

GENERAL SYNOD

**THE VACANCY IN SEE COMMITTEES
(AMENDMENT) REGULATION 2013**

Explanatory Memorandum

Introduction

1. At the July 2012 group of sessions the General Synod resolved:

‘That the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993 (as amended in 2003, 2007 and 2008) be amended so as to secure that Vacancy in See Committees have at least 21 members.’
2. The resolution was passed on a motion moved on behalf of the Bradford Diocesan Synod.
3. Currently the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993 as amended (‘the 1993 Regulation’) does not require a Vacancy in See Committee to have a minimum number of members. In particular, there is no minimum number of elected members. Indeed, by virtue of paragraph 1(b) of the 1993 Regulation, the number of elected clerical and lay members must not exceed two, unless a greater number is required to ensure that either (a) every archdeaconry in the diocese is adequately represented or (b) the number of clerical and lay members of the Committee are, as far as possible, equal.
4. The memorandum produced for the debate in July 2012 on behalf of the Bradford Diocesan Synod (GS 1875A) identified the potential for a problem to arise in cases where, because of the circumstances of the diocese, the number of *ex officio* members of its Vacancy in See Committee was small and the number of elected clerical and lay members could not be more than two in each case. In such circumstances, the total number of members of the Committee could be too small to ensure the election of six its members to the Crown Nominations Commission, given that (under paragraph 5(b) of the 1993 Regulation) every candidate for election to the Commission must be proposed and seconded by some other member and no member may propose or second more than one candidate.
5. The Amendment Regulation will remove this potential problem, by requiring that the number of clerical and lay members to be elected to a Vacancy in See Committee is to be such as to ensure not only that the requirements referred to in paragraph 3 above are met but also that the Committee has at least 21 members.

Notes on paragraphs

Paragraph 1: Citation and commencement

6. This paragraph makes provision for the title of the Amendment Regulation and prescribes the date on which it is to come into force – ie 31st January 2014.

Paragraph 2: Interpretation

7. This paragraph makes provision for the interpretation of the Amendment Regulation.

Paragraph 3: Number of elected members

8. Paragraph 3 effects the change called for by the Synod resolution of July 2010. It does so by amending paragraph 1(b) of the 1993 Regulation, which makes provision for the number of (i) beneficed or licensed clergy and (ii) actual communicant lay persons who are to be elected to serve on the Vacancy in See Committee in accordance with paragraph 1(a)(vii) and (viii) of the 1993 Regulation.
9. The effect of the change made by paragraph 3 will be that the number of clergy and lay persons to be elected to the Vacancy in See Committee must be such as to ensure that (in addition to meeting the other requirements laid down about membership by paragraph 1(b)) the Committee has at least 21 members.

Paragraph 4: Transitional provision

10. This paragraph provides that the amendment made by the Amendment Regulation will not apply to the Vacancy in See Committee of any diocese having a see in respect of which a vacancy has been announced before the date on which the Regulation comes into effect until the Committee has completed its consideration of that vacancy. Thus in the case of a diocese in respect of which a vacancy in see has been announced before 31st January 2014, the size of the Vacancy in See Committee will remain unchanged until the Committee has completed its business.

**The Legal Office
Church House
London SW1**

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