

ST ALBANS DEANERY SYNOD

St Albans city parishes

Aldenham – St John the Baptist
Bricket Wood – St Luke
Colney Heath – St Mark
Frogmore – Holy Trinity
London Colney – St Peter
Radlett – Christ Church and St John
Shenley – St Martin

Abbey
Christ Church
St Luke
St Mary, Marshalswick
St Michael with St Mary

St Paul
St Peter
St Saviour
St Stephen with St Julian

ST ALBANS DEANERY STANDING & PASTORAL COMMITTEE (anonymised for data protection purposes)

MEETING

held at 8.00 pm on Thursday 12th October 2017
at St Luke's, Cell Barnes Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire. AL1 5QJ

PRESENT

ST ALBANS DEANERY STANDING COMMITTEE

1 OPENING PRAYERS

The meeting began at 8.00pm with an Opening Prayer led by RD.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3 MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING held on 20th July 2017

There was some confusion over the Minutes. The Secretary not having been present at the meeting on the 20th July, the Minutes of 27th February 2017 had been circulated in advance by mistake. RD read through the Minutes from 20th July – there were no Matters Arising that would not be covered by the evening's Agenda. The Secretary will circulate the Minutes of 20th July 2017 to all Standing Committee members for reference.

4 DEANERY MAP PROGRESS

DMAP Project Document and Budget Report circulated to all in advance of the meeting.

JB commented that St Albans Deanery is the only one where figures have been included in the Budget. AS – costs in the Budget come to a little over what we have in the Bank. JI – the projects will take 18 months to fully implement so will run into next financial year when we will have collected next year's subscriptions.

MS – how do we intend to present this to Synod in November?

Goal 1 – Parish Ministry Support

MS – emailed all Contacts in this group providing possible dates to meet up in August or September. Only 2 responded – 1 to say they are not well enough to help. Emails may have gone into Spam Folders, MS will ask Deanery Secretary to circulate in future to avoid this. However, there is an obstacle for Lay members of Synod who only see each other at meetings three times a year, a reluctance to commit.

JB – Hemel Deanery gathered laity together outside of Synod, coffee and cake, to get to know each other, network and form links. Helped to break the ice and encourage initiatives. KP – we have dates in diary for Church Wardens to meet up and for next Treasurers' meeting, perhaps set up a meeting for Lay project members on a specific date – those who can come, will.

**Action – set up separate meeting for Laity
Who - MD**

Goal 2 – Funerals Ministry

KP – the leaflet is designed and ready to print. Not sure how many copies to have done, possibly 2000.

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Target those who have been bereaved through local Funeral Directors. Initially intended to invite all Directors to a single meeting but have decided against that. Project Team will now visit all individual Directors separately. Leaflets would also be given to our parish churches, Nursing Homes, Libraries and GP Surgeries.

Clergy in the Deanery are required to sign up to a Service Level Agreement setting out base line of minimum requirements – response times to calls from the bereaved/Funeral Directors; follow-up actions etc. There has to be across the board commitment from all clergy – 2 incumbents are still to sign up.

Agreed 2000 copies to be printed. Cost estimated at £100, not the £200 quoted in the Budget.

Action – SLA sign up complete and leaflets printed

Who – KP

Goal 3 – Nurturing Vocations

Jl, MS & BL set out project. Spoke with Diocesan Vocations Team – quite ambitious and Diocese does similar idea on a larger scale. Could the project be scaled down?

Now looking to do something on a more informal basis e.g. “Call and Curry” discussion. For those who have missed out on a Diocesan initiative (e.g. Seeking the Way) and would have to wait until the next year, this informal approach could help encourage and nurture vocations.

Action – contact all Incumbents

Who – Jl & BL

Action – update section in the DMAP document & costings in Budget

Who – Jl & BL

Goal 4 – Mission Matters

Jl – this is to do with training. Nothing has been done so far.

Goal 5 – Ministry to Primary Schools

MS – Nobody is available to lead this project at present. We have many ideas but we are not in a position to move forward with them.

Goal 6 – Project X-Site for Kids

MS, BL and HK (curate at Radlett) due to have initial meeting. Excited by the project but it will take time – aiming to hold something next year. KH interested to be involved. MS has contacted the Priest at Beaconsfield Road Roman Catholic Church with a view to involvement.

Goal 7 – Communications Team

MF – similar problems encountered to MD. Gave contacts rather short notice to respond and had no response.

Initial thoughts that we can go down 2 directions

- a) Fairly chatty Newsletter which anybody could pick up and read out of interest
- b) Announcements of what is going on in the Deanery, online only, not paper version, aimed at narrower audience. Encourage conversations between Wardens, Treasurers etc but not involve/include the congregation

AS – points raised from tonight could be included in a Newsletter. Perhaps we could tag it onto the bi-monthly Prayer Diary?

KP – in the Parish, hard copies of our Parish Newsletter are down from 300 to 200 whereas the online version has gone from 0 subscribers to over 400. No way of telling how many people actually read the online version and/or whether it is opened or goes straight to Trash or Spam folders.

JB – who is the communication aimed at? What do you need to communicate?

Action – set up meeting for Comms Team to discuss

Who - MF

Goal 8 – Deanery Directory

MS – Waiting on 1 church for information. Should have Directory completed by end of month. Planning to print (c30 pages only) and provide each parish with 4 copies – Clergy, Admin, Wardens and Treasurers.

KP useful if Funeral Directors also given a copy – there are 8 within the Deanery some with multi-sites.

Action – work out how many copies required

Who – MS & KP

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JB has used 2 different printers in the past who would give discount to Deanery. JB to provide details to Secretary. Secretary to obtain details from local residents' association of who they use for printing too. Quotes can then be obtained.

**Action – details of c3 printing firms
Who – JB & JP**

Goal 9 – Deanery Prayer

Deanery Pentecostal Prayer – 2-3 churches directly involved, limited attendance at Christ Church, St Albans. Jeremy and Team felt it went well.

Fresh Expressions – Grant for Diocese

MS at breakfast meeting last Saturday where General Synod representative, Simon Baynes and Tim Fleming present with Church Commissioners. First grant has to be on a matched basis. Second or Third grants do not have to be. Idea – to apply for funding to support 2-3 Youth Workers across the Deanery.

MD – This Grant money was mentioned at Diocesan Synod but we were led to believe the money had already been allocated to 3 separate projects. Is that correct?

JL – for Fresh Expressions, there are 3 grants across each Archdeaconry. If a church wants to access the funds, it will need to come up with a Fresh Expressions project to be able to tap into it. If the project does not fall within the remit of Fresh Expressions, then churches will need to apply to the Church Commissioners.

JB – the money is there but the Board to administer it is not yet in place.

MS – Youth work – there is an energy and excitement to work together to support each other in an area where we struggle. This could become Goal 10.

5 Deanery Synod Finances

AS – 2016 Financial Year saw transition between two separate ways of funding for the Deanery. External Auditor quite rightly asked some interesting questions in relation to this, however, we do have Auditor's Statement for 2016.

Lay Subscription for 2018 - £50 per lay member subscription. Almost 100% payment received to date. £2,500 in Bank Account. The only "push-back" from parishes was because we asked for increase in subscriptions when we did not have specific projects outlined.

MD – Increase subscriptions from £3 to £50 as a one-off to fund development of a Deanery Website. We have not spent all the money so how can we ask for more money? Costings in the Budget seem to add up to the amount we have asked for rather than actual costs?

AS – Subscriptions were originally increased to £12 per lay member then £50. The discussion around this was to set up a general fund that Deanery could use to action agreed projects there and then, rather than having to wait for the next Synod to ask for funds, voting on it then requesting payment from parishes. The website was the first proposed project and others are now being initiated under the DMAP.

General discussion on Lay Subscriptions, the amount per lay member, how and when to collect, what it is used for:-

- £50 per lay member, small amount to some parishes but large cost to others who are struggling
 - Does Deanery pay churches for use of Rooms/Hall for Deanery meetings? Some churches would not think to charge Deanery but others need compensated as Deanery meeting may mean they have lost out on paid booking.
- Money raised in advance to cover anticipated costs means Deanery can move more quickly and action things rather than having to wait. Implementation has been slow to date as we identified objectives and converted them into goals but things are starting to move now.
- If we were to lower subscriptions now, it would be difficult to raise them again.
- Treasurers will have already budgeted £50 subscription for next year
- Suggestion that subscriptions could be paid in 2 tranches, 2nd payment subject to progress. Felt that this could cause confusion and prove messy to administer
- Duty to clearly communicate to parishes what the money is being spent on

Proposal by AS – to collect £50 per lay member that each parish is entitled to have (i.e. whether they elect their full complement or not)

For – 6

Against – 0

Abstained – 1

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Motion carried

Deanery Treasurer – AS has stepped down but his replacement has yet to be appointed. Job Outline was circulated ahead of the meeting.

**Action – Recruit new Deanery Treasurer
Who – MS & AS**

6 PARISH SHARES REVIEW

Papers outlining current breakdown of Parish Shares together with Draft Review document and workings were circulated to all ahead of the meeting.

- i) Diocesan Funding. AS it is not responsible for Diocese to require Deaneries to continue paying at current levels. JP – Board of Finance is aware of this. There is tension between the Board of Finance and Bishops' Council. KP – the pressure on parishes has not been looked at. The early warning signs are there. It will come to a head more quickly than the Diocese is capable of reacting.

JI – Bishops' Council has decided to go for growth – Mission, Fresh Expressions etc. Drive from Bishop's staff to increase numbers.

JB – there has been a push to work better at Senior level. Two Boards are being merged – Board of Church & Society and Board of Discipleship. Asked to make large savings and do things differently. A part-time Discipleship role and full-time Stewardship Officer have become redundant although it is still in consultation to cover the HR policy and procedure aspect of it. Little cuts here and there are not enough. Losing 1.5 posts cuts £60k from costings. The new Board will still cover the same areas/activities but will do it differently.

- ii) AS with DF, Treasurer at Holy Trinity, Frogmore, have looked at ways to allocate Parish Shares across our Deanery more fairly. They have used Population of Parish compared with Level of Deprivation as the basis to come up with a more logical means to attribute costs per parish. Their proposal is that those parishes currently identified as paying too much would pay the same for the next 2-3 years; those parishes currently identified as paying too little would increase their contribution incrementally over the next 2-3 years. Incumbents and Treasurers are due to meet to decide this. Meeting planned for early in 2018.

MD – do we need to take account of the number of people outside the parish who come into Church?

KP – are the denomination/religion per parish taken into account?

JB – the more variables you include, the more anomalies arise

AS – the system is imperfect. There are 3 options

- i) Keep it the same – the system is rubbish but it works
- ii) Use this new proposal
- iii) Base it on “planned giving per planned giver”

I recommend that we go with option ii) with the proviso that there may be occasions when we need to review Parish Shares ad hoc

- a) Temporary increase to some parishes to help out another (e.g. Radlett this year)
- b) Where there is a dramatic change in circumstances in a parish

MS – AS has put forward some useful ideas to address this. We will take these choices to the next DSIT meeting (Deanery Synod Incumbents & Treasurers) for them to discuss and decide. They can work on good, clear proposals over the next 6-9 months including any further suggestions arising. Whatever is decided, it has to be measurable over time.

AS wished to have his thanks to Dan minuted.

RD arrived.

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7 DEANERY WEBSITE PROGRESS

The Deanery Website is up and running. It can be accessed via www.stalbansdeanerysynod.online
AS requested 5 minutes at the next Deanery Synod to present this to members.

8 FEEDBACK – AREA/RURAL DEANS & LAY CO-CHAIRS MEETING

MD had attended the meeting which lasted from 4.30pm – 9.00pm

The meeting looked at areas which each parish needs to develop – three areas of Ministry

- Worship
- Fresh Expressions
- Children & Young People

Delegates were asked to consider 3 questions

- i) What can you do?
- ii) How could your Deanery work on this?
- iii) What is your Deanery already doing?

Most Deaneries are at the “Thinking” stage. Delegates were asked to decide on 2 things that they can go away and do.

9. NOVEMBER SYNOD MEETING AGENDA – Christ Church, St Albans

- DMAP Projects and Budget presented to Synod
- Holy Trinity, Frogmore wish to present feedback on Life Expo 2017
- Finance Report
- Appointment of Deanery Treasurer
- Safeguarding Training

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no other business the Rural Dean closed the meeting with all saying The Grace.

Date of Next Standing Committee – 8th February 2018 – St Luke’s, Cell Barnes Lane