This paper summarises the business of the Bishop’s Council since the November meeting of the Synod. In addition to the business meetings the Bishop’s Council held a day meeting to discuss strategic items in the life of the Diocese. These included a presentation on mission and evangelism, further conversation around finance and sustainability and a presentation from the Archbishop’s Appointments Secretary regarding the forthcoming vacancy in the See of Chelmsford.

December 2019
Bishop’s Council
• Had further discussion on the Subsidy to Sustainability proposal following the discussion at the November Diocesan Synod and Area Mission and Pastoral Committees.
• Noted a paper on the elections to Deanery Synod and General Synod being held in 2020 and the New Church Representation Rules (effective from 1 January 2020).

DMPC
• Approved commencement of formal consultations on proposals for:
  o the creation of a new single parish benefice of Noak Hill.
  o the termination of the Southend Team Ministry, the dissolution of the benefice and parish of Southend, the creation of the new benefice and parish of Southend, St John, the new benefice and parish of Southend All Saints and the new benefice and parish of Westcliff St Alban and Southend St Mark.
  o the closure of St Mary in Sturmer and the merger of the parish of Sturmer with the parish of Steeple Bumpstead.
• Approved the new suspension of the benefice of New Thundersley, the benefice of Great Baddow, the benefice of Chadwell St Mary, the benefice of Thorpe le Soken, the benefice of Berechurch, a further suspension of the benefice of Boreham and the lifting of suspension of the benefice of Hawkwell.
• Approved an interim ministry appointment to the benefice of Becontree St George.

Finance Committee
• Approved the conversion of a loan to the St Mark’s College Audley End charity to a grant.
• Approved new terms of reference for the London Over the Border Council.
• Noted the decisions made by the Mutual Support Fund Panel at their annual meeting to consider applications from Mission and Ministry Units.
• Received an update on Sparrows.

January 2020
Bishop’s Council
• Approved the process and nomination form for use in the election of the Chair of the Vacancy in See Committee.

DMPC
• Approved suspension of the benefice of Maldon, All Saints with St Peter, the benefice of Becontree St Elizabeth and the benefice of Becontree St George.
• Received an update on the closed church of Asheldham and approved a proposal to commence marketing the building to find a suitable alternative use.

February 2020
Bishop’s Council
• Agreed to recommend the new vacancy management and ministry deployment policy (Subsidy to Sustainability) to Diocesan Synod.
• Elected the Chair (Canon Robert Hammond) and appointed the Secretary (Nathan Whitehead) to the Vacancy in See Committee.
• Approved a draft motion for Diocesan Synod in response to the General Synod motion on carbon neutrality.

DMPC
• Approved a proposal to sell the closed church of All Saints, Langdon Hills (currently leased as a residential property,
• Approved an 18 month extension to the Bishop’s Mission Order for DNA Networks,
• Approved a proposal to recommend to the Church Commissioners for the sale of the closed church of Holy Trinity, Abridge.

Finance Committee
• Approved the updated risk register,
• Approved appointments of two trustees to the LOB Council,
• Approved additions of signatories to the bank mandate,
• Approved proposals to financially support Sparrows during the ongoing consultations on future,
• Noted a verbal update on the share scheme including plans for a review,
• Noted an update on St Mark’s Audley End,
• Approved a grant recommended by the LOB Council to part fund heritage building support across the Diocese,
• Noted the draft outturn for 2019.

Members are asked to NOTE the report.