

THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 28 September 2022  
In person at Over Community Centre

Present: The Bishop of Huntingdon (in the Chair), Revd Canon Brian Atling, Dr Felicity Cooke, Revd Becky Dyball, Revd Canon Sarah Gower, Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Canon Simon Kershaw, Mr George Lynn, Revd Dr Robert Mackley, Mr Steve Mashford, Revd Canon Anna Matthews, Canon Rob Needle, Revd David Newton, Canon Janet Perrett, Mr John Pigott, Mrs Sarah Robinson, Canon Lizzie Taylor, Revd Canon Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Mr Christopher Townsend and Canon Tim Walters

In attendance: Ms Rebecca Boswell, Mrs Sheena Bridgman, Canon Paul Evans, Mr James Owen,

**Dwelling in the Word** was led by the Ven Richard Harlow, Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech

**Apologies** were received from the Bishop of Ely, Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker, Very Revd Mark Bonney, Mr Francis Burkitt, Mrs Elaine Levitt, , Canon Peter Maxwell, Canon Andrew Read, Revd Canon Simon Talbott.

The **Minutes** of the Bishop's Council meeting held on 6 July 2022 were agreed and signed by the Bishop of Huntingdon. There were no **matters arising**.

**Bishop's Business:** The Bishop of Huntingdon advised the withdrawal of Item 8 - paper on Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity, confirming that following further input it would be returned to Council for discussion. She also paid tribute to the late Revd Dr Jenny Gage, formerly Bishop's Adviser for Self Supporting Ministry and Social Justice Officer for Ely Cathedral, noting the details for her funeral on 7 October.

**Safeguarding update:** The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Ms Rebecca Boswell, presented her regular update to the meeting.

There are currently 185 referrals (increased from the 157 at same date in 2021) reflecting a continuing 20% annual increase. The team continue to deliver the full House of Bishops training programme and added extra dates due to demand in the lead up to the LLM re-licensing. 68% of parishes have now signed up to the Safeguarding dashboard, a slight increase over that previously report (65%)

1124 DBS checks have been carried out in 2022 to date; there are 20 safeguarding agreements in place.

Diocese of Ely's casework data has now been uploaded to the National Casework System. Despite some initial problems, information can now be recorded directly into the system. Functionality for parishes to report direct into the system should be available towards end 2022.

The national summary report of Past Cases Review will be published, after delays, on 15 October at which time the Diocese of Ely will publish its own Executive Summary.

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.

Thanks were given to the Safeguarding Team for their careful work.

**Business of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance:** Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA) presented the

management accounts to June, noting that budgeting had been managed to within £2,000 of forecast by keeping a tight rein on costs, particularly as the Ministry Share receipts were also on budget. The Diocese continues to work within the 104 cap on clergy posts previously set by Bishop's Council, and BA noted his thanks to the Archdeacons for their role in this.

In connection with the Budget for 2023, BA noted that it was becoming apparent that clergy stipends would increase by approximately 5%, to be confirmed in December 2022. As the circulated documents demonstrated a proposed increase in Ministry Share of 4%, BA confirmed that Diocesan finances would absorb the difference.

The Chair of the Audit Committee, George Lynn, is carrying out an independent review of the Diocesan Office finances, departmental accounts, departmental outputs and budgets. He will report his findings to the Finance Committee at the next meeting.

Risk Register: work on the preparation of the 2022 Risk Register is well advanced and is currently with the Audit Committee. It will be presented to Bishop's Council at its January meeting.

Ministry Share figures to end August 2022 show an increase of 2.7% at the same time in 2021. BA reiterated his thanks for the generosity in the parishes.

BA then introduced the prospective project currently known as The Lattenburys, near Huntingdon, for which Huntingdon Council are currently inviting submissions for potential development sites. A tentative start date for the project might be 2035.

Following Adam Halsey's (haysmacintyre, EDBF Auditors) presentation to Bishop's Council the process has begun to review the Diocesan reserves policy.

Bishop's Council accepts and commends the EDBF Budget for 2023 to Diocesan Synod for approval

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling

Seconded: Ven Dr Alex Hughes

Passed unanimously

Bishop's Council accepts and commends the Ministry Share proposal 2023 to Diocesan Synod for approval

Proposed: Revd Canon Brian Atling

Seconded: Ven Dr Alex Hughes

Passed unanimously

**Relocation Board:** Canon Tim Walters, Chair of the Relocation Board, explained there was a lack of progress through the summer months, largely due to planning, but that progress is now encouraging with a decision anticipated in November 2022. A potential move in date of Easter 2024 is in place as a long stop date, and all are working towards bringing this date forward.

**Delivery Oversight Board:** The Ven Hugh McCurdy introduced the Delivery Oversight Board which next meets in October 2022. Reports were received from Mission and Ministry, Church Buildings and Communications.

**Church Buildings Trust:** Geoffrey Hunter spoke to his presentation relating to closed churches and the early stages of the formation of the Trust.

**Diocesan Synod Business** - The Chairs of Houses had circulated a report with the meeting's agenda and papers. Nothing further was added.

**Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee:** the Archdeacon of Cambridge noted that there was nothing further to add to the minutes of both ADMPC. He explained that approval is required for the creation within common tenure to create time-limited posts. Two posts are to be created as follows:

*Great St Mary's* - permission is requested for the appointment of an interim Priest-in-Charge

Proposed: Ven Dr Alex Hughes  
Passed unanimously

Seconded: Revd Canon Anna Matthews

*Cambridge Church Homelessness Project* - the creation of a post on the understanding that it will end if the locally sourced funding dries up

Proposed: Ven Dr Alex Hughes  
Passed unanimously

Seconded: Canon Janet Perrett

Deanery Election ratios for Lay membership: the paper was noted and accepted. It is to be passed forward to Diocesan Synod for approval.

The meeting closed with prayer at 8.55pm

**Dates of remaining 2022 Bishop's Council meetings:** 23 November.