

November Group of Sessions 2001

Report by the Business Committee

GENERAL SYNOD

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

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1. The **November Group of Sessions** takes place at a time of particular uncertainty and tension in the world and of considerable challenge and opportunity in the Church. In recognition of the situation in the world, following the terrorist attacks on the United States, the agenda for this Synod will include time set aside for reflection on the present needs of the whole world. This will take the form of a time of prayer led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, with additional provision (under Standing Order 4(b)) for a debate on international affairs, which will be shaped in the light of the unfolding international situation.
2. The Synod will otherwise be focusing on the themes of educational opportunity, organisational reform and financial challenge, and there will be a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury on the present state and future direction of the Church. We will be welcoming the Secretary

of State for Education and Skills, the Rt Hon Estelle Morris, and there will be also a major debate on the Report of the Church Schools Review Group, which will be introduced by its Chairman, Lord Dearing. The theme of organisational reform is reflected in a debate on the report *Resourcing Bishops*, which will be introduced by the Chairman of the Review Group, Professor Mellows. There will also be a consultation on Marriage Law issues, which will cover the work undertaken by the Review of Aspects of Marriage Law Working Group. Substantial time has been set aside for the discussion of financial issues facing the Church at this time, including reports on the Stipends Review and on Clergy Pension Arrangements. There will also be a debate on the Renewed Diaconate, which will provide an opportunity to focus on ministry matters from a different perspective.

3. There will be a morning of legislative business, and debates on a Private Member's Motion (from Mr Ian Smith, on Dates of Groups of Sessions, see para 8) and one Diocesan Synod Motion (from the Diocese of Leicester, on Resolution B). The Business Committee hopes that it will normally be possible to take two Private Members' Motions and two Diocesan Synod Motions at each Group of Sessions, but the Agenda for November is quite tightly packed, for the reasons given above, and the Committee believes that members would prefer to conclude the business by Thursday evening.

4. As to the list of **Diocesan Synod Motions** (which are customarily debated in the order in which they are received), the Marriage Law Review exercise (see paras 20-21) is seeking to address the concerns expressed in the Southwell Diocesan Synod Motion on Residential Qualifications for Marriage. This appears first in the list but it has been held over pending the consultation at this Group of Sessions, and subsequent consideration of the subject at a later Group of Sessions. The second listed motion is from Leicester, on Resolution B. The third motion on the list, from the Liverpool Diocesan Synod, on Stipend Levels, is being held over pending the outcome of the General Synod debate on the Stipends Review Report, and the ensuing consultation with dioceses. The fourth listed Diocesan Synod Motion, from Southwark on the Appointment of Bishops, will be taken as contingency business if an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's business.

5. Concern has been expressed by Synod members about the need for a debate (or debates) on **constitutional issues**, and in particular Parliamentary reform, following on from the Revd David Houlding's Private Member's Motion on the Reform of the House of Lords at the July 2001 Synod. It is hoped that a major colloquium on constitutional issues may be arranged within the next few months, which would provide a

contribution to the national policy debate and could be used as background for any General Synod debates in the present quinquennium. Meanwhile, the Board for Social Responsibility is working towards a specific debate on regionalisation for the July Synod next year.

6. The Business Committee has continued to examine ways in which **Synod's business** can be streamlined. It has set up a working group to consider proposals for reforming Question time, and would welcome views and comments from Synod members, if possible by the end of November. As to possible changes in the Synod's liturgical procedures, the joint group of the Business Committee and the Standing Orders Committee will be getting its work under way shortly and will aim to report its recommendations to the Synod during the course of 2002.

7. The debate on the **Synodical Government Review Follow-up** Report at the July Synod has generated much correspondence. In view of the unease expressed about the outcome of the debate, the Business Committee has decided to reflect further on the practical consequences of the various amendments which were agreed by Synod, and their cumulative impact. Instead of setting up the customary steering group, the Committee itself intends to prepare a further report for consideration by the Synod in July 2002. The report will analyse

the position reached by the Synod this July and will identify options for handling the further follow-up work.

8. The Business Committee has reflected on the Private Member's Motion from Mr Ian Smith on **Dates of Groups of Sessions**, and is broadly supportive of the main thrust of the motion. However, it would prefer to retain, on a contingency basis, the facility of a third Group of Sessions for urgent or pressing business (or when necessitated by the flow of business before the Synod over a longer period than a single Group of Sessions). It will therefore be moving an amendment to this effect, coupled with some detailed refinements as to the proposed arrangements for the February Group of Sessions. The Committee does not seek, nor does it see the necessity for, three Groups of Sessions on a regular basis.

9. The Business Committee wishes to record its thanks and appreciation to the Venerable Trevor Lloyd, Archdeacon of Barnstaple, who will be retiring as **Chaplain to the General Synod** at the close of this Group of Sessions, and welcomes his successor, who is the Reverend Mark Bonney.

Venue and timing

10. The November meeting of the General Synod will take place at Church House, Westminster from

2.30 pm on Monday 12 November to 4.30 pm on Thursday 15 November. The times of the Sessions are set out on the front of the Agenda (GS 1427).

Security

11. In the interests of security, members are asked to wear their Church House passes at all times and to study the security notice which will be circulated on a Notice Paper.

Synod Worship

12. Outline information about services in the Church House Chapel is given on the inside front cover of the Agenda. There will be a service of Holy Communion in the Assembly Hall on Wednesday 14 November at 9.45 am, when the preacher will be the Archbishop of Sudan (the Most Revd Joseph Marona). During the sessions, members will be given material relating to worship in the Assembly Hall.

Order of Business

13. The business of the Synod has, as usual, been arranged by days. The business each day will follow the order set out in the daily list given in the Agenda, except where it is necessary to modify this. Every effort will be made to give the Synod the longest possible notice of any variations which it is

proposed to make in the timetable and to keep such changes to a minimum. Members are, however, reminded that if at any time within the Group of Sessions an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's agenda, earlier business in the agenda which has not been reached or completed within the period allotted can be called by the Chairman, unless other provision has already been made for it. If there is no such outstanding business and an unexpected gap opens in the Synod's agenda, then unless the adjournment is carried, the Business Committee has decided that the next item will be the Diocesan Synod Motion standing next in the order in Special Agenda IV, the one from the Southwark Diocesan Synod on the Appointment of Bishops. (This is in order to try to reduce the queue of Diocesan Synod Motions.) Members are also reminded that the rubric 'not later than' in the Agenda does not prevent an item coming on significantly earlier than the time stated, depending on the progress of the preceding business.

Content of Business

Private Member's Motions

14. Notice of Private Members' Motions received is contained in Special Agenda III. Any future notices of Private Members' Motions will be published in a notice paper. Only those motions received by 5.30 pm on the first day of the Group of Sessions

will be available for signature at this Group of Sessions (SO 6(d)).

Questions

15. The Business Committee has received favourable comment on the experiment at the July Synod whereby Questions were answered on the second evening. However, there was considerable pressure on the time available in July, and accordingly two hours have been allocated from 5 pm on the Tuesday evening at the November meeting. Under SO 105, members may address Questions to the Secretary General, the Clerk to the Synod, the Chairman of any body answerable to the Synod through the Archbishops' Council (including Boards and Councils), the Chairman of any Church of England body on which the Synod is represented, the Chairman of each of the three Houses of Synod, and the Church Commissioners. Anyone wishing to ask a question must give notice of it to reach the Clerk to the Synod by 5.30 pm on Thursday 1 November 2001. The Questions notice paper will be distributed in the Assembly Hall at the beginning of the Group of Sessions.

16. Members are reminded that 'omnibus' questions are not in order. If a member wishes to query several points, each should be the subject of a separate question. Detailed information, tables of figures, etc are better dealt with in a written answer and

members are urged to be selective in matters which they raise orally at Question Time, including in any supplementaries which must be framed as a question and should be kept brief. Members should indicate clearly when submitting a Question whether it is for oral or written answer.

Explanation of the Agenda

Monday, 12 November

17. Synod is invited to send a Loyal Address to Her Majesty The Queen to mark the occasion of her Golden Jubilee next year. Such Addresses need to be submitted in readiness for the 50th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne in February, hence Synod is being invited to approve in November the form of the address, the text of which will be circulated in a Notice Paper.

Report by the Business Committee

18. The customary debate on this report (GS 1428) provides members with an opportunity of commenting both on the overall shape of the Agenda and on specific items. It also offers the occasion to comment on matters relating to the effective despatch and presentation of Synod business.

Dates of Groups of Sessions: Private Member's Motion

19. This motion, to be moved by Mr Ian Smith, seeks to establish a new pattern of two full Synods per annum, in February and July. Mr Smith has produced a background note (GS Misc 653A) and the Business Committee has produced a comment, from the business handling perspective (GS Misc 653B) (see also para 8).

Marriage Law Review

20. The proposal to review certain aspects of the law of marriage in the Church of England originated in a Private Member's Motion (from the Revd Richard Handford), passed by the General Synod in November 1996, which called for the possibility of an alternative to the calling of banns to be investigated. In response, the then Standing Committee considered the matter in 1997 and agreed that there were a number of other aspects of the law, relating to the solemnisation of marriage and the preliminaries, which should be reviewed at the same time. These included the possibility of universal civil preliminaries, residence qualifications, the use of non-Anglican rites in Anglican churches and the times between which a marriage may be solemnised. (As to the issue of residential qualifications, the Southwell Diocesan Synod Motion – see para 4 – is relevant.) Shortly after the Standing Committee

discussions, the Government announced a review of the civil registration system, including the registration of marriages. In the light of the Standing Committee's decision, but also of the Government's proposals to review the civil registration system and to ensure that any legislative changes required could be tied in with the Government's own legislative programme, the Archbishops' Council set up the Review of Aspects of Marriage Law in 1999.

21. The Marriage Law Review's Working Group has now produced a report on the work it has undertaken (GS 1436). The matter will be taken forward by the House of Bishops, in association with the Archbishops' Council, in the light of future consultation with the Government, and the Government's forthcoming White Paper. Following discussion in the Business Committee and the House of Bishops, the matter is being brought to General Synod at this stage by way of a consultation on Marriage Law issues, which will cover the work undertaken by the Review Group, including an introduction by the Group's Chairman, the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. There will be an opportunity for Synod members to ask questions, and then to offer any comments on the points raised in the Report and in the consultation. The suspension of Standing Orders will be moved to facilitate this consultation.

Tuesday, 13 November

Legislative Business

22. The Legislative Business for this Group of Sessions will be found in Special Agenda I.
23. Two pieces of legislation return to the Synod. Now that the Churchwardens Measure 2001 has received the Royal Assent, Amending Canon No 20, which amends Canon E1 in line with the Measure, and received Final Approval from the Synod in July 1997, will be promulgated. The Church of England (Pensions) Measure has completed its revision committee stage with, most unusually, no amendments having been proposed. In the light of this, it is proposed that all the remaining stages of the legislative process be completed at this Group of Sessions. (Under SO 61(b), the Final Approval motion could not be moved if 40 or more members were to object.) Final drafting and Final Approval will take place on the morning of Thursday, 15 November.
24. As regards new legislation, the Care of Cathedrals (Amendment) Measure implements those proposals of the Care of Cathedrals Measure Review (approved at the July Group of Sessions) which require legislation. The Measure makes a number of detailed changes to the Care of Cathedrals Measure 1990 and associated legislation.

25. The National Institutions Measure 1998 (Amendment) Resolution 2001 will alter the provisions of the National Institutions Measure, by reducing the minimum term of office for members of the Council appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. The explanation for this proposal is set out in GS 1432; the legal aspects are covered in GS 1431X.
26. The Church Accounting (Amendment) Regulations are required to alter the Church's own rules for accounting by PCCs (made by the Synod in 1997) to reflect recent changes in the rules for accounting by charities generally. The Committee has determined that the Regulations will be taken on the deemed procedure unless any member of the Synod requests a debate or proposes an amendment in accordance with SO 69.

Archbishops' Council: Appointments

27. Under the provisions of the National Institutions Measure 1998, the two Archbishops (acting jointly) appoint six members of the Archbishops' Council. Their appointment is subject to the approval of the General Synod, which also decides for what length of term (within the limits set by the Measure) they will serve. Under the preceding legislative business, the Synod will have been invited to amend the National Institutions Measure to reduce their

minimum term of office. In 1998 the Synod approved the appointment of Stephen Bampfylde, Michael Chamberlain, David Lammy, Jayne Ozanne, Elizabeth Paver and Peter Toyne for periods of three years from 1 January 1999. Fresh arrangements now need to be made as those appointments come to an end on 31 December 2001, and proposals will be submitted by the Archbishops for the approval of the Synod. A separate paper describing these proposals (GS 1432) is being circulated.

International Situation

28. Two hours have been set aside on Tuesday afternoon for reflection on the international situation. It is envisaged that this will include a time of prayer, led by the Archbishop of Canterbury and provision for a debate on international affairs, under Standing Order 4(b). As the situation is very fluid, the terms of the motion for debate will not be settled until immediately prior to Synod meeting, but the debate is likely to focus on the issue of world-wide terrorism, its causes and consequences. There will be no separate debate on Israel/Palestine as previously envisaged, but the situation there and elsewhere is expected to feature in the discussion. With this in mind, the debate will be resourced in part by the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland Report of an Ecumenical Visit to the Middle East in March 2001, *Who is my Neighbour?*, and the BSR

Report, *Demanding Peace: a Church response to the Intifada* (GS Misc 657). Other supporting material will be made available to Synod members when they arrive on Monday 12 November, together with the terms of the motion which the Synod will be invited to debate.

Weekday Lectionaries: Extension of Authorisation

29. The effect of this motion is to propose an extended period of authorisation for Weekday Lectionaries for three years, to 31 December 2007, to allow the work of revision to be accomplished in the light of comments from users of the Lectionaries. The eventual revision of the Weekday Lectionary would then require the full Synodical process for authorising liturgical material. The extension is a two-stage procedure without a revision stage, but still requiring two-thirds majorities and Final Approval.

Wednesday, 14 November

Archbishops' Council Budget for 2002

30. The report on the Vote 2 budget for 2002 (GS 1435) follows Synod's decision in July to approve a budget which freezes the apportionment at its 2001 level. The report covers the steps taken to identify the expenditure savings necessary to achieve that objective and their impact on individual departments

within the Council. The report will be introduced by Mr Michael Chamberlain, the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Address by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills

31. The Secretary of State for Education and Skills, the Rt Hon Estelle Morris, will address the Synod under SO 112. It will be a wide-ranging address, covering schools, further and higher education and vocational qualifications. It is fitting that the Secretary of State will be speaking to the Synod at the same Group of Sessions as Lord Dearing, particularly as the Church Schools Review Group Report is specifically mentioned, affirmatively, in the Government White Paper *Achieving Success*. The Secretary of State has indicated that she is willing to answer questions from General Synod members after her speech on matters relating to her areas of responsibility, and those who wish to ask questions are requested to give notice of them to the Clerk to the Synod by **5.30 pm on Monday, 12 November**, in order to help the Chairman to structure this aspect of the proceedings.

Renewed Diaconate

32. The Synod will debate the report of the Working Party of the House of Bishops on the Renewed Diaconate, *For Such a Time as This* (GS 1407). The

working party was set up at the request of the General Synod, following the debate in November 1998 on a motion from the Ely Diocesan Synod. It was asked to consider the renewed diaconate in the light of Anglican and ecumenical insights and in the context of emerging patterns of ministry in the Church of England. The working party was chaired by the Bishop of Bristol. It included ecumenical participants from the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches and its secretariat was provided by the Council for Christian Unity. The Director of the Ministry Division was a member and it included practitioners of a distinctive diaconal ministry.

33. The report addresses the widespread concern that a transitional diaconate alone does not do justice to the biblical and ecclesiological nature of *diakonia*. It pays particular attention to the role of deacons in mission and explores the idea that various lay and ordained ministries should be distinctive but not exclusive in their roles. The report aims to provide biblical, theological and practical resources for what is already canonically possible, and in fact exists, in the Church of England. The motion before the Synod encourages dioceses to study the report and to carry forward its recommendations in their strategies for ministry and mission.

Financial Issues Facing the Church

34. Financial business will commence with a short illustrated presentation by the Financial Secretary under SO 95A, against the background of the report on *Forthcoming Financial Issues* (GS 1433). This not only sets the scene for the reports on stipends and pensions which follow, but also raises issues relating to the deployment of central resources on the support of the parochial ministry.

Stipends Review Report

35. The report of the Stipends Review Group, *Generosity and Sacrifice* (GS 1408), will be presented by the Group's Chairman, the Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, who is a member of the Financial Issues Working Group (see para 36), and sets out the fruits of the work undertaken since the Stipends Review Group was established in 1999. It sets out a series of possible aspirations for the Church to achieve on this aspect of the remuneration package. The covering paper, which has been prepared to aid diocesan consultation (GS 1408A), contains a series of questions designed to assess their views on aspects of the review. The Liverpool Diocesan Synod Motion (see para 4) is relevant to this subject.

Clergy Pensions Arrangements

36. The report on the current Clergy Pension Arrangements (GS 1434) has been prepared by the Financial Issues Working Group set up by the Archbishops' Council, following the actuarial review of the scheme and the need for a significant increase in the pensions contribution rate. It attempts to evaluate the effect of making certain changes to the existing (defined benefit) scheme and of switching to different types of pension scheme. Like the report on stipends, it will be sent out for consultation in dioceses following the Synod debate and the issues will return to the Synod in due course. The report will be presented by Mr Alan King, a member of the Financial Issues Working Group and of the Stipends Review Group.

Thursday, 15 November

Church Schools Review Group (Dearing) Report

37. The Report of the Church Schools Review Group, chaired by Lord Dearing, entitled *The Way Ahead* (GS 1406), is the first major report into Church of England schools for over fifteen years. It celebrates the achievement of Church schools and sets out a vision for their future. *The Way Ahead* states that Church schools must be distinctively Christian institutions. It shows how Church schools should be fully integrated into the life of parishes, and argues

for a growing unity of purpose within the whole Church community in supporting Church schools. Many of the report's recommendations are concerned with building up relationships within the Church.

38. The report recommends developing the provision of Church schools, proposing the equivalent of 100 additional Church of England secondary schools over the next seven-eight years, and enhanced primary provision in areas where it is sparse. For any new Church schools, the report recommends that these should have a core of children from Christian families but that they should also be open to the diverse communities which the Church seeks to serve. Most importantly, the report challenges the Church at every level to encourage the vocation to teach, and to support Christian teachers and leaders in all schools.
39. Lord Dearing will present the Report under SO 112, and the Bishop of Blackburn (Chairman of the Board of Education) will then move the 'take note' and following motions.

Resolution B: Leicester Diocesan Synod Motion

40. This motion proceeds from the present basis (a) that by passing Resolution B under the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993, one parish in a multi-parish benefice team ministry can prevent a

woman being appointed as team vicar in that benefice, and (b) that other than Resolution A under the 1993 Measure, there is no other legislation which prevents a woman priest from exercising a ministry across the benefice. The Leicester motion seeks to amend the terms of Resolution B so as (i) to preserve the right of a PCC not to accept a woman priest as team vicar in a case where she would have a special cure of souls assigned to her in respect of the parish concerned (and thus would have direct responsibility for the care of souls in the parish concerned, but (ii) to prevent a parish using resolution B to rule out the appointment of a woman priest as a team vicar in any other case, and thus create an opportunity for any other parishes in the benefice which are not opposed to the ministry of a woman team vicar to experience that ministry. The proposed amendment would not affect the position regarding a team rector (or any other incumbent or a priest in charge). A background paper from the Leicester Diocese (GS Misc 656A) has been circulated together with a background note from the Archbishops' Council's legal department (GS Misc 656B).

Resourcing Bishops: Mellows Review

41. *Resourcing Bishops* – the first report of the Group commissioned by the Archbishops and chaired by Professor Anthony Mellows - was published in June 2001, and a consultation process has been set in

train to gather the views of those principally affected by the report's recommendations, so that advice can be given to the Archbishops on how the report should be followed through in terms of implementation. A brief paper (GS 1438) sets out the main issues to be addressed in the consultative process. The Synod's debate is a key part of this process and provides an opportunity for the Synod to debate the broad thrusts of the report and to indicate its views. Professor Mellows will make a brief introduction (under SO 112), following which Stephen Bampfylde (an appointed member of the Archbishops' Council), who chairs the Consultation Group, will open and close the debate, which will be on a 'take note' motion.

Concluding Business

42. Following the customary farewells, the Synod will be prorogued, no later than 4.30 pm. The closing ceremonies will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On behalf of the Committee

Michael Perham
Chairman

15 October 2001

Annex A

Members of the Business Committee

The Dean of Derby (The Very Revd Michael Perham) – Chairman

The Bishop of Derby (The Rt Revd Jonathan Bailey)

Mrs Sue Johns

Mr Frank Knaggs

The Archdeacon of Malmesbury (The Ven Alan Hawker)

Mr Brian McHenry

Mrs Elizabeth Paver

The Revd Simon Pothan

Mr Mike Tyrrell

Mr David Williams - Secretary

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