

Bishop's Council Update

There have been two Bishop's Council meetings since Synod last met during which our Diocesan strategy and matters of governance dominated the agenda.

Live|Pray|Serve

Bishop's Council reviewed our *Live|Pray|Serve* Strategy and explored growth in depth, impact and number. The Council also agreed a plan for how wider discussion of *Live|Pray|Serve* will take place during 2020 at key points in our governance cycle and with parishes and wider stakeholders across the Diocese. This communication plan links with the budget discussions as Strategy and Finance are inextricably linked. Both *Live|Pray|Serve* and the Budget Process are on the agenda for Synod.

Matters of Governance

Hilary Tyler (Diocesan Registrar) delivered Trustee Training session to the Bishop's Council, highlighting the important guidelines and legislation that relate to being a trustee of a charity. This is an important aspect of our governance cycle as a Board of Trustees.

As you will recall from Synod on November there is a process currently underway to look at our Committees and how information is flowing between those committees as well as an important review of policies. This significant piece of work is not yet concluded but in the preparation there have been items which have needed addressing straightway and these are as follows:-

1. A whistleblowing policy has now been approved
2. The Standing Financial Instructions needed approval to enable the finance team (and those budget authority) to function effectively and with appropriate controls in place. The Council agreed to Financial Instructions and delegated authority to the Diocesan Secretary to ensure the future running of the delegated authority with the team. These arrangement will be reviewed periodically by Council as part of the governance review.
3. Council also agreed to add Sarah Bradbury (Finance Controller) to the list of signatories for the PDBF bank accounts. This is routine and necessary for this particular job role but nevertheless, as part of good governance, required the approval of Council.

Bishop's Council also approved some changes to membership of the Diocesan Finance Committee and the Property Committee. John Gwynn has stepped down as Chair of the Diocesan Finance Committee (DFC), consequently leaving Bishop's Council too. Philip Poulter has taken on the role of DFC Chair, leading to him becoming a member of both the Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod. Philip's first meeting in the Chair will be the March 2020 meeting.

Norman Chapman has stepped down as Chair of the Diocesan Property Committee and John Gwynn has taken up this role, chairing his first meeting in February 2020.

We are grateful to John and Norman for their dedication to these committees over a number of years and express our sincere thanks to them.

Victoria James

Diocesan Secretary