

**BISHOP'S COUNCIL REPORT TO DIOCESAN SYNOD
SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2025**

Since the last Synod meeting on 19 July, there have been two meetings of the Bishop's Council, on 2 October and 4 November. The following matters were discussed:

Strategy

1. Alex Shilkoff presented the proposed governance framework for the Strategy Delivery 2025-2031. The comprehensive document set out accountability and reporting structures, including those required by national church e.g. for the Strategic Mission & Ministry Investment Board funding.
2. The Reverend Anesia Cook and Mrs Rachel Edmonds attended to provide an update on the Racial Justice work and draft Toolkit Resource (which will be presented to Synod in 2026).

Finance

1. The Budget for 2026 was considered and agreed for presentation to Diocesan Synod on 22 November.
2. A finance update was provided at each meeting, including year-end forecasts against budgeted position and Common Fund receipts.

Governance and Operational

1. The Diocesan Secretary circulated a report which gives an overview of strategic and operational matters and included the following highlights:
 - The planned clergy open day to be held in London had been cancelled due to lack of interest, there will be follow-up for those who did express an interest though.
 - The Northern DAC conference took place in Rotherham and went well.
 - General Synod elections to fill a casual vacancy over the summer concluded in the Reverend Canon Andrew Howard being duly elected.
 - A job evaluation project had been completed over the summer and was presented to Bishop's Council by Judith Knight, HR Consultant.
2. Risk Register – a full review of the Risk Register is carried out quarterly and presented to Bishop's Council for review and comment. Risks that have been regraded or removed are noted.
3. Dignity at Work/Bullying and Harassment Policy – Amanda Barraclough attended to present the new policies, which will also be presented at Diocesan Synod on 22 November.
4. The Instrument of Delegation to the Bishop of Doncaster was agreed and the Rt Revd Leah Vasey-Saunders was welcomed to her first Council meeting on 2

October, following the services of Consecration on 16 September and Installation at Sheffield Cathedral on 20 September.

Safeguarding

1. Certification had been received from the Archbishops' Council confirming that the diocese has met all the national safeguarding standards, including having a Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, supervision in place, continuity in safeguarding leadership and addressing any skills gaps, as well as having a formal SLA with the Cathedral.
2. Nine O'Clock Service trial – it was noted that the sentencing hearing had been postponed until September 2026. The diocesan survivor support will continue in the meantime.
3. The INEQE audit of all dioceses and Cathedrals will take place in Sheffield in May 2026 and planning is underway for that.

Bishop's Council Away Day

1. An away day for Council members took place on 8 November. The agenda focused on the Nolan Principles (seven standards of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership) and responsibilities of trusteeship.