

ELY DIOCESAN SYNOD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ely Diocesan Synod held by video conference on Saturday 6 November 2021

The meeting opened with worship led by the Revd Canon Simon Talbott

Commissioning of Revd Sophie Young as Bishop's Officer for Homeless People

The Bishop of Ely welcomed the elected members for the next Diocesan Synod triennium and announced formally the election of the two Vice Presidents (Chairs of Houses): Canon Simon Kershaw, House of Laity and Revd Canon Simon Talbott, House of Clergy.

Canon Simon Kershaw, Chair of the House of Laity, in the Chair

1. **Apologies for Absence received** House of Clergy 6 House of Laity 8
2. There being no amendments to the **Minutes** of Diocesan Synod held on 16 June 2021, they were signed by the Chair. There were no **Matters Arising**.

Further to a question raised previously under **Standing Order 86** by Mrs Rebecca Cowburn

The House of Bishops determined to accept the ruling of the independent legal commission of the Church of England that individual cups are not legal under the Canons of the Church of England. It will not be pursued, and individual cups will not be introduced as a legal option for the Church of England.

Bishop's Council Report was received by Diocesan Synod. No questions raised.

Bishop's Business: Bishop Stephen welcomed the Hon Judge Anthony Leonard QC, the Diocese of Ely's Chancellor, to the proceedings.

Thanks and appreciation were noted to Revd Sophie Young for the quality, depth and purpose of her prayers and address to Diocesan Synod following her commissioning.

Deanery Development Planning - both Bishops will separately have visited each Deanery chapter by end 2021 to discuss Deanery Development Planning for the development of parishes and their communities. Deanery Development Planning will enable each parish, benefice and Team to celebrate, to encourage, to instil confidence and hope for the future of the Church.

Motion from Ely Deanery Synod on COP26: *"The Ely Deanery Synod calls on Ely Diocesan Synod to support the four goals of the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference 2021: To secure global net zero by mid-century; To adapt to protect communities and natural habitats; To mobilise at least \$100bn in climate finance per year; To promote nations working together to deliver these targets; and to support the implementation of these goals in any way that we can as a Diocese, the Cathedral, parishes and individually"*

Proposed: Mrs Hilary Clark, Ely Deanery

Seconded: Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker, Ely Deanery

Two abstentions: Revd Canon Brian Atling, Mr Christopher Townsend

The Safeguarding Report and update was presented by the Diocesan Secretary. The full 2021 Annual Report will be delivered at Bishop's Council in January 2022 and subsequently presented at Diocesan Synod in March 2022. The number of referrals remains constant at 135-140 requests per month. 27 Strategic Risk Assessments completed. Details of and dates for the wide range of training courses are available on the Diocese of Ely website.

Grateful thanks were noted to the Safeguarding Team.

Business of the **Ely Diocesan Board of Finance** - Revd Canon Brian Atling: The 2022 Budget, already approved by Bishop's Council (+C), reflects a third year of deficit budgeting, although at a much reduced figure. The Diocese continues to minimise expenditure as it returns to a level of budget similar to 2019 with any new initiative being undertaken at the expense of existing. A three-year financial projection is currently on hold as economies continue to settle.

2021 Ministry Share receipts are higher than forecast and sincere thanks are noted to parishes and givers for their magnificent response.

Strict control is being maintained on clergy numbers with the cap of 104 FTE stipendiary clergy (or the equivalent) remaining in place. New posts may be created for new developments or potential reallocations of clergy posts, but against the withdrawal of an existing post.

The planned increase in Ministry Share of 1.5% offers the opportunity to increase clergy stipends, as there was no stipendiary increase in 2021. This enables Ely to achieve the benchmark level set by the central church. Any further rises as a result of inflation will be carried by Diocese and will be met from investment income received. Ministry Share receipts only cover a proportion of clergy stipends and costs, with the balance being met by the Diocese.

Three years of deficit outcomes have been settled from free reserves where the policy allows the Diocese to carry 2-3 months of operating costs (£2-3m approx.) When free reserves are depleted to cover any deficit, investment income received will be reduced proportionately year on year. The receipt of any 2021 investment income was not anticipated, although some income was received from one of the Diocese's investment managers which has impacted positively on the 2022 budget.

Financial information showing how funds have been spent has been widely circulated to clergy and parish representatives, as well as Deanery officers, with the encouragement to put these on display.

Plans for new Diocesan Office. This project has been raised at previous Diocesan Synod meetings and approved by +C to proceed. The purchase of new Diocesan Office becomes an asset on the balance sheet. No funding for this project will be taken from Ministry Share funds. Instead, the funding comes from sales of Glebe land and a restricted fund to building the Diocesan Office. The existing offices at Bishop Woodford House are unsuitable for the Diocese's purposes and the whole site will ultimately be let to King's Ely, remaining an asset on the balance sheet. Income from the rental of the site will provide funds for religious training, religious education and the Diocesan Board of Education work in schools.

Staff will continue to work in a hybrid manner (i.e. between home and the offices) in the pro-tem space until the new building is complete. This therefore offers the opportunity to reduce the footprint of the new building, offering better training spaces with up-to-date, broadcast quality technology, which will allow face-to-face meetings at the same time as meeting over video conference. The aim of the new build is to be a near carbon neutral as possible, to reduce the Diocese's impact on the environment and to be as energy efficient as can be.

Synod members were asked to accept the 2022 budget
Agreed by majority

Synod members were asked to accept the increase Ministry Share by 1.5% for 2022
Agreed by majority

Clergy Covenant for Wellbeing: The Bishop of Huntingdon thanked Andrew Read for the production of the distributed paper relating to the mainstreaming of Clergy Wellbeing. This needs

further work with the support of the Task Group. Synod members were invited to give their authority to proceed and subsequently report back. This was agreed.

She commended for further reading the Living Ministry resources available from the central church via this link:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/diocesan-resources/ministry/ministry-development/living-ministry>

and the General Synod document GS2133 via this link:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/GS%202133%20A%20Covenant%20for%20Clergy%20Care%20and%20Wellbeing.pdf>

Deanery Development Planning - Living Ely2025: LivingEly2025 is an extension of the Diocesan Strategy, Ely2025. Synod members are encouraged to explore the video, the three booklets which constitute the full guide and other downloadable resources created by the Diocese via the link:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/about/strategy/living-ely2025/living-ely2025.php>

Living Ely2025 is to envision the Diocese for the near future, recognising the need to move with the times: meeting people where they are, if not in Church, and to shape and reshape our Church in order to engage effectively in Mission and Evangelisation. Living Ely2025 is ambitious and bold; the document is asking searching and significant questions. Every parish, team, benefice should be participating, while the Deaneries will coordinate responses to be reported back to Diocesan central administration.

Members of Diocesan Synod are asked to be local ambassadors for this exercise and were encouraged to be involved in the organisation of Deanery Planning in their own Deanery/parish/PCC.

Lent Course 2022- Baggage or Treasures: the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech advised that resources are available on the Diocesan website via this link:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/about/news-jobs-and-events/news-and-announcements/news/lent-2022--baggage-and-treasures-2720.php>

Materials have been written and amended by the Revd Dr Clifford Owen, with updates by Revd Geoff Boucher and Revd Nigel Moat (NM). Videos will be updated and reshot for early 2022 by NM.

Proposed Scheme for Bishop's Mission Order representation at Deanery Synod:

Elected members of Bishop's Mission Orders/Bishop's Mission Initiatives are eligible for representation on Deanery Synods (and therefore may be elected by Deaneries to Diocesan Synod).

Motion: "That this Synod approves the Scheme for Bishop's Mission Order representation at the appropriate Deanery Synod and recommends up to three (3) representatives to that Deanery Synod's House of Laity"

The motion was carried unanimously

The Bishop of Ely closed the meeting with prayer and his blessing at 12.45pm