

Investing in the future

1 message

Esther Pollard <Esther.Pollard@truro.anglican.org>
To: Esther Pollard <Esther.Pollard@truro.anglican.org>

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By email to all Licensed Clergy, PCC Treasurers, PCC Secretaries and Churchwardens

Dear colleagues,

As you may well have heard by now, Saturday's Diocesan Synod decided to increase next year's MMF call by 1.5%. And while finance may not be the most popular subject of an email from us, we would be grateful if you would take the time to keep reading as there is some very important context we would like to share with you.

When synod voted for this increase, it did so in the knowledge that it was voting for a budgeted operating deficit of £82,000 at the end of next year, which will have to come from our reserves. This is on top of the planned use of £547,000 from diocesan reserves for special projects that form part of the budget. These special projects are important to ensuring we meet the agreed diocesan strategy, and by fully funding them from reserves we have avoided adding to the costs that are met by the parishes' MMF contributions.

Whilst we are currently able to cover the £82,000 operating deficit from reserves, it does go against the principle of paying today's costs today, and not storing up problems for the future.

So why did Synod do this? We believe the members – who are your elected representatives from across the diocese - were trying to be pragmatic. In 2014, Synod took the brave decision to increase MMF by 28% as a sign of confidence that we can make the diocese financially sustainable. We recognised that was a long-term aim. Although we did not quite reach 28% we had a fantastic response.

This time we believe there was an element of realism involved because, after 2014 and the audacious 28%, our momentum seems to have slowed a little. Last year, synod set 3% as its goal but it looks like we will not attain that. Indeed, in the 10 months to October 2016 we have collected about

£100,000 less than at the same time in 2015.

By agreeing to an increase of 1.5% we believe it felt to synod members that they were setting a target that was genuinely within reach, but once again, the key is our collection rate.

We thank all those parishes who have made their full MMF contribution already or who are up to date with their monthly contributions. If your parish is behind on this year's MMF we would urge you to contribute what you can before the end of the year. The synod has determined that the diocese should invest its reserves in future growth and we hope, believe and pray that parishes will all also do their utmost to fulfil the MMF call in full, even if, like the diocese, it involves using some of your reserves.

Every part of the diocese and everybody in the diocese is asked to pray about the part God is asking them to play in the work and life of the church. We have agreed to move towards a church that is always seeking to know what God wants of us (discovering God's kingdom), and we have agreed to be a church that is looking for new and imaginative ways to proclaim the gospel afresh in this generation (growing the church).

We know that you and your parish will do your utmost to respond with generosity and confidence. We believe that our giving is a gospel issue and it is a sign of how willing we are to recognise the gifts we are given every day.

With all good wishes

Esther Pollard

Mike Sturgess

Esther Pollard

Diocesan Secretary