

ELY DIOCESAN SYNOD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ely Diocesan Synod held by video conference on Saturday 5 March 2022

The meeting opened with worship led by the Ven Hugh McCurdy, Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech

Commissioning of the Revd Keith Morrison as Bishop's Advisor on Healthcare and Chaplaincy

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

The Chair of the House of Laity formally announced the election (unopposed) of the Revd Canon Sarah Gower as the Chair of the House of Clergy, following the Revd Canon Simon Talbott's resignation after his appointment as Bishop's Senior Chaplain.

1. **Apologies for Absence received** House of Clergy 8 House of Laity 7

2. There being no amendments to the **Minutes** of Diocesan Synod held on 6 November 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, General Synod representative.

To ask the Bishop, in light of the changes approved by General Synod in February to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules to help meet the 2030 Net-Zero Carbon target, and in particular the new requirement for churches to submit a full faculty application when seeking to replace their fossil fuel boiler on a like-for-like basis, whether the Bishop's Council has any plans to recommend that Diocesan resources be applied:

(1) to develop, resource, and implement measures to help churches, especially small rural churches, who need a new boiler, to enable them:

a) to have timely access to Diocesan experts, at no, or minimal, cost to the church, to assess the optimum low carbon strategy for the whole of that church, including its heating;

b) to receive expert assistance in drawing together the relevant technical information needed for a faculty submission, in a timely manner;

c) where a faculty is required, to be able to have their boiler replacement faculty consultation and faculty decision fast-tracked, where necessary, to help ensure that churches are not without heating for an extended period; and

(2) to develop tools for PCC members and for those involved in making decisions on faculty submissions that will help them to evaluate which replacement boiler option is best when set in the wider context of the individual church's overall low carbon strategy (and ensure that, if a church's use of fossil fuel heating is very low and it makes better environmental sense, for example, to use the church's available finances to install photovoltaics on the church roof to generate renewable electricity, than to install low carbon heating in the first instance, all relevant factors are considered).

In Geoffrey Hunter's absence, the Diocesan Secretary (Canon Paul Evans) undertook to circulate a full answer in writing following the meeting (completed). Canon Evans also explained the role of the Diocesan Environmental Task Group and its Carbon Neutral Strategy. A volunteer expert, as part of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, will be able to offer support in future.

Mrs Cowburn asked a supplementary question

To ask the Bishop whether he has considered expanding the Quinquennial Inspection of churches so that it is not only used to ensure that the church building is kept in good repair, but also to provide a timely route to assess and identify the best low carbon options for the church (in liaison

with the church PCC), by having the 5-yearly inspections undertaken by both an architect/surveyor and also a Diocesan low carbon expert, and for the findings to be used to support the fast track approval of fossil fuel heating boilers, where necessary, where this has been identified as the most sensible option within the low carbon strategy for the church at that time?

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/heating>

In her **Presidential Address** the Bishop of Huntingdon passed on apologies from the Bishop of Ely due to his continuing secondment as Acting Bishop of Lincoln for 12 months. Good communications continue between all members of the Bishops' Senior Staff.

The Archdeacon of Huntingdon & Wisbech retires at Easter 2022, although he will continue working part-time with the Changing Market Towns Projects and the delivery of Living Ely2025. There will be a service of thanksgiving on 8 May 2022 in Ely Cathedral. As plans proceed to appoint a new Archdeacon, the Revd Canon Nicholas Thistlethwaite, will cover the post on an interim basis.

The Bishop of Huntingdon gave a presentation about the ongoing situation in Ukraine and gave an overview of the religious background to the war. A copy of her address is available on the diocesan website: <https://www.elydiocese.org/about/governance/diocesan-synod/>

Ms Rebecca Boswell, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and Mr Jon Chapman (JC), Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP), formerly Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group, presented the **Annual Safeguarding Review 2021** (circulated), and this was followed by a Q&A session, after which the Synod voted unanimously to receive the report.

Grateful thanks were noted to the Safeguarding Team, all Parish Safeguarding Officers and PCCs, and JC formally recorded his thanks to the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech for his contribution to safeguarding.

The Diocesan Secretary, Canon Paul Evans, gave an oral report on the proceedings of **Bishop's Council** on 1 February 2022. There were no questions.

Website links for the Changing Market Towns Report below:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/church-in-action/changing-market-towns/market-towns-mid-term-project-review.php>

The Revd Canon Sarah Gower, Chair of the House of Clergy, took the Chair

The Ven Dr Alex Hughes and the Ven Hugh McCurdy gave a presentation on **Deanery Development Planning/Living Ely2025**. Details of the process were outlined, noting that each Deanery plan will be formally approved by Bishop's Council as the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee. The presentation was followed by a Group discussion session.

Website link for Living Ely2025 information and resources below:

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

Rural Deans now have rights and permissions to access a work-in-progress range of datasets on the Diocesan database for sharing within their Deaneries. Lay Chairs will also to be given access to their Deanery data.

The Revd Canon David Pritchard - Retired Clergy Officer for the Diocese of Ely - rco@elydiocese.org gave a presentation about the role of the **retired clergy** in the Diocese.

The Revd Canon Brian Atling, Chair of the **Ely Diocesan Board of Finance** updated Synod on the current financial situation. He reiterated his thanks to the parishes, benefices, teams and deaneries for the incredible out-turn of 2021 Ministry Share payments (94.2% of request). These

payments, together with an unexpected one-off bonus payment from one of the Diocese's investment managers and conscious consideration of all expenditure, have contributed to an anticipated small surplus, to be finalised after the annual audit is complete.

Finance Committee agreed to a wider communication of financial information across the Diocese. Figures are now disseminated to treasurers at all levels, Rural Deans and Deanery Lay Chairs, parish churchwardens and parish clergy

Mr Christopher Townsend, elected lay representative to General Synod, presented a report from **General Synod** highlighting Racial Justice and Net Zero 2030 (faculty jurisdiction). His report was received with thanks

The Bishop of Huntingdon closed the meeting with prayer and her blessing at 12.55pm