

Leeds Diocesan Synod

DRAFT Minutes of the twenty third meeting of the Synod of the diocese held at 9.30 am on Saturday, 15 October 2022 via Zoom.

Chair: The Bishop of Leeds

1. Opening prayers, Welcome and Apologies

Worship was led by The Ven Bill Braviner, Archdeacon of Halifax.

Mr Jonathan Wood, Secretary to the Diocesan Synod, confirmed the Zoom meeting procedure and that the Diocesan Communications Team would be using social media to provide a live general commentary on Synod.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone including:

The Rt Revd Arun Arora, Bishop of Kirkstall (First Leeds Diocesan Synod) and to newly elected members:

House of Clergy

The Revd Anna Lumb (Aire and Worth deanery)

House of Laity

Marilyn Banister (South Craven & Wharfedale deanery)

Kathryn Croll (Bowland and Ewecross deanery).

The Chair's permission to speak (SO3) was granted to:

Items 6 Presentation and Discussion: Parish Share Scheme and Item 10 Motion: Budget 2023 – money resolution Geoff Park, Chief Finance Officer.

Apologies

14 apologies have been received.

Chair: The Revd Canon Rachel Firth (Chair of the House of Clergy)

2. Minutes of the last meeting on 18 June 2022. DS22 10 01

The Chair proposed:

“That the draft minutes contained in DS22 10 01 be accepted as a true record of the Diocesan Synod meeting held on 18 June 2022”.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 76

Against: 0

Abstain: 14.

The motion was approved.

3. Presidential Address

The Bishop of Leeds gave his presidential address to the Diocesan Synod. A copy of the address is attached to these minutes.

4. Questions to the Synod.

No questions had been received.

5. Report: General Synod report (July 2022) DS22 10 02

Paper:

Synod members had been circulated with a report from The Revd Canon Joyce Jones (DS22 10 02).

Presenter: The Revd Canon Joyce Jones

The Revd Canon Joyce Jones spoke to the circulated report. The new General Synod had had important matters to discuss: the war in Ukraine, Route Map to Carbon Net Zero and funding from the Archbishops' Council. There had been many members wishing to contribute to the debates and lots of amendments to motions. Canon Joyce asked the Diocesan Synod members to pray for wisdom for the General Synod members as difficult discussions and decisions were coming up.

There were no questions.

6. Presentation and Discussion: Parish Share Scheme. DS22 10 03

Papers:

DS22 10 03	Parish Share Review v2,
DS22 10 03 01	Appendix 2 Current Share System: Matters for Review
DS22 10 03 02	Appendix 3 2018 Parish Share Systems Review
DS22 10 03 03	Appendix 4 Rework the Existing System.

Presenters (PowerPoint presentation): Geoff Park and Jonathan Wood

Jonathan Wood (JW) expressed thanks to all the parishes for their generosity and sacrifice in contributing to the parish share and so ensuring that the churches in the poorest communities could continue.

The Diocesan Strategy had committed to a review of the parish share scheme. The review began in 2019 and had been paused, due to the pandemic, until February 2022.

The parish share was more than half of the whole diocesan income. The rest was made up of grants from the National Church, fees, property rental income, investment income and other smaller income sources. 71% of budgeted expenditure was spent on parish clergy and parish housing.

GP outlined that the parish share calculation was based on two thirds clergy deployment and one third church services attendance and an additional overlay of a social economic adjustment using the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This resulted in the base share assessment for all parishes. During the creation of a parish share system for the new diocese, there had been concern that there may be too much change from what parishes had been paying previously. So caps were introduced to maintain stability: an increase cap was 10%, a decrease cap was -5% and there was an income cap if the parish's income was 80% or less of the parish share request. Then finally, a rural cap increase was applied to the assessment so that the IMD increase would not occur if the attendance was less than 50 and the population less than 1500.

The current review had considered whether the caps should be revised. There were criticisms of the caps including lack of discount in vacancy, IMD increases and the implication that the rural cap cannot be wealthy. The review looked at what could be changed whilst maintaining the integrity of the system.

GP said that the review group considered various adjustments to the formula. With change Option 1, the advantages were maintaining the integrity of the system, that it was based on cost and the ability to pay. The disadvantages were that there would be significant changes and it wasn't certain that more income would be raised as those parishes who were asked for increases may not be able to pay these immediately.

JW said that the second option the review group had considered was re-baselining the requests. This would look at what the broad figure needed for share income was (roughly £14m) and then use a baseline figure of 2019 payments from parishes to calculate parishes contributions. The disadvantage would be that 2019 may have been a one-off year for a parish and this would be the

set level of the contribution. Option 2 also broke the link between cost of ministry, ability to pay and social deprivation.

The Leeds Board had reviewed the options and, although on balance the Board felt that Option 1 was probably preferable, it didn't think the argument for it was strong enough to outweigh the benefits against the issues it would raise. The Board decided instead to update the data set but not change the system and to look in future to write off any arrears from the old systems ie before 2017.

Synod members moved in to break out rooms to consider the following questions:

- *What are your reflections on what you have heard?*
- *Is there anything you wish the LDBF Board to consider further over the coming year?*

In plenary session, the Synod members gave feedback from their break out rooms discussions.

Kay Brown (Allerton deanery)

Communication about what the diocese offers to parishes (eg support on HR, Safeguarding, buildings and vacancy) is essential in motivating parishes to pay share and also arrears.

The Revd Nicholas Clews (Inner Bradford deanery)

Felt it was the parish priests' primary responsibility to tell congregations and PCCs that the diocese is already committed to paying for the clergy and that the parish share is "reimbursement". He had taken screen shots of the presentation as this would be useful in communicating this.

Roger Lazenby (Headingley deanery)

IMD can work to give a parish an unfair advantage and this should be reviewed. For example, a parish in a deprived area but with a significant number of congregation members living outside the parish. The IMD applies but doesn't apply to these members of the congregation who contribute a significant income to the parish. With regard to the proposal to write off arrears, this would be hard for those who had struggled to pay more when others had their arrears written off.

Canon Mrs Jane Evans (Halifax and Calder Valley deanery and General Synod)

The National Stewardship Review emphasised communications support and strong diocesan engagement, helping and supporting parishes. More important than the formula was the communications and support for the parish share process. This should be a proactive area of work and would be an effective way of increasing what was paid for those struggling and those who decide not to pay.

The Revd Allan Garrow (Harrogate deanery)

Thought that the diocesan survey before the pandemic was a useful tool. It could be turned in to something the PCC could respond to remotely and forces a PCC to think about the aspects of diocesan provision it couldn't do without. It would also inform the diocese which departments parishes/the diocese didn't need. It would be good to see this survey revived.

JW confirmed that the diocese was preparing communications to accompany the parish share requests on 2nd November 2022. This would include a detailed guide. JW would follow up on the survey.

GP confirmed the diocese were conscious of the concerns about the motivational/de-motivational aspect of writing off arrears. The write off would only be from the old systems not the current system where the basis of calculation was different. It was the pre 2017 share arrears which would be totally written off.

Mike Moss (Aire & Worth deanery)

Thought that the caps were a massive disincentive to all and it was unclear if the current adjustments generated any extra income. It was understood that the system provided for parishes to help more needy parishes. It felt as if the adjustments to base share under the current system meant parishes were subsidising wealthy parishes. It was important to look at each parish with regard to historic debt. If a parish's share was reducing but the parish was actually paying more than the base calculation, then it was paying its share. If the parish wasn't paying share and their calculation should be increasing, then this should be seen as a debt. The current system was particularly unfair in a clergy vacancy when assessing whether a parish had historically paid share.

Stephen Hogg (General Synod)

Asked that the term "debt" was not used with reference to unpaid parish share. Unpaid parish share was not a debt or arrears as they were voluntary payments. There should be more engagement and openness in discussions with parishes about priorities. This would make a difference.

Steve Jackson (Richmond deanery)

IMD refers to deprivation. Steve asked that the term "affluent" was not used for those who were less deprived. His parish would like to pay in full but asked how they could generate the income to pay the 10% increase they had been asked for.

Robert Haskins (Harrogate deanery)

Agreed with the point made by Canon Mrs Jane Evans. It was up to everyone to do this. It could be co-ordinated by the stewardship team with parish stewardship advisers. Robert queried how "income" was defined in terms of the 80% cap. For example, for a parish magazine there were printing costs to deduct from sale monies. Robert asked if the definition referred to a PCC's gross or net income.

The Revd Jane Brown (Whitkirk deanery)

Jane said her parish want to pay their share contribution but had not been able to do so since the change to the new system. So writing off 2017 debt wouldn't help them. They were aware some parishes weren't trying to pay. She asked that, as her parish was trying to pay they be treated differently from those parishes which were not.

The Revd Ruth Newton (General Synod)

All the indices to decide what parish share is are financial. They did not intersect with missional

viability or consider what the money was being used for when not used to pay the parish share. For example, whether a parish was carrying out a mission action plan and that monies were being invested in the future and new disciples and wasn't being hoarded.

Graham Foster (Halifax and Calder Valley deanery)

Graham said he represented the poorest parish in the diocese and yet they were still being surcharged. The parish shared a priest with another parish. His parish was listed as in arrears but they had always paid their base assessment. The request had begun at 50% more than their base assessment.

JW thanked the Synod members for their feedback. There was no perfect system. Every system would be liked or disliked depending on the parish's income. Support was available from the diocesan stewardship team to assist with how parishes could manage and engage with greater giving and fund raising. Parish share allocations which were not paid were not a legal debt but the diocese is already committed to paying clergy stipends and their housing. If parish share was not received this was not sustainable and there were consequences in having a deficit: the diocese had to live within its means.

7. **Motion: Parish Allocations – 2023 Deanery Synod elections. DS22 10 04, DS22 10 04 01**

Motion:

“That the proposals for determining the number of lay members to be elected to Deanery Synods from the parishes, as set out in paper DS22 10 04 be approved.”

Proposed by: Canon Matthew Ambler (Huddersfield deanery)

Papers:

DS22 10 04 Proposal for 2023 Deanery Synod parish lay elections allocations

DS22 10 04 01 Appendix 3 Example application of proposed

Proposer and Presenter: Canon Matthew Ambler.

Canon Matthew Ambler (MA) spoke to the circulated papers. The next triennium of the deanery synods was approaching and so the Diocesan Synod needed to confirm the parishes' deanery lay member allocations by the end of the year. The proposal was for the existing 2019 system to be adopted. This formula was based on electoral rolls. Where parishes had not submitted 2022 electoral roll figures the 2021 figure would be used and if 2021 electoral roll figure wasn't available, then the allocation would be one lay member for that parish. MA encouraged any parishes who had not yet submitted their 2022 electoral roll figures to do so.

Questions of clarification

The Revd Chris Lawson (Wensley deanery)

Asked that the figure on the circulated papers for his parish was checked before confirmation to the parish.

Canon Mrs Ann Nicholl (Allerton deanery)

Asked if casual vacancies in one parish could be shared across a benefice.

MA confirmed that this was not the case.

John Beal (Whitkirk deanery)

Asked if the parish allocations for the Leeds deaneries would be carried over to the new Leeds deaneries when they came into being at the end of the month?

MA confirmed this was the case.

MA proposed:

“That the proposals for determining the number of lay members to be elected to Deanery Synods from the parishes, as set out in paper DS22 10 04 be approved.”

No debate was offered by the members.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 95

Against: 0

Abstain: 2.

The motion was approved.

A break was taken during which the Diocesan Synod members attended a Leeds Diocesan Board of Finance company members’ meeting on the same Zoom link. The papers for the company members’ meeting had been circulated separately. After the company members’ meeting, the Diocesan Synod members re-convened as the Diocesan Synod on the same Zoom link.

Chair: Canon Matthew Ambler (Chair of the House of Laity)

8. Motion: Outer Bradford deanery motion DS22 10 05

Motion:

“This Synod would welcome the Church of England withdrawing its opposition to the distribution of wine in individual cups at the Holy Communion.”

Proposed by: The Revd Tracy Milne (Outer Bradford deanery)

Paper:

DS22 10 05

Proposer and Presenter (PowerPoint presentation): The Revd Tracy Milne (Outer Bradford deanery).

The Revd Canon Tracy Milne (TM) spoke to the circulated paper and outlined the wording of the motion using a PowerPoint presentation. The Outer Bradford deanery synod had met after 18 months of pandemic. All eighteen parishes in the deanery were involved. With the exception of one lay person and one priest who abstained all were in favour of the motion. There was an overwhelming agreement to use individual cups at Communion.

The deanery were not asking for everyone to change or for the proposal to replace the current provision. It was asking for the goodwill of the Church ie that in some situations it would be permissible.

During Covid, both the Archbishops had given instructions to the clergy to withdraw the Common Cup. Symbolism is important: Jesus commanded us to eat bread and to drink wine. However, although the Church offers gluten free bread there was not similar option for all people to drink the wine.

Canon F3 arguably only states the bare minimum to be provided for Holy Communion. In the BCP rubric a common cup isn't specified ie that the wine could be offered in whatever contained the wine may be in.

Bishop Colin Buchanan and the Ven Trevor Lloyd had worked together on a joint liturgical study looking at the story of the Church of England Eucharist. In this study, one chapter is devoted to the distinction between consumption and ablutions. Members were directed to the rest of the PowerPoint which had been circulated to them for more information on this.

Questions of clarification

There were no questions of clarification.

The Chair confirmed that as there were likely to be many Synod members who wishes to contribute to the debate of the motion, there would be a 2 minutes speech limit.

TM proposed the motion:

"This Synod would welcome the Church of England withdrawing its opposition to the distribution of wine in individual cups at the Holy Communion."

Debate

Stephen Hogg (General Synod)

Said he was against the motion. It was badly drafted and would not make it past the legal office to be debated at General Synod. The motion didn't add to what had already been asked at General Synod. For example, what did "Church of England" mean as this body didn't exist as such. The

motion ask for “withdrawal of opposition”. The prohibition on cups is legal so if a change to the law is what is being asked for the motion should ask for this. The House of Bishops can’t be asked to allow the law to be broken. The motion as drafted is not helpful and didn’t add to the debate.

The Revd Canon Stephen Race (Barnsley deanery)

Canon Stephen said the one cup signified for all community receiving the sacrament. Particularly, that at the Communion rail it was shown how diverse and complex our community is but we come together and are invited to receive from one cup. For this reason, he would always object to motions for the removal of the practice of the common cup.

The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Allerton deanery)

Canon Kathryn said she was privileged to be part of an Anglican/Methodist LEP where both the chalice and individual cups were used. During Covid, the Methodists in the LEP agreed not to offer small cups when the Anglicans couldn’t use the chalice. People made their own choices when they receive the sacrament. Kathryn said she wasn’t sure how she would vote on the motion but it was an issue that needed thought.

Canon Mrs Jane Evans (Halifax and Calder Valley deanery)

Canon Jane had consulted her deanery on this matter. There had been good discussion at her PCC. Jane understood the points made about the wording of the motion but supported the spirit of what it was trying to achieve. There was a wide range of views. The emphasis had been on the difficult liturgical issues so maybe PCCs were not responding to the right issue ie that the motion was asking for goodwill and not compulsion. However the motion seemed to be encouraging local choice without any compulsion.

Justin Brett (Harrogate deanery)

Agreed with Stephen Hogg both on the wording of the motion and on the theological ground that it was not possible to get around the wording “all of you and drink from it”. So unless the Holy Communion service was changed, he couldn’t see how this would work. However, he felt there were more important things to worry about than this.

Tabitha Tanna (Wakefield deanery)

Tabitha said she thought it was an important motion and had been put together sensitively and it emphasized choice. Work had clearly been put in to looking at Canon law. Tabitha didn’t agree that the law says one chalice as the shared legal opinions showed this. The Methodists had been using individual cups for a long time: was this wrong? The Gospel says “take” and “drink” not how. Tabitha supported the motion and, as the pandemic had deprived a lot of people from taking both the elements, she felt it was important to think carefully about this.

The Revd Erik Peeters (Dewsbury and Birstall deanery)

Erik said he would be voting against the motion because it was a large distraction which was not needed. It would cause division and alienation in the Sacrament.

Bernard Lewis (Outer Bradford deanery)

Bernard said he was the Lay Chair of Outer Bradford deanery. The motion was proposing that there were separate cups alongside the single cup. The single cup was depriving around 40% taking full Communion. People felt guilty if they didn’t take full Communion.

The Revd Canon Joyce Jones (General Synod)

Canon Joyce said that any motion to General Synod would need to ask the House of Bishops to change. Joyce didn't have a strong view either way but wondered if there perhaps there needed to be more choice.

Jonathan Wilson (Harrogate deanery)

Jonathan said he did not support the motion. The use of an individual cup reflected the unity of the Christian community, whereas an individual cup didn't. There would also be practical problems around cleansing, reverential consumption and ensuring that there were enough cups. A common cup emphasized that all were equal at the Communion rail.

Richard Pattinson (Bowland and Ewecross deanery)

Richard said that the motion had been discussed at the Bowland and Ewecross deanery synod for some time and no one had been against it and a quite a few were in favour, particularly in view of the public health issues. Canon law could change over time and Covid had not gone away. The favour was for both a single cup and individual cups to be available ie both for inclusivity.

The Ven Paul Ayers (Archdeacon of Leeds and General Synod)

Archdeacon Paul agreed with Stephen Hogg that the motion was misdirected and would not have the desired effect. With regard to "choice" he asked whose choice was being referred to: PCC, Incumbent, celebrant. He also agreed that the motion was unnecessary and there were better things to do at General Synod. To achieve the change needed would require two thirds majority and this was unlikely. The prohibition on receiving Communion was when the [Covid] virus was an unknown quantity. There was no evidence of increased infection coming from the common cup – though it could be that no specific research on this had been carried out. However, if there was not increased risk to health from the common cup he asked what was the motion for.

Barbara Smith (Brighouse and Elland deanery)

Barbara said she had a nursing background but did not have an issue with the common cup. However, people should have a choice. There were individual wafers so there seemed no reason for there not to be individual cups ie the wine in a flagon could be consecrated. The important matter for many was the coming together around a common table.

The Revd Canon Rachel Firth (Huddersfield deanery and General Synod)

Canon Rachel said that members could not vote on what they wished the motion said. The Huddersfield deanery had passionately held differing views on the Eucharist. Canon Rachel said she would have liked to support a motion with transparency for options if the next pandemic occurs. The motion before the Synod would not enable that to happen. She suggested that perhaps a couple of deaneries could work on a motion around access which would also respect different traditions and be something that everyone could support.

The Revd Jane Brown (Whitkirk deanery)

Jane said she was in favour of the freedom to use individual cups and many congregations were asking for this. Jane cautioned that when intincting is used, this can cause issues for those who are gluten free i.e. if ordinary wafers have been intincted from the Common Cup.

David Corps (Huddersfield deanery)

David said that the Church was bound by five hundred year old legislation and can accommodate gluten free wafers but not alcohol intolerance. He was aware of the points made about the way the motion was worded and he encouraged the Outer Bradford deanery to bring back a motion to permit the Church to be more welcoming.

The Revd Pete Gunstone (Inner Bradford deanery)

Peter said that this issue was not just about the pandemic but also those with alcohol issues. The matters covered by the motion were complex. There was a great diversity in Eucharistic practice. With the motion in an appropriate format, he would support the heart of the motion which was about enabling participation in different cultural ways.

The Revd Ian Jamieson (Huddersfield deanery)

Ian questioned the comments on the specialness of the common cup ie that individuals felt included by use of the single cup at Communion. The consecration of the bread was a communal symbol so the use of individual cups would not degrade the communal aspect of the Eucharist. Ian said that with regard to the comment made about there being no health benefits to individual cups, perception was important. Ian mentioned that quite a number of clergy had not received the common vessel at the clergy conference. People were unhappy about the common vessel and if there was not an actual health benefit, there was a perception that it was safer to receive in individual cups.

The Revd Che Seabourne (General Synod)

Che thanks The Revd Tracy Milne and the Outer Bradford deanery for bringing the motion to the Diocesan Synod. It was difficult to collate the different concerns. With regard to communicants with clinical vulnerabilities, it would be possible to instigate gluten free and "ordinary" wafers from different chalices. It seems the legal perspective is ambiguous. However the clergy had legal canonical obedience and the Bishop of Leeds had made his view clear. Che echoed the comments that the motion would not achieve what it was aiming to do but that the motion could be brought back though addressed in a different way.

The Revd Gary Waddington (General Synod)

Gary said there seemed to be a lot of legal pitfalls. He felt that it was right for the Synod to debate this matter as it was clear there was a diversity of views. Within the liturgy of Communion there was a diversity of practice but certain commonalities. He cautioned the Synod not to let a once in a generation event result in unforeseen difficulties from a decision made now, even with the best reasons.

Response to the debate

TM responded to the debate. TM thanked the Synod members for engaging with the debate. TM had discussed the wording of the motion with the Synod legal adviser. The motion was worded correctly as there was no intention of sending the motion to General Synod in the current format. The Outer Bradford deanery synod members had voted for a choice to receive Communion from individual cups as opposed to a chalice. They were not asking to replace the common cup at all. The intention was to give the president the choice that if a communicant came to Communion with a pastoral need they could be included by drinking from an individual cup. There was no proposal to change the law or debate the interpretation of the law. TM said it was a contentious issue. TM

confirmed that she had no intention to undermine the diocesan bishop's leadership but TM had a duty, as Area Dean, to represent the deanery and the majority of people in the deanery wanted to explore and have a choice for the distribution of the wine in individual cups.

TM proposed the motion in her name.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 40

Against: 47

Abstain: 07

The motion was not approved.

9. **Motions: Church Representation Rules 23 Schemes for the Cathedrals. DS22 10 06, DS22 10 06 01, DS22 10 06 02, DS22 10 06 03, DS22 10 06 04, DS22 10 06 05.**

Papers:

DS22 10 06	Bradford Cathedral CRR 23 Scheme
DS22 10 06 01	Ripon Cathedral CRR 23 Scheme
DS22 10 06 02	Wakefield Cathedral CRR 23 Scheme
DS22 10 06 03	Bradford CRR briefing note
DS22 10 06 04	Ripon CRR briefing note
DS22 10 06 05	Wakefield CRR briefing note

Proposer: Chair

Presenter: David Whitaker (DW)

DW outlined to the Synod that there had been legislative changes under the Church Representation Rules and in the Cathedrals Measure. Some cathedral clergy were already able to participate in deanery synods by reason of being beneficed or licensed within the deanery. Under the new Church Representation Rules there was a requirement for a formal scheme to be made for representation for the deans, the residentiary canons and other ministers (or any of them). The Cathedrals had been consulted on the draft Schemes. All three schemes were similar.

Questions of Clarification

As set out in the circulated reports, with regard to the Bradford Cathedral scheme and the reference to the Canon Precentor and Canon for Pastoral and Mission Development, the issue wasn't their designation but that they were funded by the Church Commissioners.

9.1 The Chair proposed that:

"That this Synod approve the deanery synod representation scheme DS22 10 06 in respect of Bradford Cathedral."

No debate was offered by the Synod members.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 79

Against: 0

Abstain: 8

The motion was approved.

9.2 The Chair proposed that:

“That this Synod approve the deanery synod representation scheme DS22 10 06 01 in respect of Ripon Cathedral.”

No debate was offered by the Synod members.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 84

Against: 0

Abstain: 6

The motion was approved.

9.3 The Chair proposed that:

“That this Synod approve the deanery synod representation scheme DS22 10 06 02 in respect of Wakefield Cathedral.”

No debate was offered by the Synod members.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 84

Against: 0

Abstain: 6

The motion was approved.

10. Motion: Budget 2023 – money resolution. DS22 10 07, DS22 10 07 01

Motion:

“That the Diocesan Synod authorise (or direct) the diocesan board of finance to raise and expend a sum not exceeding £21,841,861 for the calendar year 2023”.

Proposer: The Revd Nigel Wright (Allerton deanery)

Papers:

DS22 10 07 2023 Budget and Sustainability plan

DS22 10 07 01 Appendix 1 – 2023 Budget and Sustainability Plan 2023 – 2027

Presenter (PowerPoint presentation): Geoff Park (GP).

Proposer:

The Chair reported to the Synod that The Revd Nigel Wright was unwell and so had agreed the motion would be proposed by another member of the Synod. The procedure for this was:

- Under SO 37 (b) A motion which, when called by the Chair, is not moved by the member who has given notice thereof may be moved by some other member in his or her stead.
- Under SO 112 no motion framed as a money resolution shall be moved otherwise than by a member authorised by the Leeds Board.

The Chair confirmed that Mr Andrew (“Angus”) Maude, (Wensley Deanery and member of the Leeds Board) had been authorised by the Leeds Board to move the money resolution set out on the Agenda paper.

Andrew Maude (AA) introduced the motion. Members had been circulated with the 2023 Budget and Sustainability plan and Appendix. The proposal was *“that the Diocesan Synod authorise (or direct) the diocesan board of finance to raise and expend a sum not exceeding £21,841,861 for the calendar year 2023”*. The report before the Synod was being presented at a time of political and financial instability. The report contained some assumptions, options and pessimism that it would take some time for these wider issues to stabilise. In the meantime, the Synod members could be assured that the Finance Assets and Investments Committee would monitor this and make recommendations to the Leeds Board.

GP gave a PowerPoint presentation on the motion. This presentation had been circulated to the members in advance of the meeting. Slide 3 outlined income and expenditure for the year to date. There were three months left in the year but the current forecast was for a Budget deficit of £1.5m. This was £1.2m higher than the Budget. The Budget was ambitious with regard to parish share contributions but it had been hoped that contributions would be higher than received so far. Historically the budgeted parish share contribution was set at £13.9m, so the current budgeted level was much lower than pre-Pandemic.

Expenditure on properties and ministry in parishes was above budget. The properties expenditure was driven by vacancy works associated with training curates and incumbent properties.

Income from investments, property lettings and education service agreements were ahead of Budget. The deficit was higher than expected and the free reserves were expected to end the year at £6m, not taking in to account investment income, though final figures wouldn't be available until the year end.

The National Church had made available £15m to dioceses as support for parishes during the energy crisis. The Diocese of Leeds had received £724k for this. Discussions were in hand to discern how best to allocate and distribute the monies to the parishes in an appropriate, fair and equitable way so that those most in need were supported.

The Budget assumptions in the circulated paper were set in July 2022. The financial landscape had changed through the summer. The proposed increase in salaries and stipends was 4%. Over recent days, the National Church had indicated that the national stipend benchmark increase would be 5%. The Leeds Board would take a final decision on this increase in February 2023 but historically the diocese had tried not to be lower than the national stipends benchmark.

The parish share pays for the diocese's clergy stipends. The Leeds Board is aware of the challenges parishes are facing, however not to ask for a 4% increase in parish share would break the link between share and stipends. It was hoped to send the parish share allocation notifications to the parishes by 4 November 2022.

Income

Budgeting for parish share would be at £13.3m. As previously outlined, this was an ambitious figure. There had been positive growth in investments and property income and this was reflected in the Budget for 2023.

Expenditure

The proposed Budget was for a stipends increase of 4%. There was a reduction in the pension contributions and the clergy pension scheme was in surplus for the first time and so savings would be available from that.

Since the figures were proposed, there has been a change in National Insurance. The savings in National Insurance will fund the extra 1% increase in stipends and salaries.

Budget summary

The budgeted deficit was £549k. There was uncertainty with regard to income from parish share but expenditure was expected to be as set out in the papers. If the 2022 deficit was £1.5m and then £594k in 2023 this would leave reserves at £5.5m, which was within the reserves range.

Sustainability plan

Looking beyond one year, the key assumption was the income coming from parish share in future years. There had been a lot of debate at the Finance Assets and Investments committee and at the Leeds Board about actions which would need to be taken if the assumptions did not come true. The basic assumption needed to be some recognition that the Barnabas project should increase parish share giving. The assumption was that parish share contributions would increase by 3% a year from the 2022 position. The Leeds Board was keen to support the ongoing Barnabas work and potentially

using reserves to invest in this. If share contribution payments didn't increase, then there would be a possible £1m deficit throughout the figures, leaving difficult decisions for the Leeds Board to take.

Questions of clarification

Iain Ward-Campbell (Harrogate deanery)

Asked when the forecast figure for the current year was struck. With regard to the assumptions on income from receipt of parish share how was this reached and what was it based on e.g. was it as received to date?

Robert Haskins (Harrogate deanery)

The Revd Canon Joyce Jones had said in her General Synod report that the National Church had provided 30% more to the dioceses. Robert asked how this fitted in with the presented figures.

GP replied that the forecast was updated every month. The forecast deficit was as at the end of September 2022 figures for share shortfall against Budget and assumed this would continue for the rest of the year. With regard to the promised National Church funding, a lot of the detail still remained to be worked on and so the proposals didn't include any increase in National Church funding. Known streams of income from the National Church were included in the proposed Budget – most of these related to specific projects supported by, for example, the National Church's Strategic Development Fund.

JW commented that the Church Commissioners had announced that £340m would be made available during its next funding triennium (2023-2025) as part of its dioceses investment programme. £100m was for lower income communities funding. There was c£3m National Church funding included in the proposed 2023 Budget. The diocese was also bidding for more funding but this wasn't included in the proposed Budget before the Synod.

Andrew Maude proposed:

"That the Diocesan Synod authorise (or direct) the diocesan board of finance to raise and expend a sum not exceeding £21,841,861 for the calendar year 2023".

Debate

The Revd Pete Gunstone (Inner Bradford deanery)

Said a key question was what was being done about addressing the question of discipleship around money. House of Clergy members particularly needed to address how they teach discipleship. The parish share contributions were equivalent to £450 per person per year. There needed to be realism about people's financial states on the ground.

No further debate was offered by the Synod members.

The Synod members voted via a poll.

Result of the voting:

For: 89

Against: 01

Abstain: 02

The motion was approved.

11. Introductory presentation and update: Church Support and Deployment

Papers: None

Presenter (PowerPoint presentation): Jonathan Wood

JW gave a brief update on the progress of the Church Support and Deployment project. JW and The Revd Jude Smith (Director of Church Revitalisation) had given a presentation on this project at the June 2022 Diocesan Synod. The project had been re-branded as “Barnabas – encouraging confidence”. The diocesan Vision was for “Confident Christians, Growing churches and Transforming communities”. The diocese did this through a number of activities ie having a strong thriving diocese, encouraging clergy and lay together and enabling more young people knowing the Good News of Jesus.

The budget presentation had shown that the diocese was currently running at a deficit and so the diocese needed to consider what was the right size for the diocese, how churches could be supported moving forward to be missional and how resources were used to support this. These issues were at the heart of the Barnabas project. The hope was to give every church the chance to move forward in mission and ministry and have sustainability in a prayerful and intentional way.

Work had been carried out to identify the current position of the diocese’s churches. JW shared the assessment grid which had been used. The data from this exercise could be used to establish where and what support was needed as not all churches were the same. The early church had equipped, mentored, encouraged and taught the local churches. Barnabas, whose nickname was “Son of Encouragement” modelled how to support others and went and got involved. The Barnabas project would use this as a loose framework. JW pointed to Acts 11 which outlines Barnabas’s encouragement, long term investment and bringing of resourcing to the early church. The results from this work had an impact across the early church. Barnabas was generous, persevered and looked for new opportunities to mentor and support others.

The project had been re-named Barnabas to reflect that the diocese wanted to be confident in God’s faithfulness and that this was rooted in prayer, worship and growing as confident Christians. This was encapsulated in four strands of the Barnabas project focus, to be:

- Confident in our mission - support for churches to become confident in their use of their building, financial and time resources.
- Confident in the future - ensuring diocesan levels of clergy deployment are fit for the future and are affordable.

- Confident in our witness- encouraging support for all to be confident in living and telling the Good News of Jesus in a rapidly changing world.
- Confident in our leadership - giving significant and specific support around leadership and mentoring in the Church, both for clergy in their roles, but also for Church teams moving forward in mission.

The Barnabas team would be looking at how the diocese supports the parishes in the future. This would be a two way process: helping the parishes to understand the benefits received from the diocese and the diocese understanding what was currently offered and of value to parishes.

The Revd Jude Smith would be visiting all deaneries before Christmas 2022 to speak about Barnabas. Synod members were encouraged to contact JW by email if they wanted more information.

12. Bishop of Leeds Blessing and Close.

The Bishop of Leeds announced that the Dean of Wakefield had become a grandfather and that The Revd Canon Stephen Race was to become the next Bishop of Beverley. He asked that Synod prayed for Dean Simon and Canon Stephen.

The Bishop of Leeds closed the Synod with a blessing.

Diocese of Leeds
Twenty third Diocesan Synod, Saturday 15 October 2022

Presidential Address

The collect for today reads as follows:

“Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at the last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.”

In the title of a book by the American Old Testament theologian Walter Brueggemann, these are ‘words that linger, texts that explode’. An explosion of theology at the start of our Synod today is no bad thing. This prayer constructs a lens through which we might see the business before us, establishing a perspective that puts in context (relativises, perhaps) the particularities of our discussions. Our big vision will shape how we pay attention to the details and pragmatics of our business.

For we are about the business of Almighty God, creator, sustainer and redeemer of the cosmos. A biblical vision of God is bigger and broader than our narrow perceptions, our limited priorities and passionate commitments. It is God’s kingdom we serve, and that kingdom is shaped by God’s character which is rooted in love, mercy and justice.

Yet, in the context of the entirety of the known and unknown universes, somehow we matter. And when we sound the depths of human meaning and significance - of value and dignity - we find ourselves coming back to God. In other words, it’s all about God; it’s not all about me. Human experience is always restless - as Augustine observed from trying it all out - until it comes home in humility and relief to God who is the beginning and end of it all. Which is why I keep arguing that we can relax: after all, when we think we have found God, we discover that it was God who had already found us.

So, it is God who draws us to himself, not the other way around. And isn’t that liberating? For this God is not just here to satisfy our needs in the present; he is the God who brings all things together in the eschaton. As the Book of Revelation is all about: when things get rough here and now, see your life and current experience in the context of eternity; so, stand firm, there is more to life and God than ‘this’. Remember, the ‘heavenly city’ doesn’t wait for us to get all our ethics or hermeneutics right; according to the whole biblical narrative summed up in Revelation 21-22, it is the heavenly city (where God is present and his character rules) that comes down to earth, to us. In Genesis 3 it is God who comes searching for Adam and Eve in the garden in the cool of the day, asking: “Where are you?” It is God who liberates his people in the Exodus; it is God who comes to his dodgy people in the prophets; it is God who comes among us - uninvited - in Jesus; it is God who stays with us by his Holy Spirit, come what may.

Sermon over; but, you get the point. This world faces some enormous challenges right now (although when hasn’t it?) ... which makes it all the more essential that we hone our theological vision and allow the lens behind our eyes (by which we ‘see’ reality) to be re-ground - re-shaped - as we go. (The biblical word is ‘repentance’ ...)

Today we meet amid political turmoil at home, a cost of living crisis already hitting more than the poorest in our society, power-plays over energy supplies around the globe, a brutal war on European soil again, corruption in high places, and Liverpool tenth in the Premier League. Precarious times and lots of fear and uncertainty around. And a time for Christians to find out what we truly believe about God, the world and us. But, as I wrote a number of times to clergy during the pandemic, you can't argue with reality. Every generation faces its crises and challenges; we are called to be faithful in this generation - courageous, obedient, reflective and confident in God and one another.

It is appropriate at this point to mark the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the accession of King Charles III. The Queen lived through times of immense change and challenge, and, knowing her own need of God's grace, was able to help the people of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth to do the same. Her example and impact live on. The King is now the head of state of a country in turmoil in a world that appears more fragile than could have been imagined only ten years ago. However he shapes his role, he needs our prayers. Demonstrating confidence at a time of uncertainty is a vital gift for a national leader whose power is soft rather than hard.

Speaking of confidence, I am pleased to welcome Bishop Arun to the Synod as he embarks on his ministry among us as Bishop of Kirkstall. The process for identifying a new Bishop of Huddersfield is underway and I expect a nomination in December followed by an announcement (probably) in late January or early February, followed by a consecration in early May. Change is always an opportunity.

But, we have LLF ahead of us and the General Synod in February and July next year. Battle lines are already being formed - which says something about who we think we are and how we think our attitudes and behaviour reflect the character of God as seen in Jesus Christ. We cannot escape the fact that it is Jesus who does the calling and we don't get a veto over who else gets called.

The church needs to be confident in what discipleship entails. Robust argument and debate are healthy as we shape our common life together in order to be agents of transformation in society. I do hope, therefore, that members of Synod will use the opportunities given on the agenda each time to pose questions and bring motions.

Today we also have the joy of a DBF company members' meeting. The detail of what we do and how we shape our life - legally as well as organisationally - really matters. So, we gladly take responsibility for doing the detail - and we thank God for those who drive these elements of our diocesan life, especially our administrative staff under the leadership of our Diocesan Secretary Jonathan (who I've discovered is not a bad pool player). We will discuss and decide on Deanery representation for cathedrals, a detail brought on as integral to and a consequence of the new Cathedrals Measure currently being implemented.

We will take finance seriously as we look at the budget, parish share and where our priorities lie. If the money doesn't come in, it can't go out. Our current deficit is unsustainable, so decisions will be forced upon us if we don't have the vision and practical strategic courage to set out our store in good order and in good time. Hence what we are calling the Barnabas scheme whereby we want, as a diocese, to encourage, challenge, accompany and resource all our parishes as we face the very real challenges before us. We all need to be transparent about reality and visionary in our choices.

This coming winter will be hard for many people in our parishes and institutions. The Warm Spaces initiative, building on other community-facing work, turns our focus outwards. The national church is providing funding for churches and individuals to help with rising energy costs in the shorter-term. The diocese is providing hardship grants to those in need. And these are on top of other government-led provisions (which have yet to run their course).

Today we also consider a question of how Holy Communion is administered. I will listen carefully to the debate and will cheerfully represent views expressed within the House of Bishops. But, I have to be clear from the outset: a motion on matters of liturgy or doctrine cannot change the fact that the bishops have thus far declined to allow administration of wine in individual cups. I don't know if that will change in the future, I hope we can keep even this in perspective as we locate the question in the broader context of a fragile world. Wine can be received from the common cup (breathing in a church is more 'dangerous' than sipping alcoholic wine in a chalice) or by the administrator intincting the bread or wafer. So, no one is compelled ... and this will not be policed.

Today, with this agenda, we will do the stuff of the kingdom of God. For God's kingdom, rooted in Christ's call to discipleship (which is about restoring our full humanity), is not about the flourishing of the church ... other than in order to enable the church to serve and transform the world bit by bit. We remember in this diocese that confident Christians grow churches which exist for the transformation of our communities. In that spirit, with that dynamic, and in the light of God's eternal love and grace, we turn to our agenda with hope, faith and commitment.

Rt Revd Nicholas Baines
Bishop of Leeds