

Synod summary for Diocesan Secretaries

Introduction

General Synod met on 8th to 12th July. This was the first residential meeting of the new quinquennium and the first time there has been a residential meeting since July 2019. As with meetings during this quinquennium, this was a hybrid meeting and there was an average of around 40 -50 members engaging via Zoom. This is the same number as joined by Zoom in February.

This summary has been delayed to enable us to share an update on the submissions to the Revision Committees for the legislation that completed its First Consideration in July. These details have been incorporated below.

There will be no November group of sessions but we will be providing an opportunity for members to engage with issues informally during the dates allocated to the November group of sessions. This is entirely optional and further details will be circulated in due course.

Synod Business

A brief summary of the items discussed at the July group of sessions are below. More detailed information can be found in the Business Done summary on the website [here](#).

Welcomes and introductions: the usual first item for any group of sessions. Synod was formally welcomed back to the University of York by Professor Charlie Jeffery, Vice Chancellor of the University of York. All members were welcomed by the Archbishop of York. In addition, there was the formal introduction of the Pro-Prolocutors for the Convocation of Canterbury, The Ven Alastair Cutting and The Revd Esther Prior; and the Deputy Prolocutors for the Convocation of York, The Ven Stewart Fyfe and The Revd Canon Andy Salmon.

The co-opted members of the House of Clergy were welcomed. For the Convocation of Canterbury, these are The Revd Aneal Appadoo (Southwark), The Revd Preb Sandra McCalla (London) and The Revd Sandra Schloss (Southwark). For the Convocation of York, this is The Revd Canon Falak Sher (Manchester). There is currently a vacancy for the Convocation of York and it is expected that this will be filled in 2023.

The co-opted members of the House of Laity were welcomed. These are Mr Abishaq Leel (Lichfield), Mr David Hermitt (Chester), Mr Jesvin John (Liverpool), Mr Kenson Li (Manchester) and Ms Wendy Kasenene (London).

As co-opted members, they have the same rights as an elected member, so they are ex officio members of the diocesan synod and deanery synod where they are resident.

Item 2 Address by the Representatives of the Anglican Communion: The Rt Revd Titre Andre George, Archbishop of the Congo and Bishop of Kindu gave an address.

Item 3 Presidential Address: the Archbishop of York gave a Presidential Address.

Item 4 [GS 2257 Report of the Business Committee](#): the Chair of the Business Committee, Robert Hammond, spoke to the Business Committee Report and answered questions from members about the shape of the Agenda. The Synod voted to take note of this on a show of hands.

Presentation of Petitions: two petitions were presented to Synod under Standing Order 43. They stand referred to the Business Committee.

Item 5 [GS 2258 Route map to Net Zero Carbon by 2030](#): This gave an update on progress towards net zero carbon as requested by the motion from the February 2020 group of sessions. The debate requested that Diocesan Synods debate the Routemap as it applies to their structures, parishes and BMOs, and to agree a feasible programme of action towards achieving net zero carbon by 2030.

The full motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod, having recognised that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God’s creation, and a fundamental injustice, and following General Synod’s motion passed in February 2020 to plan to reach net zero carbon by 2030:

- (a) endorse the “Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030” (GS 2258).
- (b) request every Diocesan Synod to debate the Routemap as it applies to their structures, parishes and BMOs, and to agree a feasible programme of action towards achieving net zero carbon by 2030;
- (c) request high energy users within the Church (every cathedral, TEI, school, office and the top 20% of energyconsuming churches) to similarly draw up a programme of action, with a clear time frame, based on the Routemap.
- (d) call on the Environment staff team to report back to Synod on progress against the Routemap in 2025, 2028 and 2031, and for reports on the Church’s carbon emissions every year.’

Item 6 [GS 2259 War in Ukraine](#): This topical item gave Synod the opportunity to engage with this issue. Dioceses and parishes were called upon to work towards providing long term refuge and hospitality to refugees from Ukraine and other conflicts and forms of danger, and to contribute to the Disasters Emergency Committee’s Ukraine Appeal or the appeal organised by USPG and the Diocese in Europe.

The full motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod, committed in Christ to support peacemakers and to work for the reconciliation of humanity to God in a world marked by division and conflict:

- (a) lament Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, the suffering and terror experienced by Ukrainians and the repercussions and anxiety felt globally for our common future;
- (b) urge all Christians and people of faith to pray that the war in Ukraine be ended justly, that the risk of strategic miscalculation between conflicting parties be avoided and that the Russian people find respite from an authoritarian government;
- (c) call on each diocese and each parish to work towards providing long term refuge and hospitality to refugees from Ukraine and other conflicts and forms of danger, and to contribute to the Disasters Emergency Committee’s Ukraine Appeal or the appeal organised by USPG and the Diocese in Europe;
- (d) call on Her Majesty’s Government to work to secure a negotiated peace that provides for the flourishing of relations in Ukraine and between nations in Europe and to provide a generous response to those seeking refuge from the conflict.’

Item 7: Questions there were 184 questions submitted by members which is the largest number ever received. The Business Committee allocated two sessions for questions to be answered. 67 of them were covered during this session, and they were questions to the House of Bishops, Finance Committee and Ministry Council.

Items 8 – 12 [GS 2260 See of Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission](#): This followed the Take Note debate in February 2022 at which members were told that a final proposal for changes to the Standing Orders would be brought to the July 2022 Synod. Members debated the policy proposals at this session.

The motions as carried were as follows:

‘That this Synod request that the necessary amendments be moved to the Standing Orders to reduce from six to three the number of members elected by the Diocese of Canterbury to the Crown Nominations Commission for consideration of a vacancy in the see of Canterbury’

‘That this Synod request that the necessary amendments be moved to the Standing Orders to increase from one to five the number of representatives of other churches of the Anglican Communion who are members of the CNC for consideration of a vacancy in the see of Canterbury.’

‘That this Synod request that the necessary amendments be moved to the Standing Orders to provide that one such representative is to be chosen by the Joint Standing Committee of the Primates Meeting of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council from each of the five regions of the Anglican Communion (the Europe region to include the provinces of the British Isles other than England).’

‘That this Synod request that the necessary amendments be moved to the Standing Orders to provide that of those so chosen, at least one must be a primate, one a deacon or priest and one a lay person who is an actual communicant, and that at least half rounded down shall be male and at least half rounded down shall be female, and that a majority of them must be Global Majority Heritage.’

‘That this Synod request that the necessary amendments be moved to the Standing Orders to provide for vacancies in the see of Dover to be considered by the CNC as if it were a diocesan see.’

Items 13 – 14 [GS 2261 Review of Strategic Development Funding \(SDF\) and Lowest Income Communities Funding \(LInC\)](#) : Sir Robert Chote who chaired the Independent Review of SDF and LInC funding gave a presentation. The take note debate was debated and a following motion was carried requesting a further review to report back to Synod in July 2024.

The motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod, acknowledging with gratitude the enormous value of the independent review performed by Sir Robert Chote and his colleagues, request the Strategic Investment Board commission a follow-up independent review to determine the extent to which the recommendations of and lessons learned from this review have been implemented, and with what success. The results of such a follow-up review to be made available to General Synod when for consideration when it meets in July 2024.’

Item 15 [GS 2262 Spending Plans of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops’ Council](#): This item is focussed on the spending plans of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops’ Council for financial distributions over 2023-2025 and indicative distributions for the subsequent six years. This was passed following a count by Houses.

The motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod

- (a) welcome the spending plans by the Church Commissioners and Archbishops’ Council, set out in GS 2262, for financial distributions over 2023 to 2025 and indicative distributions for the subsequent six years;
- (b) welcome the investment in ministry in parishes, chaplaincies, schools, Cathedrals and other forms of church in support of the Church’s vision and strategy as set out in Annex A of GS 2262; and
- (c) welcome the focused investment to support previously agreed commitments to a 2030 net zero carbon target and to address racial justice.’

Items 16 and 17 [GS 2263 Safeguarding and Independence: Update and Next Steps](#) and [GS Misc 1320](#): There was a presentation by Maggie Atkinson, Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board and Meg Munn, Chair of the National Safeguarding Panel. Synod was also invited to debate this issue.

The motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod:

- (a) acknowledge and deeply regret the safeguarding failures of the Church of England and especially their effect on victims and survivors, noting the vital importance of their voice in the Church’s ongoing safeguarding work;
- (b) recognise the challenges involved in changing the culture and practice of safeguarding across the Church of England as well as the effort that is being put into this nationally and in dioceses and parishes,
- (c) urge the Archbishops’ Council to ensure that IICSA’s recommendations for the Church of England are fully met as soon as possible, and
- (d) request regular updates on progress at each group of sessions, especially concerning the strengthening of independent accountability and oversight of the Church’s safeguarding work at all levels.’

Item 500 [GS 2264 Church of England Pensions \(Application of Capital Funds\) Measure](#): This Measure further extends the period during which the Church Commissioners are permitted to resort to capital to meet their obligations under the pre-1998 clergy pension scheme. It completed its First Consideration stage and stands referred to the Revision Committee. No submissions to the Revision Committee were received by the deadline.

Item 505 [GS 2278 Legal Officers \(Annual Fees\) Order 2022](#) and [GS 2279 Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others \(Fees\) Order 2022](#): There were requests for these deemed items of business to be debated. They were both carried.

Item 18 [GS 2265A](#) and [GS 2265B Insurance Premium Tax](#): Unfortunately, this Diocesan Synod Motion from Lincoln which seeks to address the impact of insurance premium tax on churches and other charities was not taken at this group of sessions. The Business Committee will seek to find time on the agenda of a future group of sessions for this to be debated.

Item 19: Questions this was the second session for questions to be answered. 68 of them were covered during this session, and they were questions to the Ministry Council, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee, Mission and Public Affairs Council, Corporation of Church House, Business Committee, Clergy Discipline Commission, Crown Nominations Commission, Dioceses Commission, Faith and Order Commission, Legal Advisory Commission, Liturgical Commission and Archbishops’ Council.

Item 20: GS 2266A and GS 2266B Assisted Suicide: This Private Members’ Motion by Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) affirmed that the current legislation in relation to Assisted Suicide referenced in Section 2 of the Suicide Act 1961 (and its application through the Director of Public Prosecutions guidelines) should remain unchanged. It was carried after a count of the Synod.

The motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod:

- (a) appreciate the enormous and untiring efforts of health professionals, including healthcare chaplains, in constantly developing and maintaining the excellence of palliative and end of life care provision in this country;
- (b) call on Her Majesty’s Government to guarantee and expedite the adequate funding and

- resourcing of palliative care services within the NHS to ensure that the highest possible standards of care are achieved and made universally accessible; and
- (c) affirm that the current legislation in relation to Assisted Suicide referenced in Section 2 of the Suicide Act 1961 (and its application through the DPP guidelines) should remain unchanged.'

Item 21 [GS 2267 Archbishops' Council Annual Report](#): A presentation on the Archbishops' Council's Annual Report was given and members were able to ask questions on the work of the Council in 2021.

Items 22 – 28 [GS 2268 Archbishops' Council Budget 2023 and Proposals for Apportionment 2023](#): This is a regular item for the July group of sessions, as under its Standing Orders, General Synod must be invited to approve the Archbishops' Council's annual budget and its proposals for the diocesan apportionment. These were all approved by Synod.

The full motions as carried were as follows:

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2023, as shown in its budget, of £15,744,000 in respect of Training for Ministry.'

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2023, as shown in its budget, of £33,080,016 in respect of National Church Responsibilities.'

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2023, as shown in its budget, of £1,520,634 in respect of grants.'

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2023, as shown in its budget, of £603,000 in respect of mission agency pension contributions.'

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2023, as shown in its budget, of £5,845,182 in respect of clergy retirement housing grant.'

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's proposals (set out in the Table of Apportionment contained in GS 2268) for:

- (a) the apportionment amongst the dioceses of the net sum to be provided by them to enable the Council to meet the expected expenditure shown in its budget for the year 2023; and
- (b) the pooling adjustment for 2023 in respect of additional maintenance grants for ordinands.'

Item 501 [GS 2269 Amending Canon No 42](#): This Amending Canon implements a recommendation from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse that the role of diocesan safeguarding adviser be changed to one of diocesan safeguarding officer. This completed its First Consideration Stage and stands referred to the Revision Committee. Some submissions to the Revision Committee were received and they can be found [here](#).

Item 507 [GS 2281 Clergy Discipline Measure 2003](#) – Amending Code of Practice: There was a request for this item of deemed business to be debated. It makes amendments to the existing Code of Practice. One set of amendments removes the presumption from current guidance that it will always be necessary to pause CDM proceedings pending the outcome of the police investigation or a criminal trial. The other amendment transfers responsibility for publishing details of penalties by consent from dioceses to the President of Tribunals. It was carried by Synod.

Item 29 [GS 2270 Affirming and Including Disabled People in the Whole Life of the Church](#): this item

addressed disability issues and reflected on the importance of diversity and inclusion in the life of the Church. It included a request to encourage dioceses to cluster together to employ a full time Disability Adviser across a manageable group of dioceses.

The full motion as carried was as follows:

‘That this Synod, affirming disabled people (with hidden as well as visible disabilities) to be fearfully and wonderfully made in the image and likeness of God, and mindful of the progress already made in removing some of the barriers which disabled people, clergy and lay, face; commit to working towards the removal of all remaining barriers to full participation for disabled people in the life and ministry of the church, and, in initiating that process:

- (a) request the Faith and Order Commission and the Liturgical Commission to consider how our liturgies might be made more inclusive to disabled people (e.g., by removing rubrics such as “all stand”);
- (b) call upon the Research and Statistics team to interrogate existing data and gather new data, which quantifies the numbers of disabled people among clergy, whilst also planning to extend to include lay ministers and NCI/diocesan staff in the future, so that Synod can monitor the representation of disabled people within the church and encourage accountability for progress.
- (c) request the Archbishops’ Council to introduce legislation to amend the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018 to require every DAC to include at least one person with direct experience and knowledge of accessibility issues in its membership or co-opted if not appointed as a member;
- (d) acknowledging that the General Synod motion passed in July 2007 (that every Diocese should appoint a lead person on disability issues), request that the ongoing review of dioceses, recognising that resources for additional officers in every diocese are limited, encourage dioceses to cluster together to employ a full time Disability Adviser across a manageable group of dioceses.’

Item 502 [GS 2255 Diocesan Stipends Funds \(Amendment\) Measure](#): This legislation will allow dioceses more freedom to be generous with their historic wealth to other dioceses in the Church of England, and enable a more equitable sharing of this wealth. It completed its First Consideration Stage and stands referred to the Revision Committee. Some submissions to the Revision Committee were received and they can be found [here](#).

Item 30 [GS 2271 Resourcing Ministerial Formation](#): The Resourcing Ministerial Formation review has found that significant changes to the current system of funding for the training of ordinands are required. Further proposals will be brought to a future group of sessions.

The full motion as carried was as follows:

That this Synod:

- (a) affirm the aims of the “Resourcing Ministerial Formation” in seeking to create a more sustainable and responsive accountable framework for ministerial formation within the calling of the whole people of God
- (b) welcome the principles of reform set out in GS 2271; and
- (c) request that synod be invited to consider and endorse more developed proposals prior to their implementation
- (d) request that Ministry Council closely monitors and supports the capacity of TEIs through the RMF implementation period.’

Items 503 and 504 [GS 2272 Church of England \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Measure](#) and [GS 2273 Amending Canon No 43](#): This Measure and Amending Canon cover a wide range of provisions which

would not merit free-standing legislation. Many of the provisions are of a technical nature. It completed its First Consideration Stage and stands referred to the Revision Committee. A number of submissions for the Miscellaneous Provisions Measure were received and they can be found [here](#). A smaller number of submissions were received for the Amending Canon No 43 and these can be found [here](#).

Item 31 [GS 2254A](#) and [GS 2254B Review of Qualifications for PCC Membership and Entry on the Church Electoral Roll](#): this is a Diocesan Synod Motion from Canterbury which calls for a review of the qualifications for membership of parochial church councils and the electoral roll in light of the existence of bishops' mission initiatives. The Business Committee will be undertaking the review as set out in the motion.

The full motion as carried was as follows:

'That this Synod invite the Business Committee while keeping in mind that membership of a parochial church council involves spiritual leadership within a parish, which should properly be exercised by those who habitually attend public worship:

- (a) to conduct a review of:
 - i. the qualifications for membership of parochial church councils; and;
 - ii. the qualifications for enrolment on a church electoral roll, and the form of application for enrolment, and;
 - iii. provisions concerned with disqualification from holding office on a parochial church council or a synod constituted under the Church Representation Rules and the availability of mechanisms for checking disqualifications and preventing those who are disqualified from being elected to or holding office.
- (b) to report to the Synod on the conclusions of the review.'

Item 32 [GS 2274A](#) and [GS 2274B Age Verification for Pornography Websites](#): this is a Diocesan Synod Motion from Guildford and calls for the Government to introduce legislation requiring pornographic sites to have in place age verification systems preventing access by people under the age of 18. This was carried following a counted vote of the Synod.

The motion as carried was as follows:

'That this Synod

- (a) acknowledge that our children and young people are suffering grave harm from free access to online pornography and that there is currently no legal requirement for pornography sites to have in place age verification systems to prevent children from having access to those sites.
- (b) ask Her Majesty's Government to introduce legislation requiring pornographic sites to have in place age verification systems preventing access by people under the age of 18.
- (c) recommend more social and educational programmes to increase awareness of the harms of pornography, including self generated sexually explicit images.'

Item 33 Loyal Address: a [Loyal Address](#) was presented to HM The Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee.

Items 51 – 56 [GS 2276 60th Report of the Standing Orders Committee and Amendments to the Standing Orders for Membership of the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission \(CNC\)](#) This introduced changes to the Standing Orders, reflecting the debate which took place earlier in the group of sessions. The changes were carried by Synod and took effect from 13th July 2022. The latest Standing Orders can be found [here](#).

Item 34 [GS 2277 Report by the Clergy Conduct Measure Implementation Group](#): In July 2021 Synod took note of the report from the Lambeth Working Group on the reform of the Clergy Discipline Measure. That report recommended the creation of an Implementation Group to bring forward legislative proposals to Synod for the replacement of the CDM. These proposals were debated by Synod in advance of legislation in 2023.

The motion as carried was as follows

‘That this Synod

- (a) welcome the report from the Clergy Conduct Measure Implementation Group (GS 2277);
and
- (b) request that the Archbishops’ Council introduce legislation to give effect to the report’s recommendations for first consideration by this Synod at the next available opportunity.’

Item 35 Farewells: Farewells were presented to Dr Jacqui Philips, Clerk to the Synod; the Bishop of Birmingham, Rt Revd David Urquhart; the Bishop of Peterborough, the Rt Revd Donald Allister; and the Bishop of Blackburn, Rt Revd Julian Henderson.

Changes in Synod membership

We would like to remind you to update the Synod team of any resignations that you receive. Resignations from the House of Clergy should be sent to the Registrar and House of Laity to the Clerk of the Synod. If you could send any updates to gsresignations@churchofengland.org, that would be extremely helpful. This is particularly important for those resigning from the House of Clergy, as the Provincial Registrar needs to send a formal citation for the vacancy to be filled.

As we are still within the first two years following the elections to General Synod, any casual vacancies should be filled using the voting records of that election. Civica can help you with this and you should not be charged for this. Once the recount of the election has taken place, or new election if there were no candidates from the previous election, please send the confirmation of the new members to clerk@churchofengland.org.

Elections Review Group

The Elections Review Group is a sub-committee of the Business Committee and its remit is to consider all aspects of elections and rules relating to elections. It will be in touch with diocesan offices to reflect on their experiences of the online elections process. The Group would be grateful for your constructive feedback on this process. They would like to know what worked, what could be improved and what should be scrapped for next time.

It will also be in touch with diocesan offices to undertake the review as requested by Synod following the debate on the [GS 2254A](#) and [GS 2254B Review of Qualifications for PCC Membership and Entry on the Church Electoral Roll](#).