

DEANERY OF EAST WIVELSHIRE

Rural Dean
Rev Canon Lynn Parker
parker30@hotmail.com

Lay Chair
Richard Margetts
01752 847044
warden1@saltashparishchurch.org.uk

Deanery Synod Secretary
Linda Myles
07969 987870
Lindamyles3@gmail.com

MINUTES OF THE DEANERY SYNOD **meeting held at 7.00 p.m. on Thursday 18th May 2023** **at Bishop Cornish School, Saltash**

1. Welcome and Worship

Welcome from Richard Margetts (RM). Apologies from Rev Canon Lynn Parker who had been invited by the Bishop to take on the role of Rural Dean, pending recruitment to the new leadership post. She had planned to attend but was unable to do at the last moment. RM expressed his thanks to those who have been Deanery Synod members for the last 3 years, along with anyone who joined part way through, and also to any new members who would be taking up their place from the 1st July and who had been invited to attend on this occasion.

RM welcomed Jenny Bushrod (JB) to the meeting as chair of DIT, and also Bishop Hugh.

Thanks to the school for hosting and Vicky, Issy and Barney for leading the opening prayer.

2. Present and Apologies

19 members were present.

Apologies received from: Mike Manaton, Kathy Polz, Linda Myles, Sue McClaughry, Rev Joe Lannon, Andrew Barratt, Gary Morris, Lennie Starz, Rev Canon Lynn Parker & John Evans.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the last Synod Meeting

RM read aloud from an email from Sue McClaughry who had raised several concerns: that a statement from another member (regarding the need for minutes to be issued promptly) had been inserted in the minutes but had not in fact been read during the meeting; that minutes should be issued sooner after a meeting; and that a point she had raised regarding the voluntary nature of MMF contributions during a discussion with JB regarding MMF had not been included. RM stated that in his recollection whilst the statement may not have been read out in full it had been summarised at the start of the meeting (by the then Rural Dean) with a view to inclusion in full; that efforts would be made to get the minutes out sooner (the point made by both members); and, that while MMF was indeed technically a voluntary contribution it remains a moral responsibility and obligation.

No further comments were raised.

4. Matters arising not on the Agenda

None

5. Deanery Items

It was noted Linda Myles has requested to stand down as secretary. RM thanked Linda for her efforts in the role. Nominations requested to be submitted to Richard or Rev Lynn before the next meeting.

Licensing of Rev Canon Lynn Parker will be 31st May, 7pm at St Dominick. All welcome to attend.

RM noted that as we were about to start a new triennium, Lay Chair, Secretary and Treasurer nominations were required by next meeting, as the first items of business would be to fill these posts.

6. Finances

At the last meeting there was discussion surrounding a change in bank account. This change is currently on hold.

MMF collection rate at 56.1% until April 2023. It was reiterated that when MMF contributions are met, LICF and Mission funding can be released.

Q - How many parishes pay regularly.

A - About half a dozen.

Suggested the Parish Giving Scheme was pushed more as a source of income for all churches.

Q - How to justify paying MMF when there's no vicar.

A - Acknowledged that large groups within the deanery are currently without a minister. This is a point that has been raised with the DBF in the past and the answer has been that all parishes have a vacancy at some stage and it evens out over time. MMF Payments are for more than a minister and the overall figure (and allocation between parishes) was agreed at synod.

Q - It was queried whether there was any help with transition costs (such as 'buying in' retired clergy for eucharistic services). Parishes in transition used to get help with costs.

A - Nothing was known about this. RM to investigate with Finance.

It was pointed out the MMF call for the deanery had dropped by almost £100k and we were not being asked to give more than had been given last year,

Bishop Hugh stated the diocese has reserves but these could only be used to plug the deficit gap. Through the On the Way process, teams were working hard to develop a sustainable finance model and a fair formula for MMF. Once the deficit gap was closed then the reserves could be released for other things.

It was pointed out that Jenny Wreford, the generous giving adviser, lives in the area and is more than happy and willing to help out churches improve their giving.

7. Deanery Plan Update

Jenny started by noting the changes to the team. Rev Chris, David and Hannah no longer on the team. Rev Chris is to be replaced by Rev Canon Lynn Parker who has already got involved. Rev Laura and Andrew Farr had been unable to help this quarter. JB expressed her thanks to the Project Support team, without who's help things would have been far more difficult.

JB noted there had been questions over how wise it was to be writing our plan at the same time as other deaneries. She pointed out all the positives and opportunities to learn from other deaneries.

JB reiterated the 3 overarching themes for the DIT - prayer, people & comms. JB offered to attend any groups for explanations/updates of the plan.

Focus for 2023, regroup to advance/gathering our flocks. To achieve an agreed pastoral scheme for 3 benefices in the deanery. To achieve a simplified deanery structure with an effective, efficient & inclusive.

Pastoral reorg – advert published, for oversight minister for the proposed southern benefice.

JB offered her personal apology to Rev Joe and Rev Richard who are in limbo whilst waiting for the role profiles for oversight minister for the proposed northern and central benefices.

Thanks were noted to Rebecca Evans as transitions advisor and to transitions reps from each parish.

Rev Lynn is currently trying to establish the wider ministry team.

Thanks to Pat Paxton for organising the meeting of Local Pastoral Ministers and providing such a positive report in time for Deanery Synod. JB committed to supporting those recommendations through Synod and encouraged those present to support their LPMs.

First CAP debt advisor has been appointed and they start training next month.

It was noted the deanery synod is a fundamental part of the governance structure, with each Parish represented and that it will be required to make fundamental decisions going forwards.

JB closed the DIT update by saying to be sustainable we need to meet the MMF call and that it is a moral obligation.

Richard recognised how hard JB works on leading the DIT.

Q – The role of the oversight minister was queried.

A - The role is in the previously agreed structure however the role title was not formally named in the On the Way Plan.

8. Update from Bishop Hugh

Bishop Hugh commented that the deanery plan is maturing well and is at the top end in regards to clarity and purpose.

He noted all deanery plans are different and it is recognised that one size does not fit all. We were reminded that if we meet the baseline for MMF, reserves can be spent on other things.

There are currently 12 deanery plans. 3 questions were asked of all of them and the answers informed the overall diocesan plan which can be found on the diocesan website.

Bishop Hugh gave us brief highlights from the diocesan plan. The measures of success being more Christians of all ages and backgrounds and flourishing church communities of every size, tradition & style.

In order to achieve that the focus is on changing patterns of ministry, significant investment in reaching children, families & schools, and refocusing on resources, people and prayer.

It was noted how church buildings are both our greatest asset and greatest burden. There needs to be particular support for small churches. Of 300 churches in the diocese, 200 are small churches (the definition of a small church being a congregation of under 30).

There needs to be work around leadership & governance, money, and sustainable financial models. There is a central commitment to be carbon net zero by 2030.

Bishop Hugh gave an explanation of oversight ministry: oversight = episcopate, from the bible so not really a novel concept and a recognised feature of the early church. He explained the oversight minister is not "a parish priest in multiple parishes", but rather a leader of a community of communities. As a leader of leaders, they will be there to help identify, train, equip, support and bless the leaders in the parishes.

He noted how the role of deanery synod is changing and encouraged everyone to step up to that challenge and reiterated how the group is critical for managing necessary change.

Q – What's in the plan for congregations? We can talk of fruitfulness and sustainability but what are we paying for?

A – The gospel doesn't set out to answer the question "what's in it for me"? Rather it's a call to "pick up your cross and follow me".

RM noted that communications go both ways - the synod is a critical link to feed information up as well as down but will also increasingly be responsible for taking decisions that affect the deanery as the plan matures.

Q – How do we train an oversight minister if priests have a different backgrounds and expectations?

A – Bishop Hugh stated that there are plans in place in July for training for clergy moving into oversight roles. 3 cohorts over 3 years. There will be spaces for approx. 40 clergy. Encouragingly, 2 oversight ministers have already been appointed for Kerrier & Roseland.

Q – How long are the reserves envisaged to last in supporting the plan?

A – There is expected to be £10m input over 10 years.

RM thanked Bishop Hugh for the update and mentioned that role profile comments had been fed back to the team (the role profile was emailed to synod members prior to the meeting).

It was noted that the Rural Dean & Strategic Lead and the Pioneer Minister will be licensed across all parishes.

9. The meeting closed with a prayer from Bishop Hugh at 21:05.

Date of next Deanery Synod: 18 September.

RM suggested an additional meeting at the end of July with more social theme and a better opportunity to catch up with life in the Deanery in general. There was general agreement. Date and venue to be advised.