

SYNOD 2018

Lay Conference

Anglican
Church
Diocese of Perth



Peter Moyes Anglican Community School
Sunday 7 October 2018

NOTES and ACTION

The Archbishop welcomed people to the Lay Conference and opened with prayer at 11.35am.

Mr John Whitton, Belmont

Acknowledged the help given by Archdeacon Lionel Snell with the parish's maintenance program. Raised the following concerns: With few exceptions, the excessive level of Mesh Assets' quotes and charges and public liability insurance. Suggested solutions – Mesh Assets to fast-track a range of local contractors; competitive quotes to be included in the Mesh contracts; parishes seeking 'breathing space' in actioning some of the maintenance required; and for the Diocese to re-visit the 'one method fits all' policy which is detrimental to many parishes.

The Archbishop reiterated what she has heard during the listening sessions and requested the Diocesan Secretary, Mr Keith Stephens, to respond. Insurance was identified as an item that needed attention and it is unlikely the Diocese will not move from this arrangement. The Diocese will be working with Mesh Assets to keep costs down and, wherever possible, to have local trades undertake work providing they have the necessary cover. Mr Stephens reiterated that parishes may nominate local trades to undertake work. Following changes to Policy 6.5 parishes may obtain additional quotes.

Mr Stephens advised of the implementation of the funding available for short-term loans from the Anglican Community Fund to assist parishes to undertake necessary and urgent work. This is in addition to the grant allocation system which will have funding available from November (\$50,000 per annum). Advice and assistance can also be sought from Mike Brown, Risk and Compliance Manager, for parishes to submit applications to other bodies for monetary assistance.

The Archbishop introduced Ms Kirsten Rhoades, Diocesan Property Services Manager.

Mr Doug Fletcher, Lakelands

Appreciates the review and change of procedures. Would it be possible for a list of pre-approved contractors be made available to parishes?

ACTION: Diocesan Secretary

Mrs Bev Downing, Kalamunda

Raised her concern regarding the circulation of the 'how to vote' sheet at the Cathedral and on the floor of Synod. Since when has this been allowed? It could be seen as a way to influence the election process. Some members of Synod have believed this to be an authorised document.

The Archbishop advised the document had been distributed without her authorisation.

John Brett, Armadale

Raised concern about Gunn Electrics being the sole contractor for electrical works across the Diocese. Shared the experiences of the Parish of Armadale with Gunn Electrics highlighting the quoted costs and the site visit charges being incurred. The required works at Armadale for electrical works is impacting on the financial viability of the parish.

John expressed his thanks for the Archbishop's listening in the Diocese.

Mr Keith Stephens, Diocesan Secretary, acknowledged the concerns raised and explained the reasoning behind having one provider to bring all diocesan properties in line with legal requirements. Once the complete certification is completed opportunities will open for other electricians to be used working to the specifications required by the Diocese.

Mr Jeremy Buxton, West Perth

Expressed appreciation for the *Messenger* and for the articles regarding the armed services in the current edition.

The Archbishop drew attention to Tara Hogan's article, a member of the staff of the Anglican Community Fund.

Mrs Jo-Anne Allery, Mt Lawley

Raised concern regarding the liability of the parish in paying fines for non-compliance to Mesh Assets.

Mr Keith Stephens requested copies of the correspondence in order to follow up.

ACTION: Diocesan Secretary

Meg Bradford-Seeley, Gingin-Chittering

Given the circulation of the voting sheet, she chose not to vote as she did not wish to be influenced in any way.

Is the Mesh Assets contract for a fixed period and will the Mesh Assets contract be put out to tender in the future?

Amana Living Chaplains – retired clergy living in particular Amana Living centres are not allowed to minister to the residents of that centre.

Mr Keith Stephens advised that Mesh Assets' contract has been extended for a further year. The two years' experience will be helpful in moving forward and determining how best to proceed. It is envisaged there will be consultation with parishes, overseen by a facilitator not from Diocesan Office, and subsequent tender and issuing of a new contract.

The Archbishop has discussed the Amana Living chaplaincy issue with the retired clergy and also with Amana Living and this is currently being renegotiated.

Mr Sam Walsh AO, Fremantle

Thanked the Archbishop for the President's Address and asked what her vision might be in reinvigorating a mission plan for the Diocese.

The Archbishop described the 'jewels' that came out of the listening sessions and how the Diocese can embrace this 'new season'. She has invited people to pray together and to celebrate – which was a request made during the listening sessions. We need to determine what our hopes and dreams are for the future and how we can prioritise our desires and strategic direction for the next three to five years. One of the most important things is having a plan – we can have a vision, but without a plan we have nowhere to go. People had a sense about being somewhere along the 'plan'. When people believe they can do something, they do. It can be a small and modest step, and from that a lot more flows.

Pray, celebrate and then devise strategies about where to from here. This will be worked through into the first part of 2019.

Mr Roger Wright, Bassendean

The Parish of Bassendean has had a positive experience with Mesh Assets and their engagement together. Encouraged parishes to seek quotes from approved contractors and then forward to Mesh Assets and engage in negotiations.

Ms Louisa Kennard, Scarborough

Was very warm-hearted regarding the response to the question regarding staff turnover in Church House. She raised concerns about the inconsistencies coming out of the Finance Department, eg advice from payroll and overcharging, non-payment of interest and incorrect details provided, incorrect amounts being withdrawn from parish accounts on behalf of the Trustees. Is it possible to have an up-to-date list of members of the Finance Team and contact details? Advised of difficulties making contact with the Australian Taxation Office. Queried how bequests are dealt and specific questions about the reasons how and why they are held by the Diocese.

Mr Torsten Marsden, Chief Financial Officer, was introduced by the Archbishop. The Archbishop requested Torsten to meet with Louisa to discuss the concerns raised. The Archbishop advised that contact details could be made available to office bearers and advised that work is being done with staff in Church House and how they engage with the wider Diocese. **ACTION: Mr Torsten Marsden**

Mr Keith Stephens advised that the Trustees are responsible for bequests given the specific requirement of individual bequests which is why they are held centrally.

The Archbishop encouraged people to seek out Mr Ian Leverington, ACF, with any questions about on-line statements and other financial matters.

Mr David Elsing, Bassendean

Expressed appreciation for the Archbishop's good humour. This is David's first Synod. When did this Diocese decide that homosexual acts were no longer considered to be sinful?

The Archbishop advised that to her knowledge there has never been a diocesan statement about the matter raised. The whole Christian Church is on a journey - How do we live in the 21st Century, eg women in leadership? How is that something we are willing to change or say is sinful? We live into an environment with real difficulties. Anglicans try to work in God's grace in the world in which we live. How is it that we understand what we now know about human beings? How is it that people are differently identified in their sexuality and how do we work this out? These are difficult questions. We do know that Jesus loves everyone – and that means we need to work out how we love each other, whatever the 'sinful' situation, and how we find how God is present in all these situations? How is it that pastorally we can offer and meet with the love of God and Christ's love for those with whom we do not agree? For example, marriage of divorced people. We need to work out how we live together with grace.

The Archbishop thanked everyone for their participation and closed the Lay Conference with Grace at 12.31pm.