



THE DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDSBURY AND IPSWICH DIOCESAN SYNOD

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on Saturday 20 March 2021 over Zoom conference call.

Present:

- House of Bishops: Bishop Martin Seeley, Bishop Mike Harrison
Archdeacons: Archdeacon David Jenkins (Sudbury), Archdeacon Jeannette Gosney (Suffolk), Archdeacon Rhiannon King (Ipswich)
House of Clergy: 51 Members of the House (2 apologies)
House of Laity: 48 Members of the House (3 apologies)
Ex-officio: 16 Ex-officio Members (1 apology)

In Attendance:

The Diocesan Registrar, the Diocesan Secretary, 5 members of staff and 0 visitors.

Revd Canon Sharon Potter, Chair of House of Clergy, in the Chair

Table with 2 columns: Item Number and Description. Rows include WELCOME, WORSHIP, and 21.01 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

**21.02****BEING POLITICAL**

Paper ref DS(21)02. Revd Tony Redman introduced this item. "Be political" was one of the four focus groups set up at the beginning of the triennium and is the first group to report back to Synod. Members of the group are: Revd Catherine Forsdike, Revd Eleanor Goodison, Guy McGregor, John Dixon and John Dangerfield, now sadly passed away.

Political engagement falls in the growing in influence element of the growing in God strategy. We are called to engage with the world. The focus group decided that political engagement is something to encourage all parishes to be involved in.

The focus group gave a presentation encouraging parishes to get involved. They discussed what political engagement might look like, gave some examples of where this has already been achieved and some topics where the group believes political engagement should be sought: namely housing, education and transport. Revd Tony Redman introduced a motion where three recommendations were asked to be debated and voted on to agree future action.

A leaflet is available for all parishes on "how to engage politically", this will be circulated after the meeting.

Revd Tony Redman moved that:

"In seeking God's Kingdom; this Synod commits to improve our engagement with local issues for the common good by:

1. Resolving to influence and shape local policy debate, through encouraging Bishops and their senior staff to continue to be actively engaged with MPs and local and national policymakers on appropriate matters;
2. Encouraging all parishes and benefices to engage with local political and community leaders and processes, to bring about change for the common good within the communities they serve and beyond, and;
3. Creating and recruiting for a volunteer role that will foster, coordinate, advise and resource such political engagement."

A debate followed. The main points drawn from the debate were as follows:

- Need to ensure that the Christian message is expressed in any discussions where government bodies are setting policies documents, at all levels; parish, town, county, national level;
- Is it possible to consider working with the Citizen Advice Bureau who effectively gather data and use this data to lobby politicians;
- When campaigning, must build alliances but its also important to keep control of the agenda;
- From working in partnership with others, it has been heart warming and encouraging to see how the church has been treated;
- When matters occur in the media which require a fast response; the church should respond;
- Challenge is to be political without being party political;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern raised that clergy are being told they are not doing enough whilst in the context of being already exhausted over the past year.</li> </ul> <p>An amendment to the motion was proposed by Archdeacon Sally Gaze. The amendment proposed, was to change the first sentence so that it reads: <b>“Resolving to listen to God and discern his call, on how and when to engage to political issues and in seeking God’s Kingdom, this Synod commits to improve our engagement with local issues for the common good”</b>.</p> <p>Two members objected to the amendment, feeling it weakened the motion.</p> <p>A poll was taken to agree the amendment to the motion, this was agreed by an overwhelming majority.</p> <p>A poll was taken to agree the amended motion in full:</p> <p>For: 104 (94%)  Against: 1 (1%)  Abstain: 5 (5%)</p> <p>The full and final wording of the motion that was agreed was:</p> <p>“Resolving to listen to God and discern his call, on how and when to engage to political issues and in seeking God’s Kingdom; this Synod commits to improve our engagement with local issues for the common good by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolving to influence and shape local policy debate, through encouraging Bishops and their senior staff to continue to be actively engaged with MPs and local and national policymakers on appropriate matters;</li> <li>Encouraging all parishes and benefices to engage with local political and community leaders and processes, to bring about change for the common good within the communities they serve and beyond, and;</li> <li>Creating and recruiting for a volunteer role that will foster, coordinate, advise and resource such political engagement.”</li> </ol>
<b>Tony Allwood, Chair of House of Laity, in the Chair</b>	
<b>21.03</b>	<b>ANNUAL REVIEW OF RURAL MISSION</b>  Archdeacon Sally Gaze provided a presentation on the work throughout 2020, of the Rural Mission SDF project, Growing in God in the Countryside. Highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Lightwave community intends to become self funding so its projects will be sustainable after the five years of SDF funding has ended.</li> <li>One aim is to have 1,500 new disciples over the five years. This is being measured by those who not previously engaged with any form of discipleship, who, by the end of the project will be engaging at least monthly in some form.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are now 201 new disciples, 126 of whom are engaging this year as opposed to last year.</li> <li>• £19k has been donated by regular givers.</li> <li>• 23 Lightwave groups have been set up over the last two years with another 16 planned.</li> <li>• There are three rural hubs – Red Lodge, Otley/Bealings and Bungay.</li> </ul>
<b>21.04</b>	<p><b>ANNUAL REVIEW OF INSPIRING IPSWICH</b></p> <p>Archdeacon Rhiannon provided a presentation on the work of the Inspiring Ipswich SDF project, throughout 2020. Highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim is for 15,000 new contacts, 7,500 to explore faith and 1,500 new disciples by the end of the five years.</li> <li>• The pandemic has prevented some work therefore the project is behind on some of its targets.</li> <li>• Monthly deanery vocations group starting</li> <li>• The project would like one parish evangelist in each benefice</li> <li>• Workshops taken place to help people get on line with church</li> <li>• First diocese nationally to undertake the “Leading your Church into Growth” seminars over Zoom (about 90 people attended over a weekend)</li> <li>• At least 11 online courses of Alpha have been run and two youth Alpha courses.</li> <li>• The church plant from St Matthews (Bridge Church) are celebrating one year of being established.</li> <li>• One church plant from St Augustine’s began in January (Lindbergh Road Community Church) and another is in the process of being set up (River Church).</li> <li>• Re-imagining South West Ipswich Team Ministry (SWITM) and how this might look in the future.</li> </ul>
<b>21.05</b>	<p><b>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC) FOR THE CARE OF CHURCHES</b></p> <p>DAC Secretary, James Halsall presented the annual report of the work of the DAC. Paper ref DC(21)05. Main highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result of the pandemic, the second quarter was quieter for faculty applications than normal but did pick up throughout the third quarter.</li> <li>• 24 churches and chapels were in contact for the creation of kitchens and bathroom facilities over the year.</li> <li>• Recommendations made by the national Churches Rule Committee have been approved by General Synod, and, commencing from 1 April 2020, allows parishes to undertake more repair works to their church buildings without the need for a full formal faculty, meaning less paperwork for PCCs.</li> </ul> <p>James is leaving the diocese at Easter after 37 years of service. +Martin thanked James for his many years service and commitment to the diocese.</p>

<b>21.06</b>	<b>GENERAL SYNOD UPDATE</b>
	General Synod met in February 2020 over Zoom, it was an informal meeting of Synod members, not its formal meeting. The report ref is GC(21)06. All reports are available on the diocesan website.
<b>21.07</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b>
	The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 3 October 2020, paper ref DS(20)M1 were approved.
<b>21.08</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA</b>
	No matters arising were raised.
<b>21.09</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL</b>
	<p>The minutes of the following Bishop's Council meetings were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 September 2020, ref 09.1_BC(20)M4</li> <li>• 22 October 2020, ref 09.2_BC(20)M5</li> <li>• 3 December 2020, ref 09.3_BC(20)M6</li> </ul>
<b>21.10</b>	<b>QUESTIONS</b>
	No questions were received by the deadline.
<b>21.11</b>	<b>NOTICES</b>
<b>21.11.1</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>
	Revd Richard Stainer, lead on net zero carbon for the diocese, provided a brief outline to the environment motion that will be a main point of discussion at June's Diocesan Synod meeting.
<b>21.11.2</b>	<b>PROMULGATION OF AMENDED CANONS 40 &amp; 41</b>
	As instructed to do so by General Synod, Tony Allwood explained that Canons 40 and 41 have been made amended, promulgated and executed. The amendments allow parishes to use an electronic service book and minor updates have been made, the biggest update is with regards to changing language to be more gender neutral ie changing "chairman" to "chair".
<b>21.11.3</b>	<b>CLERGY WELLBEING</b>
	Revd Canon Sharon Potter updated the progress on clergy wellbeing. An informal group of clergy have now met and ideas passed to Archdeacon Jeanette who is co-ordinating next steps in consultation with senior staff and Rural Deans. Resources have been made available to help clergy and are recommended. General Synod have also appointed a small group to evaluate the progress of the covenant and will be inviting feedback from dioceses in due course.

<p><b>21.11.4</b></p>	<p><b>LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH</b></p> <p>Revd Canon Sharon Potter has agreed to be the diocesan advocate for this project. There are now a set of resources to help everyone engage with the project, its Christian teaching in identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.</p> <p>Everyone is encouraged to take part in a five part course, there are booklets available. Anyone undertaking the course, is asked to feedback to Revd Canon Sharon Potter who will collate. The national lead is the Bishop of London who will be leading on the next steps.</p>
<p><b>21.11.5</b></p>	<p><b>ELECTIONS 2021: DIOCESAN AND GENERAL SYNOD</b></p> <p>James Hall, Diocesan Registrar provided an update on General Synod elections and Diocesan Synod elections which will both take place this year.</p> <p>Diocesan Synod elections: nominations will be between mid-May and June, with voting between mid-June to mid-July, Those elected will take office from 1 August.</p> <p>The diocesan office must have accurate data of the members of deanery synods and, where possible, fill all vacancies. Members were encouraged to assist with this process as much as possible.</p> <p>General Synod elections: will take place in the autumn. These will be done electronically, so all members were encouraged to ensure the diocesan office has email addresses for all those involved.</p> <p>Hustings will be decided by Bishop’s Council in due course.</p>
	<p>Bishop Martin closed the meeting with a blessing.</p>

**The next meeting of the Diocesan Synod will be held at  
9.30am, on Saturday 19 June 2021 over Zoom.**