

The July 2012 Group of Sessions of the General Synod

Report by the Business Committee

Introduction

1. The Business Committee has met twice since the February group of sessions – in March and May. The March meeting (an innovation) enabled the Committee to begin planning for the July group of sessions at a suitably early point.
2. The election of the Ven. Julian Henderson (Archdeacon of Guildford) to chair the committee created a vacancy among the elected members. On a recount of the original ballot papers the Revd Charles Razzall (Chester) was elected to the vacant place. The Committee elected the Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) as its Vice-Chair. The Committee's membership is set out on page 11 below.
3. This report falls into three parts:
 - Part I introduces the Agenda for this group of sessions (GS 1863) and highlights distinctive features.
 - Part II comments on individual items of business where necessary.
 - Part III reports on other work and decisions of the Business Committee.

I: The July 2012 Group of Sessions

4. The Synod will meet at the University of York from 5.15 p.m. on Friday 6 July until 1 p.m. on Tuesday 10 July 2012. (On Friday 6 July the House of Laity, the York Convocation and the Convocation of Canterbury will meet at 2 p.m.)

Anglican and Ecumenical Guests

5. The following Anglican and Ecumenical Guests will be present as observers:

The Most Revd Dr Kari Mäkinen, Archbishop of Turku and Finland

accompanied by the Revd Dr Jukka Keskitalo, Chancellor (Secretary General) of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland;

Dr Hans Ulrich Anke, President of the Church Office of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD);

The Ven Dr William Strange, Archdeacon of Cardigan, Church in Wales.

6. Dr Mäkinen, who was elected to the Finnish archiepiscopal see in 2010, is the 54th successor of St Henrik (Henry), the Apostle of Finland and first Bishop of Turku, and the 14th with the title of Archbishop. He will address the Synod on the Friday afternoon.

Shape of the Agenda

7. The most prominent item on the Agenda is the final approval of the Measure and Canon providing for women in the episcopate, to which the Monday morning and afternoon have been allocated (see paras 37-42 below). If the final approval debates were not to be completed in July, the Committee would recommend to the Presidents that a further group of sessions be held in November, at which this business could be completed.
8. It is at the July group of sessions each year that the Synod receives reports on the work of the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners and is invited to approve the Council's planned expenditure for the following year and the apportionment of the necessary sums amongst the dioceses. Both annual reports will be the subject of presentations, with the opportunity to ask questions. This year the Commissioners' presentation will reflect on their investment performance in 2011 and the general economic backdrop, as well as aspects of their distributions.
9. Members will be invited to spend the first part of the Saturday morning in the groups that met last July, engaging in listening, reflection, discussion, fellowship and worship, on the theme 'Jesus in the Olive Grove'. This will provide an opportunity for members to engage with each other in a different way, outside the usual structure of formal debates and voting.

The Anglican Communion Covenant

10. Under Standing Order 91 the Business Committee must report to the Synod on the Reference of the Draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant not later than the second group of sessions following the date prescribed for submission of reports by diocesan synods. The Business Committee intends that its report should be scheduled for debate. Nine diocesan synods have passed a Diocesan Synod Motion on the Covenant (two with minor textual variations). A debate on this motion will enable the Synod to express a view about the Church of England's place in the Anglican Communion in the light of the decision now taken not to approve the draft Act of Synod adopting the Covenant.
11. The Business Committee envisages allocating a significant amount of time to these debates and considers that they should take place at the same group of sessions. The content and necessary shape of the Agenda for this July would have made it very difficult to allocate sufficient time at a suitable point within the group of sessions. It has been suggested that it would be helpful for all members of the Synod, and especially the House of Bishops, to have time to reflect on the position and on the Diocesan Synod Motions before the debates, in the light of discussions within the Anglican Communion and in particular at the forthcoming meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council. For all of these reasons the Committee decided not to schedule the report or the DSM for debate at this group of sessions. If it were to become necessary for the Synod to meet in November, they would be scheduled for debate then, but otherwise the debates would take place in February.

Private Members' Motions

12. The Private Members' Motions (PMMs) are listed in Special Agenda III. Once put down, a motion remains on the agenda at least until members have had an opportunity to sign it at three groups of sessions. Under Standing Order 6(c) the Business Committee is required to exclude from the agenda a PMM which is not supported by at least 100 signatures within three groups of sessions. Conversely, the Business Committee considers that in order to be listed for debate a PMM ought to have attracted 100 signatures.

13. In shaping the agenda the Business Committee is required to give special consideration to items included in the agenda for the previous group of sessions that were not reached or not completed. It has accordingly scheduled the Revd Stephen Trott's PMM on the Manifestation of Faith in Public Life (which had been included in the Agenda as contingency business in February) for debate. The PMM with the highest number of signatures, Dr John Dinnen's motion on Palestine and Israel, is also listed for debate, and the Revd Christopher Hobbs' motion on the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 is listed as contingency business.

Diocesan Synod Motions

14. The Diocesan Synod Motions (DSMs) that have been received are listed in Special Agenda IV. They are normally debated in the order in which they were received. However, the Business Committee has decided that the Southwark DSM on the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod (which is first in the list) and the motion from Rochester on the Ordination of Women to the Episcopate (which is second in the list) should not be debated whilst the current legislative process in relation to women in the episcopate continues.
15. At this group of sessions, a motion from the Bradford Diocesan Synod Motion has been listed for debate. It seeks amendment of the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993 (as amended in 2003, 2007 and 2008) so as to ensure that Vacancy in See Committees have at least 21 members.
16. The next DSM in the list is also from the Bradford Diocesan Synod. (A motion in identical terms was also passed by the Ripon and Leeds Diocesan Synod.) It seeks the introduction of legislation to enable Church of England dioceses to be named by reference to a geographical area. (At present a diocese legally takes the name of the diocesan see, which must be a city or town – or two or more cities or towns.)
17. The motion arises from the Dioceses Commission's draft Reorganization Scheme providing for a new diocese in Yorkshire (which names the proposed diocese after a see city while providing that it 'may also be known as' the diocese of a geographical area). Any legislation could not be passed in time to affect the outcome of the process arising from the Commission's proposals for Yorkshire, but it would be difficult for the Synod to debate the motion without reference to the context that gave rise to it. There would then be a danger that the outcome of the debate on one item of business before the Synod would prejudice the outcome of the other, rather than allowing each of the matters – the draft Reorganization Scheme and the proposed change in the law – to be considered on their own merits.
18. The Business Committee has accordingly decided that this second Bradford DSM should not be debated until the General Synod has considered the draft Reorganization Scheme for approval (or it becomes clear that it will not be submitted to the General Synod for approval). The Dioceses Commission hopes that, if it decides to prepare a final Scheme, it will come to the General Synod for approval in July 2013.

Order of Business

19. Members are reminded that if at any time within the group of sessions an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's Agenda, business earlier in the Agenda which has not been reached or completed within the period allotted can be called by the Chair, unless other provision has already been made for it.

II: Individual Items of Business

20. This section of the Report offers comments, where necessary, on individual items of business. They are discussed in chronological order.

Friday 6 July

Questions

21. On this occasion the pressure of other business means that it is not possible to allocate more than 90 minutes to Question Time. The Business Committee hopes to be able to allocate more time to Questions at the next group of sessions.
22. Any member wishing to ask a question of any of the bodies or persons specified in Standing Order 105 must deliver notice of it to the Clerk to the Synod by **5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 26 June**. Questions sent by email should be addressed to questions@churchofengland.org
23. Members are reminded that **all questions will be presumed to be for written answer** unless an oral answer is specifically requested.

Saturday 7 July

World-Shaped Mission

24. The Report *World-Shaped Mission* (GS 1865) looks at the history and direction of the Church of England's engagement in world mission and how it should develop. It recommends a move towards patterns of world mission relationships based on mutual receiving and giving – instead of earlier patterns, which tended to be based on an assumed role as giver and on models of dependency. The report asks how the life and mission of dioceses, deaneries and parishes can be enhanced by receiving from world church partners and suggests a process whereby cross-cultural awareness can be developed in parishes. *World-Shaped Mission* acknowledges that the Church of England has already begun this journey but argues that it needs an intensified awareness of our place in the world Church, so that our own life and mission across the globe is reshaped amidst the many challenges which all churches face at this time.

Legislative Business

25. The Legislative Business for this group of sessions is set out in Special Agenda I.
26. Items of Legislative Business not connected with the Bishops and Priests (Ordination and Consecration of Women) Measure will be taken on the Saturday afternoon.
27. Having completed its Revision Stage in February, the Clergy Discipline (Amendment) Measure returns to the Synod for Final Drafting and Final Approval. Also returning to the Synod, for Revision, is the Diocese in Europe Measure. Given that no proposals were received for its amendment, the Synod will be invited also to give the Measure Final Approval at this group of sessions.
28. As regards new legislation, the Synod will be asked to give First Consideration to the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure, which is the next in a series of

such Measures – one of which is generally brought before the Synod in each quinquennium – making a variety of uncontentious, and often technical, changes to ecclesiastical law. The draft Measure will be accompanied by draft Amending Canon No. 31 which, similarly, will make miscellaneous uncontentious amendments to the Canons.

29. The Synod will be asked to approve the Church of England Funded Pensions Scheme (Amendment) Rules 2012, which will make further changes to the Rules of the Funded Pensions Scheme – principally to make provision for dealing with debts that arise under section 75 of the Pensions Act 1995.
30. Finally, as at every July group of sessions, the Synod will be asked to approve two orders – the Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order and the Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order – which specify the fees payable (respectively) to diocesan registrars and ecclesiastical judges and other legal officers for the following calendar year. The Business Committee has agreed that, as is usually the case, both orders be taken under the ‘deemed procedure’.

Fresh Expressions in the Mission of the Church

31. The report *Fresh Expressions in the Mission of the Church* (GS 1871) was commissioned by the Faith and Order Commission of the General Synod and the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church to explore the ecclesiological challenges and opportunities raised by the growth of fresh expressions of the Church in both churches. It discusses mission-shaped ecclesiology in the light of pioneering practice, yet holds this in tension with the ecclesiological patterns found in Acts and the traditions of the Church of England and the Methodist Church. There are now 1,000 ‘fresh expressions’ in the Church of England, with 30,000 new people attending for whom this is their expression of our church. As the second term of the Fresh Expressions team will come to an end in 2014, a debate on the impact of the movement, and the changing landscape of the Church in this country in the light of it, is timely.

Sunday 8 July

Liturgical Business

Additional Eucharistic Prayers: Final Approval

32. The Additional Eucharistic Prayers are intended to be ‘suitable for use on occasions when a significant number of children are present or when it is otherwise pastorally appropriate to meet the needs of children present’. Following completion of the Revision Stage in February, the texts for authorization stood committed to the House of Bishops under Article 7 of the Synod’s Constitution. At its May meeting the House of Bishops approved the texts without amendment. No reference of this business under Article 7 was claimed by the Convocations or the House of Laity and it therefore returns to the Synod for Final Approval.

Financial Business

33. The 2013 budget (GS 1872) is the third budget drawn up under the Archbishops’ Council’s five-year spending plan endorsed by the Synod in July 2009 (GS 1731). The Council adopted it after consultation with the Inter-Diocesan Finance Forum. The overall proposed apportionment increase is 1.3%, well within the strategy target of at most an inflationary

increase. The largest recommended apportionment increase is in respect of Clergy Retirement Housing (Vote 5, 8.9%). The apportionment for the two largest Votes – Training for Ministry (Vote 1) and National Church Responsibilities (Vote 2) – is recommended to increase by 1.6% and 1.8% respectively. The remaining two Votes – Grants (Vote 3) and Mission Agencies pension contributions (Vote 4) – have recommended apportionment decreases of 11.3% and 23.4% respectively.

34. The Synod will be invited to approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure budget for 2013 and the Council's proposals for apportionment amongst the dioceses, and the usual pooling adjustment in respect of additional maintenance grants to ordinands.

Testing the Bridges: Understanding the Role of the Church amidst Riots, Disturbances and Disorder

35. The economic crisis and the impact of austerity on some of the hardest-pressed communities of the country continue to cause concern to the churches. The Mission and Public Affairs Division recognizes that questions of economics and ethics will continue to be prominent for some time and is about to appoint an adviser on Economic and Social Policy to help with the Church of England's thinking in this field. A well-resourced debate on economic policy might be desirable at a future group of sessions. In the meantime, the report *Testing the Bridges* (GS 1873) puts the Church's response to growing social tensions around the country under the microscope.
36. Last August, disturbances broke out in many areas. Though rioting of this kind has not been repeated to date, it remains a worrying symptom of a dysfunctionality in society. The churches were at the forefront of the response to the disturbances, both as they took place and in the aftermath. Many others have researched the possible causes of the riots and the Mission and Public Affairs Division has not sought to duplicate that work. Staff have instead talked to clergy and lay people in many of the affected areas and the report looks carefully at their ministry, its theological underpinnings and implications, and suggests that what the churches did was both hugely impressive and distinctly fragile. The debate will be an opportunity to reflect on recent Christian action in local communities under stress and to seek to learn the lessons, so that the Church of England is better prepared for ministry and mission at times of extreme social stress.

Monday 9 July

Legislative Business
Women in the Episcopate

37. Following the completion of the Final Drafting Stage at the February group of sessions, under Article 7 of the Synod's Constitution the draft legislation to enable women to be ordained to the episcopate stood committed to the House of Bishops. The House considered the draft legislation at its meeting in May. It made two amendments to the draft Measure and went on to approve both the draft Measure and the draft Amending Canon. Both Convocations and the House of Laity have claimed a reference of the draft legislation under Article 7.
38. If it is approved by them, by simple majorities in the House of Laity and in each House of each Convocation, at their meetings on the Friday afternoon it will return to the Synod for Final Approval (requiring two-thirds majorities in each House) on the Monday. Rejection by the House of Laity would end the process, but if the legislation is rejected by one House

of one Convocation only, the Synod may refer the business to the two Convocations only. If it is rejected a second time by one House of one Convocation only, it may be referred by the Synod to the House of Bishops and the House of Clergy for approval.

39. Once the final approval debate begins – with an Archbishop in the Chair – it is open to any member of the House of Bishops or a member of the Steering Committee under Standing Order 94(a) to move “*That the debate be now adjourned to enable [the draft Measure] to be reconsidered by the House of Bishops*”. Moving the motion requires the permission of the Chair.
40. Under Standing Order 94(b) it is also open to any member of the Synod, with the permission of the Chair, to move that “*The debate be now adjourned to enable [a specific amendment made by the House of Bishops] to be reconsidered by the House of Bishops*”.
41. If an adjournment motion is moved the vote at the end of that part of the debate would be by a simple majority in the whole Synod. Since it is a procedural motion the voting cannot be by way of a division by houses.
42. If the adjournment were lost, the final approval debate would resume. If it were carried, it would not be possible for the House of Bishops to meet and for the final approval debate to be resumed in the same group of sessions. The first opportunity for it to be resumed would be in November. The House of Laity and the Convocations would be able to claim a fresh Article 7 reference immediately before such a November group of sessions. In addition, if the House of Bishops had further amended the Measure the Group of Six would need to have met to determine whether there had been a change to the substance of the proposals embodied in the Measure.

The Church School of the Future: Presentation

43. The report *The Church School of the Future* was launched on 23 March, and it will be a seminal document in the evolution of the Church of England’s role in the education of the nation. It is the report of a review chaired by Dr Priscilla Chadwick, based on an extensive survey and interviews involving schools, diocesan authorities and other interested parties. It addresses the significant challenges to church schools presented by recent and ongoing changes in the way our national system of education is organized. While the changes are demanding, there are also opportunities for the Church to extend its role and the report analyses how that might be resourced. The Report makes 26 recommendations and the Board of Education and National Society will be managing the implementation programme with key partners. The whole of the Church of England is implicated in the programme envisaged by the report and it is hoped that the Synod will debate the implementation programme at a future group of sessions (possibly in February 2013).

Tuesday 10 July

Farewell to the Archbishop of Canterbury

44. Following past precedent, the Farewell to the Archbishop of Canterbury will take the form of a short debate, introduced by the Archbishop of York, to which the Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Chairman of the House of Laity and Archimandrite Ephrem Lash, as the senior Ecumenical Representative, will contribute. The Archbishop of Canterbury will be invited to respond.

III: Other Work of the Business Committee

45. At its March meeting the Committee reviewed the correspondence received since the February group of sessions and considered a number of practical arrangements for Synod meetings. The Committee welcomes comments and suggestions from members. These should be sent to the Clerk to the Synod: colin.podmore@churchofengland.org

Private Members' Motions

46. The Committee noted a widespread concern among members that the Synod should be enabled to debate topical issues before they lose their relevance. Under the present Standing Orders, a Private Member's Motion (PMM) put down after 5.30 p.m. on the first day of a group of sessions is not available for signature until the following group of sessions and therefore cannot be debated until a further group of sessions (usually a year later). The Committee has therefore proposed to the Standing Orders Committee that in future it should be possible for PMMs to be submitted and signed throughout a group of sessions, and for them to be submitted and signed electronically between groups of sessions, with a cut-off date roughly two weeks before the Business Committee meeting. The Committee notes that the Presidents are able to add 'urgent or specially important business' to the Agenda after it has been finalized by the Business Committee (as was the case with the debate on Nigeria in February).

Microphones

47. It has been suggested that on occasion members' inability to get to a lectern quickly can affect the spontaneity of Question Time in particular. As an experiment, roving microphones will be available at Question Time in York, and the Committee will review the experience afterwards.

Use of Electronic Devices during Synod sessions

48. The Committee received correspondence from a member of the public who, having watched a broadcast of the Synod's proceedings, expressed concern that some members sitting in the Synod Chamber appeared to be using electronic devices for purposes not connected with the Synod's proceedings, rather than giving attention to those proceedings. Members are reminded that their activity in the Chamber can not only be observed from the gallery but may also be photographed and broadcast.

Social Media

49. In our last report we noted that members can use social media while in the Chamber, recognized that this can contribute to fostering interest in the Synod's work, and expressed the hope that members will ensure that the tone and content of any comments that they make while using social media in the Chamber bear good witness to the wider Church and to society of the way in which Christians should relate to each other when debating controversial issues. In order to enable all members of the Synod to be aware of the comments made about the Synod on Twitter, by Synod members and others, a feed of #synod 'tweets' will be displayed on a screen in the Concourse during the July group of sessions. Tweets are, of course, in the public domain and displaying them is equivalent to the existing display of press cuttings in the Concourse.

Report of Proceedings

50. In response to a suggestion from a member of the Synod that the printed copies of the Report of Proceedings should be made available for purchase by members on a print-on-demand basis, the Committee asked members in February to contact the Synod Office if they wished to buy a printed version of the Report of Proceedings, on the understanding that publication would need to be self-financing. In the light of the responses, the Committee has concluded that the proposal is not financially viable and therefore should not be taken forward.

Distribution of Flyers

51. In the past, only flyers for certain fringe meetings have been circulated by the Synod Office. The Committee considers that it would be helpful for members to have information about as many of the fringe meetings as possible, to enable them to decide whether they wish to attend. In future, therefore, flyers for all fringe meetings for which the organizers submit the necessary number of copies of the flyer by a deadline will be circulated.

Cost of Synod Sessions

52. At the February group of sessions the Revd Christopher Hobbs (London) encouraged the Business Committee to think about holding three groups of sessions of about three days each, once information was known about the cost to the dioceses of holding them in London and York.
53. To that end, information was sought from the dioceses about the costs borne directly by them for the two groups of sessions which took place in 2011.
54. The cost per day for the London group of sessions, including the costs borne by the central budget, was £29,000 and that for the York group of sessions was £48,000. The main reason for the difference is that under the Charter of the Corporation, the Corporation makes the facilities in Church House available to the Synod free of charge and also covers the costs of the additional security required while the Synod is meeting.
55. To assess the overall financial impact of decisions about the duration and venues of Synod meetings it would, however, be necessary in addition to take into account the fact that when Church House is not required for the Synod the Corporation is able to seek additional external income through the Church House Conference Centre. All profit made through the Conference Centre is covenanted back to the Corporation, with Gift Aid added, further to support the Charter aim of providing a home for the National Church Institutions. It is difficult to give an average daily figure for the potential external income forgone, since demand for conference accommodation varies a good deal across the year. But in months of significant demand – including February and November – it would be unlikely to be less than the difference between the York and London daily figures quoted above.
56. The Business Committee has agreed that the opportunity should be taken to review the current pattern of Synod meetings when the dates for the next quinquennium are considered.

Forecast of Future Business

57. The forecast of future business annexed to this report provides a forward look to the February and July 2013 groups of sessions. This should not be read as more than a broad indication of the business expected to come to the Synod next year.

On behalf of the Business Committee

Julian Henderson
Chair

May 2012

Membership of the Business Committee

Chair

The Ven Julian Henderson, Archdeacon of Dorking (Guildford)

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester

Elected by the House of Clergy

The Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) – *Vice-Chair*

The Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)

The Revd Charles Razzall (Chester)

Elected by the House of Laity

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)

Mrs Sue Johns (Norwich)

Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)

Appointed by the Archbishops' Council

The Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield)

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans)

The Secretary to the Committee is the Clerk to the Synod (Dr Colin Podmore)
and the Assistant Secretary is Eva Sadowski.

Forecast of future General Synod business

This forecast should not be read as more than a broad indication of business that may come to the Synod in 2013.

Legislative business

February 2013

- Miscellaneous Provisions Measure – Revision Stage
- ? Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure: Code of Practice
- ? Amending Code of Practice under the Clergy Discipline Measure
(to reflect changes made by the Amending Measure)
- ? Amending Rules under the Clergy Discipline Measure
(to reflect changes made by the Amending Measure)
- Amending scheme in relation to the Diocese in Europe Constitution (deemed business)
- Report of the Standing Orders Committee

July 2013

- Miscellaneous Provisions Measure – Final Drafting and Final Approval
- ? Dioceses of Bradford, Ripon & Leeds and Wakefield Reorganisation Scheme, with related Vacancy in See Committees Regulation and provision for synodical representation
- Fees Orders

Liturgical business

- Additional Texts for Holy Baptism

Reports

- *February 2013*: The Anglican Communion Covenant:
Report on the Reference of the Draft Act of Synod to the Dioceses
- The Church School of the Future: implementation (Education Division)
- Fresh Directions in Local Unity in Mission (Council for Christian Unity)
- Going for Growth: national mission strategy: follow-up to the resolution on Mark Ireland's PMM on Mission Action Planning in the Church of England (Mission and Public Affairs Council)
- ? Re-imagining Ministry (Ministry Division): Presentation
- ? Debate on the Economy (Mission and Public Affairs Council)

Diocesan Synod Motions and Private Members' Motions

One or more Diocesan Synod Motions and one or more Private Members' Motions are customarily included in the Agenda for each group of sessions.