

ELY DIOCESAN SYNOD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ely Diocesan Synod held at Over Community Centre on 21 June 2022 starting at 6.45pm

The meeting opened with worship led by the Revd Canon Sarah Gower, Chair of the House of Clergy.

Commissioning of the Revd Fred Kilner as Rural Dean for St Ives Deanery

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

1. **Apologies for Absence received** House of Clergy 17 House of Laity 23
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**.
3. Under Standing Order 86, Mr David Peat (Wisbech, Lynn, Marshland) asked about the percentage of staff employed at the Diocesan Offices who were in positions for which there is an occupational requirement to be a practising Christian, and how many of these posts were filled. The Diocesan Secretary responded that, from a total of 40 positions, eight (20%) were in such posts across all salary bands and all were filled.
4. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Ms Rebecca Boswell, presented her regular **Safeguarding Update** to the meeting.

There are currently 117 referrals (increased from the 102 at same date in 2021). The team continue to deliver the full House of Bishops training programme. 1124 DBS checks have been carried out in 2022 to date; there are 20 safeguarding agreements in place.

The National Casework System (Diocese of Ely is one of the first three Dioceses to participate) went live on 5 July 2022. Data migration should be completed by 22 July.

The national summary report of Past Cases Review was due in July - this has been delayed to October at which time Diocese of Ely summary will be published.

The Survivor Care Review being carried out by 31:8 is looking at how support is offered by Diocese of Ely. The final report is due at the beginning of August and the DSA will report back to the Council at the September meeting.

5. **Business of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance:** Mr Adam Halsey, partner of haysmacintyre, the Diocese of Ely's auditors, gave his presentation relating to the 2021 Diocese of Ely Annual Accounts.

No points of significant weakness were noted, and he confirmed that the Diocese of Ely is a going concern and that the audit was clean. Due to the current global economic situation, investment income was likely to be less predictable over the forthcoming 12 months, therefore it was suggested that free reserves be increased to £10m.

It was also suggested that increased narrative be considered for inclusion in the quarterly Management Accounts. Mr Halsey acknowledged the generosity of the parish contributions in these challenging economic times. He highlighted the need for close and regular maintenance of the parsonage houses in order that their market values be preserved.

He thanked the Diocesan Secretary for his support and praised the work of the Financial Controller, Mrs Lorraine Orbell, and her team for the meticulous and accurate keeping of the complex sets of diocesan accounts, endorsing that the systems and procedures used are fit for purpose. He also thanked them for the smooth operation of the annual audit. These thanks were repeated by Revd Canon Brian Atling as Chair of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance.

The proposal for the approval of the 2021 Annual Accounts

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling

Seconded: Canon Janet Perrett

Carried unanimously.

Canon Tim Walters gave his update on **Project Lancaster** (relocation of Diocesan Offices from Bishop Woodford House, to Lancaster Way, Witchford), reporting that King's Ely are using part of the building, while EDBF staff continue to work from home, using the remaining area as a hub for formal and team meetings.

Revd Canon Sarah Gower, Chair of the House of Clergy, in the Chair

6. 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. She welcomed the appointment of two deputies in Education, Mission and Ministry.

She advised that she had recently visited our partner church, Nordkirche, in Germany, noting that she wished to invite representatives for a reciprocal visit.

She advised Synod of the upcoming ordination services in early July and drew attention to the 15th Lambeth conference taking place in July and August.

7. The Diocesan Secretary reported on the two meetings of **Bishop's Council**, making reference to the presentation by Mr Francis Burkitt, Chair of the Assets Sub-Committee, which was informative and well received. There were no questions.

8. The Ven Dr Alex Hughes, as Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE), and Canon Andrew Read introduced the **DBE Measure** for Synod members' consideration, noting that this legal document would institute the Ely DBE as a sub-committee of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance. The DBE would therefore remain part of the EDBF, strengthening the bond between the Diocese and the schools.

The Ely Diocesan Synod resolves:

- i. To approve the form of draft Scheme before it which would designate The Ely Diocesan Board of Finance as the Diocesan Board of Education for the Diocese of Ely.

Proposed: Canon Janet Perrett
Agreed unanimously

Seconded: Revd Dr Robert Mackley

- ii. To confirm that it is ready to make the Scheme, conditional on it being certified by the Archbishops' Council thereafter in accordance with s.23(1) of the Measure and that the Scheme will come into effect on the date the certificate is issued by the Archbishop's Council.

Proposed: Canon Janet Perrett
Agreed unanimously

Seconded: Revd Dr Robert Mackley

- iii. To authorise the submission to the Archbishops' Council of the draft Scheme and to request that the Bishop and Diocesan Director of Education take all necessary steps required in connection with this process.

Proposed: Canon Janet Perrett
Agreed unanimously

Seconded: Revd Dr Robert Mackley

Synod's thanks were recorded to Revd Canon Brian Atling, Canon Andrew Read and Mrs Annabelle Evans for their work on the complexity of the DBE Measure.

9. The Diocesan Secretary introduced the **2021 Annual Report** which has been published on the Diocese of Ely website at <https://www.elydiocese.org/about/governance/board-of-finance/annual-reports/> . He highlighted the efforts of the Diocesan Office and its staff through Covid to keep the Diocese working. He commended it to Synod members.

10. **Deanery Development Planning:** the Archdeacon of Cambridge gave a brief update, advising that Deaneries have been visited to offer guidance and to gather information about how they may develop in future. Canon Andrew Read advised that the Mission and Ministry Team are available to assist and support parishes and deaneries.

11. A new **Scheme for the Inspection of Churches** was approved by Synod, which gives PCCs a wider choice in the selection of an architect to carry out Quinquennial Inspections.

The Bishop of Huntingdon closed the meeting with prayer and her blessing at 9pm

The next meeting of Diocesan Synod will take place in the Hayward Theatre, Kings Ely on Saturday morning, 15 October 2022.