

**DIOCESE OF CHELMSFORD  
DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**Minutes of the 136th meeting of the Synod held on  
Saturday 6 June 2015 at Chelmsford Cathedral**

**PRESENT : The President and 121 Members**

The Synod began with a time of worship led by Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson.

**1. NOTICES**

The Chair highlighted several issues from the day paper. Members were also made aware of a forthcoming conference on engaging with adults who have learning disabilities. The Annual Report from the Workplace Chaplains was available and members were invited to contact Revd Canon Carol Smith if they would like a copy.

**2. MINUTES OF DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING HELD 14  
NOVEMBER 2014**

The minutes were approved.

**3. NATIONAL REFORM & RENEWAL WORKSTREAMS**

The Chair welcomed Dr Philip Giddings, Chair of the House of Laity of the General Synod and Dr Jacqui Phillips, Clerk to the General Synod. They had come to this Synod as part of the Archbishops' Council's consultation on the Reform and Renewal workstreams being considered by the national Church. They stressed the importance of the consultation and that they were here to listen.

In their presentation they made the following points:

- The Church of England has a mission to every person in every community, but for a while it has become increasingly difficult to have an ordained person in every community. It has also become increasingly difficult to sustain the reduced presence and train, recruit, house and provide pensions.
- Over the years this has led to a series of priorities and goals which have all produced lots of good work.
- However we now need to face the reality that if we continue as we are we will not be able to meet our commitment to mission. There is a struggle to maintain current levels of clergy, let alone provide for more.
- The workstreams build on the report Anecdote to Evidence and chiefly around the points on what encourages growth and what are the barriers to growth.
- There was a period of consultation with Dioceses where they were asked what barriers they faced and what they would do with more resource.
- Five working groups were established following a programme which is more a collection of principles than anything else.

- A process of consultation with Dioceses is now underway and each Diocese is receiving a visit from representatives from Archbishops' Council as well as a public consultation through the national website. They also sought to enthuse people so they become advocates for Reform and Renewal.
- The motivation for this is the Great Commission. This is the driver for all work currently being done.
- The research and arithmetic projections show a rapid decline in congregations and clergy leading to virtual extinction in some areas.
- Conversations with Dioceses thus far had shown a universal ambition for growth, a sharp reduction in clergy numbers due to retirements, a desire to keep the parish system, a desire to strengthen clergy numbers and build lay leadership capacity and the reality of a gap between scale of ambition and capacity to achieve it.
- The main changes proposed under Reform and Renewal were discipleship, evangelism, an increase in lay leadership, a 50% increase in candidates for ordination by 2020, the process of discerning and nurturing senior leaders, the simplification of church bureaucracy, central changes, all national funding for Dioceses being used for mission and growth. Half of the funding to support mission in poorer areas. The other half to invest in new growth opportunities around the country.
- Members were urged to take part in the national consultation.

The Chair thanked the speakers and invited members to submit questions for clarification. The following members asked questions:

Revd Quintin Peppiatt (Newham)  
 Bishop of Bradwell  
 Revd Steven Hanna (Barking & Dagenham)  
 Mary Durlacher (General Synod)

The following questions were submitted, with answers in italics:

- How will support for poorer communities be calculated in a Diocese, like ours, if average income is used as the measure? *The process is still under consideration and it is important to get it right. It will be subject to peer review.*
- What could be asked of us? *Resources are all contained in the parishes, all offers are greatly received.*
- Is there any recognition of the principle used elsewhere that resources are best directed to the people on the ground?
- What flexibility will a Diocese have? *There is no intention of a uniform approach. We need to sign up to the principles first and find the best way to develop locally. There is a great deal of flexibility. Some Dioceses are using it to shape their Mission Action Plan, others are using it to energise their current one.*

The Chief Executive and Diocesan Secretary then delivered a presentation on what the proposals would mean for our Diocese. The key points were:

- It is not yet completely clear what it will mean, the consultation is underway and we do not know the view the Church Commissioners will take.

- We have an indication of what the post-Darlow formula will be. As a Diocese we receive more than we contribute. We are the second biggest recipient of Darlow due to our areas of deprivation and the low membership per stipend.
- What we receive will be lower than Darlow and we have asked the same question as had previously been mentioned on what approach will be taken to average income.
- During the ten year transition period there is the suggestion of increased support in the early years.
- The main contributor to the Mission Opportunity Fund would disappear, but we do get an opportunity to apply for strategic funding.
- The key questions are, do the principles look right? Are the transitional arrangements fair? Does it look fair in totality?

Members of Synod were then invited to discuss the following six questions in small groups:

1. What do you think the challenges we've been discussing today and the proposed responses will mean?
2. What 3 things would make the biggest difference here?
3. Are there any gaps/causes for concern in what you've heard today? How should we respond together to these?
4. What do you understand by lay leadership and what can your diocese and the Church nationally do to support it?
5. What should the Church nationally be doing to reach out to the under-30s, particularly in respect of social media/digital?
6. If we need a 50% uplift in ordinands nationally just to meet diocesan ambitions and replace retirees, what will be most valuable in supporting your diocese in attracting candidates and overcoming financial obstacles?

Members were invited to feedback from their discussions. The following people contributed here:

Revd Russell Moul (Havering)  
 Revd Lesley Goldsmith (Waltham Forest)  
 Revd Canon David Banting (General Synod)  
 John Winterbotham (Harlow)  
 Roger Ennals (Colchester)  
 Revd John Dunnett (General Synod)  
 Bishop of Chelmsford  
 Bishop of Bradwell  
 Revd Geoff Bayliss (Witham)  
 Revd Canon Martin Wood (General Synod)  
 Revd Sandra Manley (Maldon & Dengie)  
 Jacqueline Bliss (Southend)  
 Revd Katie de Bourcier (Chelmsford South)  
 Colin Setchfield (Waltham Forest)  
 Robert Hammond (General Synod)  
 Anthony Nicolle (Vice Chair of the DBF)  
 Revd Kieran Bush (In attendance)

Revd David Tomlinson (Saffron Walden)  
Sylvia Halford (Braintree)  
Bishop of Barking  
Vevet Deer (Waltham Forest)  
Revd Steven Hanna (Barking & Dagenham)

The contributions to the plenary session were as follows:

- One member commented that they do not see what benefit the Diocese and national Church bring.
- Are we asking the wrong question to the wrong people? We should be asking those who are not Christians.
- If the title changed to 'Renewal and Reform' that would be a significant step.
- We should revisit the connections between the National Church and the Local Church. These are very much national proposals.
- There are too many tick boxes. We need to discern first, then train.
- We should be encouraged. The Diocese is some way down the track with this due to Transforming Presence. We have terrific leadership and we need to build on that.
- We need to be radical. We should explore lay presidency.
- We need to avoid reinventing the wheel. There is a lot of stuff already out there that could help us in the process.
- We need to ensure we do not lose the checks and balances. The rules we have now were put in place for a reason. We should not be overdriven by finance.
- The most important report is not yet published – the report on evangelism.
- The Discipleship report makes being a Disciple seem very dull and this is worrying.
- We don't need more vision in ministry, we need a flourishing of lay and ordained ministry and the one size fits all model is a long way away from where we need to be.
- The Ministry Division is a large obstacle. There is nothing to show that they are taking reality into account in the proposals. They use an evidence based system which is hopeless if you are young with massive potential. The process should be more focussed on development than judgement.
- It is encouraging to see that we are not working alone and that the same issues as we have for the local Church are facing the national Church.
- A 50% uplift in ordinands may be the mathematical answer, but who do we need to replace? Who is God calling and to what? There is growth in other areas of ministry and maybe God is calling us to go there. We should not ask what lay leadership is, but what leadership do we need and what should be lay and what ordained.
- We seem to forget there is someone more important in the discernment process – God.
- There is an elephant in the room. How do we deal with our buildings? There is a need for mutual support particularly in impoverished Deaneries which need to raise huge amounts of money for buildings.

- It is a mistake to underestimate formation during curacy. Switching to three year curacies will mean that it would be possible to move on in your second year.
- Social media should be used appropriately.
- We hope the laity do not have to take vast amounts of annual leave to engage in this process.
- If we really take our relationship with God seriously we will get this right.
- A number of people exploring ordination are slowed down or turned away and are not given proper explanations as to why. They then join other denominations.
- Transforming Presence is dependent on lay ministry.
- Concern was expressed about the increasing pressure on current stipendiary clergy.
- Buildings are a huge issue and we would benefit by having a national strategy.
- There is nothing in the workstreams about ecumenism.
- At Baptism we all take responsibility for mission. Not everyone has the shape for leadership but we can gossip the Gospel in our everyday lives. We need enhanced local training.
- The proposals are not radical enough. We need to get the politics right. We need to think more local in terms of checks and balances and the selection process.
- We need more focus on the laity. There is a lot of talent that is not being utilised.
- The trend in younger vocations may be down, but there are examples where it is increasing. It would be good to seek to replicate this at local level.
- The danger with setting targets on numbers is that you rush to fill them and you risk filling with the wrong people. With MMUs there has been some nervousness, but the principles offer an exciting prospect. Question 6 is misguided.

Philip Giddings and Jacqui Smith thanked members for their contributions. They confirmed that a note will be produced and fed into the steering group leading on this. A number of the contributions need reinforcing at General Synod. They responded on a few of the main points raised:

- The important word in question 6 is 'If'.
- We struggle to get the language right on lay training. We still have a one size fits all culture and a fear of what would replace it if it was replaced.
- The Evangelism report is being prepared in line with the Discipleship report and it will come out either later this year or early next year.
- The church buildings issue is universal and the Bishop of Worcester is leading a task group to address this issue.
- A survey is being planned and this will be sent to all parishes.
- We are looking at how we can create framework with regulations rather than primary legislation. An Enabling Measure is being proposed and there will also be a consultation on that.

#### **4. DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT GROUP: “GREEN COLLAR” CAMPAIGN**

The Chair of the Diocesan Environment Group, Venerable Martin Webster, spoke to this item. He stressed that the implications of our stewardship of the environment are huge, particularly for future generations. Later this year there will be a climate change conference which will seek to obtain legally binding agreement from all nations.

He continued making the following points:

- The impact of a rising sea level would mean that places like Bradwell, Rainham, Southend and Wivenhoe could be flooded or underwater if the sea level rises by 0.5cm.
- There is no planet B. This is a Christian concern and is at the heart of our stewardship of the planet.
- We intend for this to become part of our mission and evangelism.
- Clergy are being requested to wear a green collar and lay people a green cross sticker as visible signs of this campaign.
- Parishes are being encouraged to put on events, as they did last year with mission events, to raise awareness of the issue. It was suggested that Advent Sunday be given a particular focus to environmental issues.
- This is God’s justice, the poor communities are often those who suffer the full effects of climate change.
- A pack was available for each parish with resources to use.

He closed his presentation by thanking Susan Latchford, who had had to step back from her role as Diocesan Environment Champion, for the significant work she had done in her time as Champion.

#### **5. ANNUAL REPORTS TO SYNOD**

The Annual Reports were received.

#### **6. BISHOP'S COUNCIL, DIOCESAN MISSION & PASTORAL COMMITTEE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The reports were noted.

#### **7. SCHEME FOR DEANERY SYNOD LAY REPRESENTATION OF BISHOP’S MISSION ORDERS**

The Chair moved:

‘That this Diocesan Synod, in accordance with Church Representation Rule 27A, approve the draft Schemes to provide lay representation on a Deanery Synod for Immanuel Church Brentwood and the Deeper Network.’

The motion was carried with one abstention.

## 8. PROMULGATION OF AMENDING CANONS NO. 32 & 33

The Chair proclaimed Amending Canons 32 and 33.

## 9. DBF AGM see separate minutes

## 10. 2016 BUDGET

The Chair of the Budget Committee, Don Cardy, spoke to this item. In his presentation he made the following points:

- Since the report had been written we had received confirmation from the National Church that the various Votes would increase by 2.5%.
- The Budget made provision for four fewer stipendiary posts. There is also an additional half post for Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands being provided to meet the increasing demand in vocations. This reduced the number available for parochial ministry by a half post.
- The national recommendation for stipend increases is 1.5%. This is due to be considered by Finance Committee at their next meeting.
- The deficit in 2014 had been confirmed as £90,000. We had done slightly better on parish share collection.
- The Deanery Share increase will be around 1.5% and not more than 2%.

Don Cardy then shared some graphs with Synod which highlighted the following points:

- Since 2003 the number of stipendiary posts budgeted for has been consistent with what was or what would have been allocated to this Diocese under the Sheffield Formula.
- Since 2007 we have been running a balanced outturn.
- Funding has increased from National Church, under the Darlow Formula, to achieve the balanced budget.
- The adult membership per stipendiary minister is well below average at 118. This will always compromise our finances.
- Under the new arrangements we will receive directly half of the support we currently get and the other half will be open to bids to develop growth. This is good, but challenging.

Members were invited to comment or ask questions on the presentation. The following members did so and their contributions are listed below:

Jaqueline Bliss (Southend)  
Revd Charles Mason (Braintree)  
Revd Geoff Bayliss (Witham)

- Are the figures for members per stipendiary clergy available for 2015? *In response it was noted that the data collection has been indeterminate and less reliable. Also Church House has not published this data since 2013.*

- The report said that the collection rate for parish share had improved, but it is still more than the shortfall provision in the budget. *There is a 4% provision in the budget for shortfall. The reason the deficit was less than expected was due to savings on stipends and an improved performance in rental of vacant properties.*
- With the move away from Darlow will the impact be felt evenly, or will there be a greater impact in some places? *There is no direct relationship between parish share and Darlow at present. The money that we received because of socio-economic disadvantage will be distributed on that basis. We do not yet know how that will be calculated.*

## **11. SHARE SCHEME REVIEW – INTERIM REPORT**

The Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson, Chair of the Share Scheme Review Group, led this item. She began by asking the Synod to consider what inspires them to be generous. Nearly £22 million had been given by Church members in 2013, this is phenomenal and a privilege. However money is a means to an end, what really matters is growth.

She went on to talk about the proposals coming from the share scheme review. The following points were highlighted:

- Generosity and mutual support will still be central to the proposed new scheme.
- The current scheme has served well, but the landscape has changed and the finances need to follow not the other way round.
- We must break out of a model based solely around stipendiary ministry.
- There are many questions about units. These will be a place where prayer and planning come together and it would be bizarre not to include finances here.
- The unit share request will never be twice more than the unit gross cost assessment.
- Two examples of how units could allocate their finances were given.

It was noted that this was the interim report and a final proposal will be presented to the Synod in March 2016. Members were asked to feedback what they would find useful in explaining the proposals to the parishes. The following members responded and their responses are listed below:

Gordon Simmonds (Rochford)  
 Robin O'Neill (Saffron Walden)  
 Revd Ian Scott Thompson (Colchester)  
 Revd David Tomlinson (Saffron Walden)  
 Revd Quintin Peppiatt (Newham)  
 Revd Darren Barlow (Thurrock)  
 Revd Martin Howse (Havering)  
 Bishop of Barking  
 Revd Katie de Bourcier (Chelmsford South)  
 Canon Harry Marsh (Chelmsford South)  
 Revd Charles Mason (Braintree)  
 Bishop of Bradwell



Ron McLernon (Hadleigh)  
Revd Geoff Bayliss (Witham)

- Stipendiary curates should be charged to the unit in which they serve.
- The proposals state that only MMUs will be able to claim from the Mission Support Fund. This is a breach of trust and we must allow people to form MMUs in their own time.
- The current scheme no longer works and the Deanery allocating the share to parishes often leads to heated debates. Socio-economic indicators don't really work.
- There should be an attempt to limit overheads as much as possible and the service charge which units are expected to meet.
- The allocations should be decided centrally with advice from the Archdeacon.
- Financial discussions in units could get quite tense and therefore we need guidance and access to mediation.
- It is good to see how this engages with Transforming Presence.
- How will the Mutual Support Fund work? The National Church are looking at a bidding process and overlooking the poor.
- There is a danger we develop a sense of self-righteousness here.
- Curates should not be charged to units as they are in formation and will be a resource to benefit us all. This would be a negative step.
- The existing system is too complicated.
- We need to be flexible around issues of MMU formation. Not many will be ready for 2017. We need clear communication on this.
- The changes value all ministry received not just stipendiary.
- There will be no job for a Deanery Treasurer if the proposals are implemented. More people will be needed if allocation happens in units and there is often a struggle to find people to fill these roles.
- If curates are charged to the unit there is a danger some will ask for non-stipendiary curates.
- We need another 12 months for the implementation of the scheme if we are not going to be able to consider the final proposal until March 2016.
- If the ceiling and floor are removed how will some cope with the change in share requested?
- Each parish has its independent legal standing and there will be some hard conversations to be had in the units.
- The proposals embed Transforming Presence and move us to where we need to be. Generosity is often more embedded in the deprived areas. We need to look at where there is real demand and need.
- This is not just a mechanical approach, but avoids subsidising decline and promotes mission, engagement and outreach.
- How many extra posts will be required at the Diocesan Office to operate the proposed new scheme? What action will be taken against those parishes who can't/won't contribute? What is the timescale for transition if you are not in an MMU?
- Generous giving is done through stewardship.
- It is good to see the transparency here. The treatment of the socio-economic funding could undermine that.

- Most contributors felt a series of roadshows would be useful, however a few questioned whether it was too soon for those to be held.

Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson thanked members for their comments. There is always risk in changing, but then there is risk in not changing. The greatest risk in this is that the call for mutual support is not heard. The main point is not the scheme itself, but the generosity which underpins it.

## **12. QUESTIONS**

### **Q. Colin Setchfield (Waltham Forest) to ask the Chief Executive & Diocesan Secretary:**

Following the disclosure in February 2015 that, within the Church of England, some staff are paid less than the living wage, would the diocese confirm whether any employees of the church within this diocese – be that at the diocesan, deanery or parish level – are similarly affected? Would it also confirm whether any employees within this diocese – at any of those levels – are not given bank holidays off in addition to their statutory paid holiday, i.e. whether any worker is required to take Good Friday and Christmas Day off out of their leave entitlement without compensation? If there are instances, please could figures be provided, where possible banded by clergy/laity, and managerial/non managerial?"

### **A.**

It is worth noting that in this Diocese both the living wage and London living wage would be applicable.

The vast majority of CDBF staff are paid at least the living wage. However a small number of staff at the Retreat House Pleshey, while paid in excess of the national minimum wage, are not living wage rates.

The Board of the CDBF's subsidiary undertaking, Sparrows, has set an aspiration to meet the relevant living wage rate and is reviewing the practicalities of implementation given issues such as the prevailing rates for local authority funded nursery places.

In terms of Parishes, it is not possible to answer this because we do not collect this information. The exception is where the CDBF provides a payroll agency service to a PCC, and from these 29 out of 74 employees are paid below the living wage.

We do not have the information available in respect of annual leave, except for employees of the CDBF group. Employees of the CDBF group are granted leave for public holidays in addition to annual leave entitlement. Clergy are required by canon to work certain public holidays but are entitled to time off in lieu.

**Q. Rosalind Tatum (Waltham Forest) to ask the Bishop of Chelmsford:**

The paper by Canon Roger Matthews and his team

[http://www.transformingpresence.org.uk/resources/Outcomes\\_of\\_the\\_conference\\_by\\_Roger\\_Matthews.pdf](http://www.transformingpresence.org.uk/resources/Outcomes_of_the_conference_by_Roger_Matthews.pdf)

gives a good summary of the Time to Talk 2 Day on Saturday 25 April 2015, and lists many of the questions and points raised. In Section 3 the only direct pointers for Action Planning and further work are to be taken up by Deaneries. Please give an indication of early thinking on decision-making arising from the Day at Diocesan level, and when these will be brought to this Synod?

**A.**

Thank you for the opportunity to mention the time to talk conference which was a great day.

We subtitled the event ‘mapping the territory’ with good reason as now, nearly three years in we are able to identify the direction of travel, replace questions with statements and learn from our early experience.

All of which means it’s time to have an updated summary of Transforming Presence moving on from the original document agreed at the start of this triennium. The provisional timescale is to develop this over the summer, allowing for discussion with Area Deans and Lay Chairs in the autumn and then bringing something to the first Synod of the new triennium in November that better reflects where we are as a diocese and the journey we’ve made. So for those who have been involved on this journey there shouldn’t be many surprises in the new presentation of Transforming Presence.

Beyond this, there is a wider question of alignment – how we align the processes of the diocese to integrate with transforming presence. We have made a small step in the new licensing service, and the practice of giving out holding crosses at confirmations. A much bigger step is aligning our share scheme, as we’ve discussed today. There will be other areas too and these will come forward to Bishop’s Council and Synod as and when appropriate.

But this is about what we do collectively, including within deaneries. And of course deaneries are not alone in this; there are diocesan resources ready and willing to assist both from the teams that serve our Episcopal Areas and from those that serve the whole diocese.

Supplementary

Q. Will there be sufficient time to consider a draft of the new Transforming Presence?

A. We believe so but may not meet the timescale.

### **13. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

The President shared greetings from Trinidad and Tobago. He also paid tribute to the Revd Sue Brewster who had recently passed away.

The full presidential address can be found on the website -

<http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/Bishop%20Stephen's%20Presidential%20Address%20to%20Synod%20June%202015.pdf>

The President thanked members of Synod for their service over the triennium. He paid tribute to Canon Dr Sue Atkin, who had decided to stand down from the Synod and being Chair of the House of Laity. She was inducted into the Order of St Cedd. The Bishop also acknowledged that Canon Don Cardy and Anthony Nicolle would not be serving the Synod in their respective roles in the next triennium.

**CLOSE** The President closed Synod with his blessing.