

Private & Confidential

MINUTES of a meeting of the **ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD** held at All Saints Academy Dunstable on **SATURDAY 14 MARCH 2020**

The Synod convened at 9.30 am with the Bishop of St Albans in the Chair.

The Bishop welcomed the Deputy Registrar, Mr Owen Carew Jones.

1. **PRAYERS** were led by the Reverend Bill Britt (Assistant Rural Dean, Hitchin Deanery).

2. **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

The Bishop addressed the Synod and a copy of his Address is attached to the original Minutes. The Address may be found on the Diocesan website: <http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/bishop-of-st-albans-sermons/>.

3. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of Synod held on Saturday 19 October 2019, which had been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the President.

4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BUSINESS ITEMS**

The President noted those people who had recently joined or left the Diocese, taken up new roles within the Diocese, retired or died. He noted the appointment of the Reverend Javaid Iqbal, Chair of the House of Clergy, as Archdeacon of Doncaster.

5. **GUIDANCE ON SYNOD RULES FOR NEW MEMBERS**

Canon Peter Adams (Chair of the House of Laity), gave a short presentation giving 'Guidance on Synod Rules for New Members'.

[The Standing Orders can be found on the Diocesan website at: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Standing-Orders-2008-revised-2018.pdf>.

Chair: Canon Peter Adams, Chair of the House of Laity, assumed the Chair.

6. **REIMAGINING RURAL MINISTRY**

The Archdeacon of Bedford introduced this item, and with the Chairman's permission under Standing Order No. 4, the Reverend Dr Mark Betson, National Rural Officer, Church of England, gave a presentation on 'Reimagining Rural Ministry'.

The Reverend Stephen Holroyd (Sharnbrook Deanery) presented a case study on Rural Ministry in the benefice of the Stodden Churches.

There were responses from: Mr Tim Fleming (General Synod and St Albans Deanery; the Reverend Canon Dr Tim Bull (Director of Ministry, General Synod and St Albans Deanery); Mrs Krystina Oborn (Sharnbrook deanery).

The Reverend Dr Mark Betson and the Archdeacon of Bedford responded.

Members were invited to consider the following questions over the Coffee Break:

- 1) What was the most hopeful aspect for rural ministry in the future?
- 2) What was the most surprising aspect of rural ministry for you?
- 3) How could we challenge ourselves to look more actively into the needs of our rural communities?
- 4) How could we challenge ourselves to Re-imagine rural ministry in our diocese?

The Archdeacon of Bedford moved:

"That this Synod asks the Bishop's Council to ensure that diocesan policies, and in particular the review of the diocesan Ministry Strategy, help realise the potential of all our rural Churches and enable them to thrive as flourishing Christ-centred communities".

There were responses from: the Reverend Jane Banister (Berkhamsted Deanery); the Bishop of Hertford; the Reverend Canon Dr Tim Bull (Director of Ministry, General Synod and St Albans Deanery); the Reverend Mark Dunstan (Hertford and Ware Deanery); the Reverend Will Gibbs (General Synod and Wheathamstead Deanery); the Bishop of Bedford; the Reverend Dave Brown (Stevenage Deanery); Mr Stephen Fletcher (Berkhamsted Deanery); the Reverend Caren Topley (Amptill and Shefford Deanery and the Reverend Sam Cappleman (Bedford Deanery).

The Reverend Dr Mark Betson responded. The Archdeacon of Bedford summed up the debate.

The Motion was PUT and CARRIED unanimously.

7. 'REACHING NEW PEOPLE PROJECT (RNP)

At the request of the Bishop's Council, and with the Chairman's permission under Standing Order No. 4, the Director of Mission and members of the RNP Team, gave an update on the Reaching New People Project.

There were responses from: The Reverend Canon R Hibbert (Bedford Deanery); the Reverend D Brown (Stevenage Deanery); the Reverend K Goss (General Synod and Bedford Deanery); Mrs P Humber (RNP Monitoring Co-ordinator and Dunstable Deanery).

A copy of paper **DS/20/01** had been circulated.

8. PREPARATION FOR GENERAL SYNOD VOTING

At the request of the Bishop's Council, Mr Tim Fleming (General Synod Member and St Albans Deanery) gave a presentation on Preparation for General Synod Voting.

9. QUESTIONS

The text of two questions had been circulated on the First Notice paper (**DS/20/02**). The answer to Question 2 was tabled on the Second Notice Paper (**DS/20/02b**).

The President gave an oral response to Question 1. The Reverend Richard Brown (Luton Deanery) asked a supplementary question to Question 2 and a response was given by Mr Tim Fleming (DBF Vice Chair, General Synod Member and St Albans Deanery). The text of the response is attached to the original minutes.

A copy of paper **DS/20/02** had been circulated.

10. LGL 2025 – THE 'BIG CONVERSATION'

The Bishop of Bedford introduced this item and gave an update on LGL – The 'Big Conversation'.

11. UPDATE ON THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

At the request of the Bishop's Council, and with the Chairman's permission under Standing Order No.4, the Reverend Tim Vickers (Watford Deanery) gave an update on preparations within the Diocese to provide hospitality for Bishops attending the Lambeth Conference.

12. CORONAVIRUS

The Bishop invited questions on the coronavirus outbreak.

There were responses from: Mrs R Mynett (Amphill and Shefford Deanery); the Reverend S Chrysostomou (Barnet Deanery) and the Bishop of Bedford.

The Bishop of Hertford and the Bishop of St Albans responded.

The Bishop of St Albans thanked everybody for their contributions and hoped that Synod members would be able to join him later in the day for the Service for the Collation of the new Archdeacon of St Albans. He dismissed the Synod with prayers at 12.28 pm.