


THE  
WORD  
WHO  
IS LIFE



## Introduction

1. On coming into the Diocese in 2015, I spoke of three elements that are central to the life of the Diocese: Prayer, Formation, Mission. These three are core to our purpose of proclaiming The Word who is Life – we have no other Subject.<sup>1</sup>
2. Over the last eighteen months, following the Kinharvie Review of the Diocesan Central Offices, much work has been done at Deanery level leading to the Pastoral Plan – “The Word who is Life”. We are in an ever-changing context and this Pastoral Plan, seeks to provide a way forward for the Diocese that will enable us to proclaim Christ in this new setting. It is a flexible plan, for a plan that cannot adapt to circumstances, opportunities and challenges will fail.
3. Formation in the Christian Life, at an ever-deepening level and at every age, is necessary. We are Christ’s instruments in a society that is in need of Evangelisation. This is the Mission of the Church – the “New Evangelisation” to which Pope St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict and Pope Francis have called us. There is so much good work already being done in our parishes and deaneries, in our schools and chaplaincies – but we must look to the future with renewed resolution and energy, growing from ever-deepening prayer and aided by continuing growth in understanding.
4. Life without prayer is no life at all – and our Diocese is about Life, the Life that is Christ. Let us all pray, as this Plan is carried forward, that the work of each and every one of us in the Diocese as a whole may be brought to fulfilment.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Jn.1:1.

## Context

5. The Church in this country finds herself in a very significant moment. Many have described society as ‘post-Christian’ or ‘post-religious.’ This presents the Church with both a challenge and a significant opportunity.
6. In this place, the Christian is called to be both well-formed and well-informed. This is a time in which the Church must go out into the world with a ‘new apologetic’ – not to be self-absorbed, but to be confident in professing the True Faith. For this going forth to be fruitful it must be grounded in prayer and in the Eucharist.
7. While these challenges are great, this a moment of seeking and great thirst for so many. This is seen in the desire for social justice amongst so many of our young people and in the recognition in parts of the business world that Catholic Social Teaching has much to offer. The lack of moral compass, so apparent in many aspects of life, speaks of a searching and a desire for direction.
8. We, Christ’s Faithful People, are called to journey into this space. We carry with us the faith, hope and love that root us in God. We carry with us the person of Jesus. We speak of one subject – the Word Who is Life.
9. However, we are all too aware that we are weak.<sup>2</sup> We are the earthen vessels that hold the treasure,<sup>3</sup> but the vessel is often damaged, cracked and leaking. The recent history of the Church speaks to us of frailty and failure in so many ways – not least the incidents of abuse that have damaged the Body of Christ that is His Church, alienated many and weakened the witness that the Lord calls us to give. Much healing is still to take place and the Church must continue to reach out to those affected in a spirit of humility and penitence.

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 12:10.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. 4:7.

10. We must recognise the situation within our own society and, therefore, our own Diocese, in which so many of our brothers and sisters have not heard the message of the Gospel. For this reason, our evangelisation must be new. Pope Benedict XVI expressed the needs of European society in the following terms:

“It is not difficult to see that what all the Churches living in traditionally Christian territories need is a renewed missionary impulse, an expression of a new, generous openness to the gift of grace.”<sup>4</sup>

Pope Francis is unequivocal in his call to every member of the Church to be engaged in this mission given us by Christ:

“All the baptised, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelisation, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelisation to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients.”<sup>5</sup>

It is necessary for everyone in the Diocese to reflect on the context in which we find ourselves and to embrace the call to be instruments of evangelisation.

11. The source and summit of all that we do is the celebration of the Eucharist.<sup>6</sup> The whole world is present there as Christ gives Himself to us. The healing and life that flows from Him is the foundation of all we are and all that we do in His name.
12. The Word who is Life calls every one of us to respond to His call. This is a call that begins with Baptism and the time has come for us all to recognise that, as the Baptised, we have a part to play.<sup>7</sup> Now is the

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<sup>4</sup> POPE BENEDICT XVI, Ubicumque et semper, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2010.

<sup>5</sup> EG, n.119.

<sup>6</sup> LG, n.11.

<sup>7</sup> CIC, c. 204§1.

time for the Lay Faithful to be open in new ways to the Vocation that comes through Baptism. This is not “optional”. It will be lived out in many ways, but every person must respond to the wonder of the Saving Love of Christ in such a way that the world around us is transformed.

13. This is at the core of the Pastoral Plan – the dignity of the Baptised and the Vocation and New Life that flows from Baptism.
14. A new agility is needed in the living-out of the Mission the Lord has given to us. This will demand a renewed openness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit; a new listening to the still small voice;<sup>8</sup> a new spirit of contemplation.
15. Currently, we are at a time when the number of priests is a new experience for us. Most of us have been born in a time when there have been many vocations to the Priesthood, notably after the Second World War. We are now in a situation where the ratio of priests to people is much closer to that of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the world was a very different place, with different demands on clergy and on those whom they served. We are now at a moment when adjustments will be necessary, together with fervent prayer that many will answer the call to Priesthood.
16. This is not a time for despondency. It is a time of renewal and while the path ahead may be rocky at times we need not fear if we keep our minds and hearts fixed firmly on the Word who is Life. It is He who leads us.

## **Consultation**

17. The journey thus far has involved the two rounds of meetings in Deaneries together with meetings with those priests of the Diocese who will be 65 years old and under in 2030.

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<sup>8</sup> 1 Kings 1:12

The meetings in the Deaneries provided much material that has been important in the writing of the Plan. The key themes were as follows:

- The need to identify the Formation needs for clergy and lay faithful.
- Provision to be made for the lay faithful to discern their personal vocations and their specific charisms.
- Formation in Faith in every Deanery.
- Formation in Prayer in every Deanery.
- Formation at a high level for those who wish to pursue such studies.
- Exploration of formation with seminary students.
- Availability of spiritual accompaniment across the Diocese.
- A unified voice on matters of the Church's Social Teaching.
- A greater reaching out to those areas of life where people can feel excluded and rejected.
- Change management training and exploring news ways of doing things.
- Opportunities for prayer, meditation and retreats for all.
- Preparation by clergy and laity for leadership.
- Formation for the Ministry of Welcome.
- Better communications across the Diocese.
- Greater involvement of women in the life of the Church.
- An identification of those areas in which the lay faithful can become active in the planning and implementation of pastoral initiatives.
- Budgeting at Deanery level to support initiatives and employment of some roles: Youth Worker, Pastoral Assistant, Chaplain.
- Involvement of lay faithful in care of parish sites
- Ecumenical work in Social Action
- Outreach to the marginalised.
- Greater understanding of diversity, with particular reference to LGBT.
- Greater culture of dialogue and for an openness to changing circumstances.

- The call for the ordination of married men to the Priesthood and for the ordination of women.
- Greater importance being given to the Deanery.
- New non-Eucharistic ways of celebration.
- Exploration into working without church buildings.
- Restructuring of the central functions of the Diocese.
- Twinning of parishes and schools.

## Structures for Mission

### Diocese

18. The Diocese is so much more than a defined territory, so much more than an administrative structure. It is called to be a 'family of believers.' All the baptised who are members of the Catholic Church make up this family and each and every one has their part to play in the Mission to which we have been called by Christ, the Mission to "make disciples of all the nations."<sup>9</sup>
19. All that we do must grow from our encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, "the Word who is Life"<sup>10</sup> whom we encounter truly present in the Eucharist and who draws us into communion with each other. Insofar as we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, so we are effective in Mission. The extent to which we do not listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit; the extent to which we do not remain close to Christ, to that extent we shall not be effective.
20. There is so much for which we give thanks about the life of the Diocese, but we must always be considering the ways in which we can be a more effective 'Mission Family', a more effective particular Church. This requires unceasing prayer and formation that begins at Baptism and continues throughout the pilgrimage of life.

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<sup>9</sup> Mt. 28:19.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Jn. 1:1.

## Parishes

21. The Parish is the core group in the life of the Church.<sup>11</sup> It is the locus of the Church's celebration of the Liturgy, the group that is suited to be the focus of identity, the focus for much formation and for outreach to the wider community in social action and in evangelisation. It is an identifiable area of the Diocese, served by a Parish Priest.
22. The Parish is an entity that is readily understood and parishes, so described, will continue to be at the heart of the life of the Diocese.
23. Currently, the Diocese is comprised of 85 parishes. There will be some need for change in the future and the proposed alterations to parishes are outlined in the next section of this document, since placing this in a Deanery context will be helpful and give a more coherent picture.
24. With changes to parishes, there will be a rightful concern about the future of church buildings. These are the focus for the identity of the parish, the place where the community gathers for prayer and the Eucharist, the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. A change to a parish does not, of itself, mean that a church will necessarily close. Rather, the parish concerned, in conjunction with the Deanery and in conversation with the Bishop, can determine ways in which such churches can continue to be used at the service of Prayer, Formation and Mission.
25. Such plans will also be required to go to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Diocesan Finance Committee to ensure financial sustainability.

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<sup>11</sup> "The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and community...In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers." EG, n. 28.



26. In the event that a decision is made to sell a church building (or any other property), the involvement of the Diocesan Trustees will be sought and the specific requirements in Canon Law observed.<sup>12</sup>
27. Where parishes will be conjoined or merged, the procedures required in Canon Law will be observed.<sup>13</sup>

## **Deaneries**

28. As we look to the future of the Diocese, the Deanery will become increasingly important. It will be the locus of Formation for the parishes within it and there will be increasing opportunities for resources and administrative tasks to be shared across the Deanery.
29. To this end, each Deanery should produce a budget for itself, based on the programme of Formation being offered each year in each deanery by the Formation Team of the Diocese, including the development of Guided Prayer Teams and the resourcing of School Chaplaincy.
30. It will be important for the parishes within Deaneries to work together to ensure appropriate provision of Mass times across the Deanery in such a way that priests may support one another when required. The provision of Sunday and Holy Day Mass times (including Vigil Masses) and availability of the Sacrament of Penance will be reviewed in each deanery, with the assistance of the Episcopal Vicars in Surrey and Sussex, with the resulting programme being shared with the Bishop for his final decision. This work is to be completed by the end of 2019.

## **Schools**

31. The School is, for many young Catholics, their most significant experience of the Church's life. Schools are, therefore, a key element

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<sup>12</sup> CIC, cc. 1291-1296.

<sup>13</sup> CIC, c. 515§2. Conjoined parishes are distinct parishes, with one parish priest as proper pastor of both. Merged (or amalgamated) parishes are those that, through due process, become a single parish.

in the life of the Diocese, to which much weight is given in Canon Law<sup>14</sup> and at national level, through the work of the Catholic Education Service (CES). At Diocesan level, both the Bishop and Trustees are fully committed to ensuring the best possible school provision and the Diocese is blessed to have many fine schools.

32. In supporting our schools, the Diocesan Education Service is a small but effective team, working at capacity with a number of partners, in a complex and often sensitive context.
33. The recruitment and appointment of effective foundation governors is an essential element in the provision of schools. The programme of governor training is an important support for them.
34. The development of Multi-Academy Trusts has begun in the Diocese, now centred on two Catholic Education Trusts (CETs): Xavier in Surrey and Bosco in Sussex. This development will continue with those schools ready and wishing to join CETs being encouraged strongly to do so.
35. It must also be recognised that most Local Authorities are limited in their capacity to assist schools, while support for Leadership Teams, Governors and Teachers must continue. The Education Service is best placed to broker such support in close collaboration with our Diocesan Teaching Schools, especially to those schools that are outside CETs. This work must be resourced, with discussions ongoing with schools and with the Diocesan Trustees to ensure best possible provision.
36. Similarly, the provision of Section 48 Inspections, vital in the assurance of Catholic Ethos, continues to be facilitated by our Education Service. The Secondary and Primary Schools Advisers play a vital role in ensuring best possible RE Provision, together with support for Catholic Life and Ethos in our schools.

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<sup>14</sup> CIC, cc. 796-806.

37. Effective chaplaincy is a key element in the Catholic Ethos and pastoral provision for our schools. It is often a challenge to assure chaplaincy provision in a financially difficult climate. However, pastoral demands must outweigh such considerations.
38. No school should be without chaplaincy: the provision of a full-time chaplain in every Secondary School must be made. Chaplaincy must also be available in every Primary School, with chaplaincy hours dependent on the size of the school, but still ensuring sufficient provision.
39. Given constraints on school budgets, it will be necessary for Deanery communities to support the financing of chaplains in our schools.
40. The Bishop will work with the Chaplaincy Co-ordinator, the Director of Education and the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Diocese, to present to the Deans and Headteachers a plan for the development of Chaplaincy.

### **Chaplaincies (Universities, Prisons, Hospitals)**

41. There are a number of Prison, University and Hospital Chaplaincies across the Diocese. Chaplains (including those members of the lay faithful who are given chaplaincy roles) are appointed to provide pastoral ministry to defined groups within the Church,<sup>15</sup> but it is important that their ministry is also seen in a wider context.
42. Hospital chaplaincies are usually part of parish ministry, with the priests of a parish taking on responsibility, together with deacons and dedicated teams of lay faithful (often volunteers) to ensure the best possible care for patients. Hospital chaplaincy is, however, a changing ministry.
43. University chaplaincies should never see themselves divorced from the local parish and deanery. While proper provision must be made

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<sup>15</sup> CIC, cc. 564-572.

for students within the campus, it must also be recognised that students (especially those who do not live on campus) bring much to parish communities and that many students will also wish to be a part of parish communities.

44. Prison chaplaincy, of its nature, brings with it particular requirements and the development of larger teams of volunteers in the parishes surrounding prisons will be a great help to the Chaplain working within the prison.

### **Formation team**

45. During the course of the Meetings in Deaneries, there was a universal call for Formation to take place in Deaneries. This formation must take place in two ways: 'formation *ad intra*' and 'formation *ad extra*'.
46. The first of these – 'formation *ad intra*' consists of the formation that we need for ourselves. It is the deepening in the understanding of the Gospel, the teaching of the Church and of the Mission to which we have been called. This formation cannot take place effectively without the celebration of the Eucharist and an ever-closer meeting with Christ in prayer.
47. The second of these – 'formation *ad extra*' – is the Mission to others. It is the example that we give through the living of the Christian life, day by day. It is the life that we model and to which we call all those around us and then, the formation that we are able to offer them.
48. The delivery of Formation across the Diocese will be made in accordance with this demand. The Diocesan Staff, formerly known as 'The Pastoral Team', now take on a new name as 'The Formation Team', better reflecting their service to the Diocese in this essential work of Formation for Mission.
49. As a result of this change, the title 'Christian Education Centre' (leading to the acronym of DABCEC) no longer reflects the wider remit of work based in the offices in Crawley. It seems appropriate to

entrust the work of the Education Service and the Formation Team to the intercession of the Patron of the Diocese, St. Philip Howard. The centre will, therefore, now be named “The St. Philip Howard Centre”.

50. The Formation Team is now tasked with the delivery of programmes in Deaneries. This intentional approach will be expressed in a number of measures and might be expressed as “Forming the few for the sake of the many.”
51. With the development of formation being given in Deaneries, each Deanery will, in time, develop Deanery Formation Teams, with the Formation Team based at the St. Philip Howard Centre supporting the Deanery Teams.
52. All courses being delivered across the Diocese will be certificated, assisting in bringing a harmony to the formation of all in the Diocese.

## **The Spirituality and Formation Adviser**

### **Spiritual Formation**

53. The Formation Adviser is tasked with working with the Society of Jesus to form teams of people in each Deanery, so that a Week of Guided Prayer can be available in every Deanery, every year.
54. The Diocesan Spirituality Network is, potentially, an important resource for Formation in the Spiritual Life. The Adviser for Spirituality and Formation will work with the Network, to support its development, so that opportunities for Spiritual Direction and accompaniment become more available.
55. The Diocese continues to be blessed with a number of Retreat Houses and the Adviser for Spirituality and Formation will liaise with these houses to ensure that information about their ministries is widely known.

## **Adult Formation**

56. The Adviser for Spirituality & Formation will be responsible for the oversight of the delivery of such programmes and will work with the Episcopal Vicar for Formation to determine the courses most suited to the needs of the Diocese. This will make possible a more coherent approach.
57. Such programmes will facilitate Faith formation for Adults as well as Formation of those engaged in catechesis of others.
58. With formation programmes being delivered in a coherent way in each Deanery, it will be possible for Deanery Teams to be developed, with the Formation Team taking on the role of support and formation of formators.
59. The CCRS, currently being delivered in some parts of the Diocese, will – in time – be delivered more widely.

## **Sacramental Catechesis**

60. The principle of Family Catechesis is sound and is to be fostered and developed across the Diocese. Through such means, parents are enabled to fulfil the responsibilities they accepted at Baptism, of being the first teachers in the ways of faith – and the best of teachers.
61. Confirmation Catechesis will continue to be reviewed, with the results of the review being available during 2019. This will impact on the work those preparing our young people for Confirmation and enable the continuing development of programmes and resources.

## Youth Adviser

### The Ascent Movement

62. The engagement of the Diocese with the Ascent Movement represents a major development in Youth Formation. This programme, run from Worth Abbey, provides a three-year programme for young people post-Confirmation. It enables those who take part to be well-formed in Faith and to develop a deeper prayer life.
63. The Youth Adviser will be working with the Ascent Team at Worth, so that two young people from six deaneries each year will be able to begin the three-year programme. Thus, over a period of years, numbers of young adults will be able to follow the programme, with a resulting impact on the life of the Diocese.
68. The costs for this programme will be borne by the Deaneries, with young people being able to seek a grant from the Diocese to assist with their engagement with the programme.

### Encounter, Lectio Divina and Lourdes Pilgrimage

65. The development of Encounter Groups across the Diocese and on the Lourdes Pilgrimage has proved effective for those who take part. Grounded in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and providing opportunities for the deepening of Faith Formation, the Youth Adviser will continue to develop the Encounter Network, so that there is a group in each Deanery, with 'Big Encounter' bringing such groups together on a regular basis.
66. The Redshirt experience is to be viewed as a two-year programme, with the first year being an opportunity for deepening the experience of prayer and encountering the initial *kerygma*<sup>16</sup> of the Gospel. This experience of growing in relationship with the person of Christ can

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<sup>16</sup> "we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement, or *kerygma*, which need to be the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal" EG, n. 164.

then pave the way for more specific formation in the second year of the Redshirt Experience.

67. The *Lectio Divina* formation currently being offered to young people across the Diocese will continue, with the Adviser for Youth Ministry liaising with the Adviser for Spirituality and Formation.

### **Social Action Adviser**

68. The Social Action Adviser Post will now bring together the two former roles of Justice & Peace Adviser and Social Action Adviser.
69. There is to be a major development in this area of the life of the Diocese, in the form of membership of the Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN). This will enable the Diocese to become part of National and International work in Social Action and benefit from the resources being offered by CSAN.

### **Dialogue & Unity Adviser**

70. This post continues in its present form, with work in the Ecumenical field taking place in close collaboration with the Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenism. Present collaborations in the field of Mental Health will continue and develop in the future.
71. A Priest Adviser for the inter-faith element of this role will be appointed.

### **Inclusion Adviser**

72. The importance of ensuring that all are welcomed in our parish communities is clear. The engagement of the Inclusion Adviser in the support for the sacramental preparation for those with disabilities will continue.
73. It will also be necessary to develop further the formation of the Ministry of Welcome in the Diocese and, in the short to medium



term, this must be a key aspect of the Adviser's role, with delivery taking place at Deanery level right across the Diocese.

### **Marriage & Family Life Adviser**

74. All the work being carried out in this area of Diocesan life will continue and the Family Groups Project Worker (formerly funded by grant-making bodies) will now be brought into the Diocesan pay structure, thereby ensuring the continuation of the post.

### **Liturgy Adviser**

75. The work of the Liturgy Adviser will continue and it is envisaged that, in time, the Cathedral will grow in importance as a place for Liturgical Formation.

### **Vocations to Priesthood and Diaconate**

76. The formation of Clergy, both Priests and Deacons, begins with the discernment of the Vocation. The role of the Vocations Director and Promoters in respect of Priests is a very important element of the work of the Diocese and consistent and persevering prayer for Vocations to Priesthood should take its part in the prayer life of all in the Diocese.
77. The Vianney Group, which brings together the Vocations Team, Seminary Students and those considering the call to Priesthood will continue and develop its work in the years ahead. Outreach to parishes and schools will be an important element in the promotion of the Vocation to Priesthood.
78. Similarly, the Diaconate Team will continue to support prospective Deacons and their Parish Priests in the discernment process leading to selection for Diaconate Formation. Deacons are a blessing to their parishes and deaneries and will continue to play an increasingly important role in the future Diocese.

79. Prior to seminary formation, those discerning the vocation to Priesthood will usually follow the Propaedeutic Programme offered at St. Alban's College, Valladolid, or (where appropriate) spend time in a parish prior to Seminary Formation. Such initial formation will follow discernment with the Vocations Director and the Seminary Selection Advisory Conference.

### **Clergy On-going Formation**

80. Following the advice of the Council of Priests, the Overnight On-going Formation Period will continue to be a mandatory event for all the priests of the Diocese, with those Deacons able to attend being encouraged so to do.
81. Future on-going formation should, whenever possible, bring together clergy and laity, especially those who are members of the Formation Team.
82. On-going formation with smaller groups can also take place at Deanery level.

### **Lourdes Pilgrimage**

83. The Lourdes Pilgrimage is now fully incorporated into the Diocesan Trust. This is an important sign of its place in the life of the Diocese.
84. The links between the Lourdes experience and the life of Parish and Diocese must be developed, with opportunities to enable a wider representation on Pilgrimage being explored.

## **The Diocesan Curia**

85. The Diocese is served by a number of administrative offices (situated in Bishop's House in Hove) that support the life and pastoral outreach of all in the Diocese. These offices are mandated by Canon Law<sup>17</sup> or by the Episcopal Conference of England & Wales.
86. The Diocesan Trustees, drawn from the Clergy and the Lay Faithful of the Diocese, carry out the requirements and responsibilities of Civil Law at the service of the Diocese.
87. In the light of the report drawn up by the Kinharvie Institute in 2017, there have been some changes to the work and structure of these offices, so that that can better support the life and mission of the Diocese.

## **The Chancery**

88. The Vicar General and Chancellor<sup>18</sup> is supported in his work by one full-time secretary and the Diocesan Archivist. He is also the Moderator of the Curia,<sup>19</sup> with oversight of the whole operation in Bishop's House.

## **The Finance Office**

89. The post of "Financial Secretary" has been changed to that of "Chief Operating Officer."
90. The COO is assisted by a Financial Controller and a Finance Officer, all supported by three others. The Diocese now has the services of an HR Manager and a Property Manager to assist parishes with these two important elements of pastoral provision.
91. The Diocese is also served by a Data Protection Officer and a Health & Safety Adviser.

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<sup>17</sup> CIC, cc. 469-494.

<sup>18</sup> CIC, c.475.

<sup>19</sup> CIC, c.473§2.

## **The Diocesan Tribunal**

92. Supported by one Administrator, the Judicial Vicar and those who work with him, exercise the juridical and pastorally sensitive care of those who seek Declarations of Nullity.

## **Safeguarding Office**

93. The Safeguarding Coordinator, together with one assistant and the Office Manager provide safeguarding training for the Diocese and respond to safeguarding issues as they arise.

## **Communications Team**

94. This team of three has now relocated to the Bishop's House in order to ensure more effective implementation of the requirements of GDPR.

## **Consultative Bodies**

95. The Diocese has a number of consultative bodies, some of which are required by Canon Law. These bodies are listed below:
- The Council of Priests
  - The College of Consultors
  - The Chapter of Canons
  - The Deans
  - The Council of Deacons
  - The Episcopal Council
  - The Diocesan Finance Committee
  - The Diocesan Education Committee
  - The Diocesan Trustees
96. The Pastoral Council, bringing representatives of the lay faithful together with the Bishop will be re-established.
97. A Communications Group, bringing together the Episcopal Council, the COO, the Director of Education, the Communications Officer and the Bishop's Secretary will meet prior to Episcopal Council Meetings.

## Concluding remarks

98. The interesting and perhaps challenging times in which we carry out the Mission given us by Christ present many and varied opportunities, both for the life of our parishes, deaneries and diocese and for our outreach and evangelisation. This will demand a real openness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and a certain agility in the exercise of Mission.
99. Formation for the few and for the sake of the many will bear much fruit. Formation for Deanery Teams will facilitate formation ad intra and the formation within deaneries, parishes and the diocese will facilitate the mission of evangelisation to the wider world.
100. All must be built on a firm foundation of Prayer. The celebration of the Eucharist must always be the centre of our Catholic life. Prayer together in parish communities, in the family and personal prayer will always be a vital aspect of Christian Life and will always be a source of blessing for the life and work of the Diocese.
101. Deanery and parish dispositions will need to change. These are outlined in Appendix I. Such changes are often sensitive and will not be carried out in one single operation, but at times when this will be appropriate, given the local situation.
102. There will be financial implications to this plan, outlined in Appendix II. This will lead to demands on parishes and deaneries, but will be necessary for effective carrying out of the Mission. Clear and easily-understood information will assist people to appreciate the need for appropriate financing.
103. The way in which so many have engaged in the work that has led to this Plan has been very encouraging indeed and there is a real sense of openness to the need for change and development. Persevering and fervent prayer must accompany every step that we take as the Diocese.

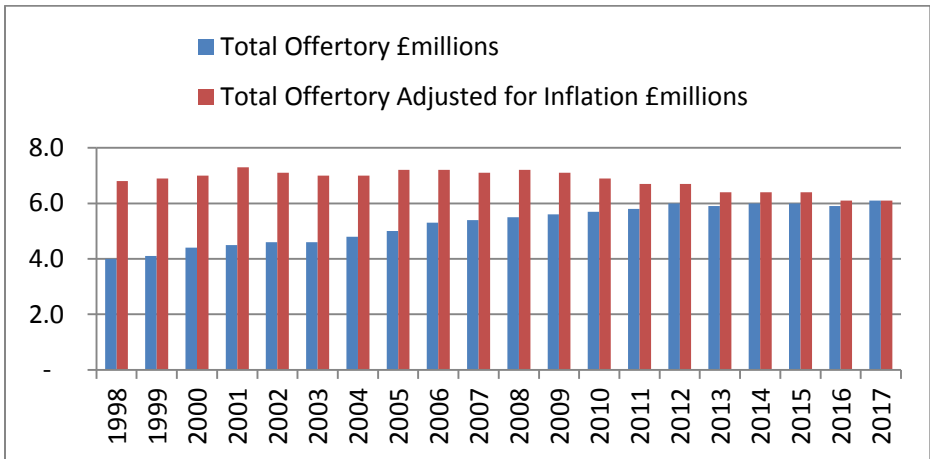
## Appendix II – Finance

1. The Pastoral Plan lays out the Bishop’s vision of the organisation that will be required as we prepare to deliver the Diocesan Mission to 2030. This Appendix takes stock of the current financial position of the Diocese and discusses the financial implications of the Plan. These include the costs incurred in staffing the organisation, provision of office space and facilities, and the funding of core Diocesan activities such as supporting priests in their retirement and seminarians through their years of training.

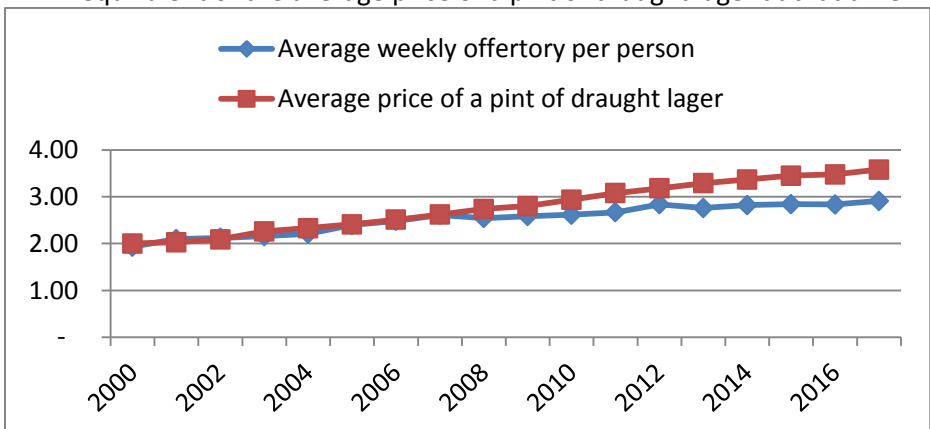
<b>Results for 2017</b>	<b>Parishes</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>2017 total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Income	13,967	2,054	12,049	28,070
Expenditure	-11,305	-4,256	-11,784	-27,345
Levy and transfers	-1,746	1,746	-	-
Operating result	916	-456	265	725
Gain on investments	703	1,234	-	1,937
Net income	1,619	778	265	2,662

2. The net assets of the Diocese increased in 2017 by £2.7 million, to £91.0 million. However, this increase benefited from investment gains and exceptional items totalling £3.1 million. There was an underlying operational deficit of £0.4 million on the ‘day-to-day’ activities of the Diocese.
3. Overall, parishes covered their costs with a collective surplus. The operating surplus of £916,000 included a gain of £652,000 on land sales. Gains on land sales are often ring-fenced for specific capital projects in parishes, and there is an expectation that where possible one third of the funds realised will be donated by the parish to Diocesan funds. Disregarding the exceptional property gains, there was an operational surplus of £264,000.

4. A particular issue affecting parish income is the fact that parishioners are not adjusting their offertory donation to keep pace with inflation. Offertory giving has increased over the last twenty years, but in real terms there is a significant decline. In the chart below the red columns represent the value of the offertory received in previous years when adjusted for inflation. The measure of inflation used in this calculation was the government's Retail Prices Index.



5. The decline in real terms giving can be illustrated if we consider the cost of day-to-day items, for example a pint of draught lager. At the turn of the millennium the average offertory donation per person was around £2. According to the Office for National Statistics this was the equivalent of the average price of a pint of draught lager at that time.

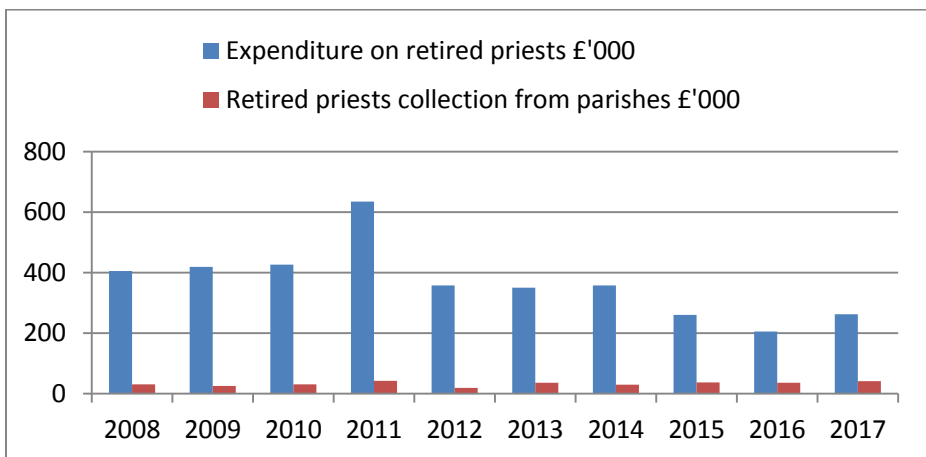


6. In 2017, total offertory was £6,056,000 and estimated Mass attendance across the Diocese was 40,000. This means that the average weekly donation per person was £2.91. The Office of National Statistics reports that the average cost of a pint of draught lager nationally was £3.58. The example of draught lager is one of many items monitored by the Government to assess the level of inflation occurring. Overall average inflation since the millennium was 2.8% per year, so that an item costing £2 in 1999 would now cost £3.30.
7. The Bishop's Pastoral Plan asks parishes to prepare for new additional financial undertakings, such as contributing to the funding of Catholic chaplaincy in our schools. There is also the request for Deaneries to contribute to the cost of participation in the Ascent youth programme. Average giving in 2017 was £11.64 per week for a family of four (£2.91 per person). In order to meet the financial demands of the future an increased offertory must be sought. An extra £1 per person per week would give the parishes £2 million additional income per year. This could be achieved if a family of four increased their average weekly gift to £15.64. This level of increase in offertory giving would go beyond what is necessary for inflation and would represent a new level of provision for the funding of the Mission.
8. The operational deficit clearly derives from expenditure exceeding the income received from recurring sources. This deficit was considered as part of the organisational review carried out by Kinharvie Institute in 2017. This included particular scrutiny of our largest single cost, the staffing of the central Diocesan offices. This has led to a reduction in overall staff numbers employed, as a leaner and more efficient organisational structure was sought. Inevitably, the imperative to control staff costs at a sustainable level must be balanced with the need to ensure that the strategic objectives of the Pastoral Plan can be properly resourced and delivered. The Kinharvie review also contributed to the closure of St. Cuthman's, which was a cause of ongoing financial risk due to operational losses and the need for significant property investment.



## Support for retired priests

9. The Diocese has a moral, as well as a canonical imperative to care for priests in their retirement. In many cases, retired priests are able and most willing to continue to serve the Diocese by acting as supply priests and/or celebrating weekday Masses. Others will need specialised care, and this constitutes the greater part of the costs incurred by the Diocese along with maintenance of the properties provided to retired priests.
10. The parishes contribute to this cost through a second collection which achieves a maximum of around £40,000 per annum. The following graph illustrates the shortfall incurred by the Diocese between 2008 and 2017, and shows that this collection has covered less than 10% of the costs incurred. A total of £3.7 million costs were incurred by the Diocese in the support of retired priests during this period. The total received via the second collection appeal during the ten year period was £331,000.



11. Parishes are encouraged to make donations to the Retired Priest's Fund (or to the fund for Ecclesiastical Education) when a property or land is sold. Consideration is being given to a major fundraising project to secure financial resources for the support of retired priests to 2030.

## **Central Diocesan income**

12. The parish levy of some £1.7 million is the fundamental source of Central Diocesan finance. Dividend income from investments adds a further £0.5 million. Income from legacies and grants is less predictable. The rental income relates mainly to properties that are held for future use by retired priests.
13. The central deficit cannot be resolved without an increase in the parish levy for 2019 and beyond. It will necessary to achieve an increase that goes beyond general inflation. At the same time, we recognise that parishes do not have unlimited resources, and that some are facing financial concerns.
14. As we noted above, £1 additional giving by each person attending Mass each Sunday would achieve £2 million overall increase in parish income. A 33% share of this would reduce the central deficit by £660,000.

## **Conclusion**

15. The Diocese has some financial strengths, with investments of £30m and bank balances of over £5m. There is no immediate financial crisis, but the recurring Central deficit of approaching £1m is a cause of concern, and must be addressed in order to establish a sustainable way forward for the Diocese.
16. Diocesan net assets (reserves) increased in 2017 by £2.7m, but this was achieved through investment and exceptional gains of £3.1m: there was actually a small shortfall on 'day-to-day' operations due to the Central deficit.
17. Parishes made a modest surplus on day-to-day activities overall, but individually there were deficits in some parishes, and concerns as to the impact on reserves.

18. Notwithstanding the action taken following the Kinharvie Report, staff costs (the greatest single element of expenditure in the Central Diocese) will not decrease dramatically in total in 2019 as compared with 2017. New staff have been taken on as a result of changing demands on the Diocese and the need to provide proper support to parishes.
19. The closure of St. Cuthman's removes a substantial exposure to ongoing losses: holding costs continue in the short-term, but a sale is anticipated during 2019. The resources previously deployed maintaining the Retreat House will be used for Formation.
20. It is anticipated that increased levies on parishes will be essential to prevent the Central deficit from continuing at around £1million.
21. Deaneries will also be asked to contribute financial support to ensure participation in the Ascent youth programme and to secure the continuation of Catholic chaplaincies in our schools. These additional commitments along with a higher levy indicate the need for a substantial increase in offertories.
22. Offertories have not kept pace with inflation. Inflation has increased by 65% since 2000, whereas average offertories per person have increased by only 45% (£2 to £2.91). An increase of £1 per person each week would increase parish income by £2m overall. The share of this received through the Diocesan levy would significantly reduce the Central deficit but would not eliminate it.
23. Other income raising initiatives will therefore need to be developed. A significant project to encourage the support of retired priests is envisaged. This will involve a fundraising campaign across the Diocese, giving parishioners an opportunity to express their concern for the security and wellbeing of the retired clergy who have served so loyally, in many cases for over half a century.

# PRAYER FOR THE DIOCESE

Lord, the Word who is Life.  
May all the people of our Diocese  
grow in openness  
to the power of the Holy Spirit,  
so that through a growth  
in understanding and courage,  
and truly open to your call,  
we may bear powerful witness  
to all around us,  
for you are Lord for ever and ever.  
Amen.

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