

**BISHOPS STAFF MEETING (BSM)**

**Terms of Reference**

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| **1.** | **NAME** |
| 1.1 | Bishop’s Staff Meeting (BSM) |
| **2.** | **PURPOSE** |
| 2.1 | The purpose of the BSM is to support and advise the Diocesan Bishop to exercise their Oversight and Jurisdiction under Canon C18 and other legislation.  BSM – as officers of the Bishop - work to lead, enable and promote a coordinated and transformational approach to mission across Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Swindon and North Wiltshire. They lead enable and promote a coordinated and transformational approach to supporting the work of our parishes, churches, chaplaincies and schools.  BSM also work to ensure that Bishop’s Council has the appropriate information and advice to make well-informed decisions. |
| **3.** | **AUTHORITY** |
| 3.1 | Members of BSM include those who have their own jurisdiction (the Archdeacons) and those whose authority derives from Ecclesiastical and Charity Law. Those who hold the Bishop’s licence are accountable to the Bishop. BSM works corporately to exercise oversight through collaborative endeavour. Their meetings are framed by prayer and theological reflection on pastoral practice |
| **4.** | **FORMATION OF A NEW COMMITTEE** |
| 4.1 | Not applicable. |
| **5..** | **MEMBERSHIP** |
| **5.1** | **MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT** |
| 5.1.1 | Not applicable |
| 5.2 | **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS** |
| 5.2.1 | By provincial custom, the membership of BSM is:   * The Diocesan Bishop * The Bishop of Swindon * The Archdeacons of Malmesbury and Bristol * The Dean * The Diocesan Secretary * The Bishop’s Chaplain (the Secretary) |
| 5.3 | **ELECTED MEMBERS** |
| 5.3.1 | Not applicable |
| 5.4 | **APPOINTED MEMBERS** |
| 5.4.1 | The Chair may appoint new members to the committee if particular areas of work need to be represented on the committee. In line with our strategic priorities, the following are regular attendees:   * The Dean of Women’s Ministry * The Racial Justice Lead * The Associate Archdeacon * The Director of Mission and Ministry |
| 5.5. | **CO-OPTED MEMBERS** |
| 5.5.1 | Not applicable |
| 5.6 | **ADVISERS/VISITORS** |
| 5.6.1 | * Other ministers, members of staff, or external guests may be invited to attend BSM, from time to time, as the agenda requires. * Where guests are in attendance, they should be invited to honestly, politely and rigorously debate and discuss the items, to enable collective discernment about ways forward. |
| **5.7** | **CHAIR** |
| 5.7.1 | The Chair is the Diocesan Bishop of Bristol |
| **5.8** | **VICE CHAIR** |
| 5.8.1 | The Vice Chair is the Bishop of Swindon |
| **5.9** | **RESIGNATIONS** |
| **5.9.1** | Not Applicable |
| **5.10** | **CASUAL VACANCIES** |
| **5.10.1** | If the post of one of the ex officio members is vacant, ,a nominated member of the relevant team maybe invited by the Chair to attend the meeting and report during the Casual Vacancy. |
| **6.** | **OFFICERS OF THE MEETING** |
| 6.1 | The Secretary is the Bishop’s Chaplain. |
| **7.** | **FUNCTIONS OF THE MEETING** |
| 7.1 | To implement the statutory responsibilities laid out by Canon and set out in the Charge to the Diocesan Bishop at their Enthronement:  **Strategic**   * Act as an **advisor to the Bishop of Bristol** in his/her leadership role on critical matters for General Synod, Diocesan Synod, Bishops Council, and wider community engagement. * Champion, and live out, our **diocesan values**. * Lead and implement our strategic work by **inspiring, supporting and guiding the leaders** in our churches, communities, schools, cathedral, chaplaincies and - through the Diocesan Secretary - the Diocesan Support Services (DSS). * Identify and activate opportunities for **coordinating and prioritising resources and activities** between the cathedral, churches, chaplaincies, schools, and the DSS. * Identify and activate opportunities for **coordinating and prioritising resources** to support Interfaith activities and relationships with Civic leaders, Faith leaders and Ecumenical partnerships. * A **prayerful, empowering, and critical friend to the Senior Leadership Team** (SLT) in their task of implementing the strategy and supporting our Ministers, Parishes and Schools. * Supporting the ongoing development of clergy and lay leaders * Act as a conduit and filter for **National Church initiatives**, championing key issues amongst diocesan leaders. * Engage with our stakeholders externally, as necessary, to support strategic delivery.   **Operational**   * **Pray for and support each other**; the BSM, churches, schools, cathedral and chaplaincies, and leaders across the diocese. * Ensure the implementation of **Safeguarding** policies, procedures and behaviours across the diocese at all levels to develop a safer space and culture, calling for corrective action where needed. * Design, review, and recommend **diocesan policies** **for Ministers** to the Bishop for approval (and for Bishop’s Council to note), ensuring subsequent implementation across the diocese. * Design, review, and approve **policies for ministry** and send to Bishop’s Council for information and ensure subsequent implementation across the diocese. * Nurture the **wellbeing of our leaders** - ordained and lay - ensuring support is in place to enable them to flourish in their mission. * Oversee **vacancies** and support the appointment of clergy and chaplains, identifying those parishes in need of **revitalisation,** and ensuring development plans are in place. * Advise the Diocesan Bishop on the strategic allocation of curates to parishes, the recruiting of ordinands, and the development of a **pipeline of future leaders.** * To advise the Bishop on clergy deployment, in accordance with the Bishop's responsibilities under Canon C18:6, the Patronage (Benefices) Measure, the Pastoral Measure and other relevant legislation, and reflecting the DBF budget approved by Diocesan Synod * Work to revitalise and plant new churches and advising the Bishop on BMOs to support these. * Advise the Bishop on overseas partnership links with other churches. |
| **8.** | **MEETINGS** |
| **8.1** | **FREQUENCY**   * The meetings will occur monthly, as far as is practicable. * They will aim to be scheduled 3 weeks before Bishop’s Council (when appropriate), and 6 weeks before Diocesan Synod (as appropriate). * There will be two days of residential meetings, up to twice a year. |
| **8.2** | **AGENDA AND PAPERS** |
|  | * The secretary will call for agenda items before each meeting and will aim to issue papers (including the outstanding action list) 4 working days before each meeting when possible. Some papers may necessarily be distributed later. * The meetings will normally be preceded by Holy Communion and will run from 1000-1500 unless the agenda requires otherwise. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. * Significant new items (i.e. not routine reports) should normally come to BSM with a covering paper, including: * Name of item, author and date * BSM role – for information, shaping support, for decision * How it relates to our vision and strategy * Capacity implications – financial and workforce * Expected outcome of the work/paper * Executive summary (where papers are longer than four sides of A4) * Recommendation * What needs to be communicated and to whom * Agreed actions will be recorded and sent out after the meeting. * All meetings should be conducted in line with our values and in ways that demonstrate mutual respect, attentiveness to God, timeliness and enabling broad engagement with the issues * BSM members will commit to reading all papers before the meeting commences. |
| **8.3** | **QUORUM** |
|  | * Not applicable. * BSM members should place a high priority on attending in person. In extremis, a member may join by video link. * It is expected that members will attend the service of Holy Communion which begins each meeting. |
| **8.4** | **ACTION POINTS** |
| **8.4.1** | The Action list will be drafted by the Secretary and approved by the Chair. |
| **8.4.2** | The aim will be for the action list to be issued within 7 working days of the meeting. |
| **9.** | **DELEGATION** |
|  | Once agreed at BSM, members are delegated the authority to implement decisions or take actions within their own area of responsibility, and to liaise with other members who have parallel actions or related responsibilities within BSM. |
| **10.** | **CONFIDENTIALITY** |
| 10.1 | All matters discussed by BSM must be kept confidential unless otherwise indicated by the Chair or Vice Chair. |
| 10.2 | Matters which need actively communicating may be summarised by the Chair at the end of the meeting. |
| **11.** | **REPORTING** |
|  | There is no reporting requirement placed on BSM |
| **12.** | **REVIEW** |
| 12.1 | BSM ToRs will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner if a new Diocesan Bishop so directs, taking account of the Charge to the Diocesan Bishop at their Enthronement. |
| 12.2 | BSM will collectively agree their ToR under the direction of the Diocesan Bishop. |

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| **Terms of Reference first drafted** | 13 January 2025 |
| **Last reviewed** |  |
| **To be reviewed** | January 2028 |

**ANNEX – BSM STAKEHOLDERS**

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| **STAKEHOLDER GROUP** | **INTEREST** |
| Ministers (Lay and Ordained) | Theological and practical leadership, support & guidance |
| Parishes | Practical support and advice |
| Schools | Practical support and advice  CYP engagement |
| Bishop’s Council | Policy and annual budget advice |
| Diocesan Synod | Policy and annual budget advice |
| NCIs | Oversight of funded projects  Implementation of NCI strategic objectives  Support to General Synod |
| Other Dioceses (particularly in SW England) | Sharing best practice  Collaborating |
| Partners (Public, Private and 3rd Sector) | Mutual projects/campaigns |
| General Public | Engagement, notably through the 5 marks of mission |
| Media | Communicating our mission  Responding to enquiries  Crisis communications |
| Government (national and local) | Pursuant to the Gospel imperatives of the Diocese |