**Record of Bishop's Waltham Deanery**

**Mission & Pastoral Committee**

**20th June 2022**

**via Zoom**

Area Dean - Revd Canon David Isaac Lay Chair - Norman Chapman

**Present**: David Burgess, Louise McEwen, Jamie Balfour, Malcom Padgett, Sabrina Gwynn, Rachel Houlberg, Revd James Hunt, Diana Hunt, Revd Jane Isaac, Petrina Hillier, Janet Chant, Jill Phipps, Revd Simon Brocklehurst, Janet Clarke, Norman Chapman, David Isaac.

**Apologies**: Revd Tony Forrest, Revd Gregg Mensingh.

**Updates:**

**Deanery Audit.** Following initial conversations about the scope and process of theaudit, implementation was paused pending an indication from Bishop Jonathan’s policy for the future as to whether further elements might need to be included.

**Committee membership.** The M&PC is composed of one member per parish, plus incumbents. Occasionally it is helpful to invite others to attend to help focus on specific issues.

**Bishop Jonathan’s Vision and Roadmap**

**Main impetus**

In his address to his first diocesan synod and at our deanery choral eucharist at Botley, Bishop Jonathan has challenged us to refresh our commitment in discipleship and to recognise that the most important issue for us to grapple with is ‘our confidence in Jesus and in each other’. Within that overarching vision, he is asking each deanery to reframe its plans for development of mission and ministry so as to become a Chistian community in which all belong, in which abiding and sharing is Christ is central.

**Specific focal issues**

In particular, he asks us to create opportunities for children, young people and young adults to have a life-enhancing encounter with Jesus Christ; and to provide Anna chaplaincy for older people in very parish or benefice.

To provide some background context for the implications of this, Jill Phipps provided for members an outline of the nature, purpose and delivery of Anna chaplaincy and her explanatory notes will be circulated with the notes of this meeting. Similarly, James Hunt gave a summary of the opportunities and challenges of faith development with young people, reflecting on the work being undertaken in Bishops Waltham by the small team of parish-employed youth workers.

In order to help parishes engage more fully with the implications and issues involved, it was agreed to set up a conversation opportunity in the deanery for both Anna chaplaincy and youth ministry.

**Deanery Plan**

Our current deanery plan (Deanery Synod, 2nd February) provides a clear direction of travel into working more collaboratively and with more intentional development of relationships across the deanery. This general direction accords well with Bishop Jonathan’s vision, but needs to be expressed more visibly in our praying and worshipping together. Our planning also has to take account of the wider scenario shared by deaneries across the diocese, which may require us to adjust the framework of our inter-benefice relationships.

The area dean updated members on some of the facts of that wider reality….

**Finance:**

Overall diocesan income, derived mainly from parish contributions and allocated almost entirely to clergy stipends, has stabilised somewhat since the early days of lockdown, (due to the efforts of parishes to maintain payment of their allocated share). It will, however, remain under pressure in the future as inflation impacts on parishes, in terms both of church maintenance costs and personal incomes. The Bishop’s roadmap of consultations with deaneries is focussed towards enabling realistic decisions to be made at the November 5th meeting of diocesan synod about budgetary issues for 2023 and beyond.

**Stipendiary posts:**

The pause on appointing incumbents to vacant benefices, introduced as an emergency measure in 2020, has provided an opportunity for review, across all deaneries of the allocation of stipendiary posts for the delivery of mission and ministry. Bishop Jonathan is hoping to be able soon to ease the diocese out of the ‘paused’ scenario and to begin making appointments, within the context and constraints of the predicted longer-term budgetary projection.

It is unlikely that all vacant posts can be filled just as they were previously and this will require some re-thinking of how we use stipendiary posts and what scope there may be for some element of that pool of resource to be used to support different types of post in support of local ministry. This is likely to require the re-shaping of some of the areas of ministry to which we appoint clergy, in order to maximise impact and support long-term development of parish and benefice collaboration in mission.

Unlike earlier possible scenarios of re-adjustment, it is intended that any change in clergy roles or job descriptions will only be done in the context of using naturally occurring vacancies, so as to minimise disruption. The current large number of benefice vacancies across the diocese provides the feasibility of making any desirable or necessary adjustments to the distribution of stipendiary posts.

This re-shaping, across the diocese, will not need to happen all at once and there may be a phase of making interim provision for ministry support, either stipendiary or self-supporting, pending longer-term adjustments. However, to enable any of this, deaneries will need an overall plan of how they think future provision for ministry could work, against the background of the Bishop’s priorities for developing work with young people and supporting Anna chaplaincy. The Bishop is now asking us to consider what an overall plan might look like, as a basis for decisions later this year about the process of filling vacancies.

**A possible plan**

Throughout our discussions over the past two years, one of the core elements in developing effective parish-based ministry has been identified as the provision of locally-based clergy and/or lay ministers to provide focus and leadership for church communities.

This broad scenario, described embryonically at the M&PC meeting, and further developed below, tries to reflect that essential localness, while also providing scope for spiritual stimulus, growth and development through wider collaboration.

The scenario should be seen as a potential longer-term goal, using opportunities to implement as they occur and, within budgetary constraints, consideration might be given to interim appointments.

It posits the same number of stipendiary posts as at present, with the proposed addition of some House for Duty roles or Self-supporting priests and the desire/expectation for the development of lay minsters.

The ministers with specialist roles would be a resource both within their local ministry area and also have responsibility for the support of that specialised work across the deanery.

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| **Ministry area** | **Parishes** | **Specialist focus** | **Resourcing** |
| **Western** | **Botley, Curdridge,****Durley** | **Pioneer work among new housing development** | **1 stipendiary priest****1 pioneer minister, (+ general parish role)****1 licensed lay minister** |
| **Meon Valley**  | **Exton, Corhampton,****Meonstoke, Droxford, Soberton, Newtown, Hambledon, Wickham** | **Anna Chaplaincy** | **1 stipendiary priest****1 Anna Chaplain (+ general parish role)****2 House for duty/Self-supporting priests****2 licensed lay ministers** |
| **Central** | **Swanmore, Bishops Waltham, Upham, Shedfield** | **Children and Young People** | **1 stipendiary priest****1 youth minister (+general parish role)****2 House for duty/Self-supporting priests****2 licensed lay ministers** |

**Roadmap – next waypoints**

**11th July** Deanery plans supplied to Bishop

**18th July** Bishop’s Council – update on deanery plans

**Late July** Budget planning on basis of Bishop’s Council decisions

**August**  Reflection

**Early September** First draft of diocesan strategic plan – for discussion in and between deaneries. Further updating of deanery plans

**Late Sept/Oct** Deanery events, to share vision and financial plans

**19th October** Bishop’s Council – final strategic plan and budget

**Nov 5th** Diocesan Synod – diocesan vision and strategic plan, budget for 2023. Financial plans for 2024/25.