

GENERAL SYNOD

LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

CONSTITUTION**1. Title and status**

- a) The name of the Commission shall be ‘The Legal Advisory Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England’, hereinafter referred to in this constitution as ‘the Commission’.
- b) The short title of the Commission shall be ‘The Legal Advisory Commission’.

2. Functions

The functions of the Commission shall be:

- a) To give authoritative and entirely independent legal opinions to the General Synod and to senior officers of the Church of England, including diocesan chancellors and registrars upon questions generally affecting the Church of England.
- b) To advise the General Synod upon the revision of ecclesiastical statutes, measures and canons when so requested.
- c) To report to the General Synod

3. Membership

(a) The Commission shall consist of up to 28 members appointed as follows:

(i) Those persons holding office for the time being as:

- Dean of the Arches and Auditor
- Vicar-General of Canterbury
- Vicar-General of York
- Provincial Registrar of Canterbury
- Provincial Registrar of York
- Chief Legal Adviser to the Archbishops’ Council and the General Synod
- Standing Counsel to the General Synod
- Official Solicitor to the Church Commissioners

(ii) Up to 17 persons appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Church of England of whom:

- at least one shall be a member of the House of Bishops and
- (in addition to those members under paragraph (i) above who are *ex officio* members of the General Synod) not fewer than three shall be members of any of the three houses of the General Synod

(iii) up to 3 persons co-opted by the Commission who shall have the same rights and responsibilities as the appointed and ex-officio members.

(b) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be elected by the Commission from amongst its own members, subject to approval by the two Archbishops.

4. Term of office

(a) Members *ex officio* shall be entitled to continue as members of the Commission throughout their tenure of the relevant office.

(b) General Synod members (other than those with *ex officio* membership) shall, subject to Article 3(4) of the Constitution of the General Synod, be members of the Commission for the period from their appointment until the next dissolution of the General Synod.

(c) Other appointed members and co-opted members shall, subject to paragraph (f), be members of the Commission for a period of five years from the date of their appointment or co-option.

(d) Members appointed or co-opted under paragraphs 3(a) (ii) and (iii) shall not serve as members of the Commission for more than three consecutive terms without the consent of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

(e) The terms of office of the Chairman and the Vice-chairman shall be determined by the two Archbishops.

(f) If any casual vacancy should arise among the appointed members of the Commission, a new appointment shall be made for the unexpired portion of the term of office of the outgoing member, unless that unexpired portion shall amount to twelve months or less, in which case the vacancy shall not be filled.

5. Consultants and observers

In addition to members of the Commission, the Commission may invite such consultants and observers as it considers appropriate to attend its meetings from time to time. Such persons shall have the right to speak at meetings of the Commission at the invitation of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman but not to vote.

6. Business and procedure

a) The Commission shall have the power to regulate its own business and procedure.

b) Ten members of the Commission or one third of its total membership (whichever shall be the lower figure) shall form a quorum.

c) The Commission may appoint such committees, and delegate to them such of its functions, as it may from time to time think fit. The terms as to membership, appointment, functions and reporting back shall be such as the Commission may from time to time direct. Any such committee may include persons who are not members of the Commission.

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