

Diocesan Synod – 30th November 2024

Standing Committee Report

1st October 2024

- Bishop Michael welcomed everyone and particularly new members elected in the triennial election.
- Opening worship was led by Julie Jones.
- New members briefly introduced themselves.
- Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- Amanda Robbie raised an item under Matters Arising requesting an update on the Racial Justice team. Bishop Michael explained that Dr Evie Vernon was in place as Director, but the team was not all in place as yet.
- Our two new officers, The Revd Canon Nick Smeeton, Strategic Programme Director, and Mr Arun Kataria, Director of Communications, introduced themselves and spoke about their first impressions and initial aims.
- Archdeacon Megan and the Acting Archdeacons reported back on the recent PCC sessions introducing the new diocesan strategy. Around 1200 people had attended and there had been varied responses but generally a warm welcome and positive engagement across the diocese. Responses would be collated to help illustrate where challenges lay and the information gained would be key as we took the next steps in implementing the strategy.
- Bishop Matthew and Archdeacon Megan gave background information on the bid for funding from SMMIB for a project in Stoke. The bid aligned closely with our strategic principles, particularly with regard to engagement with younger people, schools and new worshipping communities. This bid, for around £5.9 million, had now been submitted. A response was expected shortly after a meeting of SMMIB on 30th October. If successful there would be an ongoing negotiation, reporting and accountability process around the use of the funds.
- Bishop Michael introduced the item on National Church Financial Allocation which had been passed to council following the last meeting of Diocesan Synod. Julie Jones spoke to previously circulated papers and following discussion, a proposal to recommend the progression of the item to Diocesan Synod was approved unanimously.
- Elections to sub-committees were held and following voting, the results were as follows:

Agenda Planning Committee – Tug Wilson and Chris Precious

Finance and Asset Management (FAM) – Chris Gill

Diocesan Investment Group (DIG) – Brian Leathers

Risk and Audit Committee (RAC) – Malcolm Maclean

Trusts, Projects, Loans and Grants (TPLG) – Chris Precious, Stephen Clifford

- Clare Beavon, the Diocesan Pastoral Officer, gave an overview of the church closure process for members' information.

- As the DMPC, members then noted a Schemes and Orders update and a Suspension and Restriction report. An amendment to the proposal set out regarding Cheswardine, Childs Ercall, Hales, Hinstock, Sambrook and Stoke on Tern; and Hodnet was noted without questions.
- A proposal to move Saint George's; Wombridge; and Donington Wood to the Oakengates benefice was approved with 1 abstention.
- A proposal to accept the proposals of the review of the REVS BMO, including the indefinite renewal of the BMO was discussed and approved with 4 abstentions and 3 against.
- The election of Mr Graham Eardley to the Diocesan Board of Patronage was noted with no questions.
- The Chair of the DBF introduced the finance section of the meeting, including the minutes of the meeting FAM on 5th September 2024, which were noted with no questions.
- The Finance Director presented the Draft Budget for 2025 and this was unanimously approved to go forward to Diocesan Synod.

JD November 2024