

**ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**10 MARCH 2018**

**DIOCESAN COMMON FUND 2018**

At the meeting of Diocesan Synod on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 Canon David Nye, Chairman of the DBF, gave a presentation on the Common Fund budget for 2018 and moved the motion:

*“That the estimates of requirements of the Diocesan Common Fund in 2018 in the gross sum of £16,054,418 be approved, and that the Synod authorises the Diocesan Board of Finance to expend in accordance therewith a sum not exceeding £16,054,418 and that the sum of £13,475,630 be requested as parochial contributions in 2018, to be apportioned in accordance with the approved Parish Shares Scheme.”*

Mr Anthony Archer (General Synod) moved as an amendment the addition of:

*“And instructs the Bishop’s Council and Standing Committee urgently to review the budgetary and other implications of proposed redundancies of diocesan staff and the reasons thereof, and to report back to Synod”.*

The amendment was put and carried with three abstentions. The main motion as amended was put and carried with three against and seven abstentions.

Following the meeting of Synod, the Bishop’s Council, at its previously scheduled meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017, considered the amendment, as instructed by Synod. In a lengthy discussion the following points were noted:

- (i) Parishes were finding it hard to make new disciples and in the light of a 10% decline in church membership over five years a significant change was needed to help parishes encourage the next generation.
- (ii) Resources needed to be used differently to help parishes with their MAPs.
- (iii) In recent years the budget had focused on growth resulting in an increase of 13% over five years with more asked from fewer church members. If the level of stipends was to be maintained, support provided for an increased number of ordinands to secure ministry for the future, and vital support provided for Safeguarding, savings needed to be found elsewhere.
- (iv) The process for formulating the budget, and determining the level of any increase or need for savings was considered noting that in February 2017 the Policy sub-committee had asked Boards and Committees to find savings. The Budget scrutiny group had reviewed an initial draft of the budget and recommended that savings were needed if an acceptable budget was to be presented to Synod. Potential savings had been identified as part of the operational decision-making

process involved in developing a budget which was both affordable and facilitated the implementation of the diocesan strategy approved by Synod.

(v) It was envisaged that some of the work previously undertaken by those in the posts which were at risk of redundancy might be fragmented across several roles.

(vi) It was further noted that the matched funding which the Diocese would be asked to provide in due course as part of the Strategic Development Funding bid approved by the Church Commissioners had no bearing on the savings being made in the 2018 budget.

In conclusion the Chairman confirmed that Bishop's Council had reviewed the budgetary and other implications of proposed redundancies of diocesan staff, as requested, and the Council agreed unanimously that they had met the instruction of Synod.