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Strategic Programme Update

Report to Diocesan Synod

1 Summary

Since the brief verbal update to Diocesan Synod in June 2023, there has been much progress on:

- Building relationships - with the central church strategy and vision team, and within the Diocese
- Ensuring that robust management and governance processes are in place
- Re-baselining the existing SDF (strategic development funding) projects
- Preparing a new funding bid for growth on the Isle of Wight
- Initial planning for a major funding bid from the Diocese in 2024

Diocesan Synod are asked to note this report.

2 Management and Governance

The management and governance focus since the previous Synod (June) has been:

- Embedding and refining new processes for reporting and financial controls
- Establishing the parameters for change control with the grant funders.
- Ensuring we meet the requirements for reporting on existing project and for new bids.

Feedback from the Church Commissioners Strategy & Vision team has been complimentary regarding the openness of reporting and the action to deal with previous issues. Portsmouth Diocese is now recognized by the SMMI (Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment) Board as an exemplar of good governance and management, having taken effective action to remedy the previous shortcomings on our grant-funded projects.

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3 Programme summary

3.1 Summary status

The programme RAG (red amber green) report gives an at-a-glance view of status of each project within the programme. The following chart is based on the project reports as at end September 2023.

	Project Name & Overall RAG status	Notes
SDF2	Harbour Portsmouth	Growth expected to be significantly below the unrealistic bid outcomes
SDF2	St Margaret's Southsea	Outcomes reported as behind track, but there are various Fresh Expressions which should also be included
SDF2	St Luke's - The Host	Missional design does not realistically lead to the required growth outcomes
SDF2	St Luke's - Bridgeway	Missional design does not realistically lead to the required growth outcomes
SDF3	Gosport North	Behind on outcomes but with a new plan in place to deliver.
SDF3	Gosport South	Issues re sustainability within the current grant period
SDF3	Newport	Focus has been on the Minster buildings project rather than growth
	Newport Minster	Not an SDF project, but receives some SDF funding

Green – on plan or better

Amber – behind with actions in place to maintain or improve

Red – behind plan with no actions/insufficient actions to improve

The Red ratings on several projects reflects a range of factors including:

- Poor communications and oversight in the past, leading to variable delivery focus and missed opportunities for intervention
- The absence of any agreed change requests eg to vary delivery schedule or outcomes due to the impact of Covid
- Some unrealistically ambitious target outcomes in the original bid

Actions are underway to re-align the agreed position with realistic schedules and outcomes, via the SDF3 project reset and the SDF2 annual review and subsequent change requests. It is therefore expected that the RAG status will be much healthier (all green) by the end of 2023.

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3.2 Financial summary

The summary of spend against budget as at end of September 2023 is given in the following table.

	SDF2		SDF3	
Funding Source	Budget £'000s	Spend to date £'000s	Budget £'000s	Spend to date £'000s
Strategic Development Fund	£2,181	£2,041	£2,077	£850
PDBF Mission Reserves	£440	£184	£475	£162
PDBF Budget reallocation	£783	£509	£3,303	£1,266
Total	£3,404	£2,735	£5,856	£2,278

3.3 Next steps for SDF2

SDF2 started in 2019 and the current funding period ends in January 2024.

An annual review meeting for SDF2 is scheduled for 1st November 2023. This is the first of the mandatory “annual” reviews since funding was awarded in early 2019. Change requests – extension of time, adjustment of target outcomes – will then be submitted to the SMMI Board for approval in December 2023.

The two projects at St Luke’s are good work but do not have any realistic prospect of delivering the growth outcomes that were given in the bid as the justification for investment. Therefore the team at St Luke’s are being supported to develop a plan for sustainability and further mission beyond the SDF funding period, including seeking additional sources of funding. Their SDF funding is expected to cease in early 2024.

3.4 Next steps for SDF3

SDF3 started in early 2020 and currently runs to end of March 2025.

A “reset” request was submitted to the SMMI Board for their meeting on 18th October, to re-baseline the project. This sought approval of:

- extension of time by 18 months to end-Sep 2026
- adjustment of target outcomes. Overall outcomes exceeding 90% of the original target are anticipated by September 2026 – growth of 835 compared with the 900 in the original bid – but with redistribution across the workstreams
- retention of full SDF funding, but with re-allocation of funding across workstreams

The reset request was assessed by a Church of England review panel and was then submitted to the SMMI Board with “deemed approval” ie a clear recommendation to approve. The Board’s decision will be formally notified to us within the next week.

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4 New bid – Isle of Wight Revitalisation Phase 1

A bid for a major growth project for the Isle of Wight, was submitted for decision by the SMMI Board on 18th October 2023.

Working over 5 years the project aims to revitalise the church in Ryde as a first stage in the wider revitalisation and growth in the Isle of Wight, growing from a faithful but aged congregation of 30 at All Saints, Ryde, to a younger, more diverse congregation of over 300 people, including families, younger adults, and children. The major intervention will be a church plant, working hand-in-hand with the existing congregation and the pioneering work of existing small groups which are ready to become part of a church.

The amount requested is £1,212,050 over 5 years.

The bid was assessed by a Church of England review panel prior to submission to the SMMI Board, and very positive feedback was received. The Board's decision will be formally notified to us within the next week.

5 Planning for the main Diocesan bid

Attention now shifts towards the main Diocesan bid to SMMI during 2024.

5.1 Timing of bid

SMMI Board meetings for 2024 that will consider funding awards are scheduled for:

- Wednesday 28th February
- Thursday 6th June
- Thursday 31st October

Papers are required 1 month beforehand.

It is not feasible to prepare the bid for February (end Jan submission). It is proposed to work towards bid submission for early May 2024, for decision at the 6th June SMMI Board meeting. The October 2024 Board would be the fall-back.

5.2 Potential size

The Strategy & Vision Team of the Church of England are keen to stress that there is no fixed allocation of funding per Diocese – decision will be made based on need and on robustness of proposals.

However, it's helpful to have some rough idea on order of magnitude, so here are some figures that may be useful.

Total funding available for award 2023-2025: £240m

Amount per Diocese if shared out equally: £6m

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5.3 Immediate work (to end of 2023)

The immediate (next few months) work relates to planning, sizing and scoping the bid.

Work strands include:

- Development of **“supporting framework” and priority areas of work** by +Jonathan and Bishop’s Staff Team
- Engagement with Diocesan and Deanery colleagues re. **potential items for inclusion**:
 - Request to Deanery leadership teams to identify key areas from their DMAPs
 - Discussion with Cathedral team re Choir Church
 - Church planting workshop session with Archdeacons and Dean of Church Planting – 10th Nov
 - Scanning of projects in other Dioceses for relevant items
- Familiarisation with **SMMI requirements for supporting strategy**, including working session with Strategy & Vision team 23rd Oct

5.4 Outline schedule

Based on the above, a rough outline schedule to the bid might look like:

	10/23	11/23	12/23	01/24	02/24	03/24	04/24	05/24	06/24
Develop supporting Framework & priority work areas	x	x							
Identify potential items for inclusion	x	x							
Deaneries identify candidates based on DMAPs	x	x							
Choir church scoping	x	x							
Church planting workshop 10 Nov		x							
Scanning of projects in other Dioceses for relevant items	x	x							
Understand SMMI requirements re strategy	x								
Pull together all the above									
Create bid scenarios			x						
Refine plan for bid delivery			x						
Develop bid				x	x	x	x		
Develop proposals - multiple workstreams				x	x	x	x		
Develop strategic elements incl finance plan, people plan				x	x	x	x		
Ongoing review with Strategy & Vision team				x	x	x	x		
Regular reporting to Bishop's Council, Diocesan Synod				x	x	x	x		
Submit bid - 1st week of May								x	
SMMI Board Decision - 6th June									x

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