

Minutes

Meeting on: 5 November 2016
 Time: 9.30 -12.30pm
 Location: St John's, Churchdown

Item	Action
1. Eucharist	
Synod opened with Eucharist in the Church	
2. Welcomes and apologies	
<p>Bishop Rachel welcomed members and introduced three people joining the meeting this morning. Laura Chesham, Deputy Registrar. Helen Wolfson, Vision Enabling Officer. Duncan Munro was also “introduced”; Bishop Rachel noted many will already know him from his role with the Development Fund, which he was now stepping down from to focus on his role as Chair of the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust (DGAT). Bishop Rachel offered a big thank you to Duncan on behalf of the Diocese for his work and was sure Synod would wish to make him aware of our appreciation. Duncan responded briefly, and thanked Bishop Rachel, noting that the Olive Trees he received as a leaving gift were flourishing.</p> <p>The Secretary reported 19 apologies had been received.</p>	
3. Notices and Questions	
<p>The Secretary noted that there was a vacancy with Bishop’s Council for a lay representative of Diocesan Synod from Cheltenham Deanery. Martin Kingston, also General Synod member stood unopposed and so will fill this vacancy.</p> <p>No further questions.</p>	
4. Minutes of the previous meeting	
The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2016 were approved.	
5. Matters arising from the minutes	
<p>The Chair reported that the appointment process for the next Bishop of Tewkesbury had now taken place and the Archdeacon of Cheltenham, the Ven Robert Springett, was to become the next Bishop of Tewkesbury. His Consecration will take place in Canterbury on 30 November 2016 with a welcome service at Gloucester Cathedral in December.</p> <p>The Chair then reported that the appointment process for the next Archdeacon of Cheltenham has been completed, and an appointment has been made, which has been accepted. The new Archdeacon will begin sometime in March 2017. Yet to be announced.</p> <p>SCIE Audit – the Chair touched briefly on the audit, which was reported to have gone remarkably well. Special thanks was given to Judith Knight and her team. There will be a report available on the website, which members were urged to read. The Chair ended with congratulations to “everyone” as this</p>	

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was a diocesan-wide effort and urged everyone to keep up the good work!	
<p>6. Diocese 'LIFE' Vision</p>	
<p>Bishop Rachel introduced item DS16/8. She gave a brief explanation of the vision themes and priorities, stressing that the vision is about stories and telling stories.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel proposed the motion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Synod encourages all church bodies, officers and members of worshipping communities to engage actively with the Vision set out in DS16/8 and thereby seeking to bring life in all its fullness to our communities. • This Synod requests that Bishop's Council and the Bishop's Staff Team considers the changes necessary in its structures, communication and operation to best support this Vision for the Diocese of Gloucester. • This Synod requests that the Diocesan Board of Finance engages with this Vision for the Diocese of Gloucester and uses the resources at its disposal to promote and enable its effective delivery. <p>Bishop Rachel asked for comments.</p> <p>Revd Canon Helen Sammon (Severn Vale) asked, being sure it would be the case anyway, that the guidance/inspiration/materials needed to roll out the vision to the parishes are available to all and easily accessible.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel responded with a definite yes – but did mention that too often people are waiting for other people to do something. She explained that this will only work and be successful if starts at parish level, and that throughout the whole process communication is key.</p> <p>Graham Smith (Wotton); asked that the resources to support rolling out the vision should be readily available on the website and easily accessible.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel also noted that all people should feel able to ask questions at any point throughout the Vision and if they need to, to get in touch with Church House or Mission Department.</p> <p>Revd Canon Richard Mitchell (Severn Vale) asked whether it was possible to make the Life Vision as simple as it can be to continue to keep those already engaged with the Journeying Together Vision. Bishop Rachel assured Richard that the aim is always to keep people energised in sharing the Gospel.</p> <p>Revd Stephen Wookey (North Cotswolds) felt the deanery discussions were quite vague, and asked how do we ensure that diocesan money is apportioned well?</p> <p>Bishop Rachel raised the subject of how the vision should be monitored/ checked, and emphasised that if someone feels something is too vague, we need to know. Equally if something is interesting and exciting we need to know. It is important that we are all responsible for asking questions.</p> <p>Graham Collins mentioned two types of reactions to a new vision; 1. Fear; 2. Liberation. He pointed out that it has been a really good process and that people have been pleased they have been asked for their contributions.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel proposed the motion, seconded by Prof. Jenny Tann. All in favour. No abstentions.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel said she was really excited with what is to come and the journey ahead!</p> <p>Bishop Rachel handed over to Helen Wolfson. Helen explained how she has read every submission and comment from across the diocese. She explained that an exercise was to follow where members would be invited to share and hear stories on the different priority areas. Hosts would sit at the different tables within the room to help the conversations. All members were invited</p>	<p>Approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Synod encourages all church bodies, officers and members of worshipping communities to engage actively with the Vision set out in DS16/8 and thereby seeking to bring life in all its fullness to our communities. • This Synod requests that Bishop's Council and the Bishop's Staff Team considers the changes necessary in its structures, communication and operation to best support this Vision for the Diocese of Gloucester. • This Synod requests that the Diocesan Board of Finance engages with this Vision for the Diocese of Gloucester and uses the resources at its disposal to promote and enable its effective delivery.

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to sit to a table of their choice and share stories around the headings.	
7. Coffee	
Short coffee break.	
8. Shared Conversations on Human Sexuality	
<p>Bishop Rachel welcomed everyone back from coffee and introduced the item, explaining how the Church of England has had a two year period of shared conversations since 'The Pilling Group'. In September 2014, the College of Bishops met together to share recommendations, experiences and theological perspective. Bishop Rachel invited everyone to hear reflections from some of the participants of the discussions held at General Synod; this was to give a taste of what was discussed, not to start a discussion.</p> <p>Margaret Sheather was invited to speak first. She spoke of her experience of being involved in both regional and General Synod conversations and explained that each Synod member had been asked to choose a text that was significant to their views about the issue and she had chosen "<i>I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.</i>" She explained how the experience started with an intense day with numerous conversations taking place. She described the spiritual, prayerful context. She noted there were those wanting 'no' change and others wanting significant change. Then followed a session of interesting conversations/ discussions/ presentations took place, thinking about the impact this will have on Christians. She recognised this is causing some people pain, and that some powerful views are highly polarised at present.</p> <p>Corinne Aldis started with how touched she had been by the amount of engagement and commitment and recognised that the commitment to this had taken courage. She explained how they shared as one body; Bishop/clergy/laity all had the same level of engagement. They shared faith journeys, and tried to help each other understand where others views were coming from. She spoke of acceptance, spiritual and personal and of tentativeness at the start of this journey with the end still not yet in sight. She described a desire to be open and honest, and a feeling of trust. The meetings in York worked well; she wonders whether a more formal synod in London be able to continue.</p> <p>'William Belcher was invited to speak. He started by concurring with the previous positive comments by Margaret and Corinne on the benefit of sharing openly and honestly in small groups. There was however no priority given in the conversations to a determined search for biblical truth in discerning the will of God on this issue. In fact, discussing scripture together was positively discouraged, in favour of an underlying narrative to build relationships of trust, with the eventual aim of walking together in disagreement. With the foundations of the Anglican church based on the authority of scripture 'in all matters of faith and conduct', this was a glaring omission, which meant that the Shared Conversations process must be considered flawed for establishing the way ahead.'</p> <p>Archdeacon Jackie Searle spoke last. She told the group how panels were a way of allowing members to listen to the different views. She shared a story of 4 young people, with same sex attraction, and the courage that it must have taken to share their views. She then shared how 3 theologians outlined their interpretation which she found thought provoking. She noted this could have been a debate, but the power of listening was palpable. She described how some are still undecided/in the middle, and still need time to listen deeply.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel invited everyone to give applause and thanked each speaker for sharing their reflections. This was just a taster of what has been going on. When the synod meets in February there will be more discussion. Bishop Rachel explained that the group which took part in the regional shared conversations the process of preparing resources. She asked for a brief show of hands of those interested in carrying out conversations around this. A fair number of members raised their hands. Margaret Sheather asked for any</p>	

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<p>questions to be directed to her, which would be most useful.</p>	
<p>9. GDBF Budget 2017</p>	
<p>Colin Rank introduced the item. He started by thanking Julie and her department for all the work they do and that what the public see is the very tip of the iceberg of all that they do. He explained that the Finance Committee has requested that each item has a budget holder. They are aware that a number of items are not fully under control e.g. quinquennial work on houses; do they need/not need work doing. These items are difficult to predict, but after reviewing similarities that have appeared in the budget of previous years they can identify areas of being over/under budget. Colin invited Julie Ridgway to speak.</p> <p>Julie started by making two apologies for the paper. The Parish Share had not been updated and a line explaining expenditure had not been included. She explained how the new vision will affect the 2018 budget due to it being in its infancy. She stated that inflation was assumed at 1.5%. The Budget for Parish Share for 2017 is based on the new model. Julie thanked deanery officers for their work towards the model.</p> <p>Julie asked if there were any questions.</p> <p>Graham Smith asked for an explanation for the high proportionate increase between 2016 and 2017. Julie Ridgway explained. There was also a need for a part-time safeguarding officer, which has been approved by Bishops Council and Finance Committee respectively.</p> <p>Revd Nick Bromfield asked about civil celebrants, particularly being involved with funerals and how this may affect the fees. Bishop Rachel replied to Nick, explaining that this was due to be discussed by Bishop's Staff and that Canon Andrew Braddock was exploring the issue.</p> <p>Colin Rank asked for any further questions. Revd Nick Fisher touched on the discussion around fees. He wanted clarification that when talking about fees, did they mean the fees generated by weddings/funerals? If so, would they be looking to reduce those fees? He pointed out how they are greatly appreciated by the SSM's among the diocese and would find it heart breaking if they were to be reduced, undervaluing their services. Bishop Rachel made clear that the diocese greatly appreciated all that is done by the SSM's, and they continue to receive the support they need, although there are fewer services taking place.</p> <p>Canon Paul Williams praised the work of the Registry. He asked however why the budget and actual costs were so adrift and whether 'we' as a diocese benchmark against other dioceses. Julie Ridgway replied first, by saying they were looking at ways to access services more efficiently, and work had been undertaken on a new pathway document which was proving effective. She thanked Laura Chesham for all that they do and how valued she is. Laura Chesham continued to explain how the Registry charges are structured, the aim ultimately is to keep costs down. She also explained how the Registry and other legal services provided were based on the figures set by the C of E. Revd Paul Williams asked again, do we do benchmarking? Benjamin Preece Smith replied, informing all that the benchmarking work is undertaken.</p> <p>Les Reilly stated his disappointment that the Diocesan Stipends Fund aspect of the new parish share model was not fully in place for 2017 following the work that had been put into this, and whether a date could be issued for when the new model will be in place asap. Julie Ridgway explained that work was in progress to ensure a date is in place asap.</p> <p>Colin Rank proposed the Gloucester DBF Budget for 2017. Seconded by Jackie Colburn. Agreed <i>nem con</i>.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel thanked Julie, her team and Colin for all that they do.</p>	<p>Approved: The GDBF Budget for 2017 as set out in DSI6/9</p>

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<p>10. Delegation of certain functions to the Bishop of Tewkesbury</p> <p>Bishop Rachel introduced the item. Laura Chesham directed everyone's attention to a minor mistake in the Instrument of Delegation on page 3. The document should read LASTLY this instrument shall continue in force until it shall cease to have effect in accordance with sub-sections (6) and (7) of section 13 of the Dioceses Measure 2007. So it should read 13 not 10 and of 2007 not 1978.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel read the Instrument of Delegation. Then asked for a show of hands for all those in favour. Agreed <i>nem con</i>.</p>	<p>Approved: The delegation of the functions set out in paper DS16/10 from the Bishop of Gloucester to the Bishop of Tewkesbury.</p>
<p>11. Bishop's Council Update</p>	
<p>Was received.</p>	
<p>12. Any Other Business</p> <p>Bishop Rachel shared with the members the date of Archdeacon Roberts service to celebrate his time as Archdeacon, which will be 5 November at 4.30pm.</p> <p>Bishop Rachel also shared the sad news of Bishop Michael's health. She described him as being pragmatic and deeply spiritual about the situation, and explained about his treatment with a course of chemotherapy to take place for three weeks. She read part of Bishop Michael's letter and the group shared a moments quiet. Bishop Rachel asked if the letter could be shared amongst people and within parishes. She pointed out that at the moment, Bishop Michael does not want to receive visitors; but is grateful for any letters/emails people would like to send, although he may not always reply.</p> <p>Prayers for Bishop Michael and his family were said.</p>	
<p>13. Date of next Meeting</p>	
<p>The date of the next Synod was announced as 4 February 2017, St John's Churchdown 9.30-12.30pm</p>	