

REVIEW OF SYNOD STRATEGIC MISSION AND CHURCH BUILDING GRANT PANELS

I met with Keith Morrison and David Walters convenors of the two grant panels to discuss their operations and moving forward for the review at the October Synod Together Meeting.

It was felt that the operation of the panels had enabled a more focused approach to making grants available to churches within the Synod. At the same time, it gave churches a more visible sign of the grant procedures.

The panels were originally set up in 2019 for a trial period of two years with each having an annual budget of £1.0 million. Both panels have operated easily within these budgets.

The Strategic Mission Panel awarded grants totalling:

2020 - £220,000

2021 - £176,000 (to date)

The Building Grants Panel awarded grants totalling:

2020 – Annual Church Maintenance Grants £108,000

Church Building Grants / Loans £578,000

£686,000

2021 – to date

Annual Church Maintenance Grants £ 14,000

Church Building Grants / Loans £317,000

£331,000

It was agreed to recommend the following to Synod Together: namely:

- 1. Instead of a renewal the panels are established as permanent grant making bodies within Southern Synod,**
- 2. The Annual Church Maintenance Grants budget (£250,000) be removed from the budget of the Panel and placed in the Synod's annual budget under "Annual and Emergency Repair Grants",**
- 3. The annual budgets for each panel be reduced to £750,000.**
This is really no difference for the Building Panel as £250,000 had been reserved for the Annual Church Maintenance Grants part of budget. Keith Morrison agreed that this should be sufficient for the Mission Panel at this time. It needs to be appreciated that if required budgets can be reviewed.

Both panels have operated in a period of great uncertainty. I think that the Council should record a large thanks to Colin McCracken, Mark Price Haworth and Martin Hayward for the work that they done during this time.

John Denison
Synod Treasurer
24th September 2021