



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

DS(17)M3

DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDBURY AND IPSWICH

DIOCESAN SYNOD

Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on Saturday 4 November 2017 in the St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich.

Present:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|----------------|
| House of Bishops: | The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich The Bishop of Dunwich | |
| Archdeacons: | The Archdeacon of Sudbury | |
| House of Clergy: | 41 Members of the House | (15 apologies) |
| House of Laity: | 59 Members of the House | (14 apologies) |
| Ex-officio: | 9 Ex-officio Members | (5 apologies) |

In Attendance:

The Acting Diocesan Registrar, the Diocesan Secretary and 11 members of staff.

Item No. Subject and Description

17.25 OPENING WORSHIP – LED BY COLNEYS DEANERY, REVD TOBY TATE, VICAR OF MARTLESHAM AND BRIGHTWELL

The Lay Vice President of Synod was in the Chair.

17.26 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Available to view at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRqTkdwHAMA>

Bishop Martin welcomed new members, in particular Phil Bailie, Diocesan Youth and Young Adults Officer and Revd Canon Sally Gaze, Dean for Rural Mission Consultancy. Bishop Martin also recognised the departure of The Very Revd Dr Frances Ward as Dean of the Cathedral and welcomed Acting Dean Bishop Graeme Knowles.

Our calling is for Christian discipleship and learning to live more deeply in our relationship with Christ. Worship is a vital part of this and the development of worship is a top priority for the diocese. For the first Christians, their understanding of worship was their way of life, not just a church service. This should be the same for us today, living a life honouring and giving praise to God. When the early Christians met, they would reflect, study, eat, pray, take the eucharist, which enables everyone to grow as disciples. Meeting together, should encompass all of these elements. Bishop Martin asked parishes to be imaginative and creative, to take risks and be bold for the sake of our discipleship and to draw in others.



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He highlighted the work carried out by E-Harmony, the Family at Worship (led by Carl Melville) and the Enhancing Worship course with 120 attendees engaged with all things that help us to grow as disciples.

He highlighted how we are called to be “welcoming, caring and safe”. We do this through supporting groups like the Children’s Society (see agenda item 17.30), promoting a safer church (safeguarding within the church), and preventing bullying and harassment within the church. We want to be a place of safety, to protect people and know that we have practices in place to be as safe as possible and to be alert to those behaviours that may need intervention.

In conclusion, he reminded Synod that the foundation of the renewal of the church had two dimensions - the study of the scriptures and diligent prayer. Both dimensions can be seen across all Christian denominations and are the foundations that we should develop so that by the power of the Spirit we may grow as disciples and the church be renewed.

17.27 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2017 DS(17)M2 were agreed and signed.

17.28 MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA

No matters arising.

Standing Orders were suspended.

17.29 GROWING IN GOD – RELUCTANCE, FAILURE & FRUITFULNESS

The Revd Canon Dave Gardner, Director of Mission & Ministry, interviewed The Revd Chris Childs (Stowmarket) about the journey of engaging his parishioners with our strategy.

The main points highlighted were:

- Find what activities work for you in your parishes
- Build the Growing in God strategy into the heart of all you do – it takes time to ‘plough the ground’ with your parishes
- Be prepared to stop certain activities that don’t work
- Be prepared to do things differently
- Persevere

17.30 CHILDREN’S SOCIETY

The Chair welcomed Emily Timmins and Revd Mike Todd from the Children’s Society. They gave a presentation on their work which linked in with the Growing in God strategy.

Highlights included:

- As a diocese, £76,802 has been donated to the Children’s Society in the last financial year, the top three deaneries being Loes, Lavenham and Sudbury.



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- The current focus is on 10-18 year olds and covers working with young people who may be carers, victims of child sexual exploitation, child refugees and migrants or who may have poor mental health or drug & alcohol problems and those who have run away from home
- Parishes were encouraged to use the resources available from the Children's Society, to continue to support them (through the house boxes and Christingle services), and to pray for them.

Questions:

Mr Ian Wigston mentioned he was aware that children often have a lack of confidence in school, was anything being done to raise confidence levels? Emily Timmins responded by outlining a project called "Include" which is about raising a child's confidence. She also highlighted an annual festival held solely for young carers to give them a rest and which also host workshops to help them to improve their confidence. The Society is aware of a link between their experience as a young carer and the outcome of their personal education which does need to be addressed.

Revd Stephen Earl (Lavenham) commented that a lot of material focusses on children in urban areas. What about work with those in rural settings? Cases are often more hidden and individuals isolated in rural communities. Emily Timmins responded that one reason why they campaign and lobby is to ensure they have a greater impact across the whole community, including rural communities.

The Chair thanked the Children's Society for their presentation.

17.31 SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Bishop Martin introduced this item, highlighting the necessity for our churches to be fully aware of the issues we face, that it is essential that policies are in place, appropriate training provided and that best practice supports those policies. The central church has made a huge investment in safeguarding, recognising the need to respond to survivors needs to be much more effective than it has been previously. The Church recognises the need to be robust and wants to ensure our churches are safer places.

A DVD was played 'Because you said Something' – highlighting examples of vulnerable adults and promoting the message that if you see something untoward, say something.

Dave Butcher, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser spoke to the 'Promoting a Safer Church - Safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults' booklet, given out on arrival. The policy has five foundational principles:

1. Gospel
2. Human Rights and the Law
3. Core Principles
4. Good Safeguarding Practice
5. Learning from the Past

Craig Hutton, Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer & Training Co-ordinator, provided a brief overview of the new national church training strategy. Highlights included:

- Five core new modules ranging from C0-C4, and a number of specialist



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modules.

- The new training is more inclusive, with the C0 module raising basic awareness of safeguarding. It is an online, one hour module which everyone must carry out (approx. 5-10,000 people over the next three years).

The Parish Safeguarding Handbook will be released in 2018. At this stage, Synod was being asked to vote on the policy and principles behind it.

Questions:

Archdeacon of Sudbury, David Jenkins spoke on behalf of the Archdeacon of Suffolk and himself reinforcing the need to take this extremely seriously, to listen to the advice and engage with it.

Revd Susan Loxton (Hartismere & Hoxne) welcomed the need for safeguarding training though she felt that to expect flower arrangers to undertake it will potentially lose those individuals on the fringe of congregations. Dave Butcher in response, explained that it can often be a volunteer who may see something and therefore that all volunteers should understand what safeguarding is. He urged members not to see it as a negative but in a positive light.

The Rt Revd Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich moved that:

“This Synod adopts the House of Bishops policy statement ‘Promoting a Safer Church’ and the diocesan strategic plan for the delivery of safeguarding training in adhering to National Church practice guidance, and commends them to parishes for adoption at their next PCC”.

Archdeacon David seconded the motion.

Voting was done by a show of hands and was passed unanimously.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

17.32

PREVENTING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT & ENCOURAGING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Bishop Martin introduced the item. Whilst bullying and harassment is not systemic in the Diocese, there sadly have been a number of examples and therefore, in common with many other dioceses, we would like to raise awareness of the issue, the first step being to develop a policy. The policy has been approved by Bishop’s Council.

Questions:

Mrs Celia Bush (Ipswich) commented that though it is a sad reflection that there is a need for such a policy she commends it.

The Rt Revd Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich moved that:

“This Synod adopts the policy statement ‘preventing bullying and harassment – encouraging positive relationships’.”



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The motion was seconded by Lorna Brook.

Voting was done by a show of hands and was passed unanimously.

17.33 APPROVAL OF THE 2018 BUDGET

Mrs Anna Hughes, Diocesan Secretary, presented the revised budget in Archdeacon Ian's absence.

Highlights included:

- A break even budget is ambitious and everyone will need to work together
- An error arose after the papers were circulated for which she apologised. An item of c£45k was shown as income, when it should have been an expense. This resulted in an error of c£90k. It is intention to retain the break even position by reducing the overall property budget and to delay some IT projects.
- Checks and controls will be put in place to ensure this doesn't happen again.
- In general, costs and income are very similar to the 2017 budget. There have been some areas of work within the diocesan office where costs have moved around to be more accurate. One area with a real increase in expenditure is ordinand training.

Questions:

Revd Tiffer Robinson (Lavenham) asked how the funding corresponds with the vision in the respect of not cutting clergy numbers, does that policy still stand? Bishop Martin commented that there is no intention to cut clergy numbers. The increase in clergy retirements is a national issue and we need to plan for sufficient replacement clergy. The Revd Jeanette Gosney is looking at this on behalf of the diocese.

Mr Guy McGregor (Hoxne) asked for clarification on Churchgates and what is the impact of the DBE finance on the diocese? Mr Gary Peverley, Director of Finance, explained that Churchgates is a subsidiary of the DBF and owns the diocesan office and another property on St Nicholas Street. Work with the DBE is ongoing to look at how any shortfalls are met whilst protecting the unrestricted position.

Mr Christopher Spicer (Ixworth) asked whether sharing back office services with other dioceses is being taken forward. Mrs Anna Hughes advised that no work is ongoing currently with other dioceses but the door is not shut on opportunities in the future.

Mrs Sally Wainman (Colneys) commented that with more and more people in debt and yet we are asking for more money, there is a need to be understanding and to offer support to those individuals.

The Rt Revd Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich moved that:

"This Synod approves the 2018 budget in accordance with the budget paper DS(17)P33"

The motion was seconded by Barry Vincent.



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Voting:

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| For | 107 |
| Against | 0 |
| Abstained | 0 |

17.34 PARISH SHARE

Mr Gary Peverley, Director of Finance, presented the item in Archdeacon Ian's absence.

Highlights included:

- The agreed methodology of allocating parish share for 2018 had been applied but because of changes in the cost/income base, results have showed significant distortions in individual benefices eg one benefice in Waveney & Blyth had a 27% increase.
- It was discussed with Deanery Organisers in October and they had recommended that an across-the-board increase be implemented instead.
- In practice this means a 2% increase but it also needs to take into account ministry changes. This equates to around £120k to reallocate across the deaneries. For an average benefice staying with the same numbers, this means a 2% increase and 1.7% for ministry changes, totalling in a 3.7% increase. If posts are increased, it will be higher, if reduced, the percentage will be less. These changes have been agreed with all Deanery Organisers.

Questions:

Mr David Walters (Sudbury): stated that the timescales for the parish share approval mechanism was not ideal. To approve the overall parish share in June is wasted if deaneries do not know their specific allocations until the end of September as it gives little time to agree the distribution across the benefices. Mr Gary Peverley agreed with the comment and is working towards bringing the share allocation to Synod in June 2018 to avoid this position in future.

The Rt Revd Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich moved that:

"This Synod approves the amended allocation of the 2018 parish share as shown in the paper DS(17)P34 such that all parishes receive an equal increase in the allocation except in those parishes where there has been a change in numbers of clergy".

The motion was seconded by Revd Tiffer Robinson.

Voting was done by a show of hands and was passed unanimously.

17.35 2018 ELECTIONS TO THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

Canon Michael Wilde made reference to the paper DS(17)P35.

The Chair thanked David Lamming for his work undertaken to provide the data to enable him to propose the following two motions in David's absence.



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Canon Michael Wilde, Chair of the House of Laity and member of the Governance Committee, moved that:

"This Synod determines, in accordance with rule 31(6) of the Church Representation Rules, that the number of members to be elected by the houses of laity and clergy of the several deanery synods in the diocese in the election of members to the Diocesan Synod in 2018 shall be as per paper DS(17)P35."

The motion was seconded by Tony Allwood.

Voting was done by a show of hands and was passed unanimously.

Canon Michael Wilde, Chair of the House of Laity and member of the Governance Committee, moved that:

"This Synod determines, in accordance with rule 32(6) of the Church Representation Rules, that the form of voting paper to be used by deaneries in the election of members of the Diocesan Synod in 2018 shall be in the form set out in Section 7 of Appendix I to the said rules (simple majority)."

The motion was seconded by Bishop Graeme Knowles.

Voting was done by a show of hands and was passed unanimously.

17.36 REPORTS FROM BISHOP'S COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2017 BS(17)M3 were noted.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19/20 September 2017 (DS(17)M4 were noted.

17.37 REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD

The Chair thanked Tony Allwood for his thorough feedback report from General Synod. No comments were made.

17.38 QUESTIONS

No questions were raised.

Standing Orders were suspended.

17.39 NOTICES

17.39.01 CHURCH INSURANCE

Mrs Anna Hughes outlined that work is ongoing with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group for church insurance. The advice from the diocese for those churches whose insurance is due, is to obtain two quotes before renewal.



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17.39.02 PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Revd Graham Hedger, Head of Stewardship, outlined the Parish Giving Scheme, a direct-debit scheme developed to provide a professional, effective donation service to support parishes by reducing the burden of work on parish volunteers and providing a professional service to our donors. The scheme is a separate legal entity, owned by its members, 18 participating dioceses. Evidence to-date shows a significant increase in planned giving once parishes have joined.

There is no charge for churches participating in the scheme.

Mailings will be going out to the parishes with invitations to the launch events early in 2018.

Questions:

Mrs Mary Hare (Woodbridge) asked whether contributions through charity aid foundations can be linked to the scheme. No.

Bishop Graeme Knowles commented that the launch needed to coincide with theological teaching. Is there any material the diocese can help with this? Revd Graham Hedger responded that there are numerous resources available of the parish resources website and the stewardship section of the diocesan website.

17.39.04 PARISH DATA RETURNS

Mr Gavin Stone, Director of Strategic Planning and Communications, informed members that the diocese will be returning to the national church online system. Parishes will be written to making them aware of this factor and what that involves.

Questions:

Revd Mark Haworth (Thingoe) asked who would be written to. Mr Gavin Stone replied that letters would be going to Data Editors, Church Wardens and incumbents.

17.39.03 #GODWITHUS

Mr Gavin Stone, Director of Strategic Planning and Communications, introduced the national church's Christmas campaign #GodWithUs and urged members to take the leaflets for their benefices to assist with their Christmas services. Gavin also encouraged parishes to add their church services onto the "Church Near You" website.

The meeting concluded with prayer.

Signed:

[Chairman]

Date:
