

GENERAL SYNOD
“CHANGING THE CULTURE OF GENERAL SYNOD”-
PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE
JULY 2015

Progress to date

Annex 2 to the July 2014 Business Committee Report (GS 1949) set out four main themes which the Business Committee had identified under the banner of ‘Changing the Culture of General Synod’. These themes are:

- Integrating worship and prayer in the life of the Synod
- Working together for good
- Communicating well with the church and the world
- Taking seriously Synod’s role in leadership and governance

In the remainder of the document, the Business Committee set out some actions under each theme and identified whether these actions were for the short, medium or longer term. In addition to GS 1949, the Business Committee invited input from Synod members on this initiative. A fringe meeting was held in the margins of the July 2014 General Synod, and further written comments were sent to the Business Committee afterwards which were discussed at their September and December 2014 meetings.

The table at the end of this document summarises progress made since July 2014. It includes follow-up under the Business Committee’s four main themes and as well as areas of action based on suggestions made by Synod members at the July 2014 fringe and in subsequent submissions to the Business Committee. The final column suggests areas for future action which the next Business Committee may wish to take forward in the new quinquennium.

On behalf of the Business Committee

The Revd Canon Sue Booy
Chair of the Business Committee

June 2015

THEME/AREA OF ACTION	PROGRESS MADE	ORIGINS	POSSIBLE FURTHER ACTION
Synod Worship	<p>Continuous Praying Presence and Synod Prayer Cards now an established part of every Synod</p> <p>Greater integration of ‘themed worship’ around Synod debates</p> <p>Greater variety of worship styles at each Synod</p>	<p>BC theme of ‘Integrating worship and prayer in the life of the Synod’</p> <p>Feedback from Synod members</p>	<p>Extend initiative to encourage Churches and Cathedrals to pray for Synod’s activities</p> <p>Continue to take opportunities to integrate worship with Synod proceedings, e.g. ‘themed worship’, use of collects to open afternoon sittings</p> <p>Appointment of non-synod member as Synod Chaplain from November 2015 to coordinate a small ‘worship team’ at groups of sessions to build on progress achieved to date</p>
Improved working together, listening and handling of difficult and divisive issues	<p>More use of focused group work at recent groups of sessions</p> <p>BC Guidelines issued for those preparing group work to ensure it is purposeful and productive</p>	<p>BC theme of ‘Working together for good’</p> <p>Input on group work given at July 2014 BC fringe meeting</p>	<p>Further group work to take place in the new quinquennium</p> <p>New Synod Chaplain to explore opportunities for bible study and group work in smaller or larger groups</p>
Improving the communication and understanding of Synod’s work.	<p>Regular updates on Synod’s activities sent to Diocesan Secretaries before and after each group of sessions</p> <p>Web-streaming of Synod proceedings</p> <p>Use of General Synod TwitterFeed and regular updates and podcasts.</p>	<p>BC theme of ‘Communicating well with the church and the world’</p> <p>Feedback on Synod appearance by Synod members</p>	<p>BC to encourage further work on communicating Synod, especially the use of social media and electronic communications by National Church staff and by Synod members</p> <p>Input to be built into Induction Day for new Synod members in November 2015</p> <p>Investigation of a “General Synod Papers app” similar to the one now used by the UK Parliament</p>

THEME/AREA OF ACTION	PROGRESS MADE	ORIGINS	POSSIBLE FURTHER ACTION
	<p>More sophisticated use of screens and improvements to appearance of platform at York Synod</p> <p>Streamlining the format of General Synod Question Time</p>	<p>Requests for further training on Synod's work by Synod members</p> <p>Suggestions on Synod Question Time made to BC</p> <p>Requests for further training made at July 2014 fringe meeting</p>	<p>Further consideration of improvements to appearance of platform at London Synods</p> <p>Continue to work with ideas to enable the General Synod to respond to topical issues.</p>
<p>Exercising General Synod's Role as a Deliberative and Legislative body of the Established Church</p>	<p>Document summarising Business Done in current quinquennium</p> <p>New training session run for Panel of Chairs</p> <p>GS Misc 1094 makes two suggestions regarding the pattern of Synod meetings and a possible Enabling Measure. Proposal for an Enabling Measure currently out for consultation</p>	<p>BC theme of 'Taking seriously the Synod's role in leadership and governance'</p> <p>Requests from Synod members for summary of Synodical activities over the course of the quinquennium</p> <p>Feedback to BC on length of groups of sessions and requests for streamlining of legislative process</p>	<p>Possible Synod review of the Quinquennial Goals?</p> <p>Business Committee to return to proposals in GS Misc 1094 in next quinquennium</p>