and invited questions.

Questions

Mr. Clive Dixon, West Wivelshire

With the building of new homes and new people in the communities, what steps are in place to introduce new growth in business to employ those people?

Response from Kate Kennally

There's worry from the business community about hiring people with the right skills and there's a shortage of these people. People are underemployed in our communities, but they may be out of work due to health, so the questions is "*how do we support those that are underemployed and needing support?*" Cornwall Council has Invested £132m in the last three years through the Shared Prosperity Fund, which is a fund to build and grow sectors. The skills and labour group give advice on gaps and what we can do.

Mr. Mike Sturgess, West Wivelshire

We are incredibly blessed with medieval listed churches, but there is also a climate crisis. There appears to be a conflict between Heritage and the Church. Because our Church is listed, we cannot get solar panels on our Church.

Response from Kate Kennally

I agree that this is frustrating. We do have a climate change development planning document which shapes policy and we are continuing to speak and collaborate with the government who suggest this will be addressed.

End of questions

Further questions can be sent to kkennally@cornwall.gov.uk.

11:00 BREAK

Meeting as Members of Truro Diocesan Synod:

Chaired by The Rt Revd Hugh Nelson, Bishop of St Germans and Acting Bishop of Truro

11:15 Presidential Address

The Rt Revd Hugh Nelson, Bishop of St Germans and Acting Bishop of Truro, gave his Presidential Address, a copy of which can be found on the Diocesan website [\[HERE\]](#).

Group Discussion

"What are the habits, people and places that help you, personally and as a church, to live in hope?"

Feedback

Revd Ben Morgan-Lundie, West Wivelshire

We are getting lots of invitations to come into schools across the deaneries. This shows a real willingness from the children to hear of faith.

Mrs. Jo Heydon, Trigg Minor & Bodmin

There was huge attendance at Christmas, Easter, and equally at our Crib Service. We have a better relationship with schools so faith can be more widely presented, which in my opinion, is progress.

Revd Andrew Yates, Powder

Recently I was listening to Desert Island Discs and there was an episode with Nick Cave (Singer and Writer), which spoke of hope. He said that "*hope is optimism from a broken heart*". I highly recommend listening to the episode.

Ms. Kathy Pope, County Ecumenical Officer

It's tough to look inward and get own house in order, but we are better together. I've seen so many signs of hope of Christians working together, sometimes Churches, but Christians serving our communities. Even in difference, we can serve our neighbour side by side.

Mrs. Charlotte Irwin, Pydar

The very habit of going to Churches elsewhere brings hope. Having a base guitarist with a mohican here today gives me hope because of the diversity.

Mr. Robin West, East Wivelshire

I have hope in what people are prepared to do for others, especially when they don't go to Church. E.g. Sending Love to Ukraine, who have made 17 trips, all of which is self-funded.

End of feedback

Bishop Hugh thanked everyone for their contributions.

12:00 Presentation and proposals for a consultation on a new MMF formula

Bishop Hugh invited SC and Sophie Eddy (SE), Director of Finance and Assets, to talk about MMF. Bishop Hugh noted that this item is to introduce work that will return to Diocesan Synod in June for a full discussion and debate.

SC introduced MMF and the structure of the presentation:

1. Why the formula is changing.
2. What the changes are (SE).
3. Timetable of consultation (SC).

SC said that the current MMF formula is not an old one and was introduced in 2018. 2019 was the first year the formula was in place fully. The call we make, however, is no longer strictly based on the formula. The reason for that is if you are moving to a new model in your Deanery plan, for stability, we will base the call on that new model. To make it level, there will be a transition period for those Deaneries where it isn't fully implemented.

The current MMF formula doesn't take into account LICF. This proposal gives the stability to allow people to implement the plans they've agreed. We also need a new way of incorporating new Churches (e.g. New Street BMO and St Gregory's BMO) into the MMF formula. SC handed over to SE.

SE said that the main changes are set out in Section 4 of the "*MMF Consultation Detailed Briefing*" document. This document can be found on our website [\[HERE\]](#). The intention is to achieve consistency in how the call is calculated and we hope to minimise the changes and disruption that Deaneries are already experiencing.

Based on the previous calculations in September 2024, if the formula was in use now, most Deaneries would only see minor changes in the call. In some Deaneries the new formula gives an output further away from the current call. In these cases we propose tapering transitional arrangements up to the end of the timeframe described in the Assets Strategy.

To clarify, this is based on a *proposal* only and that's what we're consulting on at the meetings. SE handed back to SC.

SC clarified that the consultation will be held mostly online during February 2025 and March 2025, with two of the meetings being in person. Following the consultation, it will go back to the BDC and then back to Synod in June where we can have a full conversation. SC explained that the meetings will be held with Treasurers and Clergy and those invites will be going out next week. The consultation will consider (at a Deanery level), what the call would be this year and how that compared to the previous call. SC said that we will also be writing to the PPCs for comment. If the feedback is "*we want to start from scratch*", then we will incorporate that into what comes back or into the conversation in June. Assuming that the MMF proposal is approved, the timeline is tight for it to be introduced in 2026.

SC invited questions, but they need to be brief. Bishop Hugh reiterated this so we can keep to time.

Questions

Mr. Mike Rowe, St Austell

As a Deanery, we have a Finance Team that looks at the MMF call and does calculations for Parishes. Would that Deanery team be involved in the consultation?

Response from SE

Yes.

Mrs. Sarah Vinson, Trigg Major

Which of this list of 10 alternatives referenced in the briefing document does the Diocese currently use?

Response from SE

Largely E: "Cost of Ministry", with a bit of H: "Equal share", with a bit of A: "Historic". Compared to Diocese across the country, we're more E than most.

Mr. Martin Saunders, Pydar

I was not aware there was just one scheme - there are too many variations. It needs to be wider. There is £6.4m that comes from the MMF capital stipends account and that has to be used for payments for priests. In actuality there is £6.4m worth of receipts, excluding LICF and MMF monies that have to be used for parish priests. We could decide, if we wanted, to have 100 parish priests. We need to bring all PCCs with us. Monies are raised at a PCC level (not a Deanery level), so it is up to the PCCs what we do. We haven't addressed his [MS's] comments on this in his speech 18 months ago. We do not have a scheme that we can read through and comment. If there is a motion on the table, I want to propose an amendment so the timetable is extended. I propose a Paper in June for PCCs so that final amendments are picked up in Autumn.

Response from SC

If members indicate an open and radical look at MMF and do as you say, then that needs to be heard by the BDC. Bishop Hugh said that there will be ample opportunity at Diocesan Synod in June. He asked SC to confirm. SC said yes we do not have a detailed formula today because that is to be done in June following consultation.

End of questions

12:20 LUNCH

**Meeting as Members of Truro Diocesan Synod:
Chaired by Mr Roger Smith, Chair of the House of Laity**

12:50 Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal - Reports and Questions

Roger Smith (RS), Chair of the House of Laity, introduced the next item: The Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal. RS outlined who would be speaking and what they would be speaking on. RS handed over to Ruth Marriott (RM), Director of Change and Renewal.

Overview - Ruth Marriott (RM), Director of Change and Renewal

RM said it's good to look at what's been happening in recent years, focussing on what's gone well and what challenges we still face. We have been focusing on capacity and capability - Each Deanery has a Project Support Officer to help implement plans in practice and priorities. Leadership is key. We have therefore introduced *Strategic Rural Deans* for additional support and leadership. We invest in local people and Clergy.

RM continued. We are recruiting at pace, recruiting twenty last year in Ministry. There is still

work to be done around building trust when it comes to local plans, but it's moving forward and we will revise as needed. Some plans have changed due to a change in context. RM asked how we evaluate progress against outcomes and right now it's more about outputs.

LICF money is being used to support Deaneries, with a focus on supporting those in need. We're seeing more multi-generational and community projects. People are working together collectively. We're about to take the plan for Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) to the BDC for sign-off, but Lee Moscato will speak more on this). The People Plan is to ensure the right people are in the right place with the right skills and we're encouraging lay roles as they feel called - it's a challenge.

The Asset Strategy has been created to help with Deanery implantation, including tracking. RM asked *"how do we demonstrate the outcomes and showcase the stories of what is going on in the communities?"* Quantitative data is important, but so are stories.

Models of Ministry - Isaac McNish (IM), Head of Ministry

IM introduced himself, Kelly Betteridge (KB), Archdeacon of Bodmin, and Clive Hogger (CH), Archdeacon of Cornwall. IM explained that each person sees *"Models of Ministry"* differently. What is the model that's needed in this time? What is Oversight Ministry?

KB said that it is ministry with oversight. KB used a farming analogy to describe oversight ministry. Her dad, who had a farming background started farming in the 1950s. When she was born he was a Farm Foreman and when he retired, he was driving harvesters and tractors more advanced than when he'd started. It changed, so her dad had to. He had to have oversight of a whole farm. He'd gather a team for the day, co-ordinate what needed doing, but he did the work too. It's not a one person task. In other words, it takes a team. Changes happen, methods change. I see oversight ministry in a similar way. We require team work.

IM asked CH *"How does this model relate to the calling of our Priests?"*

CH said "we need more priests" is a phrase he hears from a lot of people, but is always drawn back to this: "Ordained to lead God's people offering of praise and the proclamation of the Gospel. They share with the Bishop in the oversight of the church, delighting in its beauty and rejoicing in its well-being".

IM asked if either KB or CH have a biblical image in their mind.

CH said that for him it's Paul. The planting of Churches and looking for the next people to lead our Churches. But, Paul doesn't do everything on his own.

KB said for her it's Jesus. The Gospel shows him investing in the few, in the "early fledgling church". Jesus was about being altogether and doing things that mattered. Being a named leader wasn't important.

IM said that we ourselves can't fulfil ministry, we need to identify others. IM handed over to Lee Moscato, Director of Education.

Children, Young People, and Families - Lee Moscato (LM), Director of Education

LM said he would provide an overview of where we're out in the proposal to go to BDC. The proposals set out how we seek to address our diocesan priority for increasing the number of children who are actively engaging with their church community and how we support or start a sustained and stronger relationship between churches, schools and young people and their families. This is up to us all, not just education. The proposal will address two main objectives:

1. To ensure that every child and young person is in reach of a worshipping community where they can be at home and explore a journey of faith.
2. To increase the number of young disciples.

These two key objectives, and the work that will follow will be guided, and held to account, against Five Principles:

1. Intergenerational Communities
2. The voice of CYP
3. Connections between church, home and school

4. Intentional faith formation
5. Collaborative leadership

LM explained that this is 'delivered' through work streams which we've called "*many*", "*some*" and "*few*".

LM continued. For the 'many', this area of work is to provide something that most or even all churches will find useful. It's a broad brush approach which would see training, development and networking. This is something we've started in earnest and last week saw our inaugural '*Children and Young Peoples' Workers Network*' gather bringing together over 50 people from across our diocese to begin to receive some input but most importantly shape how this looks moving forward.

For the 'some', this sees that some churches already have lots going on that can be supported and that others will want to be more ambitious than the 'many' offer. This, like all the work streams, really looks at the context, the place (both physically the place/location but also the place churches might be in their journey.)

LM said that we'd propose to use the model of the '*Flourish*' pilots here and the principles of Growing Faith. We're fortunate that we're part of this pilot and we can already see where we can use some of this work to repeat (contextually) this in other areas and learn from the wider process and approach.

For the 'few', this refers to a few places, usually at deanery level, which will be identified for more support (progressively) and with genuine local planning that learns from '*Transforming Mission*' and '*On the Way*'.

This could be where there's a real opportunity but significant resourcing would be needed. We think this would focus on where there's a chance to work with that transition point between Key Stages Two and Three (Junior to Secondary), and work alongside schools and churches to co-design bespoke, targeted approaches.

All of this will, we believe, grow and evolve to meet changing need and most importantly, keep coming back to the principles, the aims. Our next step is to present this in detail at the BDC and following that, shared with you and more widely.

LM handed over to Graham James (GJ), Retired Bishop.

Small Churches - Graham James (GJ), Retired Bishop

GJ said that it has been small rural churches that he's been concentrating on in the last six months and he's hoping for conclusions rather than a great report by early summer. The origins lie in twelve people (Jesus' Disciples) and those that gathered around the cross. *Smallness*, GJ continued, isn't a problem to be solved. As long as they take delight in the Gospel, *size* shouldn't matter.

Some small churches have hopeful stories to tell. GJ said he's noticed on his visits to vibrant small churches that they all have the following in common:

1. Nearly all were once empty of people, ideas, activity and mission within recent memory. They have come to life again.
2. Inspired people who've taken others with them and have generated enthusiasm. God has given them what was needed in the small group they had.
3. Confident their church had a future.
4. Grown in faith when they realised that Sunday numbers aren't all that matters. *Anxiety* is not joinable. *Hope* is infectious.
5. Believed that their Church building was/is precious.
6. The people are precious. It's not 'either/or', it's 'both', 'and'.

GJ shared a short parable: *In October we stayed with some friends, went to church, and was told it was usually dead, but instead it was full. We couldn't get a seat. School classes of children were singing, they'd brought their parents. They were at home. A Teacher had the idea and two ladies in the congregation, decided to go to the school and offer to hear the children read. The school were thrilled. Eventually it led to harvest Eucharist. Now, there is a*

regular mums and toddler service in a church that was on its way out.

These small and vibrant churches may have lessons that we could do with hearing.

GJ handed back to IM.

People Planning

IM refers to the '*People Plan*' document.

IM recognise that there are certain roles we need to prioritise.

1. Incumbent Status and Stipendiary Clergy.
2. Local Leaders (Lay in the majority). Operated under Oversight Ministry.
3. Deanery Leaders to ensure plans are held and shared locally.
4. Children and Young People.

IM said that if we don't resource these, then wider plans won't be achieved. People will not just appear. We recognise that many Churches are small. IM asked whether the word '*small*' has good or bad connotations. IM closed with asking how we ensure that in seven years' time, the right people are in the right role at the right time, explaining that the culture has to be embedded, and with change, comes tensions and challenges. IM said that where there is a shared sense of coming together, there is a fruitfulness. It's about people - prayer and action.

RM asked for brief questions.

Questions

Mrs. Erica Payne, Powder

Are we there yet in terms of identifying local leaders? Some struggle to say they are. Is there more training support for them?

Response from IM

We aren't there yet, but the biggest thing is tell good stories. I've heard powerful testimonies of local leaders figuring it out so those stories are out there. Sometimes we need to *listen*, be good at talking them up so we can imagine what this looks like for me.

Miss. Nat Carney, Penwith

Are you expecting Deaneries who are writing the policy to fit theirs in with our own and will that work with Deaneries that are stuck in past models?

Response from RM

There isn't just one model. It needs to be contextual and we want to be in partnership. It's okay that Deaneries aren't all in the same place. It's a phased approach and it's purposely broad because of the different contexts.

Mr. Martin Saunders, Pydar

What is the point of having a paper like this with a presentation we have received if there isn't time for us as Diocesan Synod to discuss and debate? I came today with a paper, expecting a debate.

RS said that if everyone would like, we can go into the break to hear from more people. Everyone agreed.

Mr. Martin Saunders

"Being a priest is a vocation, not just a job...". I agree with those words from Theresa May's book "Abuse of power". [April Bullard Asked for a copy of speech on 03/02/2025.]

Response from CH

I hear that what we are describing is a change from a model of ministry, but the change is from something that has been relatively new in the life of the Church. Expression of ministry where the priest is at the centre is a new (and unsustainable) idea that stifles. Our numbers plummeted with this model. We are called and commissioned of resources we are given. I

recognise the pain from a change, but a change towards this model is a mistake. A priest in a parish church every Sunday offering communion has always been an aspiration. It's a new and novel thing having Communion as often as we do.

Response from KB

I disagree with a lot of what was said in the speech. A priest doesn't have to be in every community. The church is called to be present in every community and that is more than a Priest. That doesn't equal presence. The Church fails to be present to a huge number still. I'd like to make a correction. The Deanery Implementation Team is not entirely in the gift of the Archdeacons. The process and decision is a collaborative one. In theory I could appoint a DIT, but I choose to ask others for ideas and willing and then invite Deanery Synod to approve the membership.

Revd Elizabeth Burke, Powder

Is there a difference between Oversight Ministry and Team Rector and if so, what are they?

Mr. Patrick Newbury, East Wivelshire

I thank Archdeacon Kelly for her farming analogy, but I need a clearer definition. The idea that the '*Priest Model*' is a modern device is suspect. Many historians suggest it's not new and it's been in place for 500 years.

Introduction to Oversight Ministry video, delivered by The Rt Revd Hugh Nelson, Bishop of St Germans and Acting Bishop of Truro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFh2JmdMyzs>

SC said that we support increasing Clergy numbers.

Mr. Simon Taurins, Powder

Thank you Martin. We move together and forward, so don't I agree with all, but we need an open debate in Synod. We need to challenge more on where money is going, Transforming Mission and what we learn, and this group should be able to challenge that.

Mr. Robert Perry, Powder

I do know the number of people coming from ordination is low. Whilst we aspire to have a Priest in every parish, we can't do it because there isn't the Priest to fill post.

End of questions

RS thanked the team for their presentation.

13:45 BREAK

14:00 Safeguarding in our Diocese - Discussion and Questions*

RS Introduced Andy Thompson (AT), Safeguarding Trustee, BDC.

RS remind members to care for one another and said that there is help available in the room and online for those who may need it.

AT introduced himself and reminded that we are all respected and if anyone is in distress, they can speak to Andy Earl or Heidi Huntley.

AT said that the external body, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP), is going through a name change and will become Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Panel (DSSP). AT introduced Andy Earl (AE), Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

AE introduced himself and expressed his joy to be at Diocesan Synod, but said that recent safeguarding issues are not joyful. He expressed his gratitude to victims and survivors. AE reiterated that if anyone is effected, it is okay to step out and we will support those people. He gave thanks to those that have rung in to raise concerns. He apologised for the delay in response, explaining that due to the recent '*Makin Report*' and the incident in Liverpool, traffic has increased. AE handed back to AT.

AT referred to the '*Safeguarding Briefing Document*' and asked for comments from members.

Questions

Mrs. Abigail Kirby-Harris, Trigg Minor

Recently we had three excellent safeguarding training sessions. We felt we had done it before, but we're still thankful, particularly to Kerstin Lewis. What is going to happen to people named in 'Makin Report'? If there is no accountability, who do we go to? What are the plans higher up the food chain to make those accountable?

Response from AE

Thank you Abigail, and thanks to Kerstin Lewis and her delivery training. 'Pathway' is part of prevention going forward - it's a layer of protection. General Synod are about to review independence on the 11th February 2025. The option up for consideration is to have a statutory regulatory body that provides independent oversight including final stages and complaints process. Meaning, that when all resources are exhausted, the regulatory body acts as a final stage. The aim is to have transparency and consistency across Dioceses.

The operational safeguarding in the Diocese, AE continued, will become independent, a separate entity to the national body, which is controversial. AE admitted that there are concerns that that may make the Church less safe, but in addressing processes, an independent body may be accused of not delivering outcomes in years to come.

Once the decision is made at General Synod, we will engage with what that means in Cornwall. AE stressed to members that they shouldn't assume what we deliver is replicated in bigger and richer Dioceses - we are forging ahead.

Response from Bishop Hugh

With someone who works with big companies when they go through big loss (e.g. The Metropolitan Police), we asked them how to repair. "*They said that you're not in business of repair, it's rebuild*". Structural work is needed. It's lengthy, so at General Synod we'll be looking at Clergy disciplinary measures and accountability. Fundamentally, we need to be clear on how all Clergy are held accountable. But the answer isn't straightforward. Currently there's no clear concise answer. Conversations are ongoing.

Another option is a new association is set up (similar to the Police Federation) and in order to have a role in the Church, you must be part of this independent association (including Lay roles).

Miss. Elizabeth Lewis, Trigg Minor & Bodmin

Who is going to pay for the independent bodies?

Response from Bishop Hugh

It will be the Church of England

Mr Jeremy Stuart, Pydar

I'm often asked what is going on with the appointment of people who don't know the correct way to respond to a safeguarding issue. How does a man like George Carey get to Canterbury?

Response from Bishop Hugh

We always ask about safeguarding in our recruitment process. If the panel isn't satisfied, we would refer the applicant to Andy Earl for a 1-2-1 conversation. If this is still not good enough, they aren't appointed. All applicants are interviewed by the Head of the National Safeguarding Team, which is not independent, but safeguarding is there in the appointments process. This wasn't the case when George Carey was appointed in Liverpool.

End of questions

AT introduced questions for group discussion:

1. Has the national news about safeguarding affected your church - how?
2. What would be helpful from diocesan leadership at this time, from the Bishop, Archdeacons, BDC, or Safeguarding Team?

3. Do you have other responses that you want the Safeguarding Team, Diocesan Leadership, or General Synod members to hear?

Feedback

Mr. Jeffrey Terry, Trigg Minor & Bodmin

Feedback to Q.1

Yes, the national news has affected our local church because locally on the ground, people are doing a good job. But, the national headlines are about what goes wrong, and it seems that it's always the bad news that reaches the press. The national headlines suggest we're all over the place and we have no idea how to safeguard properly but locally we experience the opposite. There is dissatisfaction and upset locally as the headlines undermine what we're doing.

Feedback to Q.3

There is a reluctance about option 4, which is to have all the local Safeguarding Officers transferred to a national body because that might detract from what we've worked so hard to achieve over the last two years in making safeguarding the responsibility of everybody. So to have it taken away and moved nationally might detract from that message.

Mrs. Mary Cooper Brown, Kerrier

Feedback to Q.1

It hasn't necessarily affected our church in terms of in the pews because people know that what we're doing regarding safeguarding is good, but we don't know how it's affected our community. It'll take time before we know what impact that has had on our churches and what our communities feel about it.

The Ven Kelly Betteridge, Archdeacon of Bodmin

We chatted about what's needed now in terms of the immediate response, and what is needed in the future. The possibility of learning from other complex organisations and how they approach safeguarding.

Mrs. Sarah Vinson, Trigg Major

In my other life I was a uniformed scout leader for 30+ years and they took safeguarding more seriously and much earlier than the church did. You could pick up our safeguarding training, as good as it is, and you wouldn't know it was from the church at all. I suggest that we link a lot more of safeguarding messaging to our Clergy and our laity to scripture, so that it's really powerful to show how we are diverging from how Christ wants us all to behave in a Christian context.

Mrs. Kerstin Lewis, Trigg Minor & Bodmin and Mothers' Union

Feedback to Q.1

Yes the national news has affected our churches. People in the church are angry because we've done a lot of work. I have given out 50 safeguarding training certificates in the last three weeks, so I am angry that I have to face a room full of people who are also angry. Regretfully, one of the things that has made us angry is pious messaging from leadership at this precise moment about safeguarding.

Feedback to Q.2

Leadership need to step back and let the laity get on with it. Sorry, but your messaging is not quite on target, that's not personal. What's done in Truro is outstandingly good. When we come down to the options that are discussed at General Synod, it'd be helpful for people like to me to know who those people are - who here is on General Synod?

Feedback to Q.3

I disagree with taking the safeguarding officer away from the locality. That would be recipe for total disaster. We need to keep it local and keep a chain and Truro is very good. The concern we have is when you say "independent", what do you mean because we don't think you're independent and the general public certainly don't think you're independent?

The Very Revd Simon Robinson, Dean of Truro

If you are angry about the national picture then one of the things that you can do is write

to the Lead Safeguarding Bishop or the Archbishop of York, or you may have written to the Archbishop of Canterbury, as I did, asking for resignations. I did that not from a position of being angry, but because I am a victim of grooming and rape in the Church of England.

Much of what has been said this afternoon is right and proper. It sounds slightly remote from my experience, which happened over many years, in a church where I should've been kept safe. Where I stand, the most important thing for us, the Diocese of Truro, is what we do locally to ensure that there is a Parish Safeguarding Officer in every Parish. There is not. At the same time, ensuring that those people who think the training and bureaucracy is a waste of time, it is not, and we need to counter that message. By encountering those incredibly unhelpful and abusive messages, abusive to people like me, we actually stand a better chance of ensuring that young people like me are not groomed, and we're not raped, and at the age of 57 had thought they had sorted themselves out, have suddenly had all of that come back in a way that I never expected. I thought my history was in my history. It isn't. It's in my present.

There will be others here today who will have had experiences which were abusive and, yes, be angry about the national picture. Yes, call for resignations. But our responsibility to every young person and to every vulnerable person in this Diocese, our responsibility is to take this absolutely seriously. Not because it's a matter of bureaucracy or training, but because it's about God who wants us to be safe. No structure will ever create a *safe* Church. It will help create a *safer* Church. But what we have to do is be braver and not be silent. I kept silent for years, and have only recently been able to say to people what I can say in front of you, and I recently said it at the Bishop's Diocesan Council. There's a side of me that, at those times when I've said what I've said, I've felt embarrassed. That's what abuse does to victims and survivors.

So yes, we can talk about the national picture, but please let's talk about the local picture and what we do locally so that every young person, every vulnerable person, every vulnerable adult, has a chance of feeling safe in the Church that I love, and in which in many ways has *saved* me, but at the same time, abused me. So that's my plea. If you are angry, channel that anger right to where it needs to go. But we must not lose sight of our responsibilities here as a Diocese to create safer and braver churches, so that in 50 years' time, there isn't someone like me standing up here in front of an organisation like this.

End of feedback

SC suggested that if anyone has any further responses, they send them to either himself (simon.cade@truro.anglican.org) or Kate Cortez (kate.cotez@truro.anglican.org).

SC said that he will make sure that our General Synod members have seen the comments and remarks by the end of this coming week.

14:45 Questions under Standing Order XB21, see the note below

9a Question received from Jane Howells, Penwith

Will the Diocese of Truro adopt bullying and harassment policies and guidance that represent "best practice," and which will be thoroughly useable including at parish level for Clergy and lay people?

Response from Simon Cade, Diocesan Secretary

Thank you for question on this important subject. The answer to your question is "yes". We regularly review all our Clergy and staff policies, and are very aware that our harassment and bullying policies and guidance do need updating to reflect both good people and safeguarding practices, and new legislation relating to sexual harassment.

Our Director of HR, Louise Court is leading on this, and she will welcome your input Jane, if you would be willing for her to contact you. I know she is very keen to involve Clergy and parishes in this work, and similarly if anyone else has an interest in this area, do let me or Louise know.

Members should note that Jane's original question was longer and includes important

background, we include her complete text below for information*. We want to encourage "Questions under Standing Orders" from members, but please note we will need to focus on the actual question and that we will not usually allow "statements" to pass under the cover of "questions"!

Once the answer has been given, members may ask a supplementary question, which must be an actual question (i.e. not a speech on what you think of the answer!)

***Full text from Jane Howells:**

The Church of England says "Every diocese should have its own dignity at work policy and anti-bullying and harassment policy," and gives several examples including those of the Dioceses of Norwich and Derby. Truro Diocese has a Bullying and Harassment Policy section in the Clergy Handbook but compared to other Dioceses it is not best practice.

Best practice would produce an effective and useful policy with easy-to-follow procedures (and would lessen a potential for regulation by a critical press). Such a policy I suggest should be parish-led, perhaps drawn up by Benefice Safeguarding Officers and include an independent reporting and appeals structure. An example of an independent reporting mechanism happens in the UK Parliament where there is an Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme provided by the organisation Victim Support. Other organisations also exist to combat bullying. The Church of England says in its guidelines that it is helpful to signpost to external agencies.

In summary, this request is to ask the Diocese to seek best practice, and facilitate the production and implementation of a thoroughly usable, parish-led Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy which clearly set out procedures and an independent reporting mechanism.

Supplementary question from Jane Howells, Penwith

Simon, thank you for your positive response to this. I look forward to hearing from Louise Court and am glad to hear she is looking to engage with others who wish to see a robust anti-bullying policy - for both lay and ordained people - developed for the Diocese.

My supplementary question is this. As bullying and harassment can happen when there is an imbalance of power, will this process work in partnership with the parishes to understand where there are such imbalances of power in the Diocese and why they happen, and put the protection of those with less relative authority at its core including through the provision of a safe independent reporting mechanism so that the Diocese is not marking its own homework?

SC thanked JH.

9b Question received from the Revd Douglas Wren, Powder

Given the significant amount of money allocated in the Diocesan budget to Clergy housing, what steps will the Diocesan Secretary be taking to ensure that the new contract will deliver all that is required as well as providing a high level of satisfaction from those living in parsonages?

Response from Sophie Eddy, Director of Finance and Assets

Thanks for the question Douglas, which is very timely. Under the Diocesan Board of Finance's schedule for the review of contracts, the contract for the provision of property services is due to be retendered this year and that work is in hand.

The Board are working with an experienced independent consultant to support the tender process, this ensures that we consider best practice in the process. The work will also be supported by specialist advice from our legal providers where necessary. As well as professional support the work so far has already been supported by those living in board or parsonage housing.

Whilst the work is facilitated by officers, non-executive members of the Bishops Diocesan Council (BDC) are involved at every stage, BDC as the trustees of the charity will make the final decision on the award of the contract.

Clergy living in board or parsonage housing will contribute to the interview process, and BDC also includes members who live in board or parsonage housing.

One crucial element of the tender process is to ensure that potential providers understand the nature of Clergy housing and how this is different in some regards to the private rented sector - this is written into the draft tender documents. Another important element is cost, whilst the Board is cost-sensitive this will not be the only deciding factor, we also look for alignment with our values, the level of service that can be provided, and the resilience of the provider, amongst other factors.

We will be happy to work with you Douglas if you want to engage further.

RS moved on to Item 10 - Report and Minutes.

15:00 Reports and Minutes

- Minutes of the previous meeting of Diocesan Synod
- Report from the Bishops Diocesan Council

Members of Diocesan Synod had questions prior to the vote.

Questions

Mr. Mike Sturgess, West Wivelshire

I note in the minutes that it says “family working and youth working”, but it should say “Family Workers and Youth Workers”, not “working”.*

**April Bullard, Information and Governance Assistant, Diocese of Truro, amended the minutes to reflect this change on 03/02/2025.*

Mr. Martin Saunders, Pydar

I wrote to the Secretary but didn’t get an answer. In the first paragraph of the previous minutes, the House of Clergy and House of Laity are the wrong way round.** Secondly, we made 20 clerical appointments, which is third of the establishment. Has there been a review of why a third was vacant?

***April Bullard, Information and Governance Assistant, Diocese of Truro, amended the minutes to reflect this change on 03/02/2025.*

Response from Simon Cade

Yes, that figure is a larger proportion when compared to other Diocese. The difference is that they weren’t able to recruit. Whereas our vacancy rate is decreasing rather than increasing. When a member of the Clergy leaves the Diocese, the Bishop meets with that person (exit interview) as part of the process. We have found that a significant number of those “leaving” were moves to another role within the Diocese, rather than leaving the Diocese entirely. We are very much hoping to do more work with training colleges.

Mr. Patrick Newbury, East Wivelshire

The St Paul’s Church item in the BDC minutes is misleading. Instead of saying there were “no formal objections”, it should say there were “no formal objections from the consultees”.

Mr. Martin Saunders, Pydar

There seems to be a technical muddle between “approved” and “noted”. Both documents (Minutes and BDC Report) are different and therefore should be voted on as such. The BDC Report should be “noted”, not “approved”. It is for us to “approve” the Minutes of our meetings.

RS clarified the proposal: members vote on both documents separately, followed by voting on the wording change (i.e. Minutes are approved” and the BDC Report is “noted”). Depending on the outcome of whether the documents will be voted on separately, there

will either be three or four items to vote on in total.

Vote 1.

The minutes and BDC Report should be voted on separately.

For: 49

Against: 0

Abstain: 2

Vote 2.

The wording of the motion should be amended (the Minutes should be “approved” and the BDC Report should be “noted”).

For: 52

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

Vote 3.

The Minutes are “approved”:

For: 51

Against: 0

Abstain: 5

Vote 4.

The BDC Report is “noted”:

For: 54

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

The minutes were approved, and the BDC Report was noted.

15:15 Thanks from Bishop Hugh

Bishop Hugh thanked everyone for attending both online and in person. Bishop Hugh asked Bishop David to bless us. Bishop David led us in prayer and closed the meeting at 15:16.

* Please note that the item on Living Love and Faith has been postponed to the June meeting of Diocesan Synod and a safeguarding matter has replaced it. The President and co-Presidents of Diocesan Synod have exercised their powers under Standing Orders to amend the agenda from the notice provided.

MOTIONS

Meeting as Truro Diocesan Synod

10 The Chair will propose;
“that Synod note:

- the minutes of the meeting of Diocesan Synod on 23 November 2024
- the report from the Bishops Diocesan Council

Enclosures

- TDS25(03) Introduction to a consultation on proposals for a revised MMF
- TDS25(04) Detailed briefing on the MMF proposals
- TDS25(05) Introduction to the presentations on the Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal
- TDS24(27) Minutes of the meeting of Diocesan Synod on 23 November 2024
- TDS25(06) Report from the BDC to Diocesan Synod

TDS25(07)

Dates of future meetings of Diocesan Synod

You are hopefully already aware that there will be four meetings of Diocesan Synod in 2025. This is both to adjust the cycle moving forward and to give space to the new Bishop. These are the dates:

- 21 June - St Martin's Church, Liskeard
- 13 September - St Paul's Church Hall, Charlestown
- 22 November - TBC

SPECIAL NOTES

Questions under Standing Orders

Don't forget that members can ask a "Question under Standing Order XB21" by sending a question to Simon Cade in writing at least seven days before the meeting. The question can be addressed to the bishop or the chair of any synod committee or formal group appointed by synod, or the Diocesan Registrar or other officers of synod. Questions may be referred to officers or others to answer, (and the person asked can decline to answer!). If there is something that you want to know, but aren't sure how to phrase it, have a word with Simon. You don't have to read the question out in front of everyone, but you **do** need to be in attendance at synod either in person (or online when it is a hybrid meeting).

Travel and parking

You are entitled to claim for travel costs at 45p a mile plus parking for attending Diocesan Synod. You can use the claim form provided and send it, with any parking receipts, to kate.cortez@truro.anglican.org along with your bank details for payment.

You can also claim other reasonable expenses to allow you to attend. For instance, if your ecclesiastical office requires you to live on an archipelago 32 miles west of Sennen Cove you may also need to claim for flights and accommodation. Parents or carers can also claim reasonable expenses for childcare etc (even if you don't live on an archipelago).

If there is anything we can do to assist you including alternative formats and other accessibility provision, please contact kate.cortez@truro.anglican.org or 01872 360023.