

JULY 2019 GROUP OF SESSIONS

Guide to the July 2019 group of sessions: A report from the General Synod Business Committee

Introduction

1. The Business Committee is charged under Standing Order 4 with settling the agenda for each group of sessions and determining the order in which business is to be taken. Subject to Standing Order 1, it is also responsible for all matters relating to the sessional arrangements of the Synod (Standing Order 125).
2. The business of Synod is generated in various ways, including by Boards and Councils, by Dioceses and by individual members of the Synod. The Business Committee gives a great deal of thought to how it shapes the agenda of Synod meetings, considering very carefully the bids for space on each agenda. The purpose of this report is to explain the rationale behind the final shape of the agenda and also to act as a guide to the business scheduled.
3. This report falls into four parts:
 - Part I comments on practical arrangements for the July group of sessions
 - Part II comments on general categories of Synod business
 - Part III comments on the shape of the agenda for the July group of sessions
 - Part IV reports on other work and recent decisions of the Business Committee.

Part I: Practical Arrangements for July group of sessions

Sessional Arrangements

4. The General Synod will be meeting at the University of York. The timings of the sessions are as follows:
 - 2.30 pm - 7.00 pm on Friday 5 July
 - 9.00 am – 12.30 pm on Saturday 6 July. (*The afternoon of Saturday 6 July will be reserved for seminars and workshops and Synod will not be sitting at this time.*)
 - 2.30 pm – 7.00 pm on Sunday 7 July
 - 9.00 am – 7.00 pm on Monday 8 July
 - 9.00 am – 1.00 pm on Tuesday 9 July

Synod Worship

5. The group of sessions will begin with an act of worship in the Assembly Hall. All services, apart from those taking place in the Assembly Hall, will take place in the Berrick Saul Lecture Theatre. On Sunday there will be the usual Synod Communion service in York Minster. The full details and timings of worship are listed at the start of the agenda.
6. At the request of the Business Committee, all those who are participating in the Continuous Praying Presence in York at any particular time will be seated in a reserved area of the non-voting gallery in the Central Hall whilst Synod is in session so that they can be visible to members of Synod in the Hall.
7. A full list of those participating in the Continuous Praying Presence will be available on a Notice Paper.

Guests from the Anglican Communion

8. At the invitation of the Presidents, a number of senior guests from member churches of the Anglican Communion will attend this group of sessions, sitting on the floor of the Synod. The names, biographies and details of these guests will be published on a Notice Paper.
9. Under changes to Standing Orders agreed at the last Synod, the Communion Guests now have speaking rights in the same way as the Ecumenical Representatives.
10. Synod members are invited to attend a Fringe Meeting hosted by the Archbishops to welcome the Communion Guests, which will take place during the group of sessions.

Part II: General Categories of Synod Business

Categories of Synod business

11. When constructing agendas, the Business Committee seeks to view the agenda as a whole and to ensure that it covers a balance of subjects. Synod business tends to fall into four main categories as follows.

Standing items

- This includes items such as the debate on the Business Committee Report and Synod Question Time.

Legislative business

- This can take a variety of forms. Full details of the legislative business for a group of sessions are always set out in Special Agenda I.

Ordering the life of the Church

- Business which concerns the way we order our own life together.

The Church and the World

- Particular business which debates current issues and takes account of the way in which the Church relates to our public context.

12. Inevitably, some of the subjects which come under these areas may overlap.

Legislative Business

13. The General Synod's main role as set out in its constitution is to consider and pass legislation by Measure, Canon and Act of Synod. As the national legislative body of the Church, the Synod's role, powers and constitution are different from that of other Church bodies such as a PCC or a Diocesan Synod. A note on the Synod's legislative process has been uploaded to the Synod App and to the General Synod web pages on the Church of England website.
14. Following feedback at the February Business Committee fringe meeting, the Church House Legal Office will be hosting a fringe meeting during Synod which will explain the legislative process in more detail and answer any questions that members may have.

Handling of Diocesan Synod Motions (DSMs) and Private Members' Motions (PMMs)

15. Under the General Synod's Standing Orders, Diocesan Synod Motions (DSMs) must normally to be considered by the Synod in the order in which notice is received of them.
16. Private Members Motions (PMMs) may be scheduled by the Business Committee for debate providing that they have attracted a minimum of 100 signatures during three groups of sessions. Those PMM's which have not attracted a sufficient number of signatures during that time are withdrawn.
17. When deciding when to schedule PMMs and DSMs for debate, the Committee also takes into account other factors, such as the timeliness and appropriateness of the subjects being debated.

Part III: The Shape of the July Agenda

Standing Items of Business

18. The July group of sessions will begin with the greeting from the Ecumenical Guest, the Rt.Rev. Elof Westergaard, Bishop of Ribe, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark. This will be followed by the debate on the Report from the Business Committee, which offers Synod members the opportunity to comment on the agenda or on the content and conduct of the Synod's business more generally.
19. The Archbishop of York will be giving his last Presidential Address at this July's Synod.
20. After substantial deliberation in their various governance bodies, the Church Commissioners, the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council have come to an agreement regarding the medium to longer-term spending plans for the Church in the next 5 – 10 years. The Synod will receive a presentation on these outcomes from the Bishop of Manchester, Loretta Minghella and Canon John Spence,

members of the Triennium Funding Working Group. There will be an opportunity for Synod members to ask questions.

21. The Synod will be invited to approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure budget for 2020 and the Council's proposals for apportionment amongst the dioceses, and the usual pooling adjustment in respect of additional maintenance grants to ordinands. Proposed expenditure in 2020 is £46.9 million, £3.5 million (8%) above the equivalent 2019 level. By securing additional external income the overall recommended diocesan apportionment is maintained at the 2019 level of £33.0m.
22. There will also be a presentation and opportunity for questions on the Archbishops' Council's annual report and financial statements for 2018. As this is not a debate on a motion and does not involve approval, the Archbishops' Council's annual report and financial statements for 2018 are also deemed business.
23. The Synod will be invited to approve a new appointment to the Archbishops' Council.

Handling of Synod Question Time in July

24. The Business Committee has decided to split Synod Question Time into two separate parts of the agenda. The first Question Time will take place in the usual slot as the final item on the first day of Synod (Friday 5 July).
25. Bearing in mind suggestions during the debate on its Report to the Synod in February 2019 the Business Committee has decided to allocate a separate slot on the Sunday afternoon for Synod Questions on Safeguarding matters. The Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, who will have been attending the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) hearings on the Anglican Church, will be present on the afternoon of Sunday 7 July to answer Safeguarding questions before returning to London to continue preparations for the second week of these hearings.
26. The Question Time for Safeguarding will be followed by a short presentation from the Independent Chair of the National Safeguarding Panel and the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding on the development of the Panel and related Safeguarding developments at national level.
27. Because of the timing of the IICSA hearings, the Business Committee has also agreed to bring forward the deadline for the receipt of Synod Questions by **one week** to 1200 hrs on Wednesday 19 June. This will enable answers to be prepared to any Safeguarding questions by the Lead Bishop and National Safeguarding Team staff two weeks before the IICSA hearings begin, avoiding the requirement for them to do so in the week immediately prior to the start of the IICSA when they will have a great deal of other preparation to complete.

Legislative Business in July

28. Following feedback received after the February group of sessions, the Business Committee has sought to spread the timetabling of Legislative Business throughout the agenda rather than taking it in lengthier blocs earlier in the timetable as previously.
29. The following Legislative Business will be handled in July:

- a. **Amending Canon No. 39** – for Enactment. Amending Canon No. 39 was finally approved at the February group of sessions and is now for enactment. It relaxes the requirements as to the holding of certain services in every parish on each Sunday and holy day and makes other, miscellaneous amendments to the Canons.
- b. **Amending Canon No. 40** –Final Approval. Draft Amending Canon No. 40 makes provision for the formal recognition of religious communities in the Church of England and for related matters.
- c. **Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure and Amending Canon No. 41** – Final Drafting and Final Approval. The draft Measure and draft Canon make a range of miscellaneous provisions. The provision made by the Measure includes the establishment of a national ministry register, amendment of provisions concerned with the inspection of churches, and updating of provisions in the Constitution of the General Synod. The draft Amending Canon amends existing Canons concerned with the form of service registers and updates various references in the Canons.
- d. **Diocesan Boards of Education Measure – First Consideration.** The Measure replaces the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 and is intended to make better provision for the structure and functions of diocesan boards of education, reflecting developments that have taken place since the 1990s.
- e. **Cathedrals Measure – First Consideration.** The Measure implements recommendations contained in the report of the Cathedrals Working Group that were considered by the General Synod last July when it passed a motion calling for legislation to be introduced this July.
- f. **Legislative Reform (Patronage of Benefices) Order 2019** – for approval. This is the first order under the Legislative Reform Order 2018 to be laid before the Synod. It smartens up the formal processes for filling vacant benefices that are provided for by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. The responses to the statutory consultation on the proposals for the order were largely supportive.
- g. **Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2019** – for approval. It introduces a new approach that could result in a change in the allocation of seats in the House of Laity, by taking account of newer churches that are mission initiatives. In order to pass it must secure a majority in each House of two-thirds of those present and voting.
- h. **Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019** – for approval. These Amendment Rules make amendments to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015. One of the main amendments is to change the rules relating to Diocesan Advisory Committees (DACs) with a view to providing greater assistance to parishes in the formulation of proposals for the development of church buildings and to ensuring, so far as possible, that further consultation does not need to take place once the DAC has issued its notification of advice. The other main set of changes is the addition of a substantial number of items to Lists A and B, thereby deregulating those items and simplifying the faculty jurisdiction
- i. **Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2019 and Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2019** - for approval. These are the usual annual orders that prescribe, respectively, the annual retainers payable to

diocesan registrars, and the fees payable in respect of proceedings in ecclesiastical courts and tribunals

Ordering the Life of the Church

30. As in July 2018, the Business Committee has suspended Standing Orders on Saturday in order to allow for a number of seminars and workshops which enable Synod members to engage with the development of the “Living in Love and Faith” (LLF) resources. Synod members will be able to attend three seminars based on the materials that have been drafted so far. In addition, there will be an opportunity to engage with some lived experience stories and Bible study as part of a reflective journey about human identity, sexuality and marriage within the life of the Church. The Business Committee has allowed a short slot on the Friday afternoon for members of the Coordinating Group to introduce these seminars to Synod members.
31. Synod will be debating the proposed Covenant on Clergy Wellbeing which sets out some recommendations on how the whole Church can support its ordained ministers in their work of mission and evangelism.
32. Finally, the Synod will have been presented with the report from the faith and order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church on areas for further work identified by the General Synod and the Methodist Conference in their initial debates in 2018 on *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*. *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* outlined proposals for the Methodist Church to receive the historic episcopate and for each church to welcome priests / presbyters ordained in the other church as eligible to serve in both churches. The Synod will have the opportunity to debate whether these proposals should now be taken forward, and if so how.
33. At the July Synod the Business Committee schedules time for consideration of a number of formal reports from National Church bodies. The Church Commissioners requested to present their Annual Report to Synod but on this occasion the Business Committee has decided not to schedule time for discussion of that report because their work will be substantially represented in debates on Triennium Funding and on the Cathedrals Measure, in which the Commissioners will be participating.

The Church and the World

34. Synod will be debating a motion from the Ministry and Public Affairs Council on the Church’s response to the increase in serious youth violence, including knife crime. It will also be surveying the landscape of Fresh Expressions of Church, marking the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Fresh Expressions movement with a debate on a motion on “Mission Shaped Church and Fresh Expressions 15 years on”.
35. Synod will be debating two important Diocesan motions; one from Southwark about Refugee Professionals and one from Rochester on Anna Chaplaincy, which supports the spiritual care of people with dementia.
36. There will be an update on progress on the implementation of recommendations from Setting God’s People Free (GS 2056) and the opportunity to feed into future priorities and actions.

37. The Business Committee has decided to schedule a presentation by Mrs Sheran Harper, the Worldwide President of the Mothers Union. Mrs Harper is Guyanese and is the first non-British President of the Mothers Union. She will speak about the work the Mothers Union has done in enabling the leadership of women in the 84 countries where the organisation is present.

Part IV: Other Work of the Business Committee

Synod App and Email address

38. The introduction of a permanent Synod App at the last group of sessions was welcomed by Synod members. Additional functions of the App are being introduced on a gradual basis with each group of sessions. This July, the App will contain additional functions including the ability for members to submit a Request to Speak on an item on the agenda, an enhanced Search function and the facility for members to make annotations on the PDF documents on their devices.
39. The app also contains the Synod Survival Guide and other introductory material prepared for new members at the start of each Quinquennium.
40. The Business Committee has agreed in principle that all members of General Synod should be issued with a standard General Synod email address from the start of the new Quinquennium in November 2020. Work is under way with the Church House IT team to cost out, trial and develop this project. Updates will be given in each Business Committee report until the new Quinquennium.

Feedback on General Synod groups of sessions

41. The Business Committee has now put in place a regular process of requesting Synod members to fill in a post Synod questionnaire to give their feedback on the most recent group of sessions. Some key findings from February 2019 and the Business Committee's response set out below:

COMMENT	BUSINESS COMMITTEE RESPONSE
Legislation needs to be broken up into shorter chunks on the agenda	The Business Committee has tried to break up legislation more in the July Synod agenda
Concerns about the number and frequency of those speaking in debates, including concerns that the same people get called; some confusion about how Requests to Speak may be submitted. The list of those who spoke at the previous group of sessions appears to have been well received.	The Business Committee has fed back these comments to chairs. Additional functionality has been added to the Synod App. The Requests to Speak inbox has been widely publicised. We have asked staff to use the electronic submission of Requests to Speak to track more closely those who put in requests to speak in debate but who were not called.

Some confusion about how legislative business is handled, difficulties in following legislation and confusion about how such debates are chaired.	The Business Committee has requested the Legal Office to run a seminar on understanding legislative process this July. We have requested clearer numbering of legislative amendments.
A number of complaints about the catering at Church House London	On-going conversations with the Corporation of Church House regarding the catering arrangements
Very positive reception of the new Synod App	Further improvements to the App

42. Synod members are encouraged to complete the Feedback Questionnaire following each group of sessions so that improvements can continue to be introduced.

Accessibility of Synod Meetings

43. The Business Committee commissioned an audit of the February 2019 group of sessions in order to assess what steps might need to be made in order to improve the accessibility of General Synod. There will be an accessibility audit taking place during Synod at York.

44. A number of changes have been put in place or are being investigated further, as a result of the audit.

45. Members are referred to the Business Committee's statement on Accessibility (GS Misc 1201) which may be viewed in the Members' Resources section of the Synod web page at <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/GS%20Misc%201201%20.pdf>.

List of Speakers at General Synod meetings

46. In recent groups of sessions, the Business Committee has introduced the practice of publishing the list gathered by the Legal Office of all those who spoke in debates and other items on the floor of Synod. This information is already public in the form of the Report of Proceedings and it is also used by the Panel of Chairs. The Business Committee took the view that it would be helpful for Synod members to have this information available to them in a user-friendly form.

47. In a change to the list published in February 2019, the Business Committee has agreed that the names of those who spoke to move amendments and those who stood to ask supplementary questions should not be included in the List of Speakers for the February 2019 group of sessions onwards. The List of Speakers for February 2019 has been adjusted in light of this agreement.

48. The List of Speakers is circulated as a GS Misc 1218 for information.

Work of the Elections Review Group

49. The Elections Review Group met in April 2019 and discussed the timetable for 2020 elections, and the supporting election rules for the House of Laity, Draft Convocations (Election to Upper House) Rules and Draft Clergy Representation Rules
50. The Elections Review Group was also invited to undertake a consultation on the proposal to introduce term limits for lay members of deanery synods. The consultation has been circulated to members of General Synod, Diocesan Secretaries, Parochial Church Council Secretaries, Lay Chairs of Diocesan Synods, Lay Chairs of Deanery Synods, Area and Rural Deans, and the National Deaneries Network. The consultation ends on 10th July 2019, and the Elections Review Group will report back to the Business Committee at their September meeting.

Record of Business Done

51. The Legal Office produces a formal record of business transacted at each group of sessions of the General Synod in the form of 'Business Done', which is published on the Synod page of the Church of England website.
52. In addition, the Business Committee publishes a running record of the business transacted at General Synod during the current Quinquennium, with updates on subsequent developments in relation to individual items. For the most recent update, please refer to GS Misc 1219.

Business Committee Policies

53. The Business Committee has a number of policies covering various aspects of Synod's activities. These and other guidance may be viewed on the Members' Resources web page at:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/general-synod/synod-members-resources>
54. The Business Committee reviews its policies annually at its March meeting and updates them as necessary. Synod members may wish to offer feedback on any of the policies to the Business Committee in the relevant section of the Feedback Form.

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

June 2019

Membership of the Business Committee

June 2019

Chair

The Revd Canon Sue Booy

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden

Elected by the House of Clergy

The Revd Canon Graeme Buttery

The Revd Prebendary Simon Cawdell

The Revd Canon Joyce Jones

Elected by the House of Laity

Mrs Anne Foreman

Canon Robert Hammond

Mr Clive Scowen

Appointed by the Archbishops' Council

Mr Adrian Greenwood

VACANCY

The Secretary to the Committee is the Clerk to the Synod Dr Jacqui Philips and the Assistant Secretary is Ms Claudette Brown.

Forecast of future General Synod business

February 2020

Legislative Business

- Amending Canon No. 40 – for Enactment
- Amending Canon No. 41 – for Enactment
- Cathedrals Measure – Revision Stage
- Diocesan Boards of Education Measure – Revision Stage
- ?Safeguarding and/or clergy discipline legislation
- Measure enabling any recommended change in the Episcopal Oversight of the Channel Islands (first consideration) [following the work of the Archbishop's Commission]

Other Items

- Presentation followed by a Debate on a Motion from the Ministry and Public Affairs Council on Artificial Intelligence
- Presentation followed by a Debate on a Motion from the Ministry and Public Affairs Council on Armed Forces Chaplaincy
- Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing
- Presentation with questions on Anglican Consultative Council (ACC-17)

Dr Jacqui Philips
Clerk to the Synod
June 2019