



# SEVERN VALE DEANERY

Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 at Hartpury CofE School

Present:

Clergy: Canon R Mitchell, Revds. D Gill, J Walden, A Lomas, J Longuet-Higgins, P Phillips, S Mason, S Taylor

Laity: Mrs M Barnes, Mrs H Cotton, Mrs M Howell (representing Mr N Hogg), Mrs F Hall, Mr R Ashenden, Miss E Castle, Mr R Cook, Miss F Pearce, Mr C Hill, Ms K Clarke, Mr R Parker, Mrs C May, Miss M Swinley, Mr N Langstone, Mrs H McGhee, Mrs J Frost, Mrs B Fellowes, Mrs M Richardson, Mrs M Mitchell, Mr H James, Mrs J Corless, Mr C Thomson, Mrs H Witcomb, Mrs R Blandford, Mr C Jakeman, Mr D Wright, Mrs S Hargreave, Mr A Clive, Mr S Riddick, Mrs F Down, Mrs S Padfield

Apologies:

Clergy: Revds: C Ingram, J Perkin, P Donald, S Dangerfield, S Skepper, I Gobey

Laity: Mrs K Carpenter, Mrs R Cottell, Mr J Walden, Mr G Davies, Mrs M Billingham, Mrs R Clowes, Mr M Heylings, Mrs E Frampton, Mr P Cotton

**Opening Prayers:** Evening Lent Prayers were led by Revd. John Longuet-Higgins

**Minutes:** of the Meeting 16 October 2014 were approved and no matters were raised

**Christian Aid Deanery Fundraising:** Hazel Cotton reported that £1170.93 had been sent to her so far. Each parish should aim to raise at least £57 per year. As some parishes had said they would not be contributing it was suggested that others might feel able to add to their existing amount.

**Deanery Crucible 2 Event:** This was well attended and was felt to be a good evening. Thanks to the cathedral were expressed.

**Journeying Together:** The Deanery Action Plan sheets had been distributed to members summarising the responses from last meeting's discussions on areas 1-3 and the results of the Standing Committee's consultations with incumbents on areas 4-7. There will be further discussions at parish, deanery and diocesan level on this. Please refer any questions to Richard or Sue. Richard drew member's attention to the Church of England's report '[Released for Mission](#)' about growing the rural church which is available to download.

The Archdeacon of Cheltenham, Robert Springett, introduced the Diocesan Head of Finance, Julie Ridgeway and the proposals for a new way of assessing parish share since the level of contributions through the existing model are woefully short of what is required to maintain adequate ministry. There are 305 parishes in our diocese with approximately 13000 adults and 1800 children in church on an average Sunday. 'We are many members yet one body'. Our parish share contribution per member has fallen over the last five years and, nationally, our diocese is seen as the poorest in terms of parish share givers. If our parish share giving had

equalled even the 26<sup>th</sup> ranked diocese (Sheffield) we would not have our current deficit problem.

The proposals: The deanery allocation won't change. We have a stipends fund of around £800,000 pa which is an historic endowment that is currently distributed evenly between all parishes regardless of need but this will now be targeted to poorer areas and those with mission potential. Currently a proportion of all fees collected by parishes are sent to the DBF for general use but the new plan is for parishes to get all that money back themselves offset against their parish share contribution. An element of electoral roll membership will be introduced. Shared costs such as DAC, HR, finance should be allocated in a new way which would apportion costs according to things such as the number of church buildings and the number of church schools because these are more likely to access central services. There will be no change to shared curate costs and no benefice allocation will change by more than inflation  $\pm 5\%$ . Nothing is set in stone so feedback is vital.

The meeting then broke into discussion groups to consider the proposals under the headings 1) Are the proposals appropriate? 2) If not what should change? 3) How should we use the stipends fund? 4) How do we still enable graciousness? 5) How do we moderate changes?

Members were asked to take the proposals to their PCCs and provide feedback to the deanery standing committee in time for a response to the diocese by April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Table Talk: Roger introduced this which is a method of starting discussions in the form of a game. It had been intended to test this out in this meeting but, due to the previous item needing more time, will be postponed until the June meeting.

**Parish Share:** Roger handed out a sheet detailing the breakdown of Parish Share by benefice and parish and pointed out that we had met our commitment for 2014 as well as 100.5% of the requested additional contribution although the predictions for 2015 showed that our predicted dependence on mutual support had not reduced nearly as much as the five year plan just ending had hoped for

**Treasurer's Report:** Hazel reported that the deanery account stands at £1436.03. Richard said that we had hoped to use some of the funds for the worship training course but no delegates claimed their expenses.

**Report** on Highnam, Westbury and Forest Edge discussions was available for collection.

**Diocesan and General Synod Reports:** The report of the Diocesan Synod meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February had already been circulated. Richard gave an overview of the General synod meetings in November and February and encouraged members to view the reports on line.

**Diocesan and General Synod Elections:** These are both due this year and deanery synod members are the electors. Invitations for nominations to Diocesan Synod will come out in early May and we have to elect 8 Lay and 6 clergy members.

#### **Dates of Meetings in 2015:**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June (revised date) and Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October