

THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 18 July 2019  
at Bishop Woodford House, Ely

Present: The Bishop of Ely, Mr Donald Ashmore, Revd Canon Brian Atling, Very Revd Mark Bonney, Revd Canon Mike Booker, Revd Canon Adrian Daffern, Revd Martin Dale, Mrs Sue Freestone, Canon Simon Kershaw, Mrs Elaine Levitt, Mrs Diana Lucas, Mr Martin Macfarlane, Mr Steve Mashford, Revd Canon Anna Matthews, Ven Hugh McCurdy, Mr Rob Needle, Revd Carol Nicholas-Letch, Canon Janet Perrett, Dr Arvan Pritchard, Revd Simon Talbott, Mr Stephen Tooke, Canon Tim Walters.

In attendance: Canon Paul Evans, Mrs Sheena Bridgman, Revd Canon Linda Church, Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh, Mr Adam Evans, Mr Martin Kenward, Miss Eleanor Puttock, Mr Andrew Read, Revd Janet Sutton Webb

Apologies were received from Mr Francis Burkitt, Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Mr George Lynn, Canon Peter Maxwell, Revd Canon Nick Moir, Revd Canon Alison Myers, Mrs Sarah Robinson, Revd Jason Taylor, Ms Lizzie Taylor

**Dwelling in the Word** was led by the Revd Canon Linda Church: John 20: 19-28

**Apologies** were received from Mr Francis Burkitt, Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Mr George Lynn, Canon Peter Maxwell, Revd Canon Nick Moir, Revd Canon Alison Myers, Mrs Sarah Robinson, Revd Jason Taylor, Ms Lizzie Taylor

The **Minutes** of the Bishop's Council meeting on 8 May 2019 were agreed and signed

**Matters Arising**

- Following the **Trusts Review** which has been carried out over the last 18 months, the first payment/payout has been made to a PCC.
- **The Bishop's Discretionary Funds** have now been consolidated and will now be audited as a discretionary EDBF Fund.
- The **Wellbeing** paper was discussed at General Synod, but was not passed.
- **GDPR Data Breach:** the Diocesan Secretary reported that a disciplinary hearing had taken place following a serious data breach. Following the panel's recommendation, the staff member concerned was found to be in breach of our gross misconduct rules and was dismissed immediately. There was no appeal. The Information Commissioner's Office and the Charity Commission will be taking no further action.

**Changing Market Towns:** Adam Evans, Mike Booker and other team members gave an update presentation about the current position regarding SDF#1 relating to staffing, culture changes and measurables. They also introduced a draft version of the bid paperwork for SDF#2 (which now includes the Schools Singing Project) which should be fully completed later in the year, and which will be returned to Bishop's Council and thence to Synod. The draft was circulated to members.

The presentation was followed by table talk in four groups covering a series of questions, the observations from which were subsequently reported back to Council for consideration by the CMT team.

**Business of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance:** Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA), Chair of the EDBF, reminded Bishop's Council members of their responsibilities, not only as Trustees, but also as Directors of the EDBF, highlighting that their understanding of all finances is essential in order to be able to respond to questions raised by colleagues in the wider Diocese. The SDF#2 bid paperwork will return to Council and will contain details of how the Diocese plans to fund the required

matched Church Commissioner contributions. No questions have been received to date from the Church Commissioners in connection with SDF#1.

BA advised that the **Diocese of Ely Peer Review #2** would take place in mid-February 2020, following the first very satisfactory Peer Review in October 2017.

There are new projects within the Diocese awaiting financial support from the Growth Fund. The Annual Growth Fund report will be prepared in early September and will be submitted to Council. The Diocesan Secretary reminded those present that the Growth Fund has received further funds over the last 3 years from the end of year savings; this has also been topped up from annual surpluses identified and noted as a designated fund in the Diocesan Annual Accounts. Further funding may be available should there be future surpluses, however this cannot be guaranteed.

BA then referred to the circulated minutes of the Diocesan Finance Committee. He highlighted that the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) has been underfunded over a period of years, primarily as a result of reducing grant income from two charities. This income has been insufficient to support DBE expenditure to discharge its statutory duties. Staffing levels are currently low. BA reported that the Finance Committee are confident that the EDBF can absorb the funding requirement this financial year. The issue of "Sustaining Education" will be discussed at the Bishop's Council meeting on 30 September 2019.

With regard to future years, the DBE Director of Education asks to bring to Finance Committee at its September meeting a paper detailing:

- his vision for children and schools in the Diocese
- deliverables
- budgetary requirements for the 2020-2022 period

The Schools Singing Project is now incorporated into SDF#2 as an integrated part of our CMT offering. Council approval was sought for the creation of a designated fund of £175k drawn down from the Diocesan matched funding contribution to the SDF#2 project in order to start up the project. It is anticipated that the bulk of the project will be funded by external grants from non-Diocesan sources.

**Motion:** to accept the Finance Committee minutes

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling      Seconded: Canon Janet Perrett  
Agreed unanimously.

Should the SCF#2 bid not proceed as planned then the project could, subject to further Bishop's Council approval, be run as a stand-alone Diocesan project.

**Contactless Giving:** Martin Kenward, Projects and Development Officer, gave an update on the latest technological advances and discussed plans to supply free contactless giving technology to the parishes where there was a clear need.. He is preparing a questionnaire for distribution to parishes to establish the need and requirements for the appropriate type of unit. Each parish may apply to receive a unit for contactless giving. It was emphasised that these units would be offered at no cost to the parish (although they will be required to meet the ongoing fees or tariffs, as well as ensuring that the appropriate access via WiFi is available). It has already been shown that income from occasional offices has increased dramatically. The Diocesan Secretary repeated that the offer of these units and the associated income does not impinge on Ministry Share.

**Deployment of Clergy:** with the agreement of Council members, this topic was deferred to future meeting of Council.

**DMPC business:** There was nothing to bring forward from the H&WADMPC. The CADMPC draft paper relating to Cambourne and Bourn was briefly discussed, noting that there are very limited

numbers of clergy vacancies and little or no flexibility for additional posts as a consequence. Due diligence for both need and costs is to be carried out.

There was nothing to report from the recent DAC meeting. Minutes will be circulated at the next meeting of Bishop's Council.

**CHANGE OF DATE:** The next meeting of Bishop's Council will take place on **Monday 30 September 2019**. Supper will be served from 6pm and the meeting will begin at 6.45pm.