Corff Cynrychiolwyr Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru
The Representative Body of The Church in Wales

A meeting of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales was held online and at 2 Callaghan Square, Cardiff on 26 March 2026.

Present:

Ex officio members

Chair of the Standing Committee (and *Chair of the St Davids Diocesan Board of Finance*)
Tim Llewelyn *

Chairs of the Diocesan Boards of Finance
St Asaph: Sam Allin *
Bangor: Dr Hywel Parry-Smith *
Llandaff: Michael Lawley ♦
Monmouth: Ian Loynd ♦

Elected members
St. Asaph: The Very Reverend Nigel Williams *
Paul Williams *
Bangor: The Reverend Canon Miriam Beecroft *
St Davids: Judith Hayward ♦
The Venerable Paul Mackness *
Llandaff: Dr Heather Payne ♦
The Venerable Rod Green ♦
Monmouth: The Venerable Ian Rees *
Swansea & Brecon: The Reverend Dr Adrian Morgan *
Elizabeth Thomas ♦

Nominated members
Chris Clarke *
Professor Medwin Hughes (Chair) ♦
Peter Kennedy *

Co-opted members
Richard Anning ♦
Jane Heard ♦

* *Attended the meeting online*
♦ *Attended the meeting in person*

Apologies: Apologies were received from the Most Reverend Cherry Vann, Nicola Gibbons, and Thomas Lloyd.

In attendance:	The following members of staff were present for the entire meeting: the Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Finance, the Head of Legal Services, the Governance Manager and the Governance Officer. The Principal of St Padarn's was in attendance for agenda items RB26/01 and RB26/02 only. The Director of Safeguarding was in attendance for agenda items RB26/13 to RB26/15 only. The Director of Property Strategy was in attendance for agenda items RB26/18 only.
Prayers:	Opening prayers were led by Archdeacon Rod Green.
Conflicts of interest:	Michael Lawley declared an interest as an employee of Cooke & Arkwright regarding discussions of the provincial office under agenda item RB26/18.
Opening comments:	The Chair welcomed Elizabeth Thomas to her first Representative Body meeting as the new lay representative for the diocese of Swansea & Brecon. The Chair congratulated Archdeacon Rod Green on his recent appointment as Bishop of Stepney in the diocese of London, noting this would be his last meeting, and thanking him for his varied and valued contributions to the work of the Representative Body and the wider province.

Enhancing RB funding for mission and ministry

RB26/01

The Principal of St Padarn's joined the meeting.

The Chief Operating Officer reminded the Representative Body that at its meeting in November 2025 (minute 25/43), it had been informed that the Governing Body had passed a private members' motion, which asked the Representative Body to undertake an analysis of its finances to consider the effect of increasing its contribution towards local ministry, while maintaining the provision of funding via the Church Growth Fund.

At its meeting in November 2025, the Representative Body had received and discussed a paper that provided a detailed financial analysis following the Governing Body motion. That paper and the scenarios it contained had since been discussed by the Investment Committee, the Bench of Bishops, and the Chairs of the diocesan boards of finance and diocesan secretaries. It had also been discussed by the Representative Body and Standing Committee at a joint meeting of the two bodies in early February 2026: part of that discussion had also included the diocesan secretaries.

The emergence of consensus and subsequent work

The Chief Operating Officer introduced a paper that had been prepared subsequent to the series of discussions of the financial analysis paper. The paper sought to articulate the consensus position that had begun to emerge through dialogue, which included:

- An understanding that the Representative Body was required to not take actions that could be prejudicial to the Church in Wales's long-term financial model so must confine expenditure to levels that did not lead to long-terms depreciation of its investments.
- A broad acceptance that the maximum ceiling of tolerable expenditure, based on professional advice, was 4% of the Representative Body's investments, taken on average over a five-year period. This figure would be regularly reviewed by the Investment Committee.
- Given those limits and that the Representative Body was currently spending 6.7% of the average value of its investment over a five-year period, there was acceptance that the Representative Body was unable to fund additional expenditure to support local ministry costs without adjusting funding for the Church Growth Fund.
- Immediately terminating the Church Growth Fund was not feasible for reasons of equity in dioceses' opportunities to apply for funding from the Fund. If the Church Growth Fund were to be closed in order to fund other spending, it should be done in a tapered manner so dioceses that had not brought forward applications to the Fund could access funding for a specified time.
- There was strong support for the continuation of the Structural Resilience Fund – and for it to be made permanent and index linked.
- There was scepticism about the wisdom of increasing direct funding by the Representative Body to local ministry costs because of the possible impact this could have on stewardship and local financial giving. There was support for considering ways in which the Representative Body could improve indirect financial support for local ministry costs.
- There was strong support for the Representative Body absorbing the full cost of church insurance.
- There was strong support for the Representative Body providing financial support to dioceses to allow them to increase the clergy stipend by the 12% necessary to match stipend levels in the Church of England.
- There was strong support for increasing accountability for money received from the Representative Body.

Funding for cathedrals had also been considered with the cathedral deans indicating that the appointments of chief operating officers had been positive additions and suggesting that funding was provided sufficient to fund such roles in all cathedrals. While there was support for ensuring cathedrals were well and properly funded specific proposals had not been discussed in detail.

Principles

With the consensus that had emerged following the consultation process, ten core principles had been set out to guide a position on future funding for the Church in Wales and inform the strategic direction of the Representative Body:

i. The Representative Body has a responsibility to fund the mission and ministry of the Church whilst ensuring the intergenerational preservation of financial resources.
ii. The Representative Body should fund mission and ministry to the *maximum tolerable* extent.
iii. The Representative Body should ensure intergenerational financial equity by not taking actions that reduce income to a level where it cannot maintain funding to the Church in Wales at the same level.
iv. The *maximum tolerable* distribution rate (the amount of money that can be distributed on an annual basis) is currently defined, by the Representative Body's Investment Committee, as 4% of the Representative Body's investment value taken on average over a five-year period.
v. The distribution rate ceiling will be regularly reviewed by the Representative Body's Investment Committee and agreed by the Representative Body.
vi. The diocese is the primary engine of missional growth and will be the main recipient of *direct* Representative Body funding.
vii. Cathedrals have a special status in the life of the Church and will continue to receive *direct* Representative Body funding.
viii. The Representative Body has a duty to ensure that provided funds are provably used for the purpose intended and are subject to robust governance processes.
ix. Ministry areas will receive *indirect* funding from the Representative Body through provision of services and the centralisation of some costs.
x. The Church in Wales will seek to maintain approximate parity with Church of England.

Proposal

Following the dialogue and the emergence of a consensus position, the Chief Operating Officer set out a proposal based on the consensus position, which was supplemented by a detailed cost analysis. It was proposed that:

1. The Church Growth Fund was terminated on a planned basis in order to realise financial flexibility for the Representative Body to provide additional funding. It was suggested that the Church Growth Fund continued to offer funding to the maximum affordable extent.

It was noted that this proposal could not be achieved within the 4% distribution rate ceiling but an additional sum of £10million could be provided albeit with a marginal degree of risk.

2. The Structural Resilience Fund was made permanent and index linked (to the Consumer Price Index (CPI)) from 2027. Index linking meant lifting the size of the diocesan grant by the value of the agreed stipend and salary increases on an annual basis.

It was noted that by increasing the Structural Resilience Funding by CPI (estimated to be a 3.5% increase from 1 January 2027) would make the Fund a total of £3,829,500 in 2027.

3. Church insurance would become a full cost to the Representative Body, rather than a shared cost with ministry areas. This would provide some financial support to ministry areas and reduce the administrative burden as the Representative Body would become the sole client for the provision of insurance.

It was noted that with an inflationary assumption of 3.5% applied, total insurance costs for 2027 would cost £2,624,090.

4. The Representative Body would model the cost of increasing stipend levels to be proximate with those in the Church of England, a model that would be based on the numbers of clergy at a fixed point in time. A grant would be provided to dioceses to cover the full difference between the 2026 Church in Wales stipend and the 2026 Church of England stipends: a grant would be provided to dioceses on an annual basis which would be index linked and uplifted by the value of the agreed stipend and salary increases annually. The roles of bishops, assistant bishops, deans and archdeacons would not be uplifted due to current Church in Wales stipend levels already exceeding those of the Church of England.

It was noted that a 12% uplift to clergy stipends would mean an additional cost of £1,888,289 from January 2027. (Bishops, assistant bishops, cathedral deans and archdeacons' stipends were excluded from this increase.)

It was also proposed that as part of this, consideration was given to the possibility of introducing a dual scheme for clergy stipends: a basic stipend (which would be supplemented by clergy retaining occasional office fees and the benefit of any stipend augmentation trusts); or an enhanced stipend level where occasional office fees were surrendered and paid to the ministry area, and was net of stipend augmentation trust benefits. The exact details of how such a scheme would operate would need to be subject to further consideration.

5. Cathedral funding was increased by a value of £28,783 per cathedral to contribute towards the funding of a chief operating officer role in each. The Representative Body currently funded an administrator post in each cathedral. The increase value was calculated as the difference between the funding currently provided for the administrator role and the estimated salary of £50,000, plus on costs, of a chief operating officer.

It was noted that in total this would cost £172,700.

6. Partnership Funding for dioceses and the Representative Body meeting the cost of the Clergy Pension Scheme would remain as currently constituted.

The total cost of all additional activities on a per year basis, whilst allowing for the full committed cost of the Church Growth Fund funding and an additional; £10million contingency for funding, was £45,519,460.

Distribution rate

The paper emphasised that if the Representative Body committed to the consensus position and allocated a further £10million of Church Growth Fund funding, it must purposefully choose to exceed the 4% distribution rate ceiling against the total value of investments until the end of 2033. In 2033, it would be assumed that Church Growth Fund obligations would cease entirely, and the distribution rate would fall below 4% against the total value of investments. The investment fund would then require at least three years where there were no additional demands on funding above what was already committed to recover potential losses.

It was noted that the consensus position came with inherent risk, because it was predicated on the continuing performance of the stock market and assumed continuation of the trends over the last few years. It diminished the Representative Body's ability to secure itself against a prolonged downturn in investment returns. It was therefore imperative that the Representative Body considered ways in which it could mitigate risk. This should be with the explicit aim of returning the distribution rate in the period 2026-2033 to the 4% ceiling. That could be achieved by reducing operational spending or reducing funding on a temporary or permanent basis.

It was proposed that the Finance and Investment committees be explicitly tasked with monitoring investment levels and empowered to request corrective action when capital gains did not meet a target of 4% more than CPI in any given year.

Conditionality

The Representative Body had a fiduciary duty to ensure that funds it provided were provably used for the stated purpose for which they were granted and subject to good governance. It was proposed that a principle of conditionality should apply to the release of funding with quarterly reports consisting of management accounts, minutes of DBF and relevant sub-committee meetings, commentary on the impact of funding and on recent membership trends, financial analysis regarding the relevant cost categories to which the funding has been applied and the DBF risk register.

Discussion

Detailed and wide-ranging discussion of the proposals and other details contained within the paper followed.

Church Growth Fund

The Representative Body noted that applications to the Church Growth Fund had been paused while the Fund and its future levels of funding were considered. Some disquiet was expressed at the proposals to bring the Church Growth Fund to an end and make an additional £10million available (in addition to funds already committed to projects) for final applications. To date, only three dioceses had received funding via tier 2 of the scheme and concern was expressed at how the remaining £10million would be allocated: some dioceses had been working on plans for a number of bids to the Fund which would total more than £10million.

It was felt that those projects already active under the Church Growth Fund scheme should be reviewed to ensure that funding provided was fruitful and that if any project, or element of it, was not being effective or not proceeding in line with what was intended, funding could be reallocated. An awareness of dioceses' intentions for any future applications, with probable costs, would be helpful to inform decision making.

Clergy stipends

The affordability of the proposal to increase stipends to match the Church of England was discussed. It was acknowledged that a large discrepancy emerging between Church in Wales stipends and Church of England stipends was not helpful to clergy recruitment and retention. The possible implication on pension costs was discussed, and it was felt to be necessary to wait until the outcome of the actuarial valuation of the Clergy Pension Scheme (which had taken place as at 31 December 2025, the report of which was awaited) was known before any substantive decisions were made.

Consultation

Discussion moved to the scale and scope of the proposals expressed within the paper. The scope of the paper was very broad, and it was felt further and wider consultation was needed before any decisions were made. The Representative Body would report to the Governing Body the work undertaken so far and that the need for wider consultation had been identified. It was noted that any consultation needed to build on the work undertaken so far and questions should be formed to allow further listening rather than allowing free discussion, which may be misinformed and misleading.

It was acknowledged that the simple answer to the question posed by the private members' motion was 'no': the Representative Body was not in a position to increase its funding to local ministry while retaining the Church Growth Fund at current levels.

Distribution rate

The Chair of the Investment Committee emphasised both the importance of realising the risk of stock market fluctuations and the effect this would have on future investment income, and the importance of not committing expenditure that breached the 4% distribution rate advised by the Investment Committee.

The ongoing importance of the Structural Resilience Fund to dioceses was emphasised.

Efficiency savings

The Chair concluded the discussion by emphasising the complexity and sensitivity of the situation. It was noted that some elements of the future financial strategy centred around affordability and that it was therefore important that the Representative Body made sure its activities were efficient. The Chair therefore challenged the provincial staff to undertake an exercise to identify £2million of savings in operational expenditure and a further £1million of savings in the operations of St Padarn's Institute.

Conclusion

Following discussion the Representative Body:

i. Supported the pausing of the Church Growth Fund: no further applications would be considered *pro tempore* until the future funding of the Fund was resolved;
ii. Agreed it would report the current position to the Governing Body at its meeting in April 2026;
iii. Agreed to initiate a consultation within the wider province to inform future decision making in terms of the Representative Body's financial strategy.
iv. Supported the proposal that the Representative Body funded the insurance costs of church and cathedral buildings; and
v. Requested staff to identify efficiency savings of £2million from the general provincial operational budget and a further £1million of savings in the operations of St Padarn's Institute.

St Padarn's 'deep dive'

RB26/02

The Chair introduced a report from the St Padarn's 'deep dive' working group, which outlined a comprehensive review of St Padarn's Institute's governance, financial model, training provision and estate. The report noted that current arrangements lacked clarity and cohesion between strategic direction and funding, and that reform was required.

The Chair outlined each of the following proposals in the report in turn:

1. Establish a single Council with full oversight of St Padarn's, bringing together governance, strategy and resource allocation.
2. Move to a multi-year block grant funding model, replacing annual budget setting with a three-to-four-year funding cycle based on agreed plans and targets.
3. Introduce an efficiency target for operational costs.
4. Undertake a critical review of academic courses and their provision, assessing viability and future provision.
5. Develop a new resource allocation model covering all aspects of the Institute's work, with clearer costings.
6. Review and change the residential training model, including increasing the time students spend on site.
7. Require the Principal to reside on campus during term time.
8. Review and enhance the educational offer, including the introduction of intensive Welsh language immersion.
9. Require candidates to spend time in a theological institution outside Wales (or include this as part of the learning package).
10. Establish a professional standards framework for newly ordained priests.
11. Review and restructure the Theology for Life programme to a more locally provided or hybrid model.
12. Take a formal decision on the future of the St Padarn's site at Llandaff, informed by condition surveys and wider strategic considerations.

The Chair proposed that the Principal be asked to address an efficiency target of £1 million (proposal 3) through a costed proposal to the Finance Committee, with consideration to be given to current infrastructure and course provision.

Discussion followed.

Consideration was given to the comparative cost of St Padarn's. It was reported that St Padarn's was more expensive than other theological colleges, principally because it served a dispersed population which affected the cost base. It was noted that costs were approximately 10% higher than comparable colleges, with around £700,000 relating to the living costs of ordinands; without those costs, expenditure would be approximately £2.5 million. It was also noted that any significant reduction in cost would materially alter the nature of the training offered.

The current model of candidacy and residential formation was also discussed. It was suggested that alternative models, including part-time and full-time pathways, should be considered by the Bench. It was emphasised that any review should be undertaken in appropriate detail and caution was expressed against reverting to models that had previously failed. It was noted that comparable models had largely been moved away from in the Church of England, where a decline of 45% had been reported. It was felt that all options should remain open.

Discussion moved to consider the governance arrangements of St Padarn's and the tension between the vision for the Institute and cost. The creation of a single council would help to support more cohesive working and provide a better environment in which any tensions between vision and finance could be navigated. The Chair also emphasised that the Bench was clear in its affirmation of St Padarn's and was also clear that the need for a theological college in Wales remained.

The Chair outlined the next steps, proposing that three workstreams be established to consider governance, finance and academic matters.

The Representative Body noted the position.

The Principal of St Padarn's left the meeting.

Salary structure

RB26/03

The Chief Operating Officer introduced a detailed paper setting out the conclusions of the external review of the Representative Body's staff salary structure. The review had been undertaken by Crona, a firm which specialised in salary surveys and salary benchmarking. The paper documented the outcome of the review and detailed a proposed new salary structure, which had been discussed and supported by the Human Resources and Finance committees.

Job roles, salary bands and benchmarking

As part of the review, salary levels for all staff roles had been reviewed and current job descriptions had been provided to Crona for that purpose in late 2025. The ensuing evaluation produced scores for roles against ten criteria which included educational standards and skill level, proven ability, managerial and supervisory responsibility, independence of action job complexity, work pressure and the holding of internal and external relationships. Scores were then used to inform a ranking system which governed the allocation to salary bands.

Each role was benchmarked against suitable sectoral, specialist and demographic comparators: such comparative organisations included national charities with a significant presence in Wales, the Welsh charitable sector, lay provincial roles within the Church of England, the Welsh civil service and local councils, lay roles in Church in Wales dioceses and (for St Padarn's staff) English theological colleges.

The benchmarking exercise provided values for salaries for individual roles, presented in the form of quotients all of which were relevant to roles elsewhere in employment in a close approximation of the context to the Representative Body. Lower quotients indicated the lowest comparative figure paid for specific roles; median quotients indicated the median figure for specific roles; and upper quotients indicated the highest comparative figure for specific roles.

A total of eight salary bands emerged from the benchmarking process, and all job roles had been allocated a position within a band following the review and benchmarking processes, which were noted.

The use of the revised salary scale in practice and in the context of recruitment was set out.

Following the review process, the majority of staff would move to the proposed new structure at parity: ten roles had been reviewed as having been hitherto underpaid (and whose salaries would therefore increase under the proposed new structure) with one instance of a role being hitherto overpaid and whose salary would therefore be frozen.

Performance assessment

Performance assessment would form an intrinsic part of the revised salary structure. Performance review would be undertaken as part of the appraisal process and would be predicated on five categories:

- *Underperforming* – where a member of staff had not achieved defined performance indicators without reasonable mitigation.
- *Developing* – where a member of staff was learning a new role or adapting to a changed job description and had not yet developed the skills required to fulfil the job description.
- *Performing* – where a member of staff had discharged their role effectively and within the job description.
- *Strong* – where a member of staff had discharged their role effectively beyond their job description which added value to their staff team and the wider organisation.
- *Outstanding* – where a member of staff had discharged their role effectively with multiple outputs beyond their job description which had added value to their staff team and the wider organisation.

The proposed salary structure envisaged a 3% pay increase awarded to those members of staff appraised to be ‘outstanding’ and a 2% pay increase awarded to those members of staff appraised to be ‘strong’. No awards would be made for those appraised to be within the other three categories of review. All staff would continue to receive the annual inflationary pay increase: the 3% and 2% increases awarded to those appraised to be ‘outstanding’ or ‘strong’ respectively would be in addition to the agreed annual inflationary pay increase.

The process for approving performance assessment for pay awards, together with the appeal process, was set out.

Financial impact

The Chief Operating Officer explained that via a performance-based salary reward, model pay awards would not have the ubiquity of the current salary structure. Therefore, assuming performance awards were controlled and calibrated, the proposed revised structure would realise overall cost savings for the Representative Body or around £43,000, which would accrue over time.

The necessary increases in salary to the ten roles, that the review had deemed to be hitherto underpaid, would result in an overall increase to the salary budget of £11,740.

Discussion

Discussion followed. In response to a question from one member, it was confirmed that the provision of performance-related increases on the basis of bonuses, rather than

salary increases, had not been explored as an option: as such an arrangement would change the character of the system of remuneration.

The Chair of the Human Resources Committee gave a summary of the Human Resources Committee's discussion on the matter, noting that the impact on dioceses had been considered, support for performance-rated pay awards had been expressed, and that the review had been independently benchmarked. Appropriate calibration and robust appeal processes were noted as essential.

Following discussion, the Representative Body approved the proposed revised salary structure for implementation from 1 January 2027. One member abstained.

Funding for growth and resilience

RB26/04

The Director of Finance introduced a paper which outlined the current position on funding for growth and resilience, summarising the four principal funding streams through which support is provided to dioceses: Partnership Funding, Structural Resilience Funding, the Evangelism Fund and the Church Growth Fund. The paper set out the scale, structure and allocation of each funding stream, including index-linked Partnership Funding for diocesan and cathedral posts, the ongoing Strategic Resilience Fund of £3.7million per annum to 2032 and detailed updates on the progress, drawdown and remaining balances of Evangelism Fund and Church Growth Fund projects.

The Representative Body noted the position.

Staff Retirement (Defined Benefit) Pension Scheme

RB26/05

The Director of Finance introduced a paper on membership of the Staff Retirement (Defined Benefit) Pension Scheme, outlining the process undertaken to identify a second employer-nominated trustee and future Chair. The Representative Body was reminded that at its meeting in September 2025 (minute 25/28), it had requested officers to undertake a search for a second employer-nominated trustee for appointment to the trustees of the Scheme, with a view to that person being considered for appointment as the next Chair of the Scheme trustees.

Mr David Myrddin-Evans, an experienced member of the Investment Committee and someone with significant investment and governance expertise, had agreed to be considered for the role. Mr Myrddin-Evans had undertaken an initial engagement with existing trustees.

Following discussion, the Representative Body:

i. Appointed Mr David Myrddin-Evans as the second employer-nominated trustee of the Staff Retirement (Defined Benefit) Pension Scheme, initially until the end of the current triennium (31 August 2028); and
ii. Appointed Mr Myrddin-Evans as Chair of the Staff Retirement (Defined Benefit) Pension Scheme.

Guaranteed minimum pension

RB26/06

The Director of Finance introduced a paper outlining the approach to guaranteed minimum pension (GMP) equalisation within the Staff Retirement (Defined Benefit) Pension Scheme, following the 2018 High Court ruling requiring pension benefits to be equalised for men and women in respect of service between 1990 and 1997. The paper explained the range of permissible methods for achieving equalisation, together with their financial and administrative implications. The paper noted that method C2, based on equalising cumulative pension payments with an allowance for interest, had been recommended by the Scheme's advisers as the most appropriate and cost-effective approach. It was reported that the Pension Scheme trustees had discussed this advice and agreed to adopt this method.

Following discussion, the Representative Body ratified the Staff Retirement Pension Scheme trustees' decision to instruct the Scheme advisers to use method C2 in any guaranteed minimum pension calculations.

Management accounts to 31 January 2026

RB26/07

The Director of Finance introduced a paper which contained a financial information pack presenting the management accounts to 31 January 2026, together with comparative year-end figures for 2025. It was noted that the position for the first month of 2026 showed a surplus of £142,000, which was favourable to the budgeted deficit, with a number of timing differences affecting expenditure, including delays in recruitment, training activity and project payments.

It was explained that, while the 2025 full-year deficit of £12.3million was better than forecast, it remained significant and had been funded through investment drawdowns and asset disposals. Updates were provided on variances across support costs and ministry expenditure, including delays in Church Growth Fund project drawdowns and adjusted forecasts.

The current value of the portfolio stood at £734million, compared with £761million at 31 December 2025.

The Representative Body noted the position.

Bangor Governance Review

RB26/08

The Chief Executive introduced a paper which outlined the findings of an independent review commissioned by the Bangor Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and the Bangor Diocesan Trust, which had been published on 6 March 2026.

The review report had included three recommendations in relation to the Representative Body:

- The development of mechanisms to review core compliance and risk within dioceses, including agreed approaches with DBFs for early identification of issues;

- The further development of trustee training at ministry area, diocesan and provincial levels; and
- The need to consider approaches to strengthening the recruitment of trustees with specialist skills, recognising the current Constitutional framework.

Dr Hywel Parry-Smith, Chair of the Bangor DBF, reflected on the review report and affirmed the review process as being one that had been helpful and supportive. The DBF, and others within the diocese, were engaged in responding to the report's recommendations. A new diocesan secretary had recently been appointed.

Discussion followed. Other members reflected on governance developments that had taken place within other dioceses in recent years.

The expression of a formal framework for the funding arrangements between the Representative Body and DBFs was considered. It was suggested that a meeting be convened with internal and external auditors, the Chairs of the Finance and Investment committees, the Chair of the Representative Body and the Chief Executive, with a view to developing a formal instrument. Further detail was also requested on how compliance would be enforced, and it was suggested that a consistent, agreed provincial approach should be developed rather than issues being addressed on an *ad hoc* basis.

Discussion moved to consider safeguarding and compliance oversight. It was noted that while safeguarding had not been addressed in the governance report, it was vital that safeguarding remained a focus within governance interactions. The possibility of identifying a trustee with responsibility for safeguarding would be explored.

Following discussion, the Representative Body noted the situation.

Internal audit

RB26/09

The Chief Operating Officer introduced a paper setting out a detailed update from the Audit and Risk Committee on progress against the recommendations within various recent internal audit reports across the areas of risk management, cyber security, business continuity and key financial controls. The internal audit process was proving to be a helpful tool in driving operational improvements.

The internal audit process was being overseen in detail by the Audit and Risk Committee which was engaging with the detail of the reports as well as the responses prepared. Work to implement the recommendations of all the reports received was underway and had been reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Discussion followed.

It was noted that a developing culture of audit was emerging, and that the internal auditors had attended the Audit and Risk Committee meeting and engaged positively, indicating their contentment with the responses and progress made. Follow-up reviews were being planned as necessary and a standalone follow-up review on cyber security would be undertaken.

In relation to the development of a strategic framework for risk management, it was noted that it was necessary to develop strategic principles for the Representative Body:

work on these was underway and would be shared with the Representative Body for approval in due course.

The Representative Body noted the update.

Charity co-signatories on shareholder engagement (via Investment Fund Managers Policy)

RB26/10

The Director of Finance introduced a paper which outlined a proposed policy which would govern the Representative Body's participation as a co-signatory in shareholder engagement initiatives, participation which would be led by its investment fund managers. A structured framework was proposed to ensure that any co-signatory activity aligned with the mission, ethical investment policy and fiduciary duties of the charity concerned, while financial, legal and reputational risks were appropriately managed. Eligibility criteria, including materiality, proportionality and evidence-based engagement, were set out alongside an approval process involving officer screening and Investment Committee review.

The Chair of the Investment Committee commented that while the procedure appeared cumbersome it was important and would be overseen by the Investment Committee.

Following discussion, the Representative Body endorsed and approved the codification of the Representative Body's engagement initiatives for oversight via the Investment Fund Managers Policy.

Sales of consecrated property

RB26/11

The Representative Body was reminded that the Constitution of the Church in Wales required sales of consecrated property to be approved by the Representative Body. In accordance with Chapter III, section 23(2) of the Constitution, the Representative Body authorised the sale of the following consecrated property:

- A.058 – The former St Catherine's Church, Holyhead Road, Maerdy, Llangwm, Corwen (1542).
- L.325 – The former St Baruch's Church, Phyllis Street, Barry (4145).
- B.052 – The former St Michael's Church, Holyhead Road, Betws-y-Coed, Gwynedd (2188).

The Representative Body authorised the sales as listed above.

Updates from Chairs on the work of the committees

RB26/12

a) Audit and Risk Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee briefed the Representative Body on some other areas of the Committee's recent work:

- Sir Paul Silk, a member of the Audit and Risk Committee, would retire from the Committee at the end of the triennium.

- A shortlist of four firms had been identified for the appointment of the Representative Body's new external audit firm, with presentations scheduled for 27 March 2026: all members of the Audit and Risk Committee had been invited to attend the interviews. Key considerations for the appointment of the new firm would be value for money and an understanding of the Church context.

b) Cathedrals and Churches Commission

The Chief Executive reported that a review of the Commission's position within the Representative Body structure was underway. Part of the review would consider whether the Chair of the Commission would remain a trustee of the Representative Body.

c) St Padarn's Quality and Standards Panel

Mrs Judith Hayward, one of the Representative Body's representatives on the St Padarn's Quality and Standards Panel, provided an update on the recent work of the Panel.

Capacity within the provincial safeguarding team

RB26/13

The Director of Safeguarding joined the meeting.

The Director of Safeguarding introduced a paper which outlined a business case to increase capacity within the provincial safeguarding team in response to a sustained and significant rise in demand. It was noted that casework had increased in recent years, with referrals rising from 131 in 2021 to 501 in 2025 and continued to grow in 2026: such increases had placed the safeguarding staff team under significant operational pressure, despite the creation of an additional role in March 2026, with demand continuing to outstrip capacity.

A substantial proportion of concerns related to community matters not necessarily within the Church, alongside an increase in cases of abuse within the Church. The Director of Safeguarding highlighted wider concerns regarding safeguarding culture, compliance and consistency across the province as well as an environment of increased public scrutiny and limitations on the team's ability to undertake strategic safeguarding improvements.

Various options were set out, with a preferred option identified to increase the working hours of existing staff and recruit an additional Provincial Safeguarding Officer with a total annual cost of approximately £100,000.

Discussion followed.

It was noted that safeguarding was a collective responsibility and that demand was likely to continue to increase; consequently, restricting the safeguarding budget was considered unwise, and it was emphasised that safeguarding should be treated as a priority outside normal budgetary constraints. Strong support was expressed for full funding of the proposal on the basis that the risks of inaction were too significant. It was therefore agreed that the safeguarding operation should fall outside the efficiency savings agreed earlier in the meeting (see minute RB26/01, above).

Following discussion, the Representative Body approved:

i. The permanent increase in the working hours of the Safeguarding Manager and the three current Provincial Safeguarding Officers; and
ii. The recruitment of an additional Provincial Safeguarding Officer on a full-time basis.

Serious incident reports

RB26/14

The Head of Legal Services introduced a paper setting out a number of Serious Incident Reports made to the Charity Commission since the Representative Body's previous meeting, which the Representative Body discussed and noted.

The Head of Legal Services reported on an exchange with the Fundraising Regulator following the suggestion on the organisation's website that the Representative Body was in breach of their code of practice. It was explained that the Fundraising Regulator's code of practice was voluntary to which the Representative Body had not aligned itself and that the allegation was erroneous on several counts. Robust written representations had been made.

The Representative Body noted the update.

Anthony Pierce Review

RB26/15

The Chief Executive updated the Representative Body on the situation following the recent publication of the Anthony Pierce Review report. The Review's report had included detailed recommendations relating to the Electoral College, all of which had been incorporated into the draft Regulations for the upcoming Bangor Electoral College, and that the Safeguarding Committee was actively engaging with other recommendations.

Thanks were expressed for the work undertaken to address the issues, and the importance of learning lessons from the review was emphasised.

The Representative Body noted the situation.

The Director of Safeguarding left the meeting.

Representative Body and committee membership

RB26/16

The Governance Manager introduced a paper on matters relating to the Representative Body's membership and the membership of its committees, noting that one lay vacancy had been filled following the election of Elizabeth Thomas as the lay representative from the diocese of Swansea & Brecon. Two vacancies remained: a lay representative from the diocese of Bangor and the Chair of the Swansea & Brecon DBF remained vacant.

It was reported that a change in committee membership arising from the appointment of Mr Tim Llewelyn to the Finance Committee had created a vacancy on the Audit and Risk Committee due to restrictions on cross-membership, and it was proposed that the

Reverend Dr Adrian Morgan was appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee to fill this vacancy.

Following discussion, the Representative Body:

i. Noted its current membership; and
ii. Appointed the Reverend Dr Adrian Morgan to the Audit and Risk Committee, initially for the remainder of the current triennium.

Annual renewal of conflicts of interest and trustee eligibility

RB26/17

All trustees were asked to review their conflicts of interest register and renew their trustee eligibility forms as part of the annual review process.

Provincial office relocation

RB26/18

The Director of Property Strategy joined the meeting.

The Director of Property Strategy introduced a detailed paper which set out a proposed relocation of the provincial office. The proposal would provide a rationalisation of the current provincial office accommodation by surrendering the lease of the current fourth floor at 2 Callaghan Square and entering into a new lease for the smaller first floor mezzanine office space at 2 Callaghan Square.

The current office space was overly large for current working practices with far more staff now working on a hybrid basis for at least part of the working week. The accommodation within the current office for hosting large meetings was now much less needed given that the majority of provincial meetings now took place online. The proposed move would provide a more efficient, flexible and accessible working environment designed around collaborative and more agile working practices.

A number of options had been explored with the first-floor mezzanine representing the most effective option both in terms of accommodation and cost.

The proposed lease terms would represent cost savings in the medium term and other potential cost savings expected through a reduced office size and operational efficiencies were expected. The costs of fitting out the office were being explored, with estimated costs provided. Much of the existing office furniture and equipment would be transferred to the new office.

An outline timeframe for the completion of the legal transaction, fit out work and the completion of the move itself was provided.

It was noted that the Finance Committee had scrutinised the detail of the proposals at its meetings in November 2025 and March 2026 and had supported the proposal.

Following discussion, the Representative Body approved:

i. The surrender of the current lease of the fourth floor of 2 Callaghan Square;
ii. The signing of a new lease arrangements of the first floor based on the proposed heads of terms; and

iii. The procurement of works to fit out the first floor on the basis of the indicative layout.

The Director of Property Strategy left the meeting.

Minutes of meeting 20 November 2025 and matters arising
RB26/19

The minutes of the Representative Body's meeting held on 20 November 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Various matters arising from the minutes were noted.

Representative Body statement published following its meeting held on 24 June 2025
RB26/20

The Chief Executive updated the Representative Body on the implementation of actions arising from its statement in June 2025 on the issues at Bangor Cathedral at that time.

It was noted that there had been active engagement by diocesan and cathedral trustees with both the Implementation Group and the Oversight Board. Significant elements of the response to the two visitation reports had progressed, including the completion of an independent governance review (see minute RB26/08, above), the commissioning of safeguarding audits across all the Church in Wales cathedrals and the development of proposals to strengthen accountability for funding.

Some actions remained ongoing or pending, including culture and leadership interventions within the diocese. Wider work on culture change across the province was a priority of the Archbishop and was continuing to be taken forward through various channels.

The Representative Body noted the update.

Report on use of the Representative Body Seal
RB26/21

It was reported that the Representative Body Seal had been used from numbers 37386 to 37416 inclusive. The Seal Register was available for the Representative Body's inspection.

Update on ongoing IT projects
RB26/22

The Representative Body noted a paper detailing updates on ongoing IT projects.

In response to a question from one member, it was explained that there had been no discernible improvement in use of the membership app, with some dioceses having adopted different approaches, including targeting specific periods within the year.

Committee minutes

RB26/23

The Representative Body noted the minutes of committee meetings that had taken place since its meeting in September 2025.

Next meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Representative Body would take place on 2 July 2026, on a hybrid basis, at 2 Callaghan Square and online.

Closing prayers

Dean Nigel Williams closed the meeting in prayer.