



Sam Atkins / Church of England

General Synod today approved the recommendations of the National Church Governance Project Board.

In the Sunday evening session, Synod requested the Project Board draft legislation, which would be presented at Synod in February 2024.

The Governance Project Board's recommendations include reducing the number of NCIs from seven to four trustee bodies and the creation of a new NCI, Church of England National Services (CENS). CENS would, through a transitional process, replace the Archbishops' Council and Church of England Central Services and integrate some of the activities of the Office of the Archbishops and the Church Commissioners (excluding investments). The proposal seeks to make clear the interfaces between the NCIs and other National Church bodies, primarily the House of Bishops.

The motion was taken forward with amendments from Sam Margrave (Coventry) who asked the Synod to 'welcome' rather than 'confirm' recommendations, from Adrian Greenwood (Southwark) that a majority of the members of the CENS board should be either elected or appointed from the members of Synod, and from Clive Billenness (Europe) that two members of the Audit and Risk Committee should also be members of the Synod's House of Laity or the House of Clergy, and jointly elected by those Houses.

The report says: "CENS would be focused on the delivery of the Church's strategic objectives, a body designed to serve, support, encourage and enable the work and mission of the Church through the provision of funding, services, advice, and guidance. CENS would serve as a point of connection, one that joins together the local and the national."

Sir David Lidington, Chair of the National Church Governance Project Board, said: "The aim of the Project Board's recommendations is to build a simpler, more joined up national church governance structure that is better able to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. We look forward to working with Synod members to achieve this important objective."

The recommendations will now be taken forward for drafting of legislation to come back to Synod.

More information

The motion was passed with votes recorded as follows: 328 in favour, 17 against, 10 abstained.

The final motion, as amended, reads:

That this Synod:

- a. *welcome the recommendations of the National Church Governance Project Board set out in GS 2307 as the basis for the reform of the National Church Institutions and Governance Structures of the Church of England except in respect of recommendation 13, where specific provision should be made so that a majority of the members of the CENS board are either elected or appointed from the members of Synod and except in respect of recommendation 14, where specific provision should be made so that two members of the Audit and Risk Committee are members of either the House of Laity or the House of Clergy of the General Synod and are jointly elected by the members of those Houses;*
- b. *request the introduction of draft legislation to give effect to the necessary statutory changes for the implementation of these proposals no later than the February 2024 Group of Sessions.'*

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/general-synod-approves-governance-reform-recommendations>