

**REVIEW OF SYNODICAL GOVERNMENT
FOLLOW-UP**

REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Introduction

- 1 At the July 2001 Group of Sessions there was debated a report from the Follow-up Group to the Review of Synodical Government (The Bridge Report). At the end of the debate the business was remitted to a drafting group. A summary (in tabular form) of the position established at the end of the July 2002 debate is attached as Annex 1.
- 2 In the light of correspondence received by the Business Committee, drawing attention to features of the July 2001 debate alleged to be unsatisfactory or unclear, the Business Committee has paused before establishing a drafting group. As signalled in the Report on the Agenda for the November 2001 Group of Sessions (GS 1428, para. 7) the Business Committee now makes a further report to the Synod identifying 'options for handling the further follow-up work'. It also attaches (Annex 2) a statement on developments since July 2001 towards a Youth Consultative Council.
- 3 In terms of the procedures, there is no doubt that the expected next stage is for a group to be established to prepare draft legislation reflecting the recommendations of the Follow-up Group chaired by Archdeacon Rose,

as modified by amendments carried in July 2001. Such draft legislation, once introduced to Synod, would be amenable to revision through the normal Synodical processes, thus allowing Synod to amend the proposals in so far as it considered them unsatisfactory. There are, however, two matters arising from the July 2001 debate on which the Business Committee has concluded that instructions to a drafting group could be ambiguous. Those matters are raised in this report (paras 5, 6, 7 below), and clearer instruction to a drafting group is sought. A third matter (retired clergy) which arose in the course of debate is also raised.

- 4 It seems evident from the correspondence received by the Business Committee that some members take the view that the July 2001 debate was so unsatisfactory that the instruction to draft legislation should not be acted upon and that others take the view that some issues debated in July 2001 ought to be reopened for further discussion. The Business Committee makes clear that, although the 2001 vote in the Synod was to proceed to the preparation of draft legislation on the basis of the July 2001 debate, it is open to individual members of the Synod to raise these concerns in following Motions for Synod's attention and voting.

A : Overall size of General Synod

- 5 An amendment moved by Mr McHenry, (last in the series of amendments discussed in July 2001), struck-out the Follow-up Group's recommendations for overall reduction in the size of General Synod to a range of 480-490 (plus appointees) but did not state, explicitly,

that the intention was to leave the diocesan elected voting component of the Synod untouched (currently 430 excluding Special Constituencies). The Business Committee now asks the Synod to make this implicit instruction explicit. The Synod is asked to give explicit endorsement that, apart from any reduction consequent on adjustment of special constituencies, it wishes the size of the General Synod to remain as at present (subject to quinquennial adjustment between dioceses)?

B : The size of the Archdeacons constituency

- 6 The Follow-up Group chaired by Archdeacon Rose originally proposed continuation of a ‘special constituency’ of 43 Archdeacons. An amendment in the name of the Revd Simon Killwick reduced the representation of Archdeacons to parity with the elected representation of Suffragan Bishops. That level, however, had itself varied at an earlier stage in the debate (the Rose Group recommendation, of six, has thus increased by reinstatement of the *status quo*, nine). A further element in the debate prior to the amendment on Archdeacons, was the reinstatement of a special constituency of 15 (10 Canterbury, 5 York) for Deans (the Rose Group had proposed abolition of that special constituency). The cumulative effect of these amendments is that a drafting group is currently bound to bring forward proposals for an Archdeacons constituency of nine. The Synod is asked to give explicit endorsement that this is its wish (in the light of the size of the Suffragan Bishops constituency and the reinstated Deans’ constituency, which could not have

been certainly known at the time Mr Killwick tabled his amendment).

C : Representation of Retired Clergy

- 7 GS 1428 included suggested provision for the limited representation of retired clergy in General Synod (paras 46-50). No amendment was moved to vary that suggestion so on the basis of the July 2001 debate the presumption to a drafting group would be that those provisions should be incorporated into draft legislation. In the course of the July 2001 debate, however, there was an intervention from the Archbishop of Canterbury questioning the propriety of such representation. After the Archbishop spoke no-one attempted to test reaction by moving an amendment. It would in any case have been too late for a written text to be circulated and the admissibility of such an amendment would have been dependent on the permission of the Chairman of the Session.’. In the circumstances, however, the Business Committee would be glad of a specific endorsement of the proposed representation; before instruction is given to a drafting group.

Conclusion

- 8 In the light of these points, unless directed otherwise by the Synod, the legislation to be introduced to give effect to the Synod’s July 2001 decision will be drafted on the basis that:
- (a) Directly elected representation from the dioceses in the provinces of Canterbury and

York shall continue in accordance with the maximum permitted within the provisions currently included in Canon H2 and the Church Representation Rules;

- (b) shall contain provision for a specially elected constituency of Archdeacons numbering nine;
- (c) shall continue to provide for representation of retired clergy on the basis set out in paras 46-50 of GS 1428.

Makeup of the General Synod

	Current	As amended by July 2001 debate
Diocesan Bishops and Dover	45	45
Suffragan Bishops	9	6
Deans	15	15
Archdeacons	43	9
Religious Communities	5	4
Channel Island <i>ex-officio</i>	1	1
Armed Services	3	7
Ex-officio	7	7
Prison Service	1	1
Universities	5	-
Archbishops' theological appointees	-	5
Retired Clergy	-	6
Archbishops' Council appointed members	6	6
Diocesan elected proctors and laity (including Channel Islands)	430	430
	571	542

+ 8 non voting ecumenical members

For Youth representative proposals see Annex 2

The Church of England Youth Council

The National Youth Officer (Board of Education) reports the position in April 2002 as follows:

‘The Synodical Review Follow-up Report referred to the possible establishment of a Church of England youth Council, which could provide the basis for identifying specific representation of young people on the General Synod. At present, the Young Adult Network continues to support an Observer Group at the July Group of Sessions of General Synod each year, and this is proving to be a good process for giving young adults direct experience of the synodical process and developing their confidence such that some may seek formal election through the normal electoral processes. Plans for establishing a Church of England Youth Council are progressing with diocesan and regional initiatives in support of this being planned during 2002 and 2003. It is hoped that the first meeting of a Church of England Youth Council will take place in December 2003, subject to clarification and resolution of some remaining issues of a constitutional nature. The Board of Education’s Youth Office is hopeful that the Youth Council will soon be in a position to provide the basis for a number of its members to be afforded formal General Synod observer status (on a similar basis to the ecumenical representatives) if this were to be agreed in the context of the Synodical Government Review implementation process. It is not necessarily being proposed at this stage that the representatives identified by the Youth Council should have voting rights at Synod.’