

# Diocesan Synod Member Questions and Answers – November 2024

**Mark Wilson**

## **LGBTQ+ Advisor to the Bishop of Dover**

*Given the importance of the Vacancy in See Committee in the procedure for appointing a new Archbishop of Canterbury or Bishop of Dover, could the Synod consider the possibility of arranging hustings before the elections take place, to ensure that all those involved in the election process have a thorough and informed understanding of the candidates nominated?*

## **Jon Baldwin, Winckworth Sherwood advised**

There is no obligation to run hustings for either the vacancy in see or archbishop's council elections. Hustings can be a bit of a hostage to fortune, because (certainly for General Synod elections) there is a real emphasis on equality of treatment, meaning that all questions need to be put to all candidates. One should not do a "BBC Question Time"-style event in which there is a general aim for approximate equal airtime between candidates.

Circulating short written statements is probably sufficient – a video might be an alternative to that, but you might run the risk of people having different technical abilities and equipment.

## **The Reverend Rachel Webbley, Team Rector Whitstable Team Ministry, Team Vicar St Alphege Whitstable and St Peter's Whitstable**

*When will there be an opportunity for Diocesan Synod to engage with any of the five reports from the Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice since Spring 2022, and how can we as a Diocese and Synod take steps to create an anti-racist culture? What steps are already in place to support the well-being and careers of our GMH colleagues and those in our churches and communities?*

## **The Bishop's Office replies**

Bishop Rose, together with the Reverend Beatrice Musidni (Bishop's Adviser for BAME Affairs) has organised several bespoke events to support and listen to diocesan clergy from the UKME/GMH community. These have included dinners, seminars and recently an invitation to meet privately with the Revd Guy Hewit (Director of the Racial Justice Unit). This dialogue is ongoing, and, through listening, other activities will be planned.

Guy Hewit recently met with EST (Episcopal Staff Team) to discuss the work of the Racial Justice Unit and what support is available to dioceses to develop work in this

area. EST acknowledges that this is an area that needs further development. EST has also discussed this area with Quentin Roper, particularly relating to how we can work with the school's team to develop resources. An ongoing challenge is the method for collecting appropriate data to enable full inclusion.

Bishop Rose is a member of the Church of England Racial Justice Commission. In a recent communication from Lord Boateng (Chair, Racial Justice Commission), he wrote that 'There is a need for the Church of England to better understand how and why it has failed over many years to reflect in its membership a younger and more ethnically diverse population drawn from a broader socio-economic cross-section of the community. The UKME/GMH community has all too often faced indifference, neglect, and on occasion down-right hostility in its interaction with a Church which has failed to embrace them in terms of its governance, liturgy and practice.'

EST believe, as a diocese, we need to be more proactive in this area and welcome the opportunity for the Diocesan Synod planning group to find a future occasion when this can be discussed more widely.

#### **The Reverend Bob Weldon, Vicar, Trinity Benefice, Folkestone,**

*Could we please have a Synod where there is no talk about the usual Money and Sex. Could we please have a Synod where there is more emphasis on Prayer*

Specific thoughts around prayer are planned as a feature of the March Synod.

#### **Barney de Berry, Vicar, St Mary Bredin Church, Canterbury**

##### **Question 1**

*When was day zero for our bold outcomes? In other words when looking to double the number of children and young people when was that figure taken from and what is that figure?*

##### **Colin Evans replies**

The baseline year for the Bold Outcomes will be 2023 as this was the year they were adopted. Our primary outcome measure will be "Worshipping Community." This is in line with the attendance measure used within the national outcomes measurement framework for SMMIB-funded projects. An additional benefit is that the Worshipping Community measure also has a separate breakdown of ages 0-10 and 11-17. We will also track Usual Sunday Attendance as a secondary measure.

The baseline is therefore 1964 (1415 age 0-10 and 549 age 11-17).

##### **Question 2**

*Recognising that discerning vision and delivering vision are two different things has any work been done to see if having brought us to the point of discerning our three bold outcomes we*

*have the right people and gifts to deliver out vision, in our leadership, on boards and in our parish recruitment?*

**Colin Evans replies**

The strategic theme of ‘Prioritising Young People’ was established some time before adopting our bold outcome. In the light of that we shaped our Youth Enabler role (Georgina Hedley-Smith) to focus on delivering a vision connecting young people, hearing their voice and equipping them as leaders (leading to Growing Young Leaders Course and Fuse Worship events to name two). Additional support to parishes in discernment of their vision has been enabled through Youthscape Launchpad.

We also have a Lead Officer for Children and Young People Ministry (Jen Tobin) who has been in post since September 2023. She provides expertise in this critical area and networks widely across the diocese.

The Children and Young People’s Framework (board) has been in place for a number of years. This has broad representation from practitioners across the diocese. The Framework helps to review and develop the children and young peoples’ strategy and any requests for funding for specific projects. New members are recruited as needed and the Framework would be keen to consider new members who can help with developing this agenda. The co-chairs are members of Archbishop’s Council.

The Strategic Programme Board deals with the day-to-day development and delivery of the strategy. A young peoples’ project board has recently been established reporting to the Strategic Programme Board to provide a greater focus on the SMMIB-funded Youth Minister programme and the development of pathways into children and young peoples’ ministry.

As noted earlier, the co-chairs of the Children and Young Peoples’ Framework are members of Archbishop’s Council which holds the overview of strategy development and delivery as the standing committee of Diocesan Synod. Archbishop’s Council is also supported by officers such as the Director of Education.

At the parish level, parish profiles would all reference our three bold outcomes and these form the basis of recruitment to clergy vacancies. For other positions, the Lead Officer for Children and Young People Ministry has supported parishes in the recruitment of youth ministers and “Future Youth” positions. The People Services Manager also provides advice to parishes on recruitment.

There is certainly a need to consider the capacity of those that support this critical area as we continue to develop our strategy.

**Julian Hills**

*I note from the papers supplied in advance of the Diocesan Synod that there are no elections from synod to the Finance and Assets Committee. I understand that there is a governance review underway but given the current serious financial predicament of the Diocesan Board of Finance is there not an urgent case for elected synod representation on this influential committee for the next triennium which would improve the sense of transparency around this important matter? Whilst I understand that there are Diocesan Synod members on the Finance*

and Assets committee, they are ex-officio members of synod, and none are directly elected by synod.

### **Membership of the Committee**

The Terms of Reference for the Finance and Assets Committee are determined by the Archbishop's Council. They state that the following are members of the Committee:

The Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance (Chair)

The Bishop of Dover

The Archdeacon of Ashford

The Archdeacon of Canterbury

The Archdeacon of Maidstone

A representative appointed by the Board of Education

At least three lay members appointed by the DBF (there are currently four members serving)

The Committee is lay led and has a lay majority.

The reality of the Committee is that it makes recommendations to the Archbishop's Council and provides a helpful forum to discuss items in detail. Its minutes are discussed at Council meetings.

As Julian notes, there is a review of governance underway. It is expected to make significant recommendations to Archbishop's Council in 2025.

### **David Kemp, Seasalter**

*Bearing in mind that, following this meeting, the Diocesan Synod is likely to be taking a greater interest in the details of Diocesan Strategy than heretofore, could you please provide for the members of the Synod a single sheet summary of the various funding streams available from the central church, specifying such details as what can be funded, what conditions are usually attached and how applications are made. It would also be helpful to know, with details, what awards have already been made to the Diocese since 2020 and what applications are pending.*

### **Colin Evans replies**

The answer to the question about sources of funding has not really changed since the last time this question was asked at Synod. Our primary source is the Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) which is overseen by the Strategic Mission and Ministry Board (SMMIB). From the table provided below of past and present applications, it will be seen that there was an unsuccessful application to the national education team for limited funding for some Flourish pilots. Beyond that, there is also some national funding for Net Zero Carbon and church building support, but these are assumed to be outside of the scope of the question's intent.

There is no clear statement of what can be funded by the Diocesan Investment Programme. Nothing is specifically ruled out. However, there are some principles involved:

- The funding requests must align to the national vision and strategy. Our own Bold Outcomes mirror these well.
- The requests need to articulate clearly the “theory of change” i.e. how they are expecting to deliver the desired outcomes.
- How they will become sustainable over a period of time.

There is a lot of work involved in preparing these funding requests.

The process of preparing funding requests is an ongoing dialogue with our National Vision & Strategy Consultant and reviews of potential requests by other members of the national teams and other diocese to help refine them.

From a diocesan perspective, funding requests are developed by the Strategic Programme Board for discussion and agreement with Archbishop’s Council prior to submission. Archbishop’s Council are kept informed on items that could potentially be included in future funding requests.

SMMIB can award grants subject to conditions. To date these have been adding extra detail on how the funded projects will be prosecuted.

Summary of funding requests to date and pending. This will be added to the strategy highlight report in future.

<b>Application</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Summary</b>
DIP (SMMIB) 1	May-23	£1m	Awarded	7 youth ministers, Ministry Experience Scheme, Programme Office “capacity” funding.
DIP (SMMIB) 2	Feb-24	£3.2m	Awarded	Resourcing churches at Margate and Maidstone.
Flourish	Apr-24	£92k	Unsuccessful	Three pilots in schools – now being funded by DBF
DIP (SMMIB) Change Request	Dec-24	£340k-£531k	Pending	See details below.

The Change Request pending relates to a significant cost escalation and funding shortfall in the St, Luke's Maidstone refurbishment project which is part of the Maidstone Resourcing Church grant. The ranges reflect the three different options that are likely to be submitted to SMMIB. The change request is currently with the national teams for review prior to final submission to SMMIB.