

ARCHBISHOP'S COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Archbishop's Council held on Thursday 25th May 2023 at 11.00 am in the Becket Room, Diocesan House, Lady Wootton's Green, Canterbury CT1 1NQ and also Microsoft Teams

Present	Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin (Chair)	<i>(Bishop of Dover)</i>
	Ven Darren Miller	<i>(Archdeacon of Ashford)</i>
	Ven Will Adam	<i>(Archdeacon of Canterbury)</i>
	Ven Andrew Sewell	<i>(Archdeacon of Maidstone)</i>
	Ven Stephen Taylor	<i>(Diocesan Secretary)</i>
	Mr John Moss	<i>(Chair of the Board of Education)</i>
	Revd Andy Bawtree	<i>(Chair of the House of Clergy)</i>
	Mrs Miranda Ford	<i>(Chair of the House of Laity)</i>
	Revd Jeremy Worthen	<i>(Rector, Ashford Town Parish)</i>
	Revd Estella Last	<i>(Vicar, the Bridge Benefice)</i>
	Ms Fiona Higgs	<i>(Children and Young People's Minister Allington St Nicholas)</i>
	Revd Gareth Dickinson	<i>(Vicar, Maidstone St Luke)</i>
	Mr Graham Codling	<i>(Lay Chair, Weald Deanery)</i>
	Mr John Morrison	<i>(Reader, Deanery Treasurer, Canterbury Deanery)</i>
In Attendance		
	Mr Doug Gibb	<i>(Director of Finance)</i>
	Mr Jonathan Arnold	<i>(Director of Communities & Partnership)</i>
	Mr Neville Emslie	<i>(Director of Mission and Ministry)</i>
	Mr Colin Evans	<i>(Strategic Programme Manager)</i>
	Mrs Jo Manser	<i>(EA to the Diocesan Secretary)</i>

1. OPENING PRAYERS

ST opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. APOLOGIES AND NOTICES

Quentin Roper, Dean David, Richard Braddy

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Ven. Darren Miller, Ven. Andrew Sewell, Ven. Will Adam

3. PROPOSAL TO REVIVE THE SEE OF MAIDSTONE

ST explained that the See of Maidstone underwent changes last year when the ministry formerly exercised by the Bishop of Ebbsfleet was transferred to a new See of Oswestry and the ministry of the former Bishop of Maidstone was transferred to the See of Ebbsfleet. During this process it was noted that the See of Maidstone could once again be made available to the Diocese of Canterbury. A case to revive it needs to be made to the Dioceses Commission. There are three strands to the process: first agreement by the Dioceses Commission, second national appointment process and, finally, funding agreement from the Church Commissioners. The latter has been agreed.

ST spoke to the proposal he had circulated. There are few dioceses without a suffragan bishop. Bishop Rose is, practically the only Bishop, and Bishop Rose has made quite clear in her summary statement in the proposal. There are many occasions when there are conflicting commitments where it would be beneficial to have a suffragan bishop to provide additional episcopal support. ST explained that the current model of one bishop and three archdeacons was introduced when The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott became Bishop in 2010. This model has worked but it is evident that we do need a suffragan bishop.

ST explained that the hybrid model of a combined post of bishop and Archdeacon had worked well in the past in the Diocese of Hereford (which is a smaller diocese than Canterbury). In the proposed model the Bishop of Maidstone would be a suffragan bishop of the Archbishop of Canterbury but reporting to the Bishop of Dover with regard to both episcopal and archidiaconal duties.

The following points were raised:

- Clarity was requested around whether this would be a bishop with archidiaconal responsibilities or whether this would be additional bishop as well as the three archdeacons and Bishop Rose. It was confirmed that this would be a bishop with archidiaconal responsibilities.
- The job description specifies that the role is geographical, however this is not clear in the rest of the document.
ST responded that the episcopal role will be the entire diocese and the archidiaconal role will be geographical.
- Will it primarily be an archdeacon who will assist the bishop? Or another bishop who will carry out episcopal duties as well as carrying out the day to day activities of an archdeacon? In terms of the proposal it states that responsibility is around strategic management but this is not specified in the purpose of the role. As this proposal is to go to the Diocesan Commission it was recommended that the language of the description be changed that this role will be serving alongside Bishop Rose as a colleague and have more refined duties.
- Is this role cost neutral? Yes cost neutral, additional travel expenses might be slightly more.
- Is housing a factor to be considered? No.
- Other points were raised which were more specific to the appointment process.

4. APPOINTING AN ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE SELECTION PROCESS

ST talked through the timeline for the process which has been suggested nationally, the proposal will be submitted to the Diocesan Commission today. On the 8th June the Commission will consider this paper and they will then make a decision by the following week. If that decision is granted we then shift into the Archbishop's Appointments Process. ST will be sending out invitations to members of the Archbishop's Council to be part of a small appointments advisory team which will include two members of clergy, two members of laity and the Bishop may also add members from our gender and equality advisory groups who would assist in this process. An advert would be placed in Church Times and the appointment process follows on from that. The entire process from the Diocesan Commission can take as little as 20 weeks and to have made an appointment by the end of year will be quite realistic, obviously holidays might extend that.

Once we have elected our representatives they will have to respect the confidentiality of the process, we won't have open access to the process advising the Bishop.

At this point in the discussion the archdeacons left the room due to the conflict of interest.

A discussion took place around the likely outcome of the appointment process. It was agreed that there may need to be a review of the workload and deanery allocation following the appointment.

+Rose asked members of the Archbishop's Council to confirm that they supported the proposal. All members supported the proposal with the proviso that the recommended amendments to the proposal were made prior to submission to the Diocesan Commission.

+Rose closed the meeting with a prayer.