



# News from Diocesan Council

June to September 2015

The new Diocesan Council met for the first time in June in an atmosphere of prayer and fellowship.



Back row: Joan Small, Fr Peter Simmons, Margaret Adams, Murray McFarlane, Bp John Ford, Fr Dirk van Dissel, Fr Paul Devenport. Front row: Ruth Daws, John Strachan, Fr Peter Carlsson, Fr David Patterson, Fr Richard Litjens, Mark Porter, Donna Jones, Anna Stanley, Fr George Kirreh. Absent: Fr Richard Seabrook, Fr David Price, Fr Michael Varnish, Rick Fisher, David Fleming and Chancellor Robert Tong.

It is this group of people that will need to make decisions and take the lead for Synod to ensure the future of the diocese. With a new way of working smarter the Finance, Audit and Investment (FAI) Committee has been given more responsibility to do quite a lot of the nuts and bolts financial work coming back to Diocesan Council with advice for Council to agree rather than to debate, noting that Council has the final say and further noting that the work of the FAI should be to further the work of Council in terms of policy and respond to requests of Council, to look at the financial implications of, or find the finance for, and to come back with ways of doing that.

## Integrated Accounting System (IAS)

As promoted at Synod the diocese has moved to an integrated accounting system and to date seven parishes/pastoral districts have transitioned to the IAS with two in the process. This system is offered on an opt-in basis and provides accounting and financial administration for those participating. The voluntary services of Bob Plummer remain appreciated in this task.

## Survey of Assets

Council noted the importance of having a strategic overview of the diocesan assets and Mr Jeff McHugh has been commissioned to undertake this review on behalf of the diocese. The Council noted the importance of not conceiving the future to be the same shape as in the past and that real estate needs to be rationalised. Whilst this task remains a work in progress, a preliminary report was received at the September meeting.

Synod Mission motion - "working with the Bishop in all areas of his mission action plan to *walk the way of holiness*".

The Council has been focussed on wide review in many matters to find new direction going forward.

How do we order ourselves so that the church can grow?  
What do we stop that inhibits growth?  
What should we remove that restricts growth?  
What should we put in place that enables growth?  
How can we reshape it so that it is more appropriate?

## Synod motion - tender for the Diocesan Auditor

The tendering process has resulted in the acceptance of the audit proposal submitted by BDO Audit (SA) Pty Ltd.

## Murray Bridge Building Project

This proposed project remains a work in progress as Council awaits the outcomes of building and financial feasibility studies.

## Investment Distribution Rate

Paid on all investments held with the diocese was set at 2.00% per annum for the six month period to 30 September 2015.

## 2016 Clergy Stipends

Council approved an increase of 2.5% on the 2015 minimum stipend rate for 2016.

## 2016 Clergy Travel Rates

Clergy travel rates remain unchanged for 2016 apart from the increase in the clergy kilometre rate from 22 cents/km to 25 cents/km.  
(Rates will be circulated to treasurers separately)

## 2016 Ordination Candidates Fund & Home Mission Fund Targets

Council confirmed that these diocesan wide targets remain at \$15,000 for each Fund.

## Thanksgiving Motion

That this Council is deeply indebted to Father Richard Seabrook for his ministry in the diocese both as Parish Priest, Archdeacon, Vicar General and Administrator and that we wish him God's speed for his future ministry.

## 2016 Synod

27 & 28 May, Woodcroft College.

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## **Website**

<http://www.murray.anglican.org/>