

**Special Meeting of Synod**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 9.30am by Zoom**

**Diocesan Prayer**

**Loving God, by your grace we long to see more people knowing Jesus, and more justice in your world. Help us to live as your disciples in the power of the Spirit and to work to your praise and glory. Amen**

**Present:** Rt Revd John Perumbalath (President, Bishop of Liverpool), Debra Walker (Chair of the House of Laity), Rev Canon Peter Dawkin (Chair of the House of Clergy), together with 59 members of Synod and **in attendance** 4 staff and 1 guest

**Apologies:** 17 members of Synod

**Absent:** 27 Members of Synod

Meeting commenced at 9.30am

Item	Note	Action Point
<b>CHAIR – Canon Debra Walker, Chair of the House of Laity</b>		
<b>DS23(14)</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction from Chair of House of Laity</b> The Chair (DW) welcomed all to this Special Meeting of Synod with a particular welcome to Bishop of Liverpool, Rt Revd John Perumbalath joining Synod for the first time since his Installation as Diocesan Bishop. Synod opened in prayer led by DW.	
<b>DS23(15)</b>	<b>Opening Remarks and Prayer</b> The President (+J) began his opening remarks by thanking all for their words of welcome on his appointment. +J commented that as he joins the Diocese on its journey, all of the work and mission of the Diocese brings us, we hope, to a place God has led us to, enabling mission and ministry in His name through local churches across the Diocese. As we journey together, asking questions, being open to answers and comments and especially as we hear today’s presentations, we hold on to the belief in a God of abundance, not scarcity, and that the abundance is beyond material wealth, extending to an abundance of grace, hope and generosity. +J thanked Synod for prioritising attendance for this special meeting and for the listening to and praying for all we will hear today.	
<b>Update Items of Business</b>		
<b>DS23(16)</b>	<b>DBF Finance Update</b> DW introduced the item reminding Synod it is an update item with no Motions. There would be a short time for questions and comments following the presentation. DW invited ADNSF to present the item. ADNSF shared a detailed presentation “Financial Position of the Diocese May	

	<p>2023" and led Synod through the current situation and the proposed actions. (The entire presentation together with narrative can be <a href="#">found here</a> on the Diocesan website. It will be emailed to Members and also to all Diocesan Clergy, Wardens and Treasurers.)</p> <p>ADNSF concluded that the presentation is not confidential and all are encouraged to share widely and engage in conversations around this and pray for God's blessing and guidance.</p> <p>DW thanked all for their work in relation to this and opened the item for questions and comments:</p> <p><i>Fr Thomas Carpenter, North Meols:</i> Have we considered a day of prayer and fasting for the whole matter possibly on the day of Independent Reviewer's arrival? <i>ADNSF:</i> No, but would welcome Fr Thomas' assistance in that being arranged.</p> <p><i>Victoria Inyang-Talbot, Liverpool North and Walton Deanery:</i> In relation investment, there may be potential to work with Liverpool City Council in areas that it is developing and re-structuring. <i>ADNSF:</i> The Independent Reviewer may point us towards improvements in investments and this is a good example of potential type of management improvement that could be explored.</p> <p><i>Rev Canon Sam Nicholson, Wigan Deanery:</i> A very clear and detailed presentation. How will we cascade the message? <i>ADNSF:</i> the entire presentation will be available on the Diocesan website along with emailed copies to Synod. The presentation is not confidential and we want people to engage with this. If helpful to have a presentation in smaller groups, ADNSF and colleagues will be willing to attend.</p> <p><i>Paul Prescott, St Helens Deanery:</i> A comment that maximising rental within parishes utilising the church and its buildings could provide additional income for the parishes to strengthen finances. <i>ADNSF:</i> Asset development has potential albeit needing capacity to undertake this. In the medium to short term this may form part of the immediate solution.</p> <p><i>ME:</i> In relation to this comment and the earlier comment [<i>from Victoria Inyang-Talbot, Liverpool North and Walton Deanery</i>], the Fit for Mission team are exploring ways to develop partnerships that will help turn building liabilities into assets.</p> <p><i>Angela Matthewson, Wigan Deanery:</i> A comment that this presentation is ideal for sharing with our PCCs: it is detailed but very clear and we should all feel able to present and engage with this at our PCCs and congregation as needed. <i>ADNSF:</i> this presentation is not confidential and can be shared.</p> <p><i>ME:</i> Stuart Haynes will have the clipped recording of the presentation in the Diocesan mailing on Friday [26<sup>th</sup> May 2023].</p> <p><i>Michael Swinson, Liverpool South &amp; Childwall:</i> Parish Share has been used throughout but we have moved to Deanery Share. In relation to Category A, B and C within the presentation, are those measures calculated on existing formula of Parish Share metrics or in another way?</p> <p><i>Rev Canon Peter Dawkin, Chair of House of Clergy:</i> We must ensure we retain our bias toward the poor and we have to ensure we communicate the message regarding Category C churches well so that it is not misinterpreted that we are seeking to close all Category C churches, which we are not. <i>ADNSF:</i> Connecting both questions, part of the exercise is to establish if there is capacity for improvement and that lies within the Deaneries decision making powers in relation to Parish/Deanery Share. Category C churches are not targeted in that way. Bias to the poor is important but a personal observation is that most of our under-contributing parishes will not be our poorest parishes. If we decide on sound theological grounds that some places pay less than others, then that is a right decision. And that is important to maintain.</p> <p><i>Ven Pete Spiers, Archdeacon of Sefton and Knowsley:</i> Fundamentally, the problem lies outside of this Diocese. In response to the comment from</p>	<p>SH</p> <p>SH</p>
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<b>DS23(17)</b>	<p><b>Closing Blessing</b>  +J commended the helpful and clear presentation to Synod. +J closed the meeting in prayer committing the work of this Diocese and each individual to God in prayer and a blessing.</p>	

**2023 Diocesan Synod: Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023**