

GENERAL SYNOD

HOUSE OF LAITY

Standing Committee

**Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Committee
held at 13.00 p.m. on Wednesday 12 February 2020
in Room 2, Church House, Westminster**

Present: Jamie Harrison (*Chair*); Elizabeth Paver (*Vice Chair*); James Cary (*Archbishops' Council*); Lucy Docherty (*Appointments Committee*); Anne Foreman (*Business Committee*); Adrian Greenwood (*Archbishops' Council*); Robert Hammond (*Business Committee*); Rachel Jepson (*Appointments Committee*); Clive Scowen (*Business Committee*),

Apologies: Sarah Finch (*Appointments Committee*);

Staff: Adrian Iles (*Legal Adviser to the House*); Jenny Jacobs (*Secretary*),
Nick Shepherd (*Setting God's People Free*)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Committee with a prayer, and particularly welcomed James Cary, the new member from the Archbishops' Council.
- 1.2 Apologies from Sarah Finch were noted.
- 1.3 The minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2019 were approved.
- 1.4 The Committee reflected that the decision to hold question time virtually in November 2019 had led to lots of questions being received. It was noted that this might be repeated in November 2021, but that this will be kept under review.
- 1.5 The Committee asked about using Saturdays, and it was noted that at least one February Group of Sessions in the next quinquennium will include a weekend. It was requested that more timely notice of the dates would be helpful for members. In response, the Business Committee members outlined that they are restricted on how soon they are able to confirm the dates, as they don't want Synod to meet if there is no substantive business needed.
- 1.6 It was proposed that the Business Committee should look to deciding the start date earlier. The Chair agreed to write to the Chair of the Business Committee regarding the start date of future Groups of Sessions.
- 1.7 There were no other matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

2. Changes to SO 135

- 2.1 The Committee reflected that the changes to Standing Order 135 relating to Appeals had been approved during the Standing Orders debate and that this would take effective from 14th February 2020.
- 2.2 This will enable a quicker process with a summary appeal process and a full appeal process.

3. Setting God's People Free

- 3.1 Nick Shepherd provided an update to the Committee, noting that "everyday faith" is landing well in the dioceses and that this is being communicated effectively.
- 3.2 He outlined that he will be speaking to lay chairs, the Archbishops' Council and the Advisory Council to continue engagement, as there is a risk of losing the broader focus on structural change.
- 3.3 He shared that the new cohort of 8 dioceses means that there have been 32 that have engaged to date.
- 3.4 In response to a question on continuing engagement with Synod, it was suggested that there may be a report to Synod in July 2021.

4. Elections 2020

- 4.1 There was a brief discussion on plans for the 2020 elections. It was recognised that there is a need to encourage people to stand. The Committee was informed that there is a video being produced by the Communications Team which can be used by dioceses to promote General Synod.
- 4.2 There was a question of how there could be more engagement within dioceses with the Synod reps. It was noted that this was an issue but beyond the remit of the Committee.

5. Meeting in July 2020

- 5.1 The Committee agreed that there was no need to hold a meeting of the House of Laity in July. It was proposed that there will be a meeting in November 2020 to enable the hustings to take place, a meeting of the Standing Committee in February 2021 and a meeting of the House in July 2021.

6. Any Other Business

- 6.1 Anne shared that she on the CNC elections review group and asked how the Committee felt about increasing the number of CNC members to 12. She invited members to follow up with her after the meeting.
- 6.2 The Chair highlighted that the debate on the allocation of seats for the House of Laity election in 2020 will be important, and he encouraged members to attend the debate.
- 6.3 The Chair thanked Adrian for his role as adviser to the House of Laity on his last meeting. The Committee thanked him.
- 6.4 There was no other business and the meeting closed.