

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Minutes of the Forum meeting held in the Edmund Room on Tuesday 26 September 2023

1. Present: Canon Matthew Vernon (Chair), Sarah-Jane Allison, Carole Arnold, Margaret Bond, Sue Cockram, Gray Elkin, Ben Jenkins, Fiona Knapp, James Knowles, Jane Leung, Louise Martin, Pam Pitts, Barbara Pycraft, Liz Rowlands, Alice Sheepshanks, Margaret Steavenson, Liz Steele, Doreen Young,

Observing: Chris Andrews, Alan Bond, Frank Leung, Alan McAndrew, Albert Shipton, Ted Simmons, Jan Simmons, Chrissy Trendall, Roberto Gargiulo.

2. Welcome: Canon Matthew opened with a prayer and gritudes.

3. Apologies: Caroline Baker, Canon Philip Banks, David Eaton, Paul Elkin, Dean Joe Hawes, Sue Hughes, Pat Kirby, Robert Lant, Sandra Lant, Kathryn Mitchell, Jane Movley, Jane Olive, Tim Parsons, Rev Anita Rooney, James Stark, Terry Stark, Louise Stewart, Naomi Sturges, Margaret Wheeldon.

4. Minutes: The Minutes of 21 June 2023 were approved with two minor amendments and duly signed.

5. The Future of Forum: Paper circulated prior to the meeting. Discussion at this meeting ahead of draft Terms of Reference at next meeting.

List of topics for Forum - Margaret Steavenson, will this involve officers in more work? Yes may well do. **Alan Bond** – a typical structured Terms of Reference (TOR) looks at purpose, by what methods and with listed constraints to apply. **SJ-A** re-drafting TOR may seem a lengthy process but important to get right. TOR – advice from **Chris Andrews** shorter is better, with clarity. Areas to be included not already mentioned in the discussion paper; Friends of Cathedral, Volunteers are looked after by the Guild of St Edmund, Mothers' Union minutes could be shared with Forum. Suggest we remove specific mention of (Lent and other times) but intention was to include reading groups and house groups. Should Children and Young Families be included? Is this a body already represented elsewhere?

Membership of Forum – Are there too many people needing to be included? Some elected members and some non-elected people should attend. Lay Ministers to be included? Retired clergy to attend as members of congregation, include Ordinands or those training for ministry? Should young people attend occasionally, suggest they are given the opportunity to come along, or meet in their own space and discuss ideas that Forum are bringing to the next meeting. Discuss with young people as to what they would like to do? Servers not mentioned but they are part of the Guild of St Edmund. Do members of the congregation know what Forum is about? Need to communicate this more effectively.

Elected or open to everyone? If we have elected a core of people then they should attend every time. Needs to feel like a responsibility to attend. About 20-30 people is a good number. Should also be open for those who are interested – more of a community, good experience. Suggest sending an alternative representative if an elected person

cannot attend. **AS** – new to Forum and not aware of structure of Cathedral management. **Action point to publicise the Cathedral structure document on the website.** Move from a passive body to a more active body – led by the agenda. Forum needs a catchy banner to capture the fact that Forum is open to all. A mix of elected members and non-elected members is good. Is voting required? Yes occasionally this may be needed. Who is eligible to vote? The Edmund room was deemed successful as a venue this time.

6. **Social Action** (document circulated prior to the meeting) – available for people beyond the cathedral community. Shared for information – feedback – could we include **Young Families** in the social mission section? There may be perceived omissions which are included elsewhere. Not a document that includes everything we do. It was tailored for a specific target audience towards obtaining grants and funding.
7. **Dean's Report:** Matthew reported on behalf of Dean Joe who was preaching at a Friend's ordination in Edinburgh. The Chairs will now be coming in 1st quarter of next year. The Cathedrals Fabric Commission (CFCE) has now approved the removal of pews but the Edmund chair needs a darker staining. Thanks to colleagues for preparing the new application. No decision yet on future of kneelers which is still a work in progress. Autumn events fast approaching - Harvest Festival, Pet Service, Prisons Week, Grand Nave Dinner in early October as a fund raiser and to develop links with future supporters. Thanks to Cressida for organizing this. Cathedrals at Night (national initiative) rejigged into 3 talks, Tony Redman is one of the speakers, **Edmund Lecture** on 20 Oct 6:30pm speaker will be Dame Barbara Woodward OBE the UN representative in New York. Learning Hub – following the departure of Claire Cachelin as Learning Hub Manager, Chapter are seeking a replacement. If the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Project is successful our learning offer will grow. New Honorary Canons are to be appointed. Schools – King Edward VI relationship is growing. Year 7 came to the Cathedral for a service to mark their start of year and clergy are leading assemblies regularly. School Chaplaincy is being looked at again. St Edmundsbury School: Frances Parr, a retired head teacher, is Chair of Governors and Dean Joe has recently become a governor. Following an Ofsted inspection in the summer the school was rated “inadequate” and consequently a process will begin for the school to join an Academy Trust. The governors and staff have the matter in hand and are working hard.
8. **Financial Update:** Sarah Jane reported that this year's budget was set for a deficit of £88k – but now forecast for a £77k deficit. Some areas are not doing as well as expected. The amount the Church Commissioners give has now decreased as funding for some staff posts has come to an end (clergy stipends are funded separately). Cathedral community income budget for this year is £285k however we are looking at a forecast for year end of £269k – planned giving has seen some people move away, into care homes or deceased. Visitor income is down – however the budget was set at a rather unrealistic level. Lego is doing well meeting £10k target. Events expect £104k but may be more. Commercial Property – slightly up on budget. Cathedral Costs are over £2.7k a day. Enterprises are doing very well. PK kitchen extensions may occur this year. Marquee will come down shortly for health and safety reasons.
9. **AOB:** No items raised

The meeting finished with prayers at 7:50pm

Louise Martin/September 2023

Forum dates 2023: Tuesday 21 November.