



MINUTES of Meeting of the Llandaff Diocesan Conference Standing Committee

held at Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge on 19th June 2025,
commencing with a light supper at 6.00pm.

Participants: Rev Emma Ackland, Jennifer Denham, Keith Evans, David-Lloyd Jones, Michael Lawley (DBF Chair), Rev Philip Leyshon, Rev Miles Pateman, Rev Roger Pitman, Ven Mark Preece (Archdeacon of Margam), Bishop Mary of Llandaff

In attendance: Tony Harris, Sue Rivers, Angela Treherne, James Laing (Diocesan Secretary)

1. **Opening Prayers** were led by the Bishop of Llandaff.
2. The Bishop **welcomed** all present, and thanked David-Lloyd Jones and the Cowbridge MA for hosting the meeting and arranging supper.
3. **Apologies** had been received from Deryn McAndrew, Matthew Dixon, Rev Edward Owen, Harriet Morgan, Ven Rod Green, Very Rev Jason Bray.

4. **Bishop's introduction and report**

Bishop reported a healthy number of ordinands this summer (eight priests and four deacons) but noted the need for more clergy. She has also had the joy of a good number of confirmations who were well prepared and committed, and increasing numbers of lay commissioned ministers, from work with children to Anna Chaplaincy and social outreach. A new archdeacon has been appointed, Anne-Marie Renshaw, who will be living in Trecynon, and on this evening's agenda is the re-establishment of the Archdeaconry of Morgannwg, with new borders, and allocation of work evenly between the archdeacons. Anne-Marie's appointment, along with the appointment of the new Canon Chancellor Kate Harrison at Llandaff Cathedral, will help redress the gender balance in the senior team.

A report has been undertaken of the Evangelism Fund and matching DBF Vision funded programmes, due to the end of the grant funding in 2025. When the report is complete this will be shared with the DSC and DBF. Many of our staff are on fixed term contracts under these grant programmes, so we are reviewing and streamlining the DBF staff team, with assistance from the newly expanded HR support function of the Church in Wales Representative Body. The DBF is focusing on sustainable, wise and responsible use of its finite resources, as the Finance team are working on Common Fund expectations and principles for the 2026 budget and implications for DBF income and expenditure (mainly driven by stipends and salaries). Finance is a critical issue for all of us, aware that many MAs are struggling financially. Meanwhile it is a joy to see signs of life, vibrancy, welcome and energy across the diocese.

5. **Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) Chair's report**

The DBF Chair (ML) reported that the DBF had signed the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts, with a clean audit of the financial statements. ML recorded thanks to the staff



and accountants, Bevan & Buckland. The accounts included a deficit of £497,000 which was on budget, and greater than 2023 largely due to a provision of £250,000 for Fairer Share arrears outstanding at the end of 2024. Although Q1 operations were on budget, investments declined largely due to the new US Presidency, but recovered during Q2. Arrears continued to increase to unprecedented levels. The DBF is looking at trends and causes, with the team working on potential solutions. Finally he reported some staff changes, with the promotion of Shantelle Wilkins to Head of Finance, promotion of Lynsey Creed from temporary office worker to Parsonage Board Administrator, appointment of Laura Wilson as Diocesan Accountancy Trainee (providing support to MAs with Cliff Chigariro in Peter Watson's team) and Dominic Jewel as Chief Operating Officer.

In discussion, the DSC requested that DBF consider supporting MAs' cashflow where grant funders take too long to disburse the grant; and reconsider the rebate which was a good incentive to MAs to pay their Fairer Share in the past. It was also recommended that fees for life events should be paid to MAs and not to clergy individually.

ACTIONS:

- 1) Sue Rivers to introduce a motion to the GB about paying fees to MAs.
- 2) JL request an RB member to raise the same matter at the RB.
- 3) Publish list of GB members, and major Diocesan Committees (such as DBF and DSC) on the Diocesan website, subject to individuals' giving consent.
- 4) JL to circulate a list of DBF staff, including what their roles are and how to contact.

6. Territorial Reorganisation

The Bishop and Archdeacon of Margam (MP) introduced a precirculated paper outlining proposals for the reinstatement of the Archdeaconry of Morgannwg, and some necessary boundary changes and deanery changes, to ensure as far as possible parity of buildings, clergy, MAs, deaneries and populations. It was proposed that Llan MA move to Bridgend Deanery; Pontypridd MA, including Citizen Church which has one site there, move to Ystradyfodwg; and Margam Abbey move to Port Talbot MA. Morgannwg Archdeaconry would comprise Bridgend and Ystradyfodwg Deaneries, Margam would comprise Neath Port Talbot and Vale of Glamorgan Deaneries, and Llandaff would comprise Eglwysilan and Cardiff Deaneries.

There was extensive discussion, during which suggestions were made to consider renaming Bridgend Deanery to give it wider ownership, some alternative boundary arrangements for Margam/Port Talbot MAs, and allowing time for deaneries to grow together as MAs are still growing following the major changes of 2021. DSC also noted the importance of deep listening particularly to Port Talbot and Margam MAs, learning lessons from the previous process to listen to experiences on the ground and provide support for MAs and deaneries to grow together. The Committee committed to prayer for the process and the Bishop as she leads it, and supported the Bishop to issue appropriate decrees following collaboration with the DSC and further discussion with the affected MAs, in accordance with the Constitution.



ACTIONS:

- 1) JML circulate the proposals to affected MAs and Deaneries for responses by mid July.
- 2) Registrar to draw up appropriate decrees.
- 3) Bishop to sign and issue decrees as required.

7. Archdeacons' Matters

MP reported on the Archdeacons' work supporting MAs in finances and buildings, and working on clergy recruitment and development, including training, support and refined job descriptions for MALs, vicars, Lay Chairs and MAC Trustees.

8. Draft Agenda of the 2025 Diocesan Conference

Standing Committee discussed the precirculated agenda, raising questions about how to enable the "marketplace" to be more effective (including potentially leaving this year fallow and revitalising it next year), and in the longer term to enable more substantive youth involvement, perhaps via a diocesan youth council during the year.

ACTION: DSC approved the agenda and instructed the Diocesan Secretary to finalise details and implement practicalities with the staff team and relevant clergy and volunteers.

9. Church Growth Fund bid process

DSC noted the process thus far for ideas to surface through Archdeacons' visitations, deanery conferences and chapters, with lessons to be learned from the Evangelism/DBF Vision fund review. After discussion, the Committee agreed to ask the DBF Chair to convene a working group including members of DSC and others from MAs with appropriate skills to sift, shape, and finalise diocesan bids (with an individual dedicated to budget and write the documentation) for DSC/DBF review and approval for Bishop's sign off before submission to RB.

ACTIONS:

- 1) JML to work with the DBF Chair to convene a Task and Finish Working Group to assemble a CGF Bid.
- 2) The Committee asked that JML request that other dioceses' bids be published so that we can learn from successful experiences elsewhere.

10. MA Self-assessment survey

JML presented a survey of the results, edited from that presented at Governing Body (from 19 minutes into the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cILDuf-jn2A>) noting Llandaff's scores against the Provincial average, where Provincial action is being taken, and where Diocesan action has been implemented or is planned.

ACTION: The Committee asked that JML record a presentation of the survey to circulate to MALs/Lay Chairs for their MACs, and to present at Deanery Conferences.



11. Education report

The DSC noted the precirculated June report from the Joint Education Committee. JML reported that Tredegarville school house will be demolished for safety reasons (after more than 13 years of vacancy), and that Cardiff Council has requested the adoption as a public highway of a stretch of pavement at a bus stop on Drope Road near St Mary's school St Fagans.

12. Minutes of the DSC Meeting held on 20th March 2025 were approved as a true record.

13. Dates of future meetings in 2025:

Tuesday 9th September at 6pm

Tuesday 18th November at 6pm

14. The meeting closed in prayer.