



# Minutes – Diocesan Synod

<b>Meeting Date</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 (rescheduled from original meeting date in June)
<b>Times</b>	Light refreshments from 1715, meeting 1745 – 2015
<b>Venue</b>	St Francis, Beatrice Road, Salisbury, SP1 3PN

Item	Description	Action Outcome / Initial
1	<b>Welcome and opening prayer</b> +Stephen welcomed all and opened in prayer.	
2	<b>Presidential address</b> +Stephen’s address focused on John chapter 6 and the rollercoaster of events for Jesus and the disciples....read his address <a href="#">here</a> .	
3	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies were received from 43 clergy and 44 laity so Synod was declared quorate.</li> <li>No conflicts of interest were noted.</li> <li>Minutes from the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024 were approved.</li> </ul>	Meeting quorate  Approved
4	<b>AGM of the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Finance, Annual Report and Accounts 2023 and appointment of auditors</b>  Diocesan Secretary spoke regarding the AGM of the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Finance, Annual Report and Accounts 2023 along with next steps with the Vision and Strategy (V&S). Full address available on the diocesan website.  The DBF Annual report and Accounts for 2023 showed an operating deficit of £1.2m, resulting in a £800k drop in General Reserves. The DBF received 85% of share payments with 10% of parishes paying nothing at all. This coincides with a higher than usual rate of clergy vacancies (this is being reflected nationally) and a temporary increase in costs due to the move to Emmaus House with Church House not yet sold <i>{the sale completed the day after the synod meeting}</i> According to the auditors we are ‘financially resilient as a shrinking church’ – do we want to be a shrinking church? Questions were raised around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clergy vacancy rates – 20% fewer stipendiary clergy across the country moving forward</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBF Staff – all roles are due to be reviewed, and feedback will be provided at a future meeting</li> <li>• New approach to share – transparency will be key around the gap between what we need and what we receive</li> </ul> <p>Other point highlighted by the Director of Finance and Asset Management include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upcoming Generosity week which is being supported by the Giving Advisor, to support clergy and parishes with stewardship and fundraising.</li> <li>• The move to Emmaus House has reduced facility running costs by 50% as well as a reduced carbon footprint and most importantly has embedded the relationship with the DBE.</li> <li>• The £2.5m Covid loan has been paid-off in full which now puts us into a positive cash position.</li> </ul> <p>Finance questions received in advanced was answered and full details are available on the diocesan website.</p> <p>Supplementary questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much did the sale of Church House raise? – Currently unknown as sale not completed, but assumption is £1.8m</li> <li>• Request for more emphasis on figures in future reports as well as a glossary of terms</li> </ul> <p><b>2023 SDBF Annual Report and Accounts</b> The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance to move: "<i>That the Diocesan Board of Finance <b>receives</b> the Directors' and Trustees' Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.</i>"</p> <p><b>Auditors Appointment</b> The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance to move: "<i>That the Diocesan Board of Finance <b>approves</b> the appointment of Haysmacintyre as the auditors for the Diocesan Board of Finance.</i>"</p> <p>The Vice Chair DBF would have been elected at this meeting but due to timing problem with the end of the triennium this will need to be carried forward to the next Synod meeting.</p>	<p>Received</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
5	<p><b>Financing the Future sustainably: Salisbury Diocesan Board of Finance Budget for 2025</b></p>	
	<p>There was a presentation of the 2025 budget and parish share and questions were welcomed. The budget for 2025 was approved by Bishop's Council as the trustees of the DBF and standing committee of Synod at its meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>, Synod was asked to approve the budget. It was noted that this budget had been prepared early so that it can be used in the roll-out and communication of the new Share scheme, as supported by Synod in February. A fuller budget guide will be published on the diocesan website in time for September to help with conversations taking place in deaneries and PCCs.</p>	

	<p>In recent years the DBF has benefited from income from the SDBF building consultancy (fully owned subsidiary company). The market for this work is changing and following a detailed review, the directors of the SDBFBC have taken the decision to wind down the company; budget income therefore reduces.</p> <p>Questions raised at the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation around the increase in share and how some are unhappy about the monies given away (by commissioners) – +Stephen will be talking to all about this in due course.</li> <li>• Query raised around discount for early payment of share – actively trying to encourage early payment to assist with cashflow – so this is being looked at.</li> <li>• Request for straight-forward marketing to illustrate how the money is being used.</li> <li>• All aware that there are parishes that have paid nothing and the possibility of this being linked to Living in Love and Faith (LLF) – how will this be handled? +Stephen recognised this is a difficult area and a matter for ‘constant engagement’. He stressed there is a moral obligation to pay for services you are receiving and that in these instances money is being used as power and this is not right.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance to move:  <i>“That the Diocesan Board of Finance annual Budget for 2025 is approved.”</i></p> <p>This concluded this part of the meeting, the Chair of House of Laity offered her thanks to the Diocesan Secretary and staff team for their work in preparing these meetings.</p>	Approved
6	<b>Diocesan Synod Questions</b>	
	<p>Questions were submitted in advance and answers were supplied, these are available on the diocesan website.</p> <p>Supplementary questions raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue around recruiting Churchwardens and the scope of the role. Archdeacon of Sherborne responded that this is a role you can ‘craft’ and there is a lot of leeway so the role could look very different in many situations – permission-giving to make it work for the churchwarden and parish.</li> <li>• Use of social media to promote jobs – +A applauds the idea and really keen to attract clergy, this was echoed by +K who stressed the need to be proactive.</li> </ul>	
7	<b>Shaping DBF Services</b>	

	<p>Guest speaker was initially invited to the meeting to talk about upcoming work around shaping our services based on what you need. Due to circumstances which caused the meeting to be delayed this work has already taken place. Feedback will be shared at a future meeting.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Election results, end of triennium thanks and evaluation</b></p> <p>This meeting marks the end of this triennium with these members. The new members have been elected with 48 clergy and 53 lay new members (a number of which are completely new to this committee). This new group includes someone under 18 and someone who is deaf so all synods will be signed moving forward. There are 10 co-option positions and 10 Bishop's nominations and +Stephen has nominated three people to join synod and is keen to use more of these positions to involve a cohort of younger people in synod.</p> <p>Elected unopposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andy Perry as Chair House of Clergy</li> <li>• Richard Chitty as Chair House of Laity</li> <li>• Jane McCormick as DBF Chair.</li> </ul> <p>At the October Synod we will hold elections for the Vice Chair DBF.</p> <p>Director of Strategy &amp; Operations presented the feedback from the questionnaire that was circulated to the out-going Synod and thanked all for the great response (40%). Members indicated the usefulness of Synod with a 3.6-star rating. This shows there is room for improvement and further discussions are needed.</p> <p>The feedback will shape the pattern of meetings moving forward, i.e. fewer Saturday meetings, more virtual and changes to location (favoured to be more central). These points have been taken into account and will be actioned where possible. More time will be made at meetings for networking, debate and conversation. An induction for all new Synod members is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> September.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>AOB and details of next meeting</b></p> <p>The Chairs of the Houses thanked everyone for their continued commitment.</p> <p>+Stephen thanked the Chairs of the Houses and DBF Chair for their leadership and service during the triennium.</p> <p>The next meeting is:  12<sup>th</sup> October 2024  Gryphon School  Sherborne</p>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Meeting closed with Eucharist.</b></p>	