

THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 30 September 2019
at Bishop Woodford House, Ely

Present: The Bishop of Ely, The Bishop of Huntingdon, Mr Donald Ashmore, Revd Canon Brian Atling, Very Revd Mark Bonney, Revd Canon Mike Booker, Mr Francis Burkitt, Revd Martin Dale, Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Canon Simon Kershaw, Mrs Elaine Levitt, Mrs Diana Lucas, Mr George Lynn, Mr Martin Macfarlane, Mr Steve Mashford, Revd Ven Hugh McCurdy, Revd Canon Nick Moir, Revd Canon Alison Myers, Mr Rob Needle, Revd Carol Nicholas-Letch, Canon Janet Perrett, Dr Arvan Pritchard, Mrs Sarah Robinson, Revd Simon Talbott, Revd Jason Taylor, Ms Lizzie Taylor Mr Stephen Tooke.

In attendance: Canon Paul Evans, Ms Rebecca Boswell, Mrs Sheena Bridgman, Mr Jon Chapman, Revd Canon Linda Church, Revd Dr Hannah Cleugh, Mr Adam Evans, Revd Phil Marsh, Mr Andrew Read, Revd Mark Rodel

Dwelling in the Word was led by the Revd Phil Marsh and the Revd Mark Rodel. Isaiah 43 16-21

Apologies were received from Revd Canon Adrian Daffern, Mrs Sue Freestone, Canon Anna Matthews, Canon Peter Maxwell, Canon Tim Walters.

The **Minutes** of the Bishop's Council meeting on 18 July 2019 were agreed and signed

Matters Arising: Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA) advised Council that the offer of free contactless giving card-readers was received at the particularly productive Deanery Liaison Group meeting on 24 September. Constructive feedback had been received, and comments had been incorporated into the offer letters to be sent to parishes before end October 2019. The Diocesan Secretary advised that there were currently over 1000 participants in the Parish Giving Scheme with just over 100 individual parishes.

Bishop's Business: Bishop Stephen welcomed the Rt Revd Dagmar Winter, Bishop of Huntingdon, to her first meeting of Bishop's Council. Bishop Stephen asked members present for confirmation that they were content to approve that, as with the previous Bishop of Huntingdon, Bishop Dagmar be given an instrument of delegation which enables her to have full delegated powers (apart from the power to delegate and not including to be able to request that the Archbishops grant faculties under Canon C4, because that cannot be delegated)

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling
Agreed unanimously

Seconded: Revd Jason Taylor

Business of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance: Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA), Chair of the EDBF, invited Council members to accept the draft Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 11 September. The Diocesan Secretary explained that the Retreat House now forms a budget-line within the EDBF accounts. The Ely Theological College Trust (ETCT), which owns the building and land as its main asset (together with a small share investment portfolio and a limited amount of cash in hand) has been deemed by the Charity Commission to be non-functional and steps are being taken with the Charity Commission to remediate the position. A meeting of the ETCT Trustees is to be held on 15 October to discuss a proposal to vest these assets in a new Trust for religious education purposes.

Budget Proposal 2020: BA explained that 2019 finances continue to be extremely tight with a different out-turn to that expected due to costs incurred in the Safeguarding Past Cases Review, an increased number of curates and the appointment of new clergy filling almost all vacancies with the associated housing and other costs. 2020 budget planning began in 2018 and the 2019

expenditure has impacted the figures for the upcoming year. The 2020 budget has been revisited and Council was asked to approve the revised 2020 figures. The Archdeacon of Cambridge stated that Ely clergy are staying in post longer and not moving, therefore the vacancy rate has dropped.

Proposed: Revd Simon Talbott
Approved unanimously

Seconded: Ven Dr Alex Hughes

Ministry Share receipts are currently at the expected level; the Finance Departments and members of the Finance Committee are in discussions with struggling parishes.

Ely2025 Growth Fund: The presentation by Revd Phil Marsh and Revd Mark Rodel was followed by a short question and answer session.

Adam Evans, Strategic Programme Manager, presented the updated **Strategic Development Fund bid #2**, highlighting the appendices and emphasising that there is a very clear commitment to out-of-town estates. It is noted that the Rt Revd Philip North, Bishop of Burnley is very supportive of Ely's Changing Market Towns progress.

DBE/Schools Fund: Budget 2020: BA advised that the purpose of the education documents was to support the proposal to Council to support the expected deficit budget for 2020. BA explained that, following Andrew Read's resignation as CEO of DEMAT, he will be wholly employed by the DBE. The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) will report in to the EDBF as a budget line and the relevant papers highlight the current position, following AR's presentation to Council in January about the DBE's future.

Despite the anticipated deficit of £215k (reviewed by Finance Committee), the DBE must continue to fund its statutory obligations: SIAMS, Schools Inspections and support for grants to VA schools. DBE reserves are small (investment income may last a few years) and charitable support is reducing year-on-year. Future funding of the DBE is to be researched; it is anticipated that the DBE will become a budget line of the EDBF from its current stand-alone position in order that the deficit can be addressed urgently in the short-term.

Council was asked to approve the budget deficit

Proposed: Revd Carol Nicholas-Letch

Seconded: Mr Stephen Tooke

Bishop Stephen emphasised that, unlike most other Dioceses, Ely does not fund Education via Ministry Share.

Safeguarding: Rebecca Boswell, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and Jon Chapman, Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Liaison Group, spoke to their interim report for 2019 and outlined their plans for the short-term. Council members agreed that the Diocese is currently well placed to move forward and the Safeguarding team were given the warmest thanks from Council and its members.

Bishop Stephen advised that he no longer held discretion to grant PTO without Safeguarding training. Without completing this training, whether in person or on-line, it is no longer possible for the Bishop to grant Permission to Officiate as no-one may be exempt from training.

Business of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee:

Cambridge ADMPC: No questions were raised for the Archdeacon of Cambridge.

H&W ADMPC: No questions were raised for the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech

As Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee, Council felt that greater clarity was needed regarding some of the proposals and agreed that supporting documents would be included as appropriate going forward.

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Cambourn West and Bourn: The Archdeacon of Cambridge anticipates that this pioneering role would not be anticipated for at least 6 months. However, he felt it important to be working with the developers of the site from the beginning of the project. The role would, initially, require a Bishop's Mission Order to deploy a clergyperson straight away.

Council was asked to approve and give permission to establish the post. This was agreed unanimously.

Any Other Business:

General Synod elections: Canon Janet Perrett confirmed her retirement from General Synod membership and offered Deanery visits to generate Q&A discussion and future nominations as her replacement. Hustings will be held through the Diocese at the appropriate time.

The meeting closed with prayer at 8.55pm

Dates of next meetings:

2019: 28 November

2020: 23 January, 3 March, 15-16 May (Residential), 8 July, 24 September, 18 November