

## Leeds Diocesan Synod

DRAFT Minutes of the fifteenth meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Leeds held at 9.30am on 19 October 2019 at Soothill Hall, Ashville College, Green Lane, Harrogate, HG2 9JP.

### Chair: The Bishop of Kirkstall

Mrs Debbie Child, Secretary to the Diocesan Synod, reminded Synod members that a Diocesan Synod Vlog was being filmed during this Synod meeting. It was hoped that the Vlog, which would be available on the diocesan website, would help publicise the work of Synod, particularly with a view to encouraging more people to come forward to be members of the Synod.

#### 1 Welcome.

The Bishop of Kirkstall reported that, the Bishop of Leeds, the President of the Synod, was required in the House of Lords and so had sent his apologies.

The Bishop of Kirkstall welcomed and gave the Chair's permission to speak to:

Item 2 Opening Worship and Item 10 Presentation: Children, Young People and Families Team presentation (Diocesan Strategy goal 5): Children, Young People and Families Team, Mrs Liz Morton, Children, Youth and Families Team Leader and Team members, Mr Graeme Bigg, Mrs Anne Carter, Katherine-Alice Grasham and Dawn Savidge.

Item 11 Parish Giving Scheme presentation: Becky Nicholson, Stewardship Lead Officer and Janet Edmond, Stewardship Officer.

Item 13 2020 Budget and Sustainability Plan: Mr Irving Warnett, Leeds Board Trustee and Chair of the Finance Assets and Investments Committee and Mr Geoff Park, Chief Finance Officer.

Item 14 Review of licensed Reader ministry and Item 16 Initial introduction to the "Mission of the Church in Contemporary Society: Transforming Communities" (March 2020 Synod item): The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission.

Item 15 Safeguarding Annual Report: Mrs Jenni Leccardi, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

#### Welcome

Mr Richard Earnshaw, Social and Digital Media Officer, who will be filming the Presidential Address.

#### Visitors who were observing the Synod:

The Revd Chris Clayton – Assistant Curate, St Peter, Harrogate

The Revd Kim Mason – Assistant Curate, St Mark, Harrogate

The Revd Philippa Slingsby – Assistant Curate, Tong & Holmwood

The Revd Blair Radford – Assistant Curate, Monk Bretton

The Revd Pete Gunstone – Assistant Curate, Fountains Church

The Revd Judith Clark – Assistant Curate, Leeds Minster

Caroline Brown – Ordinand from St Hild, College and currently placement student at Church of Epiphany, Gipton & Oakwood Church  
Andrea Norton, Deputy Registrar  
Jackie Carr, Safeguarding Adviser.

It was announced that Mr Dave Collingwood, Diocesan Synod Lay member for Wensley deanery and Lay Chair of Wensley Deanery Synod had died. Synod was asked to pray for his widow, Linda.

2 Opening worship.

Opening worship was led by Katherine-Alice Gresham, Diocesan Disability Officer and Children, Youth and Families Team member.

3 Apologies.

37 apologies had been received.

4 Declarations of conflicts of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

Chair: The Revd Canon Sam Corley

5 Presidential Address.

The Bishop of Kirkstall read the Presidential Address from the Bishop of Leeds. (A copy of the Presidential Address is attached to these Minutes).

6 Minutes of the last Meeting on 8 June 2019.

Once amendment had been received – page 7 “The Revd Lindsay Southern” not “The Revd Lyndsay Southern”.

The Chair moved:

*“That the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 8 June 2019 DS 19 10 02 with the notified amendment be approved as a correct record.”*

The minutes with the notified amendment were approved.

7 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda (if any).

There were no matters arising.

8 Questions for Synod.

Questions had been received from The Revd Jeff Payne, Wensley Deanery (Two questions), Mr Ian Fletcher, Inner Bradford Deanery (Two questions) and a written reply had been tabled (a copy is attached to these Minutes.) The Chair invited supplementary questions.

The Revd Jeff Payne – First Question

The Chair reported that The Revd Jeff Payne had sent his apologies for the meeting.

The Revd Chris Lawton, Wensley Deanery, asked a supplementary question from The Revd Jeff Payne.

“What can be done on behalf of the local parish to keep information flowing about what the state of a property is and why it might be vacant for a long time?”

The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod replied that most clergy and the Area Dean in a deanery were aware if there was a vacancy and about any problems filling the vacancy. There were various factors which mitigated against short term lets as an option for parsonage properties. Often work needed to be done on a property during a vacancy. It was also a time when a review of the ministry needs of a parish took place. All of these factors could result in a delay of easily a year before it was known what the property would be needed for and when. If their Area Dean did not have the information, parishes were encouraged to get in touch with the Head of Property if they had any queries or if there was a particular request for information.

There were no supplementary questions to the Second Question from The Revd Jeff Payne.

Mr Ian Fletcher, Inner Bradford deanery, First Question

Mr Ian Fletcher asked a supplementary question

“A number of churches are not claiming Gift Aid, Gift Aid small donation scheme or Listed Place of Worship grant. Would they be better able to pay their parish share if they claimed these items?”

The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod replied “Yes”.

Mr Ian Fletcher, Inner Bradford deanery, Second Question

Mr Ian Fletcher asked a supplemental question

With regard to the governance of the diocese. He asked if the Audit Committee should report to the Synod, so that Synod was aware of what the Audit Committee was doing. He noted that the members of the Audit Committee were all are members of the Finance Assets and Investments Committee and there is no one independent of that committee on that committee”.

The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod replied

There was an independent Chair to the Audit Committee, Mr Simon Dennis. There would be no problem including a report from the Audit Committee in with the annual report. With regard to the role of the Synod and governance review, in the original governance structure adopted by the Synod, Scrutiny was set up to allow Synod members more involvement and yet there was not a very good response from Synod members to be involved. A small group is looking at the recommendations in the governance review. Once the work has been done, some of this work will come back to the Synod.

## 9 Debate: Parish Allocations for 2020 Deanery Synod elections DS 19 10 02

Members had been circulated with DS 19 10 02 “Proposal for Parish Lay Allocations for the 2020 Deanery Synod elections” and DS 19 10 02 01 “Deanery Synod Allocations chart”, showing the

allocations per parish. The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons, General Synod member, was the proposer of the 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 DS 19 10 02 be approved.”*

The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons spoke to her proposed motion. Every three years Synod was required to approve a formula for determining the lay allocations on deanery synods for the following year's deanery synod elections. Parameters for the formula were set out in the Church Representation Rules: i) the deanery synod must not be larger than 150 members and, where practicable, not smaller than 50 members. These figures were a total of the lay and clergy members. The allocation formula applied to parish lay members only. The formula fulfils the requirement. The formula was similar to that approved in 2016 for the 2017 deanery synods elections, with the addition of an extra band where parishes had between 26 and 50 members on the electoral roll. These would be allocated two members. Those between 51 and 100 would be allocated 3 members and then the remaining 100 electoral member bands allocations being increased by one member. Earlier in the year all parishes created new electoral rolls. These new rolls resulted in a reduction of the total on the electoral rolls for the diocese. This meant on the previous calculation a significant number of deaneries fell below the minimum of fifty members including clergy. To address this as far as possible, the extra band had been added.

There were no questions of clarification.

The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons proposed the motion and Synod debated the motion.

The Revd Alan Garrow, Harrogate deanery

Was concerned that a consequence of adopting the proposed formula would mean that parishes with large electoral rolls received a high allocation. This meant anyone who wished to could become a member of the PCC uncontested. He said he would welcome a mechanism for parishes to put a limit on the number of representatives they put forward.

Mr Peter Foskett, the Diocesan Registrar responded.

Creation of the determination formula was constrained by the requirements of the Church Representation Rules. Though these were being reviewed. The reduced electoral rolls had had a clear impact but there was not any mechanism for preventing the issue that had been raised. Synod could prepare a Scheme under the Rules, though as a matter of practice, Synod had not done this to date. However, Synod may wish to consider doing this in the future.

Unnamed member

Asked if the upper bands could be limited to address the issue raised.

It was confirmed that this was possible but may need a Scheme.

The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons responded. She thanked members for their comments and repeated that if there was a will from Synod, a Scheme could be considered. However, she invited Synod members to support the motion in her name.

The Registrar clarified that Church Representation Rule 26 provides that synod can pursue a Scheme to secure better representation of clergy or laity. The Scheme has to be laid before the Synod for 14 days, then approved by the Diocesan Synod and then has to go to the General Synod. So there was a process but it would take some time. It therefore was not an immediate answer to deal with the necessity to determine the allocations for the 2020 deanery synod elections. It was also to be noted that the Scheme had to be for “better” representation whereas the query had been about limiting representation.

Synod voted on the motion moved by The Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons:

*“That the proposals for determining the number of lay members to be elected to Deanery Synods from the parishes, as set out in paper DS 19 10 02 be approved.”*

The motion was approved with two members voting against and no abstentions.

10 Presentation: Children, Young People and Families Team presentation (Diocesan Strategy goal 5).

Mrs Liz Morton, Leader of the Children, Young People and Families Team (LM), gave a presentation on Diocesan Strategy Goal 5: “Growing Young People as Christians”. She outlined the aspiration of the Children, Young People and Families Team (CYPFT) to be: “Children and young people are part of a welcoming, enriching and safe worshipping community of every benefice and cathedral. They are provided with a supportive context for maturing in their faith, living out that faith in practice. Every child in a Church of England school encounters Christ and the Christian faith in a way which enhances their lives.” If the Strategy Objectives for Goal 5 is achieved, the diocese of Leeds would be a place where children and young people flourish and grow in faith at home, at school, in church and in their communities.

The diocesan initiatives to support Goal 5 fell into three categories:

- to support missional outreach which include fresh expressions, all age worship and discipleship opportunities,
- partnerships with schools
- supporting children, teens and young adults in church life, which focus on rites of passage such as baptism and confirmation together with opportunities to promote and support faith at home.

The CYPFT had a Core Training and Parish Support programme designed to enable parishes to engage with the aspiration and objectives of the Strategy:

- Engaging with the Christenings Project  
1 in 8 births were marked with baptism. The Church of England’s Christenings project has resources, ideas and good practices – all backed by research, which can support parishes engage with families. The CYPFT training is a practical application of those resources.
- Children and Youth Work: planning for growth.  
This facilitates parishes/benefices to think about ministry to and support for children & young people growing in their faith.
- Joined Up: A session to help deaneries consider discipleship with teenagers.

- Taster Session: Introduction to working with children and or young people. Supporting Children and Youth Work in Parishes Course
- Schools: CYPFT with the diocesan Education Team are planning a training day in 2020 to train and resource parishes to work with Schools and the CYPFT have invested in resources to be available to parishes for key Christian festivals.
- THRIVE – regular Area-based gatherings for children and youth leaders and volunteers.
- Area Resource Hubs – where parishes can borrow resources, meet with CYPFT members for help and support on specific issues. There are currently three hubs.
- Responsive Support – especially in relation to the diocesan strategy.

LM introduced the other members of the CYPFT to the Synod and invited Synod to meet with the members of the team during the refreshment break and immediately after the Synod. A summary of the Core Training programme would also be available from the CYPFT members. Synod members were then invited to discuss the following questions in small groups:

“What is the most important part of this aspiration for you?”

“How might we support you to ensure children and young people in your parish flourish?”

Feedback from the small group discussion was given:

The Revd Canon James Allison, Brighouse and Elland deanery

Thought the language of gifts should be used rather than doing this for a purpose ie we do it because we can and it is the right thing to do.

Kay Brown, Allerton deanery

It was thought it was helpful to have large scale events, like the 2019 “Mission Tribe” event in Leeds and to encourage people in the smaller things (“gifts”) they could do, for example showing young people constancy and love – not because of an agenda but because God loves them and we are called to do this too.

John White, Halifax deanery

Deanery initiatives were particularly useful for young people in parishes that did not have many young people attending. Focussing on deanery initiatives to bring young people together in this way were particularly important.

Michelle Stanley, Birstall deanery

With reference to both of the questions, the most important part is the welcome a church gives. Her experience of taking her small daughter to her current church was that they were both welcomed and made to feel at ease. However, this had not been her experience at some churches. Parents need to know that no matter how their child behaves in church it is ok; otherwise, they would be embarrassed and would not go back to the church. Support from the CYFT looks fantastic but it was important that everyone knew about it and that people from Synod go back to their own parishes and let people know what’s available.

The Revd Chris Lawton, Wensley deanery

With regard to how the CYFT might support the parishes, a downloadable set of videos to support collective worship would be an enormous boost to preparing themes common across the schools that work with “British Values” as part of their curriculum. He also wondered if city

centre parishes could assist with some videos [to support collective worship] for those rural schools that have limited internet provision.

Alan [Surname and deanery not disclosed]

Also asked for resources around collective worship in schools.

Bob Graham, Headingley deanery

His church had a presence in a local school, a youth group which flourished and a Messy Church which has also flourished. He asked how to get these children and their families to Sunday worship or how to connect with them. He said he would also like to hear comments from those who would not naturally flourish in a ministry to children context.

The Revd Lindsay Southern, Richmond deanery

Particularly loved, the line in the CYFT strategy “.....supportive context for maturing in their faith, living out that faith in practice.” In her rural parish, it was difficult to find the human resources to run groups and only a small number of children who engaged with the church, though a great number in the local school were keen. She had found that liturgy could be an enabler, particularly where it provided for children to be able to lead parts of the worship and include their own prayers. She suggested that perhaps resources which children had/could create themselves would be useful, particularly resources which did not need a lot of staffing and could be integrated easily.

The Revd Brunel James, Birstall deanery and General Synod

In the context of every child in a Church of England school encountering Christ, there was a trend which he felt should be affirmed, in moving away from mass assemblies into a diverse pattern (Small group, class based, year group or having a spiritual corner in the classroom) which was more individual based and more diverse.

LM responded that the CYFT worked closely with the Education team and they would be making more resources available. With regard to children leading worship, this was something which also happened in the C of E schools. With regard to support resources, the CYFT would look in to using the Digital Learning Platform for sharing of resources including creating communities that could support one another and share resources. With regard to attendance at Sunday worship, sometimes this is not an option for those families. For some, Messy Church or mid-week services are their “first class” church and their time and place of worship during the week.

The CYFT shared an idea from the Christenings Project. Synod members were asked to:

- take a baby sock home with them
- pray for the children and young people of their parish
- look at the resources to support baptism on the church support hub and
- take a leaflet, which outlined how the CYFT could support them as they journey in faith with the children and young people in their parish.

## 11 Presentation: Parish Giving Scheme.

Janet Edmond, Stewardship Officer, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Parish Giving Scheme (“PGS”). PGS is a direct debit facility, developed by the diocese of Gloucester, to provide an effective and professional donation management system to support parishes in funding their mission and ministry. The PGS is a planned giving scheme, which uses direct debit to collect regular donations on a monthly basis and manage the gift aid aspect of the giving.

Twenty-seven dioceses are involved in the PGS. Eleven parishes in the diocese were involved in a pilot running of the scheme until the end of 2019. The PGS will be launched in 2020.

Direct debits would be paid in to the PGS bank account on the first of the month and then the PGS would pay the money to the parish around the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, which will help the church to plan its finances. The PGS would claim the gift aid on the money from HMRC and once the claim had been processed by HMRC, PGS would send the gift aid monies to the parish in the same month as the original direct debit. This releases the PCC Treasurer to do other things. All donors could use PGS, not just those who currently paid by direct debit (all could switch to the direct debit PGS) and they did not need to be taxpayers. There is no minimum number of givers to take part in the PGS. There is no charge to join the PGS; the subscription is paid by the diocese on an annual basis. The PGS team can claim Gift aid on anonymous donations. Donors also have the option to increase their giving by the rate of inflation. This combats static giving.

There would be five launch events in January 2020, one in each episcopal area and the CEO of PGS will be at these events. Synod members were asked to make parishes aware of the PGS and to encourage PCCs and deaneries to contact the Stewardship team. Janet and Becky Nicholson, Stewardship Officer, were available to speak with Synod members during the refreshment break.

## 12 General Synod report DS 19 10 03

The Revd Canon James Allison, General Synod member had provided a report from The Revd Canon Joyce Jones, General Synod member as part of his report on the July 2019 General Synod meeting and spoke to highlight some matters. Among these were:

- The Mothers' Union President had been invited for the first time to address the General Synod.
- The Bishop of Ribe of the Lutheran church, Denmark, had been a visiting speaker and had mentioned holding "drop-in" baptisms at his church.
- The debate on knife-crime had highlighted that, in some areas, the church was the only organisation providing youth work, following the depletion of other youth work provision by other organisations.
- There was some disappointment that the issue of current and historic abuse in the church was not debated by the General Synod as the IICSA was reporting its findings in the same week. However, it had been thought better to wait to know the contents of the report before the matter was debated.
- The topic chosen for the seminars at the Synod was "Human Identity, Sexuality and Marriage". There was some progress but the final reports were not yet available.
- A discussion commenced on a "Covenant on Clergy Wellbeing" but the final proposal was awaited.
- There were some amendments to canon law. These included a relaxation of the requirement to hold a service in every parish on a Sunday, recognising religious communities, simplifying the procedures for filling vacant parishes and new rules to simplify faculties.

He encouraged the Synod members to consider standing for election to the General Synod in the 2020 General Synod elections.

## 13 Debate: Diocesan Budget 2020 DS 19 10 04

*“That the Diocesan Synod authorise (or direct) the diocesan board of finance to raise and expend a sum not exceeding £22,023,181 for the calendar year 2020”.*

Proposer: The Revd Nigel Wright, Allerton deanery

Members had been circulated with DS 19 10 04 2020 Budget and Sustainability Plan and DS 19 10 04 01 Appendix 1 - 2020 Budget and Sustainability Plan. The Revd Nigel Wright introduced Geoff Park, Chief Finance Officer (GP) and Irving Warnett, Chair of the Finance Assets and Investment Committee and member of the Leeds Board (IW) who gave a presentation on the proposed motion.

IW offered a personal perspective on the current and future financial outlook for the diocese. During the previous eighteen months, the appointment of a dedicated CFO and the formation of the Finance Assets and Investments Committee (FAIC) had introduced a regime of regular reporting to the Synod and the Board. This had created confidence in the measures being instigated to address the serious financial issues facing the diocese. He was pleased to report that the improvement in the diocesan finances he had reported in June 2019 continued. The forecast was for an operating surplus at the end of 2019, though it should be noted that this would include a final payment from the national church of restructuring funding. The diocese could now move to looking at more transformational work streams to support the diocesan Strategy. This would involve putting in place new models of ministry, organisational structures and ironing out share anomalies. All of these work streams would be implemented, properly monitored by FAIC and integrated with each other.

GP commented that the Audit Committee members were conscious of the need for greater diversity on the committee and encouraged Synod members to let them know if either they or someone they knew would be interested in joining the committee so they could be contacted.

With regard to the proposed 2020 Budget, GP highlighted some aspects of the detail in particular:

- The surplus expected for 2019 was partly a result of the final payment from the restructuring funding and savings in support and property. This means that the surplus was £225k better than budgeted for.
- Historic contributions to pensions were continuing but cash flow was now covered by property sales.
- A £53k surplus has been budgeted for 2020. Though there would be a cash deficit because of the pension payments but this was covered by the sale of properties that had already been completed.
- There was work still to do looking forward to 2024. If no changes were made it was thought that the deficit would grow again to c.£1m. Work streams were planned to try and ensure this doesn't happen. If the proposed actions were put in place, the forecast was for a deficit of c. £0.2m. However, GP cautioned that this was only a forecast.
- The 2019 figures showed a potential surplus of c. £1m. £800k of this was monies from the national church and this would not be available in 2020. Parish Share had not reached the set target. It was thought that the target for 2020 was more realistic. Clergy fees receipts had fallen significantly in 2019. There had been cost savings on support and property that offset this.
- For 2020 items to note were:
  - The target set in the previous year was to balance the budget by 2022. It was not expected that this would be achieved and so the target period was now being aligned to the Strategy period of 2024.

- Synod members should be aware that the clergy pension contributions would have an impact on the diocesan finances.
- Parish share requests would increase by 2%. The cap on increases remained at 10% and the cap on decreases remained at -5%. Part of the calculation was based on attendance figures and part on deployment. It had been proposed that the attendance figures would be refreshed. However, when this was reviewed it was clear there had been a significant decrease in Sunday attendance figures since the previously used three-year period of 2013 – 2015. This meant that in theory the costs were shared among fewer people. However, one of the work streams is the review of the share system. Consequently, the refresh of the attendance data has been deferred until the share review work stream is completed.
- Stipends and staff increases will be 1% from April.
- The Casual Duty Fee will be increased by £3.
- This would result in total income of £21,476k. Expenditure would be similar to 2019 though there were lower expenditure in Parish Support than in 2019. 65% of the diocesan income came from parish share and 17% was from the national church. These two income streams were the most significant. The significant cost items were clergy costs including the cost of housing. He clarified that “support” included the cost of training curates and training clergy, support given to the parishes by the Children, Youth and Families team and support for schools from the Education Team.
- Beyond 2020 four work streams were in place:
  - To review the parish share with a view to smoothing some of the rough edges ready for the 2021 budget. However if on review it seemed that more significant work was needed the review would necessarily take longer.
  - To review income streams.
  - To review clergy deployment. Monies would be available from the national church to fund the increase in curacies for the next 12 years. This meant in theory the diocese could have enough funding for 25 curates in total ie an extra 7 per year for four years. The work stream would be looking not just at the finance but also the ministry, mission and strategic needs of the diocese.
  - To continue to review where savings can be made in support costs.
- GP outlined the aspirations for the future would be keeping the deficit down and if this was achieved it was hoped that around £2m monies would be available to invest. Discussions were in hand with West Yorkshire Combined Authority about energy accelerator projects. They would provide people and consultancy resource to assist in getting environmental projects underway. It was proposed that £500k would be invested in two projects, solar and energy efficiency measures for clergy housing. It was also hoped to create a mission fund of £300k to support future Strategic Development Fund bids. In addition, it was hoped to set up a fund for mission grants that would be available to parishes, benefices and deaneries. This would all be part of the diocesan support for parishes. GP mentioned that there was already a parish loan scheme where funds were available to be repaid over five years and a £40k buildings grants fund.

### Questions of Clarification

Geoffrey Berry, Ripon deanery

With regard to pg 28 of the proposed 2020 Budget document, “Savings to be Achieved, -£462k”. Please could this be clarified? Secondly, what was the current situation with regard to the deficit on the pension schemes? How long will it be before these two deficits were cleared? With regard to the transfer of monies from reserves, what was the current situation of the reserves?

The Revd Nigel Wright

Outlined that in the Sustainability Plan 2020-24, showed that by 2024 there would be no pensions deficit payments. However, the caveat to this was that the national review of the pensions was still ongoing, as were the discussions about the technicalities of how the pensions deficits/surpluses were to be technically accounted for.

GP

The way the Budget was formed was that department heads put in proposals for their department's budget and then this was reviewed with GP. Savings and lowering of costs were sought. The draft Budget then went to FAIC. For this budget, FAIC challenged the departments to find savings of £450k. £300k was easily identifiable because of underspends. This left a savings challenge of c. £160k which to be found during the year. Reserves were being used to support the Budget. Page 16 of the draft Budget documents showed a forecast of £400k as the sustainable position to take from reserves. The 2020 Budget had £600k to be taken from reserves so this would result in a reduction in reserves.

Robert Haskins, Harrogate deanery

On page 16 of the draft Budget document, the parish share re-forecast for 2019 was £100k lower than the actual in 2018. ~Was this because of the reduction of £1700 attending Sunday worship or for other reasons and, in light of this, was it reasonable to assume a £750k increase by 2024?

The Revd Nigel Wright

Many factors affect parish share. The archdeacons, area bishops and area deans had been working hard to maintain the parish share payments. They were working with parishes that were struggling or where unforeseen things happen. The diocese was facing the same challenges as many other charities that were currently struggling with collections.

GP

It was thought the proposed increases in parish share were realistic. Inflation would increase above the proposed 1%. An analysis of the parishes' share payments show that 210 have increased but 180 have decreased and then there was another small group that have stayed the same. It is acknowledged that there is a huge variation year on year and the diocese tries to support parishes where possible where there are short term or long-term issues.

Graham Foster, Halifax deanery

With regard to the transitional arrangements, the 10% maximum increase, and the 5% maximum decrease, how many parishes are still in transition? He begged the diocese to look at this again.

His parish has a clergy ministry provision of a third of a priest. The majority of the parish is in an urban priority area and the parish's base share is £16k but the request is £27k, which is between 30% and 40% surcharge. It was extremely sacrificial for the church members to pay this. The current year was the first time since the scheme began in the 1960s that the parish would not be able to pay it.

The Revd Nigel Wright.

Confirmed that a serious review of the parish share system is being carried out on an urgent basis, with a view to tackling the discrepancies and difficulties that were arising. He confirmed that there were larger parishes deliberately paying more to try to help with the anomalies. Realistically though, any review would not address all problems. Information about share systems throughout the country suggested that tackling one problem would inevitably

result in others. It should also be borne in mind that realistically it would be next year before the work from the review was brought back to the Synod.

GP

About half of parishes are involved in the transition arrangements. This was originally built in to the parish share scheme because it was felt that the base position was too much of a shock. It was meant to be the way to ease in the new system. However, it was a priority to look at the share scheme.

The Revd Nigel Wright, moved the motion in name.

*“That the Diocesan Synod authorise (or direct) the diocesan board of finance to raise and expend a sum not exceeding £22,023,181 for the calendar year 2020”.*

Debate on motion:

The Ven Paul Ayers, Archdeacon of Leeds

Strongly supported the motion. He had calculated that if £14m was the sum to be raised and there are c30k people on the electoral roll, this is £437pa per person. For some that was too much but for others this was small change. It was equivalent to about 1.45% of annual median income in the UK. Scripture says that God changes hearts from stone to flesh. He felt Synod should be encouraging PCCs to be enthusiastically supporting and setting an example of effective Christian giving and for clergy to be teaching this. This would enable sustaining of parish ministry not just in Synod members’ own parishes but also across the diocese including those places of significant deprivation.

Members voted on the motion:

For - majority

Against - 1

Abstain - 3

The motion was approved.

- 14 Presentation: Review of Licensed Reader ministry, presentation, small group discussions and feedback DS 19 10 05

Members had been circulated with a copy of “Resourcing Sunday to Saturday Faith – Readers, Lay Ministers and Everyday Faith” from the Central Readers’ Council of the Church of England and the Church in Wales (CRC). The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Director of Ministry and Mission introduced this item and gave a PowerPoint presentation.

Growing the potential of Readers is included in the diocesan Strategy Goal 2 Objectives and Initiatives. There were 380 active Readers in the diocese. Lay ministry was diversifying and new types of lay ministry were being rolled out across the diocese for example, Lay Worship Leaders and the various pathways for Lay Pastoral ministry. How Reader ministry fits in to this new diversification was being considered. It should also be remembered that where ministry involved financing, the diocese had to consider purposeful resourcing. Reader ministry involved rigorous training and this needed funding. There had also been a national review of Reader ministry (DS 19 10 05). This report roots Reader ministry playing a significant part in

equipping Christians in every day faith. In the diocese 130 Readers are 60 – 69 years, 90 are 40 – 59 yrs, 3 are under 40 years and 150 over 70 years who have Permission to Officiate. One of the national challenges for renewing Reader ministry was how to encourage the next generation of Readers.

The National Readers Council vision for Reader ministry was not compulsory but available to dioceses to consider. The vision was threefold: Teachers of the Faith, Enablers of Mission and Leaders in Church and Society.

The diocese had also carried out a review of Reader ministry, through the following actions:

- Parishes were being encouraged to discuss the National Readers Council vision
- Incumbents had been sent a copy of the vision and it was hoped they had discussed it with their Readers.
- There had been an online questionnaire for Readers and clergy. 196 Readers had responded and 102 clergy had responded.
- There had been focus groups in the episcopal areas including Readers at different stages of their ministry and from different contexts to discuss different ideas for Reader ministry.
- The Leeds Board, Bishops Staff and the Ministry and Mission team had also considered the Readers' Council vision.
- A steering group of lay and clergy including three Readers had overseen the process. This group would consider the responses and then offer ideas for discernment and approval.

It should be noted that there were key aspects to Reader ministry:

- It is recognised in the canons of the Church of England.
- Readers are licensed by the Bishop
- The incumbent has to invite someone to serve in Reader ministry in a particular parish or benefice
- The role is parish based but there is wider potential, for example serving on diocesan boards and committees or in their own workplace.
- The role is portable to other dioceses as it is a recognised form of ministry
- They may lead worship, preach, teach in Sunday school and catechise children, undertake pastoral and education work, visit the sick and publish banns of marriage and distribute the sacrament.
- Readers must have recognised theological and Biblical understanding, be able to read and lead church services

Kay Brown, Allerton deanery

Gave a presentation on the feedback received to the Reader Review questionnaire. The responses have shown that:

- Readers minister in a wide range of contexts
- Responses from Readers and clergy were reasonably evenly spread from the five episcopal areas.
- Readers minister in many different ways. The largest being preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, leading nurture groups, individual discipleship and enabling mission and being community based.
- Readers were asked what they believed to be at the core of their calling and clergy were asked about what they believed to be the core of Reader ministry in their parishes. Preaching was the reply given most by Readers and clergy.

- The Readers and clergy both concurred with the Readers' Council's three-fold vision that Readers were teachers of the faith and enablers of mission. Answers to whether Readers were leaders in Church and Society varied but this may be reflective of different views on what leadership is.
- Feedback on training and supervision and how they could be improved.
- Looking at continuing ministerial development and what they should be called eg "Licensed Lay minister" as they are in some other dioceses.

Andrew Norman

In devising recommendations, the Steering group's emerging recommendations were a broad endorsement of the threefold CRC vision. The emphasis being on Teachers of the Faith and Enablers of mission with leadership depending on the gifts, competence and context of the Reader. In church this would be worked out in the context of "Clergy and Lay together" working in a supportive ways and through agreed duties. In Society there would be scope for leading public acts of worship, specialisation and for them to have a shaping role through theologically grounded involvement in various contexts or be involved in pastoral ministry.

Synod discussed in small groups four statements and were encouraged to fill in feedback sheets containing the following questions:

"To promote our vision for "Confident Christians, Growing Churches, Transforming Communities" ....

- 1 We need theologically trained lay teachers
- 2 An important contribution can be made by theologically-trained lay people who help others by reflecting on their everyday contexts
- 3 An important contribution can be made by theologically-trained lay teachers who contribute to the character and quality of church leadership
- 4 An important contribution can be made by theologically-trained lay people taking a lead in their neighbourhood and at work"

Synod members were asked to fill in the general comments section on the reverse of the form. Any Synod observers were also invited to complete the form but to note on the form that they were observers.

Questions

Mjr Geoffrey Berry, Ripon Deanery

What happened to communion by extension, which Readers were previously allowed to perform? In some rural parishes, this was an essential part of their worship.

Andrew Norman

This has been raised in a number of the Reader responses and something the Steering group is addressing as part of the review.

The Revd Jonathan Bish, Wakefield deanery

Previously, Reader training seemed to be aimed at producing an "all-rounder". With an increased focus on Teacher of the Faith, and hopefully more Scripture and doctrine in Reader training, could there also be more focus on other kinds of ministry for lay people too and resources provided eg musicians as leaders for growth in church.

Andrew Norman

At this stage, it' was important to be clear about the nature of training for Readers and the vision for future Reader ministry before looking at the detail of what this means for training. The Steering group was also looking at how different forms of ministry can have training too.

The Revd Suzy McCarter, Aire and Worth deanery

Disclosed that she was involved in Reader training in the diocese. Her small group had discussed the "White, middle class, academic" expectations and how this can be limiting to some church groups and individuals without that background. In the formation of the new syllabus, she considered it very important that those who preach in church should have a good strong doctrine, orthodoxy and understanding. However, perhaps assessments did not need to be through essays and degree level assessment. There could be other forms of assessment. Teaching could be effective even if the students were not able to read to a high academic standard. A student could have the potential to be an effective evangelist and preacher without having a degree level academic standard. She felt there needed to be a balance between orthodoxy and openness.

Duncan Jackson, Almondbury deanery

His wife was a recently licensed Reader and, from her experience, he asked if Readers could be put in touch with the Reader's Council (for more information and direction) and with an existing Reader in a mentor capacity. Being in touch with an existing Reader may assist with the academic nature of the course. This would be useful particularly for those who do not have the existing skills to write an academic essay.

Andrew Norman

Confirmed he had made a note of these two proposals. Work was already being done in the current pathway to assist those who are not used to academic study. By aligning with the national CRC vision, many resources would be available to help with attaining the CRC vision.

Michael Laycock, Harrogate deanery

Thought there was possible confusion if the title licensed lay ministry was used, as there were many different forms of lay ministry. Some of the non-Reader ministries also needed to be licensed.

Andrew Norman

This point was reflected in the variety of the questionnaire responses to Licensed Lay Ministry as a title.

Bob Graham, Headingley deanery

With the anticipated shortage of clergy in the future, would the role of a Lay Reader be expanded to include the consecration of elements?

Andrew Norman

There is a difference between "lay presidency" and "extended communion". Lay Presidency in the Church of England was quite controversial.

Tony Williams, Pontefract deanery

At what age can a person start training as a licensed Reader?

Andrew Norman

There is no lower limit by canon.

Synod members were asked to fill in the forms with their views.

15 Presentation: Safeguarding Annual Report 2018 for noting. DS 19 10 06

Members had been circulated with the annual report from the Safeguarding team. Jenni Leccardi, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser gave a PowerPoint presentation on the report. Key areas to note in the report were outlined. The Diocesan Safeguarding team was managed by Debbie Child. There were three part-time Diocesan Safeguarding advisers (DSAs), herself, Narinder Lyon and Jenny Price. Gail O'Neill provided administrative support to the team and in respect of DBS checks and the Safeguarding training the team provides. Jackie Kerr supported the team, particularly with project work such as past case reviews and annual self-audits. The team support parishes implementing policy and guidance, risk assessing those who have committed serious crimes and are wanting to explore or continue faith through worship, responding and taking a lead when there is an allegation about a church officer, and advising on the day to day concerns of those in parish safeguarding roles, providing reassurance and advice. The team also provides advice in relation to survivors of abuse and it is vital that we do not cause further damage, hurt and pain but must be ready to respond professionally and compassionately. The key is listening well, allowing the survivor to remain in control wherever possible.

The DSA also deliver diocesan Safeguarding training with support from colleagues and three volunteer trainers who have been trained to deliver the foundation module. There are four levels of Safeguarding training and two specialist modules on Safer Recruitment and Domestic Violence. The first two modules are accessible online with over 900 people completing online training in 2018. With around 2000 people accessing Safeguarding training in 2018. Safeguarding training must be refreshed every three years. A training calendar was available on the diocesan website.

Safeguarding concerns must never be dealt with alone. The risk is too high for the person you are worried about and for you. You must speak to your Safeguarding officer or DSA. DSAs liaise with statutory partners, police, probation and local authority children and adult services daily. There are also representatives from these organisations on the diocesan Strategic Safeguarding group (SSG). The SSG is independently chaired and includes the Bishop of Leeds, Senior Staff and DSAs. The SSG advises and challenges the diocese on Safeguarding matters, links to the National Safeguarding Steering group and to the diocesan Operational Safeguarding group (OSG). The OSG provides practical support and guidance often at parish level whilst facilitation consistency across the episcopal areas. Its members are the archdeacons, the Safeguarding team, the Diocesan Registrar and is chaired by the Diocesan Secretary. The three cathedrals have strong relationship with the Safeguarding team and are provided with a Safeguarding service consistent with that provided to the parishes.

#### Questions

The Revd Brunel James, Birstall deanery and General Synod

In the past, there had been advice that too many criminal records checks were being made on people who had no contact with children. Currently the advice was that all PCC members needed to be checked. Please could some clarification be given about this change?

Jenny Leccardi

There has been a change over the years. With regard to PCC members, they hold the accountability and responsibility and this is where the need comes from. PCC members need to understand Safeguarding matters, particularly with regard to decision-making and the requirements on PCCs following the introduction of Serious Incident Reporting. Part of Safer

recruitment is ensuring that people working in our churches and responsible for recruiting others have clear backgrounds or have been risk assessed if something has happened in the past.

Debbie Child

The PCC members are charity trustees and so the Charity Commission requirement is that church officers are all DBS checked and all PCC members should be checked.

Synod members were encouraged to seek advice and raise any questions direct with the Safeguarding team.

16 Initial Introduction to the “Mission of the Church in Contemporary Society: Transforming Communities” (March 2020 Synod item).

The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission introduced the item that was to be considered at the March 2020 Diocesan Synod the “Mission of the Church in Contemporary Society: Transforming Communities”. This item would be led by Bishop Toby Howarth, Bishop of Bradford, and would focus on the diocesan vision strand of “Transforming Communities”. It would consider two areas, i) Our work and the potential of our work with the Church Urban Fund via “Wellsprings Together”. Wellsprings Together works enabling community engagement across the whole diocese, and ii) Existing examples of community engagement across the diocese.

Bishop Toby asked that the Synod members find out what was going on in their local communities with regard to transforming communities’ engagement and particularly those that are linked to the church. Synod members were asked to email these before the next Synod to the Diocesan Social Engagement officer, Mark Waddington ([mark.waddington@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:mark.waddington@leeds.anglican.org)). He will be collecting these good news stories to feed in to the Synod item.

17 President’s Blessing and Close.

The Bishop of Kirkstall led the Synod in prayer and gave a blessing.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

## Diocese of Leeds

### Twelfth Diocesan Synod, Saturday 19 October 2019

#### Presidential Address

If you haven't seen it, do go and see the film *Judy* in the cinema. I went last week and found it moving, disturbing and bewildering. It's the story of Judy Garland as she approached the end of her life, but we get flashbacks to when she was a child star 'owned' by a film studio. We learn that she was effectively sold by her mother, was fed drugs either to make her sleep or keep her awake; she worked eighteen hour days; she was told that she was ugly, worthless – or, at least, worth something only as a product for other people's shallow consumption. She was expendable in order to allow others to live with their fantasies. Five marriages, suicide attempts, short-lived happinesses and long-lived despair. It's as if the accidental death at the age of 47 was written into her exploitation from a very early age.

I apologise if this seems an odd way to begin a presidential address at a diocesan synod, but I can't apologise for doing it. Ideas can be powerful, ethical maxims can often give clarity to morality. But, story – fictional in novels and drama or biographical in film and word – puts flesh and blood onto what can sometimes sound abstract – bringing to life the real experience and often-tortuous wrestling of human beings. Stories spark the imagination and invite us to put ourselves into the skin of someone else, seeing as they see, feeling as they feel.

In one sense, this is how the biblical narrative works – particularly, I would argue, the gospels. We start as spectators of an encounter, but move quickly into being participants in a drama. This is why we need to read the text while asking where we stand in the narrative. For example, in John 8, when Jesus is presented with a woman caught "in the act of adultery", do we stand with Jesus as he refuses to use this woman as an instrument of moral argument and religious power? Or do we stand with the men who, in their supposed moral purity, turn this woman into an object in their own games of legal self-justification? Or do we stand with the woman - helpless to change events, powerless to challenge her own exploitation, subject to the habitual sexual denigration exercised by religious men? The point is, we stand somewhere, and that shapes unconsciously how we read and think about the text.

So, what does this have to do with today's synod?

The question behind *Judy* has to do with what I call a theological anthropology – what is a human being? Why does any individual matter? Even if the image of God in them is marred and distorted horribly, who do we say they are, and what do we think they are worth? And if we say that every human being is infinitely valuable because of their having been made in the imago Dei, then how does that conviction, that judgement, shape my behaviour towards them?

These aren't abstract questions. And they lie behind the way we conduct our business as a synod, the language we use to consider the decisions we must take, the judgements we make of each other. In the same way that Brexit has too often been discussed merely in terms of trade and economics instead of human flourishing and the common good of a complex society, so there is always a danger that we lose sight of the purpose of and behind the specific business before us today.

Our diocese is now over five years old. In line with our original plan, we have this year commissioned a review of our governance. Originally, we set up a governance model that would reduce bureaucracy whilst optimising engagement. The first synod, understandably, wanted as much representation as possible and agreed to the largest of three options. Establishment of a smaller Board, combining the Diocesan Board of Finance, Bishop's Council and Mission & Pastoral Committee, was to be compensated by involving synod members in scrutiny committees. But, the reality is that there was a singular lack of enthusiasm on the part of synod members to volunteer for scrutiny duty, and we only draw in around half of those eligible to attend a synod. The Board itself has grown into a greater ownership of its business and responsibilities. Yet, the lived experience has also exposed

weaknesses. The review, conducted by an external consultant, has shone a light on where we might now adapt and how we might improve.

In December we will have our second Inter-diocesan Strategic Learning Community meeting in Birmingham (followed next March by our second inter-diocesan Peer Review). Again, this gives us an opportunity to look in through the eyes of those outside of us, and see more clearly how we are doing. In telling our story to those looking in from the outside, we have the opportunity to work out for ourselves whether the stories we tell ourselves are accurate, realistic or fair. This, I think, is a gift of the wider church to which we belong. It is also evidence of our commitment to our three values: Loving, Living and ... Learning. We must never stop learning.

So, today, when we debate parish allocations for 2020 deanery synod elections, we need to remember why we are doing this. It is too easy to mock deanery synods with hackneyed dismissive descriptions such as “a meeting of forty people waiting to go home”. Deanery Synods are easily left to the keenies who have time or inclination to attend them; but, they ought to have a purpose and agenda which leads to people wanting to be on them in order to shape our priorities and mission across the diocese. There should be an election in every deanery for both clergy and laity. It is in our hands to make these synods live – and it is in our hands to kill them. We should have our best people on them, bringing creativity, commitment and life to the work of our diverse parishes.

The deanery synod also forms the electorate for the General Synod and 2020 will see the election of a new one of them, too. How will we prompt our best people to stand for election in order to help shape the national church for the future? We can't just leave it to others.

One of the things our parishes complain most about is the bureaucratic load and the difficulty of attracting people to fulfil roles such as Honorary Treasurer. Well, today we will receive a presentation about the Parish Giving Scheme – a national scheme that takes a huge amount of work away from the parish officers and helps regularise the flow of income, Gift Aid and so on. If you are ever tempted to ask “what did the diocese ever do for us?” (apart from the obvious rejoinder that *you are* ‘the diocese’), well, here is a quick answer. See what you think.

Finance matters. The Archbishop of Canterbury once described a budget as ‘theology in numbers’. I think he was right. Our budget says in numbers what words will tell us are our real priorities – what we think our real mission is all about. With the recruitment of Geoff Park as Chief Financial Officer and Irving Warnett as the independent chair of the Finance, Assets and Investment Committee we have seen a massive improvement in the flow of financial information and in our confidence to tackle the deficit we discovered a couple of years ago. Much has been done already to tackle this and the proposed budget demonstrates it. Prudence and discipline have to be a means to investment and growth, if our mission is to be fulfilled and our ministry resourced. Key to this is collection of the Parish Share, which is not coming in at a rate that enables our ministry to be sustained at its current level. That statement is not the end of the matter, but the opening of a conversation about realism and consequences. I also happen to think it is a very hopeful conversation.

And what is the money for? Well, look at the remaining items on our agenda today. Children and young people; licensed lay ministry and the review of Reader ministry; the mission of the church in contemporary society; safeguarding. It all holds together. This agenda is not simply a string of items thrown together so we can tick boxes. Rather, it covers a range of areas that are integral to any consideration of ministry and mission that goes beyond the notional and into the incarnational.

We will have an opportunity at the beginning of next year to show our thanks to Debbie Child before she retires as Diocesan Secretary. We have got to where we are as a diocese largely because of Debbie and Peter Foskett. The detail is mostly unseen – so are the scars of managing change and making very hard decisions. But, Debbie has never lost sight of the bigger picture – the point of it all - and we owe her a huge debt. More anon.

And this brings me back to the point where I began this address. If we choose to resource a safe church, equipped and confident for growth in order to reach out to and help transform our communities in the name of Christ, looking at how we do ministry and mission on the ground, then we will face further choices as we prioritise. Our diocesan strategy is designed to help us do this in a deliberate and disciplined way. The toolkit, used in every parish, will make a reality of aspiration.

But, underneath it all will be this haunting, nudging, disturbing question: why bother? And the answer is to be found in our never losing sight in the detail of the bigger picture, the point of it all: that we, the church, might be the evidence in our world of what the light and life of God in Jesus Christ looks, sounds and feels like. In a country fractured by politics, in which language has become violent and often debased, in which MPs and people in the public eye are routinely threatened and vilified – dehumanised, in fact – we must pay attention to being a church open to the world, offering space for healing, truth and reconciliation.

It is easy to say. Our task is to do it. And our agenda is all part of enabling us to do so.

In the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines  
Bishop of Leeds

19 October 2019

DRAFT

## Diocesan Synod 19 October 2019 – Item 8 Questions for Synod

### First Question received from The Revd Jeff Payne, Wensley Deanery

“To The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod:

What advice is given to clergy in parishes who are reluctant to pay their share nor engage with stewardship teaching because a Diocesan house in the parish that has been empty for many months gives the PCC the impression that the Diocese has a lot of money if it allows property to be empty for long periods and that this is poor stewardship?”

From the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod

It is agreed that Diocesan houses are important assets and that the efficient use of these is an important part of our stewardship. In the majority of situations houses are vacant due to the unknown length of a clergy vacancy, where there is a need to undertake major building works or where the property is in the process of being sold. However, we are aware of isolated cases where properties have been vacant longer than desired and are working to rectify this. Where this has occurred we would advise local parish clergy to encourage their PCC to be models of good stewardship. Unfortunately the non-payment of share only exacerbates a situation where resources to pay clergy and maintain properties is already limited.

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### Second Question received from The Revd Jeff Payne, Wensley Deanery

“To The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod:

What guidance is given to clergy in parishes where there is a Diocesan house that has been empty for some months and they face parishioners angry that a) the Church fundraises when income is being lost through the empty house and b) believe with an empty house the Church doesn't care about communities adversely effected by empty homes and the housing issues facing young families especially in rural areas?”

From the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod

It is agreed that Diocesan houses are important assets and that the efficient use of these is an important part of our stewardship. In the majority of situations houses are vacant due to the unknown length of a clergy vacancy, where there is a need to undertake major building works or where the property is in the process of being sold. Given the minimum Assured Shorthold Tenancy is six months and there will likely be refurbishment works required both before letting for rental and before a new clergy moves in, a vacancy usually needs to be known to be at least 9 months before a property can be let. In some situations vacancies last much longer than initially anticipated. Therefore, there will be periods when houses are vacant but this does not reflect a lack of care for communities and whilst in hindsight they do appear to be lost income opportunities, this cannot necessarily have been known in advance. We would advise local parish clergy to highlight this to parishioners but to also note that the costs of running both the local church and the wider diocese are far greater than income generated through properties. It will always be a case that we are dependent on generous givers and that we need to make good use of our assets.

## **First Question received from Mr Ian Fletcher, Inner Bradford Deanery**

“To The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod:

Of the parishes in the Diocese how many of these, to the best of your knowledge claimed either a Listed Place of Worship grant or a Gift Aid Repayment during the most recent financial year for which information is available.”

From the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod

Of the 438 parishes (out of 459) that completed a 2018 Return of Parish Finance, 424 claimed gift during the year. No information is held on the claiming of Listed Place of Worship grants.

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## **Second Question received from Mr Ian Fletcher, Inner Bradford Deanery**

“To The Secretary to the Diocesan Synod:

In the absence of an audit committee report for 2018 to this Synod are you able to confirm the current situation with regard to any such committee?”

From the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod

The current Audit Committee membership is Simon Dennis (Chair – approved by the Board on 17 September 2018), Mr Irving Warnett (FAIC Chair and Board member), The Revd Nigel Wright (Diocesan Synod, Board and FAIC Member), Simon Baldwin (Board and FAIC Member) and Stephen Hogg (FAIC Member and General Synod member). To clarify, there is no requirement for the Audit Committee to report to the Diocesan Synod as it is a sub-committee of the Leeds Diocesan Board of Finance and not a committee constituted by the Diocesan Synod. Information about the Audit Committee was also included in the 2018 Leeds Diocesan Board of Finance Annual Report and Financial Statements, DS 19 06 03.

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