

Proposed changes to the Standing Orders relating to the Crown Nominations Commission

Summary

At the February 2019 group of sessions the General Synod effected a number of proposed changes in the Standing Orders governing the operation of the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC). Following that debate members are requested to consider further amendments in relation to the submission of names to the Prime Minister. This note provides the background to those amendments, which are set out in the First Notice Paper.

Introduction

1. Members of Synod will recall that several proposed changes to Standing Orders were debated at the February group of sessions.
2. Following that debate, Members of Synod are now invited to consider further changes to Standing Orders relating to the provision of names of the candidates to the Sovereign through the Prime Minister. Members may recall that in February it was suggested that, in the light of the fact that the second name is very rarely needed, it might be appropriate for the Standing Orders to be amended so that the CNC might be relieved of the absolute requirement to identify a second name.
3. Members are also encouraged to read the report from the oversight group established by the Archbishops to monitor the progress on the discussion and implementation of arrangements (GS Misc 1232).

Background

4. The "Governance of Britain" Green Paper (2007) proposed that the Prime Minister should only receive one name from the Crown Nominations Commission and that this recommendation would be passed to Her Majesty The Queen. That proposal was welcomed by the General Synod in July 2007.
5. However, within the Standing Orders, the requirement to identify two names was retained as was the provision for a preference vote between the two candidates. In accordance with what was proposed in 2007, the Prime Minister no longer chooses between the two names but accepts the preferred candidate. The facility for two names does ensure that should the first candidate decline the nomination the second candidate could be approached (members will be aware that this provision was used in relation to the Vacancy in the See of Sheffield). However, under the current Standing Orders the submission of one name to the Prime Minister is dependent on the Crown Nominations Commission identifying two names. If two names are not identified the CNC needs to reconvene.

6. It is thus proposed that Standing Orders are amended so that the Crown Nominations Commission -
 - i) Submit one name to the Prime Minister, subject to the support of two thirds of the voting members of the Commission in a secret ballot; and
 - ii) May agree on a second name if they so wish, also subject to the support of two thirds of the voting members of the Commission in a secret ballot as a reserve candidate.
7. The submission of one name will not therefore be dependent in any way on the agreement of a second name.
8. Members will be aware that currently one name is submitted to the Prime Minister for Suffragan Bishop nominations. In addition, the Guidelines for the Nomination/ Appointment of Deans include a provision that the panel may identify a second candidate as reserve if they so wish.
9. **Items 37 to 41** in the First Notice Paper will amend SOs 136 and 141 accordingly.

+ Sentamu Eboracensis

On behalf of the Crown Nominations Commission

June 2019

**Published by the General Synod of the Church of England
© The Archbishops' Council 2019**