

GENERAL SYNOD

November 2010 Group of Sessions

Report by the Business Committee

1. The Business Committee welcomes Synod members, new and returning, to the first group of sessions of the ninth General Synod, to be inaugurated by Her Majesty The Queen on Tuesday 23 November. The new quinquennium brings fresh challenges and opportunities.
2. The purpose of this report is to give background information about the subjects which feature on the Agenda for the November group of sessions, together with information about the Synod's procedures generally, in order to help members make the most effective use of their time at Synod. The Business Committee, and its staff, are here to assist members and are always ready to consider comments about business content or procedures, which should be sent to the Clerk to the Synod.
3. Responsibilities of the Business Committee include the management of the business of the Synod and of its meetings, and are set out fully in Standing Order ('SO') 115.

Venue and timing of the November Synod

4. On Monday 22 November, prior to the Inauguration of the Synod on the following day, there will be an induction seminar which is aimed primarily at new members, but which members who have been re-elected are also welcome to attend. All wishing to attend should book their place in advance with the Synod Office (and no later than the 5th November).
5. On Tuesday 23 November, there will be a service of Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey at 10.45 a.m., at which Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh will be present. Details will follow shortly on a separate notice.
6. Following the service Her Majesty will address the Synod at a brief ceremony in the Assembly Hall of Church House, Westminster. After the Inauguration ceremony, the Synod will adjourn for lunch, re-assemble at 2.45 p.m. and will then sit until 7 p.m. On Wednesday 24 November, the Synod will sit from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 p.m. until 3.45 p.m.
7. A meeting of the House of Laity will take place (in the Assembly Hall at 4 p.m. or 15 minutes after the prorogation of the Synod if the Synod's business is completed earlier) as required by the Standing Orders of the House. The Convocations of Canterbury and York will also meet at the same time, in the Harvey Goodwin suite and in the Convocation Hall respectively. (They are expected to finish between 5 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.)

Overview of the Agenda

8. Within the inevitable constraints of a short group of sessions the Agenda presents the new Synod with a good range of business, including a debate on the Anglican Communion Covenant, a number of other items of legislative business and a debate on the Big Society. This group of sessions will also include a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Security

- Members are asked to wear their Church House passes at all times and to study the security notice which will be circulated in a notice paper.

Worship

- A time of prayer and worship takes place at the commencement of each morning sitting of the Synod. On Wednesday morning there will be a service of morning prayer, in the Assembly Hall at 9.30 a.m. Outline information about other services in the Church House Chapel is given on the inside front cover of the Agenda.

Order of Business

- The business each day will follow the order set out in the Agenda, except where it is necessary to modify this. Every effort will be made to give the Synod the longest possible notice of any variations which it is proposed to make in the timetable and to keep such changes to a minimum. However, if an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, the Chair can call business from the Agenda which has not been reached or completed. The rubric 'not later than' in the Agenda does not prevent an item coming on significantly earlier than the time stated, depending on the progress of the preceding business.

Diocesan Synod Motions

- Diocesan Synod Motions ('DSMs') are normally considered in the order in which they are received and they continue from one quinquennium to the next. They are listed in Special Agenda IV. The Business Committee has previously decided that the Southwark DSM on the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod and the motion from Rochester on the Ordination of Women to the Episcopate should not be debated whilst the current legislative process in relation to women in the episcopate continues.
- The motions from Bradford on Communion of Baptised Adults and from Liverpool on Common Worship Baptism Provision are included in the forecast of future Synod business.

Private Members' Motions

- Private Members' Motions ('PMMs') are normally listed in Special Agenda III, but as Private Members' Motions cannot be carried over from one Synodical quinquennium to another, there are none for consideration at the November group of sessions. Notice of any new PMMs that are received no later than **5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 23 November** will be published in a notice paper. They will be available at the November group of sessions for members to indicate their support for them by signature.

Content of Business

Introductions (Tuesday 23 November)

- Amongst those who will be present in the gallery for the Inauguration and the afternoon session will be representatives of other faith communities.

Presidential Address

16. The Archbishop of Canterbury will address the Synod.

Report by the Business Committee

17. This provides the opportunity for members to raise points about the content and shape of the Agenda for this group of sessions, or about the Synod's business generally.

The Big Society: Report by the Mission and Public Affairs Council

18. The Big Society is a major theme of the new Government and is of considerable relevance to the role of religious bodies (including the Church of England) in a flourishing society.
19. On 16 June 2010, the Bishop of Leicester sponsored a debate in the House of Lords on the ideas surrounding The Big Society. The Mission and Public Affairs Division, has been in discussion with ministers to consider ways the Church might work in partnership with Government to promote greater social cohesion.
20. The debate in Synod, informed by a discussion paper (GS 1804), should enable the Church to understand the issues concerned more deeply and prepare dioceses and parishes to feel better equipped to respond at local level.

Questions

21. Under SO 105, members may address Questions to the Secretary General, the Clerk to the Synod, the Chair of the Archbishops' Council, the Chair of any body answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council (including Boards and Councils), the Chair of any Church of England body on which the Synod is represented, the Chair of each of the three Houses of Synod and the Church Estates Commissioners. Anyone wishing to ask a question must give notice of it to reach the Clerk to the Synod by **5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 11 November 2010**. The Questions notice paper will be distributed at the beginning of the group of sessions.
22. Members are entitled to ask up to two questions. 'Omnibus' questions are not in order. If a member wishes to query several points, each should be the subject of a separate question. Unless an oral reply is requested **it will be assumed that a written answer is required**. Detailed information, e.g. tables of figures, are better dealt with in a written answer, and members are urged to be selective in matters which they raise orally, including in any supplementaries (which must be framed as a question and should be kept brief).

Draft Act of Synod Adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant: Article 7 and Article 8 business (Wednesday 24 November)

23. The idea of an Anglican Covenant was first proposed in the *Windsor Report* of 2004 which stated:

'This Commission recommends, therefore, and urges the primates to consider, the adoption by the churches of the Communion of a common Anglican Covenant which would make explicit and forceful the loyalty and bonds of affection which govern the relationships between the churches of the Communion. The Covenant could deal with: the acknowledgement of common identity; the relationships of

communion; the commitments of communion; the exercise of autonomy in communion; and the management of communion affairs (including disputes).’

24. The development of the Covenant since then is described in a document prepared by the Church of England’s new Faith and Order Advisory Commission (FOAC) ‘The Anglican Covenant: a briefing paper’ (GS Misc 966) to which is attached the text of the Covenant. The House of Bishops agreed in May to commend the Covenant to the Synod for adoption. The requisite draft Act of Synod is circulated as a separate document (GS 1809).
25. The FOAC report explains the structure and content of the Covenant and looks at the issue of the relationship between signing up to the Covenant and membership of the Anglican Communion. It also examines some of the objections that have been raised in connection with the Covenant proposal. The report is circulated to the Synod with the text of the Covenant and a note from the Presidents.
26. At this group of sessions the Synod will debate a motion under the ‘Preliminary Motion’ procedure (see SO 71) that the draft Act of Synod adopting the Covenant ‘be considered’. If that motion is passed then, after any amendments and following motions have been dealt with, the draft Act of Synod will stand automatically referred to the House of Bishops under SO 71(d), with a view to compliance with the requirements of Article 7 of the Synod’s Constitution (including a possible reference to the Convocations and the House of Laity) and Article 8 (including reference to the dioceses). Subject to the outcome of the Article 7 and Article 8 procedures, the draft Act of Synod would return to the Synod in due course for final approval.

Other Legislative Business

27. Full details of the legislative business for this group of sessions can be found in Special Agenda I.
28. At the July group of sessions the Synod passed a resolution (on a motion from the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds) calling for the introduction of legislation which would enable a diocesan bishop to give directions allowing those who have a ‘qualifying connection’ with a particular parish under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008 to marry in any church within the benefice of which that parish forms a part. The Church of England Marriage (Amendment) Measure (GS 1805) will be introduced at this group of sessions to give effect to that mandate.
29. Two further pieces of legislation come to the Synod for approval as part of the continuing process of preparing for the introduction of ‘Common Tenure’ early in 2011: the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations (GS 1806) (which will make a further adjustment to the Regulations approved by the Synod in July 2009); and the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Order (GS 1807) (which will make consequential changes to other legislation, and transitional arrangements, required for the effective introduction of Common Tenure).
30. The Clergy Discipline Commission brings to the Synod an Amending Code of Practice under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 (GS 1808), incorporating a number of amendments on which the Commission conducted a consultation in 2008.
31. Finally, in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution of the Diocese in Europe, the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe has laid before the Synod a Scheme (GS 1810) making a

number of amendments to the Constitution, including some required in connection with the introduction of Common Tenure. The Scheme will not be debated unless a member gives notice of a desire to that effect.

Farewells

32. There will be a farewell to the Bishop of Lincoln.

Prorogation

33. The Synod will be prorogued no later than 3.45 pm and the closing ceremonies will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Other Work of the Business Committee

34. The Committee has continued to look at ways in which the Synod's procedures may be streamlined and made more efficient and effective. It has considered carefully the points which members have raised in correspondence. It has also considered the results of the survey of the members of the outgoing General Synod, and will be making recommendations to the new Business Committee as to ways in which the issues concerning the nature, purpose and operation of the Synod can best be taken forward.
35. However, the Committee wished to secure improvements to the form and presentation of Synod papers at an early opportunity. It is minded to propose that documents for the Synod should be produced according to guidelines similar to those applicable to papers prepared for the Archbishops' Council. This would mean that (save where legislative and liturgical business are concerned) documents longer than six pages would be sent to members electronically, with only a shorter summary (of no more than six pages) being circulated in hard copy. The Committee is keen to trial this proposal in November, and to receive feedback from members. The Big Society report will accordingly be handled in this way: Synod will take note of the full report, to be sent electronically, and only a short summary report will be circulated in hard copy.
36. The Committee has also decided to amend the protocol for the media in relation to the Synod, so that it will now be possible to film and photograph members of the Synod whilst voting. The Committee recognized that the actual voting results are now in the public domain, and are a matter of public interest.
37. The Committee appointed the Bishop of Dover as Acting Chair of the Committee.

On behalf of the Business Committee

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick

September 2010

Membership of the Business Committee (as at 30 September 2010)

The Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick (Hereford) - Chair

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover

Elected by the House of Clergy

The Ven Alan Hawker, Archdeacon of Malmesbury (Bristol) - *Vice-Chair*

The Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford)

The Ven Julian Henderson, Archdeacon of Dorking (Guildford)

Elected by the House of Laity

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich)

Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)

Mrs Rosalind O'Dowd (London)

Appointed by the Archbishops' Council

Professor John Craven (ex officio)

The Revd Canon Glyn Webster (York)

The Secretary to the Committee is the Revd David Williams
and the Assistant Secretary is David Pertaub

Forecast of future Synod business

There are two Diocesan Synod Motions in Special Agenda IV which are awaiting debate: the Bradford DSM on Communion before Confirmation of Baptised Adults, and the Liverpool DSM on Common Worship Baptism Provision.

It is envisaged that there will be one or two Private Members' Motions in each group of sessions.

The forecast of business provides a forward look to the groups of sessions in 2011. There are always considerable uncertainties when looking ahead in this way, so this should not be read as more than a broad indication of business that may come to the Synod in the future.

Legislative business

- Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure
- Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order
- Dioceses Measure: Compensation rules

Liturgical business

- Additional Eucharistic Prayers (for use when a significant number of children are present)

Reports

- Faith and Order Advisory Group report on Christian Initiation
- Parochial Fees policy: report from the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee
- ARCIC report on *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*
- Local unity arrangements: report of Council for Christian Unity review
- Relations between the Church of England and the United Reformed Church
- House of Bishops statement on marriage after divorce and the ordained ministry (GS Misc 960)
- Church schools, marking the 200th Anniversary of the National Society
- Chaplaincy in the Church of England
- Participation of minority ethnic Anglicans in the life of the Church
- Ethical Investment: Presentation by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group
- Forward Look into the New Quinquennium
- Presence and Engagement: the churches' task in a multi Faith society
- Appointments to the Archbishops' Council

September 2010