

ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD

11 MARCH 2017

QUESTIONS – FIRST NOTICE PAPER

- 1) The Reverend Canon Richard Hibbert (Bedford Deanery) to ask Canon David Nye, Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance:

“With regard to the proposed Audit Committee, how will the DBF ensure appropriate Diocesan Synod oversight of its workings?”

Canon David Nye will respond:

I thank Canon Hibbert for his question.

The Audit Committee has only recently been formed and the terms of reference provide that it shall comprise at least three members appointed by the Board of Finance from those of its members who serve on the General Committee. The majority of members of the Board are elected from the Diocesan Synod by the Deanery Synods. All the current members of the Audit Committee are members of the Diocesan Synod. In order to ensure there is appropriate oversight by members of Synod, as Canon Hibbert suggests, I propose asking the Board of Finance at its next meeting to amend the constitution of the Audit committee so that from the beginning of the next triennium, the members shall comprise of at least 3 people appointed by the DBF the majority of whom shall be members of the Diocesan Synod and at least 2 shall be members of the DBF.”

- 2) The Reverend Canon Richard Hibbert (Bedford Deanery) to ask the Bishop of Hertford:-

“With the resignation of Mr Chris Neilson, Church and Community Officer, what review will be made of this role and the potential for seeking savings to the Diocesan budget?”

The Bishop of Hertford will respond:-

The Board of Church and Society is strongly committed to good stewardship of Diocesan resources. In line with this, in 2017, we made savings of the order of £30,000 to the Diocesan budget achieved through staff reductions. Further to Chris Neilson’s resignation we look forward to reviewing how, under Living God’s Love, the Board can best support the growth of our churches in spiritual depth, transformation of our communities and in numerical strength. As part of that we shall be mindful of the need to make further potential savings in support of the Diocesan budget.”

- 3) The Reverend Dean Henley (Amphill and Shefford Deanery) to ask the Reverend Karen Turner, Chair of the Diocesan Caribbean Links Group:-

“Over a succession of questions and answers to your predecessor, Fr. Darren Collins, Synod has gained the impression that the position of your committee

as to the active homophobia of our Caribbean link dioceses (the Diocese of the Windward Islands, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and St Lucia, Guyana and Belize), is that if a few gay people are criminalized and go to prison in these countries; then this is sadly a small price to pay if it means we do not discomfit our relationships with these diocese and their bishops.

What is the theological rationale of your committee for this position?"

- 4) The Reverend Dean Henley (Amphill and Shefford Deanery) to ask the Bishop of St Albans: -

"In a political context, the prevailing elite are often described as 'pale, male and stale'. Although there have been welcome appointments to the posts of Dean of Women's Ministry, Archdeaconry Women's Advisers and as the Archdeacon of Hertford; the five authors of the *Living God's Love 2017 Lent Course* are all middle aged white men. The course is framed around the *Living God's Love* themes of generosity and joy, imagination and courage and yet no women have been invited to give voice to these themes.

What steps will the Bishop take to ensure that women's voices will be heard in future?"

- 5) The Reverend Chandrika Perera (Stevenage Deanery) to ask the Bishop of St Albans: -

"I would like to ask how equal opportunities in this diocese is being implemented and specifically the proposal, from the National Transformations Agenda, that 30% of all teams should consist of minority ethnic groups?

I note that 4 white women have been appointed to the new team to support and encourage all ordained women in the diocese and whilst I have no objection on personal grounds for the appointment of these particular 4 white women, I wonder, if before 4 white women were appointed, questions were asked as to why Black and Asian women clergy had not put themselves forward for these roles?

On querying the appointments I was encouraged by a member of Diocesan Staff to be an advocate for better representation of BME but was saddened that this appeared to suggest it was my responsibility solely to do this and not a shared responsibility.

My sadness is that we have the choice to be counter cultural, to proclaim a different set of values about who's important and who's not and we choose not to do that".

The answers to Questions 3, 4 and 5 will be tabled at Synod in a Second Notice Paper.