

GENERAL SYNOD

**DRAFT BISHOPS AND PRIESTS
(CONSECRATION AND ORDINATION OF WOMEN) MEASURE
AND
DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 33**

**REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE
ON THE REFERENCE TO THE DIOCESES**

1. Article 8 of the General Synod's Constitution states that a Measure or Canon providing for permanent changes in the Services of Baptism or Holy Communion or in the Ordinal shall not be finally approved by the General Synod unless, at a stage determined by the Archbishops, the Measure or Canon, or the substance of the proposals embodied therein, has been approved by the majority of the dioceses at meetings of their diocesan synods.
2. In February 2014 the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and draft Amending Canon No. 33 were referred to the dioceses. The deadline for returning the voting results from the diocesan synods was midnight on Thursday 22 May 2014. (At its February 2014 group of sessions, the General Synod had agreed to suspend Standing Order 90(b)(iii) until the end of the group of sessions to be held in November 2014 so as to enable the Business Committee to shorten the usual six month minimum period for the Article 8 reference in relation to the draft legislation.)

Voting on the draft legislation

3. Diocesan synods were asked to consider and vote on this motion (without amendment and as a single motion):

'That this Synod approve the proposals embodied in the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and draft Amending Canon No 33.'
4. The results of the voting in the diocesan synods are set out in **Annex A**.
5. Under Rule 34(1)(h) of the Church Representation Rules, if the votes of the houses of clergy and laity of a diocesan synod are in favour of a matter referred under the provisions of Article 8, the matter shall be deemed to have been approved for the purposes of that Article.¹ It should also be noted that, for a motion to be carried in any house, a majority of those present and voting must have voted in favour. (An abstention from voting is not a vote, and if the numbers voting for and against a motion are equal, a majority has not voted in favour.)
6. The draft Measure and draft Amending Canon were approved in all forty-three dioceses that voted. The Diocese in Europe did not return any results as it was unable

¹ Similar provision is made in relation to the diocesan synod of the Diocese in Europe by paragraph 37 of its Constitution, as amended.

to convene a meeting of the diocesan synod within the time frame allowed. **The majority of the dioceses have therefore approved the draft Measure and the draft Amending Canon.**

7. Under Rule 34(1)(j) of the Church Representation Rules, the diocesan bishop has the right to require that his opinion on any question shall be recorded in the minutes of the diocesan synod. *The Archbishop of York exercised that right.* As required by Standing Order 91(b), his statement is set out in **Annex B.**

Following Motions

8. Subject to the provisions of its standing orders, it was open to a diocesan synod, in addition to its consideration of the business formally referred to it under Article 8, to consider further (or ‘following’) motions proposed by members of the diocesan synod in relation to the draft legislation. No further motions were reported.

The Armed Forces Synod

9. The Armed Forces are not a diocese and consideration of the draft legislation by the Armed Forces Synod (formerly the Forces Synodical Council) is therefore not relevant to the requirement of Article 8 that it must have been approved ‘by the majority of the dioceses’ before it can receive Final Approval. The Armed Forces Synod did consider the draft legislation, however. Its voting figures are reported in **Annex C.**

On behalf of the Business Committee
The Revd Canon Sue Booy (Chair)

May 2014

ANNEX A

DIOCESE	BISHOPS			CLERGY			LAITY			C/L
	AYES	NOS	ABS	AYES	NOS	ABS	AYES	NOS	ABS	
Bath and Wells	1	0	0	59	3	1	57	1	0	C
Birmingham	1	0	0	33	2	1	37	0	1	C
Blackburn	2	1	0	31	19	2	50	14	1	C
Bradford	1	0	0	31	0	1	37	0	2	C
Bristol	2	0	0	13	0	0	21	2	0	C
Canterbury	1	0	0	34	3	1	52	3	1	C
Carlisle	2	0	0	33	1	0	37	2	1	C
Chelmsford	4	0	0	50	7	0	55	11	1	C
Chester	2	0	0	37	10	3	48	7	3	C
Chichester	1	1	1	36	22	2	54	20	0	C
Coventry	2	0	0	21	0	1	33	0	0	C
Derby	2	0	0	25	3	0	25	5	1	C
Durham	2	0	0	32	2	0	49	2	1	C
Ely	1	0	0	33	3	0	41	5	2	C
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Exeter	1	0	0	42	11	2	53	5	2	C
Gloucester	2	0	0	35	0	0	45	1	1	C
Guildford	1	0	0	34	3	2	36	1	3	C
Hereford	1	0	0	35	0	0	33	0	1	C
Leicester	2	0	0	29	6	0	42	2	1	C
Lichfield	3	0	0	44	2	0	44	9	3	C
Lincoln	1	0	0	57	3	0	43	2	1	C
Liverpool	1	0	0	45	1	1	50	0	2	C
London	3	0	0	40	10	7	43	17	1	C
Manchester	3	0	0	37	8	2	45	6	2	C
Newcastle	2	0	0	41	2	1	36	3	1	C
Norwich	3	0	0	37	4	1	31	2	0	C
Oxford	3	0	0	47	3	0	57	1	3	C
Peterborough	1	0	0	45	2	2	40	4	7	C
Portsmouth	1	0	0	36	1	2	31	1	3	C
Ripon and Leeds	1	0	0	37	0	0	35	1	2	C
Rochester	1	0	0	44	7	3	46	6	4	C
Salisbury	2	0	0	35	0	3	48	1	2	C
Sheffield	2	0	0	24	8	1	29	8	0	C
Sodor and Man	1	0	0	18	2	0	35	0	1	C
Southwark	3	0	0	45	6	0	62	6	4	C
S'well & N'gham	0	0	0	29	2	0	29	1	0	C
St Albans	3	0	0	46	3	1	65	0	4	C
St Eds. & Ipswich	1	0	0	48	0	2	62	0	1	C
Truro	2	0	0	26	1	0	37	2	0	C
Wakefield	1	1	0	41	8	2	30	9	1	C
Winchester	2	0	0	37	5	1	45	4	0	C
Worcester	2	0	0	23	0	0	36	1	0	C
York	2	0	0	32	1	0	40	1	4	C
Totals	75	3	1	1557	174	45	1824	166	68	

* C = Carried L = Lost

RECORDED OPINIONS OF DIOCESAN BISHOPS

The Archbishop of York

‘At the meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on 12 May 2014, the Archbishop of York was invited to present his distinct opinion in light of the synodical vote in favour of the motion to support Women in the Episcopate.

The Archbishop made specific reference to the five guiding principles set down by the House of Bishops and recorded his commitment to working within those principles to enable the most effective outworking of the five principles and all their intended consequences within the Diocese.

The Archbishop outlined his own commitment to **simplicity**, **reciprocity** and **mutuality**, emphasising that,

“The simplicity of the legislation when agreed by the General Synod would be reflected in the fact that it makes no changes to the structures of the Church of England, leaves unaltered the position of each diocesan bishop as Ordinary and preserves the historic requirement for canonical obedience to the diocesan bishop 'in all things lawful and honest' and for the taking of oaths acknowledging this duty. The practical arrangements to be made for parishes which, on grounds of theological conviction, are unable to receive the priestly or episcopal ministry of women need to be made with the same principle of simplicity in mind.”

He noted that practical arrangements for those dissenting would be made bearing in mind those same principles and including a rejoicing in partnership in the gospel, and in mission and ministry. The Archbishop made clear his understanding of those of differing theological convictions noting that prejudice was not a component of their beliefs.

As the guidelines state:

- **“Reciprocity** means that everyone, notwithstanding differences of conviction on this issue, will accept that they can rejoice in each other's partnership in the Gospel and cooperate to the maximum possible extent in mission and ministry. There will need to be an acknowledgement that the differences of view which persist stem from an underlying divergence of theological conviction.
- In particular reciprocity will mean that those of differing conviction will do all within their power to avoid giving offence to each other. There will need to be sensitivity to the feelings of vulnerability that some will have that their position within the Church of England will gradually be eroded and that others will have because not everyone will receive their ministry.”

The Archbishop went on to say,

“As a Diocesan Bishop I have a shared responsibility, with all Bishops, for the welfare of the whole Church of England. I will endeavour, within my jurisdiction, to

ensure that senior leadership roles within the Diocese of York will continue to be filled by people from across the range of traditions.

Mutuality reflects the Church of England's wider commitment to sustaining diversity. In York, this means that those of differing conviction will be committed to making it possible for each other to flourish. I call upon all to play a full part in the lives of the deaneries and diocese, with a willingness to be prepared to engage with me and with the future diocesan bishop, whoever he or she is.

I will, within my powers, endeavour to deliver **equal treatment** - for example in relation to resource issues and the discerning of vocations to the ordained ministry. This is essential irrespective of convictions in relation to gender and ministry. In discerning vocations I will continue not to discriminate on the grounds of a candidate's theological conviction on this issue. In addition, ordination services for deacons and priests will be planned and conducted in a way that is consistent with the five guiding principles.

I therefore hope that the diocese will continue to be filled with people who have a breadth of conviction to enable all to play a full part and flourish within the life of the church.”

The Archbishop concluded by giving thanks that over the eight years in post there had been an abundance of experience of **simplicity, reciprocity** and **mutuality**.’

THE ARMED FORCES SYNOD

The Armed Forces Synod voted on the draft legislation as follows:

	BISHOPS			CLERGY			LAITY			C/L
	Aye	No	Abs	Aye	No	Abs	Aye	No	Abs	
Armed Forces Synod	1	0	0	7	0	3	7	0	0	C