



MINUTES

A Meeting of the members of the Truro Diocesan Synod and The Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Limited was held in the Council Chamber County Hall, Truro on 11 May 2019

- 1 **The Opening Worship** was led by Melissa Goodrum and Jem Parker from the Way2House in Falmouth.
- 2 **Apologies** were received from 4 Clergy and 13 Laity.
- 3 **The Presidential Address** was given by the Bishop of Truro, a copy of which can be found on the Diocesan Website at: <https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/bishops-blog/addressing-our-diocesan-synod/>
- 4 **Vacancy in See Committee.** Dr Mike Todd, Chair of the House of Laity, drew attention to the letter recently sent to synod members regarding elections to the Vacancy in See Committee. He outlined the remit of the Committee and stressed the importance of having one in place so that it is ready to act should the need arise.

Meeting as Members of the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd

- 5 **The Annual General Meeting** of the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd.

Mr Mike Sturgess, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, reported on the Financial Statements for the year 1 January - 31 December 2018.

He began by quoting Matthew 6 vs 21, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" and explained that the accounts are not only factual but also a spiritual document.

In 2018 there was an overall deficit of £1.8 million. In May 2018 it was agreed that our income should match our costs (today's giving resourcing today's church) but currently our Ministry costs are greater than the Mission and Ministry Fund (MMF) which is our largest source of income. However, it is to be noted that deaneries are currently working towards matching the cost of giving against the cost of ministry and that this will take time to bear fruit.

MMF income is in decline and there is now a £1.3 million shortfall. When taking into account inflation rates in real terms we are paying less than we were in 2008.

Unrestricted parish reserves have risen since 2014 and vary between enough to cover 1 week to enough for 10 years.

Although stipendiary clergy numbers are falling, the costs of ministry are not.

Other points to note:

2018 saw investment losses of £1.2 million (£4.6 million was gained in the previous year). However, the stock market was at its lowest on 31st December 2018 and is now increasing.

Our charitable activities have increased, much of which is accounted for by the lay pension scheme deficit.

Staff numbers have increased by the addition of Transforming Mission (TM) appointments. If TM is successful then around a further 12 appointments will be added.

The balance sheet shows that Diocesan Funds are worth around £90 million but much of this is money that is either restricted or ring fenced, so the amount remaining that can be spent is low and is reducing.

Mike Sturgess concluded by saying that, as a chartered accountant, he has grave concerns about our finances but he also stressed that, as a Christian, he has great hope. He is encouraged by many of the plans deaneries have made for payment, although it is disappointing that most deaneries are cutting their costs to match a 'fixed income'. The prophet Malachi asks for the whole tithe and he encouraged churches to focus on discussion about giving and tithing.

A question and answer session followed during which the following point was raised:

- Concern was expressed at the high MMF call and whether the motivation could be found to achieve this. Could consideration be given to setting a more realistic call at perhaps 95% of the current figure? Is it easier for the diocese to avoid looking at costs and for parishes to sit comfortably and not rise to the challenge? Perhaps this is a discussion Synod needs to have.

In response, Mike Sturgess pointed out that we now have a new approach to MMF call and collection and that the call is set by the ministry costs at deanery level. Many deaneries are considering driving those costs down.

- The Parish Giving Scheme needs to be promoted centrally and emphasised on websites etc

Mike Sturgess agreed that this is an excellent scheme. He has written a 12 point document for his own parish which he is happy to send to anyone who would like a copy.

- It is important that people do not hear from this message that if they cannot give then they are not responding to God. Perhaps we need to reimagine church and ministry; we cannot keep setting budget wish lists and feel we are failing.

In response, Mike Sturgess pointed out that, whilst acknowledging that there is great poverty in many parishes and that someone steeped in debt would not be expected to give, there are equally many individuals who *could* give more. He stressed that it is not the amount given that counts but the heart and attitude behind the giving and it is often the less well-off who give more.

Regarding budget wish lists, MMF was approved after much consultation and was set by factual calculation of ministry costs. This is the scheme we have in place and will be using unless it is disbanded. People know that they are giving to the ministry of their deanery and setting the call at deanery level gives wealthier churches the chance to support parishes that have less.

- The diocese could consider occasionally running appeals for funding for specific causes. Appeals such as these are often highly successful as people know what they are giving for and to.
- Should we consider not selling Parsonage houses and instead use them to generate rental income?



Mike Sturgess explained that the legal obligations of landlords are becoming more and more stringent meaning that rental is not the best return on investment. It is better for the money from property sales to be invested in property funds. However, he emphasised that no property is sold before establishing whether or not it will be of use in the future.

The Chairman of The Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Limited moved:

"That the Members of the Company receive the Reports and Financial Statements of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2018."

All were in favour.

The Chairman of the Board informed members that this year new auditors would be appointed and that Robinson Reed Layton (RRL), who have served as our auditors for more than 20 years, would now stand down. He thanked Mark Williams of RRL in particular for his involvement over the last 20 years and Synod members expressed their thanks with a round of applause.

haysmacintyre, the company that has been selected to be our auditors, deals with 18 other dioceses and 7 Cathedrals.

To appoint the Auditors - The Chairman of the DBF moved:

"That haysmacintyre are appointed as Auditors of the Company to hold office with effect from 1st October 2019 to the end of the next period for appointing auditors under section 485(2) of the Companies Act 2006, at a remuneration to be determined by the Directors.

All were in favour.

To appoint the Solicitors - The Chairman of the DBF moved:

"That Veal Wasbrough Vizards are re-appointed as Solicitors of the Company."

All were in favour.

The Bishop of Truro thanked the Chairman of the Board of Finance and the Bishop's Diocesan Council for their careful oversight of our diocesan finances. He then resumed his Presidential Address, this time covering the areas of attitudes and culture. He stressed that money and vision are inextricably linked; the Diocesan vision of 'Discovering God's Kingdom, Growing the Church needs to be central to all that we do and he promised never to try to make people feel guilty about giving. God wants a cheerful giver and we need to promote a culture of generous and joyful giving and be a church that rejoices in the generosity of God.

Last year Synod approved the new method of MMF calculation and the Bishop of Truro emphasised that he supports this and believes it is the right way forward. However, this carries certain risks and will need our full commitment to discover God's Kingdom and grow the church.



Meeting as Members of the Truro Diocesan Synod

- 6 **Welcoming All God's People.** The Revd Dom Whitting, Chair of the Equality & Diversity Committee for the Diocese of Truro and Methodist District, thanked Synod members for the invitation to attend today and share about the work of the Committee.

He introduced Mrs Christine Todd, a long standing member of the committee. She gave a brief introduction on the roots of the Committee which originated from the Disability Committee which was set up some years ago to develop the diocese's understanding of the requirements of the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act. Since then legislation has changed and all the disability acts have been incorporated into new legislation which includes the 9 protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality and Diversity committee is an ecumenical group of Anglicans and Methodists and stresses the importance of having regard for those on the margins and the place that they can have in the Church.

Revd Whitting explained that the committee has produced a simple guide, the purpose of which is to raise the profile of the committee and to provide resources for the community, as well as churches and chapels, around the issues of equality and diversity. He encouraged members to use this resource, a copy of which was available at this Synod meeting and can also be accessed on the diocesan website at this link:

<https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/parish-resources/equality-diversity-policy-governance/advice-guidance/>

A short quiz took place after which Revd Whitting asked members to consider whether there is a difference between being welcoming and being inclusive. Which should come first? Can you have one without the other? It is important how we use these words in our church settings.

Revd Whitting finished by encouraging members to take a copy of the Simple Guide which includes a number of action ideas to consider. He is happy to provide support and to answer questions and can be contacted by email, domwhitting@hotmail.com, by phone: 07929 730239 or via Church House.

A question and answer time followed during which the following points were raised:

- The Archdeacon of Bodmin thanked the committee for their work and for providing really helpful resources.
- Access to our church buildings can be difficult and grant money for improvements from the Church Commissioners would be helpful. Could this matter be raised by our representatives at General Synod?

- 7 **The Theology of Safeguarding;** Canon Dr Jonathan Rowe, Director for Ministry on "Loving God and our Neighbours - why safeguarding is important for Christians"

Canon Dr Rowe explained that he has been asked to consider the theology of safeguarding, particularly in the light of the fact that the church has been in the news regarding this.

He informed members that the newly published Parish Safeguarding Handbook is available electronically on our website:

<https://www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/guidance/>

He explained that In May 2018 Synod members were asked to discuss safeguarding learning points with their PCCs and then give feedback to the Diocesan Safeguarding



Team. There would be a further chance today to give feedback if members have not done so already.

He also reminded members that parishes have been asked to ensure they produce a record of the staff and volunteers in their parishes, noting whether or not they have been safely recruited. The Safeguarding Team will need assurances that parishes have their own list but will not need to receive all the information.

Much training has been taking place in parishes but there is more to be done.

Synod members then gathered in small groups to discuss God's vision for the care of his people and how this can be considered against safeguarding requirements. The story of the Good Samaritan was used as the scriptural base for these discussions.

During this time Mrs Sarah Acraman, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Ms Louise Court, Director of HR, and Mrs Mandy Wells, Safeguarding Trainer, were available to answer questions and provide advice.

A plenary session followed during which the following points were raised:

- Many parishes are locked into the idea that safeguarding is about keeping people in their churches safe from those coming in from the outside. However, it is important to consider how we keep strangers safe whilst still feeling safe ourselves.
- The Bishop of St Germans thanked the safeguarding team for facilitating this helpful conversation. 14 July this year may be used as a Safeguarding Sunday; this will provide not only an opportunity to consider safeguarding but also can be used as a thank you to all those who are in safeguarding roles in our diocese.

8 General Synod update - Q&A session

Richard Best, Communications and Media Liaison Advisor, facilitated a question and answer session on General Synod matters. Answering the questions were General Synod Representatives, Revd Andrew Yates, Revd Chris McQuillen-Wright and Dr Mike Todd.

Richard began by thanking all those who had responded to his request for questions concerning matters discussed at the February sessions of General Synod. He explained this session would begin with Revd Andrew Yates, who is also our Social Responsibility Officer, giving feedback on the joint Truro and London environment motion.

Revd Yates explained that the debate around this motion was adjourned in July 2018 and was picked up again in February when it was successfully voted through General Synod with only 3 votes against and 293 in favour. Parts 1 and 2 of the motion were from Truro Diocese and parts 3 and 4 from London.

He encouraged members to read the 3 year plan of the national Environment Working Group which is on their website and which is linked to the five marks of mission.

Richard Best congratulated Revd Yates on getting this motion through General Synod and Revd Yates, in turn, thanked Synod members who voted this through at diocesan level.

Q: What systems do we have in place or are we setting up to cut our energy use and CO² emissions across the diocese? Will we be investing in capital to allow us to do this? Also, what systems do we have in place or are setting up to annually report churches' energy and CO² emissions?

A: Revd Andrew Yates drew the attention of members to the leaflet 'Connecting me with Climate Change' which lists the things that we can do as individuals (i.e. the 10 pledges) and also those we can do as a church community to help reduce our CO²



emissions. He also encouraged churches to take part in Green Church Kernow, beginning with the bronze award level and working through to silver and gold.

Regarding annual reporting of energy and emissions, Revd Yates explained that to simplify matters it was agreed that the emissions measured would be that of church buildings and church halls. By doing this regularly and consistently it is possible to keep track of how we are doing. Currently the Statistics for Mission form asks how much money parishes have spent on fuel. It is proposed that this question will be changed to ask how much fuel parishes have used and this new question will be trialled next year in two or three dioceses. It is hoped that the quantity fuel used will decline year by year and, if not, questions will need to be asked. Algorithms will be used to take into account how often a building is used and to make allowances according to which part of the country a church or hall is located in, bearing in mind that some places are colder than others.

Revd Yates thanked those treasurers who had responded to the survey earlier this year as this has helped shape this policy.

Q: Following the motion that was carried by General Synod concerning the vision set out in Growing Faith (GS2121), and dioceses, parishes, fresh expressions, Church of England schools and college or university chaplaincies being encouraged to ensure this is woven into every strand of their strategies for mission and ministry, when our General Synod members were considering how to vote on this issue, did they think about whether the provision of secondary school and college chaplains was given a high enough priority in the document?

A: Dr Mike responded that, as far as he was aware, chaplaincies were not mentioned in the discussion that took place at General Synod. However, he agrees that the opportunities provided by these are really important.

Revd Andrew Yates explained that THEOS recently undertook research into chaplaincies in Cornwall and discovered that much is happening. He praised the work of Elly Sheard who has set up a Chaplaincy in Truro College.

Q: General Synod carried a motion noting the greatly increased levels of gambling advertising and the fact that research shows significant levels of gambling by children. It therefore calls on the government to take various actions and encourages churches to support those who have a problem with gambling. In the light of this motion, should activities such as bingo and raffles be banned in our churches?

A: Revd Chris McQuillen-Wright responded. He reported that at the last meeting of General Synod someone gave their life story which underlined the devastating effect gambling can have. He observed that many churches, including his own, survive financially through gambling and that this is something that the church needs to question and wrestle with, although here are no easy answers.

Dr Mike Todd observed that it is important that the church understands how to help people with the underlying issues that lead to a gambling addiction in the first place.

The Q & A session finished with Richard Best thanking General Synod members for their contribution.

▪ **Promulgation of Amending Canon No. 38.**

The Diocesan Registrar, Mr Jos Moule, explained the background to this Amending Canon which is mainly concerned with ecumenical relationships. He advised members who may be involved in this way, or who are invited as clergy take services in other denominations, to refer to the accompanying Code of Practice which helps to give an understanding of the Canon.



There are also amendments to a few other canons, some of which impact on the holding of services in churches which are part of multi parish benefices or pluralities. More details are available on the Church of England website.

A Synod member commented that much of what is included in the Canon would not be an issue if the Anglican and Methodist churches were united and it was queried whether General Synod would be looking at this again in 2019. The Bishop of Truro confirmed that this was on the agenda of the recent meeting of the South West Bishops and he believes it will also be on the agenda of the forthcoming House of Bishops meeting.

Transforming Mission Cornwall - Progress report on future bid to the Church Commissioners.

Revd Canon Bill Stuart-White introduced Revd Chris Hassell who is a Pioneer Minister for TM Falmouth with particular responsibility for New Street Church. Revd Hassell explained that he is supported by a team that includes a worship pastor, a student and youth pastor and a children and family's pastor. Their vision is to reveal Jesus, restore lives, and to renew church. He stressed that they are a resource church which is not there for its own sake but to have an impact on the deanery and diocese. They hope in the medium term to support other churches by sharing the principals underlying mission. Attendees at New Street Church are multi-generational and include families, students, young adults and those who are retired. There have been some struggles which are being addressed, including setting up a children's and youth ministry, but this is now being addressed. The church currently meets in the theatre belonging to Falmouth KCM although longer term plans include finding a more permanent home.

Revd Canon Bill Stuart-White gave an update on Huddle, the café that was opened in Falmouth in 2017; it is run by the church but is not a church cafe and is about being at the heart of the community. The café is also used by the church as an out-of-hours hub.

As far as the broader picture of Transforming Mission Falmouth is concerned, there is a desire to encourage and grow the churches in the deanery, the aim being to dissolve boundaries within the deanery and work together across a breadth of churchmanship. The deanery will be undertaking AMD together and this will give an opportunity to work out this vision and rise to the challenge of developing something distinctively Anglican.

A question and answer time followed during which the following points were raised:

- It was queried what effect TM Falmouth has had on Falmouth All Saints Church. Canon Bill Stuart-White explained that, despite the fact that All Saints Church is Anglo Catholic and he, their Priest in Charge, is not, God is at work and that this demonstrates the heart of Transforming Mission which embraces the very best of all forms of churchmanship.
- It was emphasised that Transforming Mission is not the only missional project in the diocese and that other forms of mission will be appropriate elsewhere.

The Bishop of St Germans concluded by outlining the next phase of Transforming Mission. Part 2 of the diocese's bid has been submitted to the Church Commissioners and this proposes that the project will be enlarged to include four other areas: St Austell, Liskeard, Truro and Camborne. These projects are diverse in nature and the aim is that they will be resource churches to the surrounding area. The results of the bid should be known by around 21 June 2019.

The Bishop of St Germans expressed his thanks to Julian Briscoe and Kayode Odetayo who have been key to the process of drafting the bid for the Church Commissioners. He also expressed his delight in the fact that, alongside TM, other missional ambitions are



evident in the diocese and explained that the Total Return assets will be used for this type of activity.

- 9 **General matters for update and reporting**
- Note from the Safeguarding Team, to note.
 - Progress report on Transforming Mission Falmouth, to note.

The Chair of the House of Laity informed members that no questions had been received under **Standing Order item XB18**. He reminded members of this opportunity to submit questions 2 weeks in advance of future meetings.0

- 10 **The meeting closed with prayers at 1.45 pm.**

