



**DIOCESE OF  
BATH & WELLS**

Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities

**Constitution and Standing Orders  
of Deanery Synods**

The Constitution and Standing Orders were adopted by the Bath and Wells Diocesan Synod at a session held on 17 June 1989, the Standing Orders to take effect from the close of that session and the Constitution to take effect from 1 June 1991. Standing Orders 57 and 58(a) were amended in 1997.

## BATH AND WELLS DEANERY SYNOD CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

### PREFACE

1. The constitution and standing orders of deanery synods take their authority from the Church Representation Rules (CRR) and with a resolution of diocesan synod to implement the constitution and standing orders contained herein which are consistent with those rules. Deanery synods are free to determine their own procedures provided that they are not inconsistent with these standing orders.
2. References herein to “clergy” relate to all clerks in holy orders and the “laity” to all others.
3. Except where qualified, references herein to “synod” and “constitution” refer to the deanery synod and deanery constitution with unqualified references to “standing committee” being to the deanery standing committee.
4. Co-opted members have the same rights of participation as elected and ex-officio members but are not themselves electors to diocesan or general synod.
5. The term “chairman presiding” has been used to identify whichever joint chairman (or the chairman elected under standing order 7) is in the chair for that particular item on the agenda.
6. Any periods of notice required by these standing orders shall be deemed to consist of clear days or weeks not including the date of despatch and the date of the event before which the notice must be delivered.
7. Where the circumstances permits reference herein to the male gender includes also the female.
8. Those cross references contained herein within parenthesis are to facilitate the use of this standing order but form no part of them.

## CONTENTS

<b>Constitution</b>	
<b>Standing Orders</b>	<b>Paragraphs</b>
Roll of members	1
Participation by non-members	2
Attendance of General Synod members	3
Term of Office	4
Joint Chairmen	5 -8
Officers of Synod	9
Standing Committee	10-13
Other Committees	14-16
Meetings of Synod and its House	17-19
Agenda	20-21
Business of Synod	22-24
Notice of business	25-26
Rules of Debate:	
Quorum	27-28
General	29-39
Amendments to Motions	40-43
Procedural Motions	44-47
Voting	48-51
References by Diocesan Synod	52-54
Reports by the Deanery Synod to PCCs	55
Matters raised by PCCs and annual church meetings	56
Financial Business	57-59
Admission to the Press and Public	60
Procedural Defects	61
Amendment of Standing Orders	62

## CONSTITUTION OF DEANERY SYNOD

Deanery Synods shall consist of a house of clergy and a house of laity constituted as follows:

### 1. The House of Clergy

- (a) All clerks in holy orders beneficed in or licensed to any parish in the deanery or licensed to any institution in the deanery under the Extra-Parochial Ministry Measure 1967.
- (b) All clerks in holy orders holding the bishop's licence and resident or working in any part of the deanery.
- (c) One retired clerk in holy orders who has attained the retiring age within the meaning of the Clergy Pensions Measure 1961 by 31 December of the year immediately preceding any elections of the parochial representatives of the laity, chosen in such manner as may be approved by the bishop, by and from among the retired clerks in holy orders who have attained that age at that date, are resident in the deanery and are not licensed to any parish in the deanery or to any institution under the said measure of 1967.
- (d) Any clerical members of the general synod or diocesan synod resident in the deanery.
- (e) The house of clergy may co-opt additional clerks in holy orders according to procedures determined by them provided that the numbers so co-opted shall not exceed five per cent of the total number of members of that house or three whichever is the greater and not so as to preclude the right of the standing committee from making its own nominations. (SO 13)

### 2. The House of Laity

- (a) The parochial representatives elected to the synod by the annual meetings of the parishes in the deanery based on the numbers on their electoral rolls as follows:

Electoral roll	Representatives
1 - 25	1
26 - 100	2
101 - 200	3
201 - 300	4
301 - 400	5
401 - 500	6
501 - 750	7
751 - 1000	8
Over 1000	9

- (b) Such other stipendiary lay persons, being deaconesses or whole-time lay workers licensed by the bishop to work in any part of the deanery, or for work in the diocese, whose names are entered on the electoral roll of a parish in the deanery.
- (c) If in the opinion of the bishop of the diocese any community of persons in the deanery who are in the spiritual care of a chaplain licensed by the bishop should be represented in the house of laity, one lay person, being an actual communicant

member of the Church of England of eighteen years and upwards, chosen in such manner as may be approved by the bishop by and from among the members of that community.

- (d) Any lay member of the general synod or diocesan synod whose names are entered on the electoral roll of any parish in the deanery.
- (e) The house of laity may co-opt additional lay persons according to procedures determined by them provided that the numbers so co-opted shall not exceed five per cent of the total number of members of that house or three whichever is the greater and not so as to preclude the right of the standing committee from making its own nominations. (SO 13)

**3.** All lay members of synod must be on the electoral roll of a parish in the deanery, be aged eighteen years and upwards and be a communicant member of the Church of England. No lay person may be an elected member of more than one deanery synod at the same time.

## **STANDING ORDERS**

### **ROLL OF MEMBERS**

1. The secretary shall keep a roll of the members of the synod constantly up to date, including the name, address and parish of any person notified to him by the secretary of the diocesan synod and qualified under 1(b – d) and 2(b – d) of the constitution.

### **PARTICIPATION BY NON-MEMBERS**

2. The following persons may attend meetings of synod and shall, subject to the same obligations as members, have the right to address synod, to speak on any motion or amendment, make a personal explanation or answer questions:
  - (a) the diocesan bishop or a duly appointed commissary;
  - (b) the archdeacon;
  - (c) the registrar of the diocese;
  - (d) visitors invited by either of the joint chairmen or the standing committee;
  - (e) any reader licensed to a parish in the deanery who is not an elected parochial representative;
  - (f) any person appointed or invited under standing order 3;
  - (g) an officer of synod who is not himself a number of synod (SO 9).

### **ATTENDANCE OF GENERAL SYNOD MEMBERS**

3. The deanery synod or its standing committee may invite, and the diocesan synod standing committee may appoint, a member or members of the general synod who represent the diocese but are not themselves ex officio members of the deanery synod to attend any or all of its meetings with the rights as set out in standing order 2. They shall be entitled to receive copies of all documents and notices circulated to members of synod for all meetings for which their invitation or appointment relates.

### **TERM OF OFFICE**

4. The parochial representatives of the laity elected by annual meetings shall be so elected every three years, and shall hold office for a term of three years beginning with the 1 June next following their election. Casual vacancies may be filled by the election by the PCC of a person qualified to be so elected. Unless the house concerned fixes a shorter period of office, co-opted members shall retire on the 31 May in the year of triennial elections.

### **JOINT CHAIRMEN**

#### **General**

5. There shall be joint chairmen of the deanery synod, being the rural dean and a member of the house of laity elected triennially by that house; provided that, during the absence or incapacity of one, the functions exercisable jointly may be performed by the other alone. The lay chairman unless he resigns or ceases to be qualified shall continue in office until the commencement of the meeting at which his successor is elected.

### **Election of lay joint chairman**

6. Immediately prior to the first meeting of the synod after any triennial election or in the event of a vacancy in the office immediately prior to the next meeting of synod, the house of laity shall meet to elect a lay joint chairman. A member of the house appointed by the rural dean shall act as chairman for such meeting. Whoever so presides shall have a vote but no casting vote in the election and in the case of an equality of votes the decision shall be taken by lot.

### **Meetings of the synod**

7. The joint chairmen (as provided in standing order 5) shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the deanery synod or particular items of business in the agenda of the synod. If either is absent, the other shall preside. If both are absent, the members present shall elect a chairman for that meeting.

### **Powers of chairman presiding**

8. Subject to these standing orders, the proceedings at any meeting of the synod shall be regulated by the chairman presiding at that time and those of the proceedings of either house by the chairman of that house or in his absence a member of that house chosen by the members present.

### **OFFICERS OF SYNOD**

9. At the first meeting after each triennial election the synod shall appoint:
  - a) A secretary, not necessarily from amongst its own members, and may likewise appoint an assistant secretary. Where an assistant secretary is appointed he shall where the secretary is of the laity be a clerk in holy orders and vice versa. Such appointments do not confer membership status but do entitle the office holders to attend meetings of synod and of its standing committee with the rights of participation in both as set out in standing order 2;
  - b) A treasurer from amongst its own members (not excluding the possibility of co-option).  
The person so appointed, unless they resign or cease to be qualified, shall serve until the conclusion of the meeting at which their successors are appointed.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE**

#### **Membership**

10. There shall be a standing committee of the synod consisting of the joint chairmen who will share the chairmanship in the manner set out in standing order 7 for meetings of synod, the officers of synod where they are themselves members of synod (see standing order 9 where officers are not elected members of synod) together with such other numbers of people elected by the members of each house in equal numbers from amongst their members as the synod shall determine. This committee will have no power to co-opt additional members.

## **Elections to the Standing Committee**

- 11.** Elections shall be triennial at the first meeting of each new synod following the election of parochial representatives of the laity.
- a) Elected members shall retire on the election of their successor or on ceasing to be qualified;
  - b) Casual vacancies will be filled by election at the next meeting of the synod by the house concerned;
  - c) The outgoing standing committee will make no nominations;
  - d) Not later than 31 May in the year of the triennial elections, the synod shall decide whether the next elections shall be conducted:
    - i. At a meeting of synod, using the same procedure with essential modifications as for election at an annual parochial church meeting [CRR 10(2-9)] or
    - ii. By post, using the same procedure with essential modifications as for elections to diocesan synod [CRR 26 (3-6)].

In the event that no such decision is taken the former alternative will be adopted.

## **Functions of the Committee**

- 12.** The functions of the standing committee shall be to initiate and advise on proposals; to ensure that members are adequately informed on questions raised and other matters of importance to the deanery; to prepare the agenda; to transact the business of the synod between meetings; and to make such appointments and do such other things as the synod may delegate to it.
- 13.** The standing committee shall have the right to nominate persons for co-option by either the house of clergy or the house of laity of synod and will bear in mind the particular circumstances that resulted in such persons not being elected, the special needs of the house or of synod (see SO 96) to have that person as a member and any other relevant factors.

## **OTHER COMMITTEES**

- 14.** The synod will establish a pastoral committee from the membership of each house in equal numbers, of such size as synod shall determine and with such chairmanship, mode and duration of appointment or election as it thinks fit. Pastoral responsibility in the diocese is exercised by the diocesan pastoral committee which works through Archdeaconry pastoral sub-committees and deanery pastoral committees, whose work is of an advisory nature. In the event that synod fails to establish such a committee the standing committee will fulfil its functions.
- 15.** The synod may constitute additional committees with such chairmen, membership, term of office, functions, mode of appointment and other procedure as it thinks fit.
- 16.** Subject to these rules and any resolution of that synod, the chairmanship and other procedure of a committee, including the standing committee shall be determined by itself.

## MEETINGS OF SYNOD AND ITS HOUSES

### Ordinary meetings

17. (a) The synod shall hold not less than two meetings in each year at such times and places as the joint chairmen shall decide after consulting with the standing committee.  
(b) The date, time and place of ordinary meetings of the synod, shall be notified to members at least six weeks before each meeting in such manner as the joint chairmen approve.

### Special meetings

18. (a) The joint chairmen may summon a special meeting of the synod at any time. If they refuse or neglect to do so within 28 days after a requisition for that purpose signed by not less than 20 members of the synod such members may forthwith summon a meeting.  
(b) The minimum notice for summoning a special meeting shall be 7 days and the quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the members of each house. The notice must include the date, time, place and agenda of the meeting and only business specified therein may be transacted.

### Separate meetings of houses

19. Each house shall meet separately when and where it is required to do so under these standing orders and for the purposes stated. Additional meetings may be held when either:  
(a) The chairman of the house has so directed; or  
(b) Synod has so directed.

Subject to any directions by synod or standing committee the date, time and place of separate meetings will be fixed by the chairman of each house allowing members at least fourteen days' notice in writing. Unless specifically directed otherwise by synod, separate meetings of houses shall not involve formulating motions or amendments for consideration by synod or voting thereon. No business, except as authorised in these standing orders, conducted by a single house of synod has authority over the whole synod.

## AGENDA

### Preparation and content

20. Every agenda of an ordinary meeting shall include the approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last ordinary meeting and of any subsequent meetings, also of any other reports of proceedings as referred to in standing order 55. Subject to these standing orders and any resolution of the synod, and without prejudice to the rights of individual members to a reasonable opportunity within the time available of bringing matters before that synod, the standing committee shall settle the agenda for each synod meeting, and shall determine the order in which the business so included shall be considered subject only to any resolution of synod.

## Circulation

21. The secretary shall post or deliver an agenda paper to every member 14 days at least before an ordinary meeting or, in the case of a special meeting called at less than 14 days' notice, at the same time as the notice. Where draft minutes have not been sent to members before the agenda paper of an ordinary meeting they shall be sent with it. Supporting documentation on matters referred by diocesan synod shall be sent to members at least 28 days before the meeting at which they will be considered (SO 52).

## BUSINESS OF SYNOD

### Permitted business

22. No business shall be considered by synod other than:
- (a) Business specified on the agenda or any paper relating thereto or arising therefrom;
  - (b) Urgent and other specially important business added by the joint chairmen and matters arising there
  - (c) from;
  - (d) Matters raised or questions asked under "Any other business". Such matters shall not be considered in detail and the mind of synod shall not be tested by the moving of any motion.
23. Either of the joint chairmen or, with the consent of the standing committee, any other member, may give notice for the agenda of a subject for an address, paper or general discussion without the moving of a formal motion. An address or paper may be given by the member signing the notice or by a visiting speaker, and then be followed by a general discussion, if the standing committee so decides. (See SO 25a for notice required).
24. The order of business may be varied by the chairman presiding at his discretion or by a resolution of the synod to be put without debate.

## NOTICE OF BUSINESS

### Form and length of notice for business for synod

25. (a) Notice of any business for an ordinary meeting of the synod shall be in writing, signed and delivered to the secretary by hand or by post not later than the period before the meeting which is specified hereunder:

New business for the agenda	28 days
Motions and amendments arising from the agenda	7 days

- (b) Motions and amendments thereto arising from a debate on an item specified on the agenda or any paper relating thereto (known as "following motions") may, under standing order 22(a), be in order without any prior notice if in the opinion of the chairman presiding:

- (i) due notice could not reasonably have been given prior to that debate; and

- (ii) it would be the wish of synod to debate such motions or amendments;  
and
- (iii) time is available to debate them.

A copy of such motion or amendment shall be delivered to the secretary unless the chairman presiding dispenses with this requirement.

- (c) Questions arising after a motion has been moved or resulting from a debate may be asked and answered without notice.

26. A procedural motion (see SO 44) May with the permission of the chairman presiding be moved without notice.

### **RULES OF DEBATE (QUORUM)**

#### **Quorum**

27. To form a quorum the following minimum proportion of members if required in each of the houses of clergy and laity:
- (a) ordinary meetings: more than one third
  - (b) special meetings: a majority

#### **If quorum not present**

28. The chairman presiding shall, if requested by any member, take a count of the members present and shall adjourn the meeting if a quorum is wanting. In the absence of such request no decision of the synod shall be invalidated by the absence of a quorum unless the chairman presiding's attention is called thereto immediately upon the vote having been taken.

### **RULES OF DEBATE (GENERAL)**

#### **Moving motions or amendments**

29. (a) Matters debated in the synod shall have been moved by a member and the member speaking to such matter will be deemed to have moved it;
- (b) A motion or amendment which, when called by the chairman presiding, is not moved by the member who has given notice thereof may be moved by some other member in his stead;
  - (c) A member may move following motions or amendments under standing order 25(b) if the reasons given are acceptable to the chairman.

#### **Withdrawal**

30. A motion or amendment, once moved, may be withdrawn with the consent of synod by or on behalf of the mover.

#### **One motion at a time**

31. During the debate on a motion or amendment no other motion shall be moved except a procedural motion under standing order 44 and no other amendment may be moved on the same motion before the prior amendment is decided; provided that the chairman presiding may permit a following motion or other amendments to be discussed, but not voted on, if circumstances suggest to him that this course would facilitate the conduct of synod's business (see also SO 43).

#### **Division**

32. The presiding chairman may, with the consent of the mover, divide any motion or amendment in such manner as to enable synod to express its judgement separately upon each part of the motion or amendment so divided.

#### **Putting to the vote**

33. The presiding chairman, or in the case of a successful closure motion the synod, will decide when any debate is to be terminated and the matter put to the vote. The procedure for incorporating amendments into the main motion is contained in standing orders 40-43 and in the event that the main motion falls, amended or otherwise, any following motions will be put to the vote.

#### **Personal explanations**

34. A member may ask permission of the chairman presiding to interrupt a debate to make a personal explanation but only to correct an important misunderstanding or misrepresentation of fact during a debate with regard to what he has said and for this purpose may interrupt another speaker.

#### **Reconsideration and rescission**

35. No motion or amendment to the same effect as or dependent on one which has been rejected within the preceding twelve months and no motion to rescind a resolution passed within the same period shall be proposed without the agreement of the standing committee.

#### **Speaking more than once**

36. Subject to standing order 37, no member shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment under debate except that:
- (a) the mover of any motion shall have a right of reply to the debate on his motion but such reply shall not introduce any new matter and shall close the debate;
  - (b) a speech on an amendment shall not be deemed a speech on the main motion;
  - (c) a point of order (an alleged contravention of standing orders) or a request to make a personal explanation (SO 34) may be made at any time, whether or not another member is interrupted.

## **General discussions**

37. The chairman presiding may at any time suspend the last preceding standing order for so long as he thinks the purposes of the synod would be more usefully served by a general discussion and he may direct that such discussion shall be held in informal groups. A general discussion under this standing order or any discussion on an address or paper presented to synod shall be conducted in accordance with procedure to be determined by the chairman presiding but no motion or amendment shall be moved or put to the vote during such discussion and the number of speeches made by any member while it continues shall be disregarded for the purpose of standing order 36.

## **Speaking**

38. Every speech shall be addressed to the chair and shall be succinct and relevant to the matter under debate.

## **Length of speeches**

39. The chairman presiding may at any time impose a limit of not less than 5 minutes on the length of speeches and may vary or revoke such limit; provided that he shall inform members of each ruling which shall not be open to question.

## **RULES OF DEBATE (AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS)**

### **When permitted**

40. Except as precluded in standing order 41 any member may move an amendment to a motion which has been duly moved and such amendment shall be disposed of before that motion is put (see also SO 43). Amendments accepted by synod will be incorporated into the main motion before it is itself put to the vote.

### **When not permitted**

41. Amendments to the following shall not be permitted:
- (a) a procedural motion under standing order 44;
  - (b) a motion in reply to any matter referred by diocesan synod (SO 53);
  - (c) another amendment;
  - (d) a motion to receive a report.

### **Content**

42. An amendment shall be a modification or variation of the main motion and shall not have the effect of negating it.

### **Order of consideration**

43. In the event that more than one amendment to a motion is moved they may at the chairman presiding's discretion all be discussed prior to being put to the vote in the order he determines. He may pay regard to:
- (a) the order in which the amendments were raised;

- (b) the sequence in which they affect the motion;
- (c) those with, in his opinion, a wider impact before those of detail;

or such other criteria as in his opinion will enable synod best to express its mind.

### **RULES OF DEBATE (PROCEDURAL MOTIONS)**

**44.** Subject to these standing orders, the following procedural motions may, with the consent of the chairman presiding, be moved with or without notice but not so as to interrupt the speech of any member:

- (a) “That the synod do now pass to the next business” (“**Next business**”)
- (b) “That the synod do now adjourn” (“**adjournment of the synod**”)
- (c) “That the debate be now adjourned” (“**adjournment of debate**”)
- (d) “That the debate be now closed” (“**closure**”)

**45.** Restrictions on the use of procedural motions.

- (a) “**Next business**” shall not be moved on an amendment, another procedural motion or any matter referred by diocesan synod.
- (b) “**closure**” shall not be moved on any matter referred by diocesan synod.

**46.** The following rules of debate will apply to “**next business**” and “**closure**”. If moved the debate will be limited to a brief speech by the proposer of not more than three minutes and a brief reply by the mover of the original motion, or failing him, one other member.

**47.** If carried the result of procedural motions will be as follows:

“ <b>Next business</b> ”	the original motion may not be reconsidered during the same meeting of synod.
“ <b>Adjournment of synod</b> ”	unless otherwise resolved the resumption of business interrupted shall be resumed at the next meeting of synod.
“ <b>Adjournment of debate</b> ”	unless otherwise resolved the resumption of business interrupted, will be at the discretion of the standing committee.
“ <b>Closure</b> ”	the debate to which it relates shall be closed and the matter put to the vote (see SO 46).

If negatived the chairman presiding may withhold his consent to the same procedural motion being put to synod until such time as he is satisfied that circumstances have changed sufficiently to so warrant.

## **VOTING**

### **General**

- 48.** Decisions shall be taken by a majority of the members of the synod present and voting, except that a separate vote of each house shall be taken in the following cases:
- (a) if the chairman presiding so rules;
  - (b) if not fewer than five members so request;
  - (c) on any matter referred by the diocesan synod.

### **Assent of both houses**

- 49.** On a vote by houses, decisions of the synod shall be taken by a majority of the members of each house present and voting.

### **Mode of Voting**

- 50.** The chairman presiding on putting any matter to the vote shall either:
- (a) take a show of hands, the result of which as announced by him shall be conclusive except that he or any five members of synod may then require that the hands be counted or;
  - (b) call for a ballot if he feels that this would result in the will of synod being more truly reflected or if this is called for by a member of synod and supported by the majority of members present.

A count of hands (or a ballot) shall always be taken on a vote by houses.

### **Recording votes**

- 51.** The voting on a vote by houses (SO 49) shall be recorded in the minutes.

## **REFERENCES BY DIOCESAN SYNOD**

- 52.** When a reference is received from the diocesan synod, the standing committee shall ensure that members of synod receive at least twenty eight days notice of the referral together with supporting documents and the date, time and place of the meeting.
- 53.** Prior to voting on any issue referred by diocesan synod the synod may, subject to the timetable laid down, refer it or any matter arising from it to parochial church councils or parochial church meetings for an expression of their views. The procedure for debate on such matters shall be as follows:
- (a) When the reference by the diocesan synod is in the form of a question requiring the answer Yes or No, the question shall be put to the synod as a formal motion in the affirmative sense. No amendment shall be in order and the vote shall be taken separately by houses. If the motion is defeated or the votes are equally divided the question shall be decided in the negative.

- (b) When the reference invites a fuller statement of opinion, a motion containing a draft of such statement shall be moved on behalf of the standing committee and amendments to such a motion shall be in order.
  - (c) When all motions under the foregoing paragraphs (a) and (b) have been decided, other motions arising there from may, if otherwise in order, be moved by any member or members.
54. The decision (together with the number of votes cast in each house) on every matter referred and on every additional motion shall be reported by the secretary of the deanery synod to the secretary of the diocesan synod.

## **REPORTS BY THE DEANERY SYNOD TO PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS**

### **Report of proceedings**

55. Within six weeks after a meeting of the deanery synod the secretary shall prepare and circulate to the secretaries of the parochial church councils in the deanery a draft report (which may be in the form of draft minutes) of the proceedings of that meeting with any corrections or additions subsequently made by a meeting of synod being minuted.

## **MATTERS RAISED BY PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Mode of representation**

56. Any parochial church council or parochial church meeting in the deanery may ask one of its deanery synod representatives to bring before that synod any matter either of general Church interest or affecting that parish. It may also move that the deanery synod bring such matter to the diocesan synod. If such a motion is accepted by the deanery synod, the deanery standing committee shall request the diocesan standing committee to put such a motion before the diocesan synod, and may propose one of its own deanery representatives on diocesan synod to speak to and move such motion.

## **FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

### **Quota**

57. Synod is charged with assisting in the apportionment of the Common Fund to its parishes and with helping to ensure prompt payment to the board of finance.

### **Annual accounts**

58. The standing committee or such other committee as the synod shall appoint not later than 31 May in each year submit to the synod:
- (a) a report and audited accounts, including synod expenditure, for the preceding financial year;
  - (b) a statement showing the estimated expenditure of the synod during the next financial year; and

- (c) proposals for raising the income required to meet such expenditure.

### **Banking**

- 59.** The standing committee or other appointed committee shall have authority to open and operate bank accounts.

### **ADMISSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

- 60.** Apart from persons entitled to attend and participate in synod meetings under standing order 2, members of the press and general public are welcome to attend synod meetings as observers unless members vote to exclude them on any occasion or for any item of business.

### **PROCEDURAL DEFECTS**

- 61.** A meeting of the synod or of any of its committees that has itself been duly summoned shall by approving and authorising the signing of the minutes of the preceding meeting, validate the proceedings and that meeting notwithstanding any defect in the procedure for summoning or conducting that meeting; provided that if and when any such defect becomes known the secretary will, without undue delay, notify members (of the synod or the committee as the case may be) of the nature of such defect and of the meeting at which such minutes are due to be approved and invite comment (if any) upon such defect.

### **AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS**

- 62.** The constitution, standing orders and preface have been authorised by the diocesan synod and shall not be varied, revoked or suspended except by a further resolution of that synod. (See also paragraph 1 of preface).