

GENERAL SYNOD

NOVEMBER GROUP OF SESSIONS 2020

SIXTH NOTICE PAPER

FORMAL VOTES USING THE CRYSTAL INTERACTIVE VOTING PLATFORM

On Tuesday afternoon, the Secretary General, when introducing an update on voting for members, referred to a potential problem arising with the Crystal voting platform which we have been using for formal counted votes. Synod staff were informed by Crystal Interactive yesterday that their voting platform was recording duplicate votes in respect of some members. In other words some members were recorded as having voted twice on the same vote, with the result that the figures provided to the Registrar and the Chair – and which were therefore announced to the Synod – were incorrect.

Crystal Interactive have now analysed the results of the formal counted votes carried out using their platform on Monday and Tuesday. The first – and most important point – is that the duplication issue has not affected the result of any of the formal counted votes that were taken. According to the information provided by Crystal Interactive the position with respect to the votes taken on Monday and Tuesday is as follows.

- **Item 500A (preliminary motion on the special standing orders for remote meetings)**

The figures announced were 271 in favour, 39 against and 17 recorded abstentions.

The correct figures were 265 in favour, 39 against and 16 recorded abstentions.

- **Item 500B** (approval motion on the special standing orders for remote meetings)

The figures announced were 361 in favour, 15 against and 6 recorded abstentions.

The correct figures were 331 in favour, 15 against and 6 recorded abstentions.

- **Item 3** (Response to COVID-19 Pandemic)

The figures announced were 401 in favour, 4 against and 8 recorded abstentions.

The correct figures were 349 in favour, 5 against and 9 recorded abstentions.

- **Item 4** (Report by the Business Committee)

The figures announced were 207 in favour, 67 against and 29 recorded abstentions.

The correct figures were 179 in favour, 56 against and 24 recorded abstentions.

- **Item 505** (Final approval of the Cathedrals Measure)

The figures announced were:

- House of Bishops – 34 in favour, 0 against, 0 recorded abstentions.
- House of Clergy – 148 in favour, 0 against, 3 recorded abstentions
- House of Laity – 175 in favour, 0 against, 2 recorded abstentions

The correct figures were:

- House of Bishops – 32 in favour, 0 against, 0 recorded abstentions
- House of Clergy – 125 in favour, 0 against, 2 recorded abstentions

- House of Laity – 151 in favour, 0 against, 3 recorded abstentions

The Chief Legal Adviser has advised the Secretary General and the Clerk to the Synod that despite incorrect figures having been announced by the Chair, as the result of the vote on each motion (i.e. that it was carried) was correctly announced, those results stand and the motions in question were duly passed by the Synod.

On Tuesday, Synod staff were told by Crystal Interactive that the duplication problem would be solved by members using the Crystal voting platform in the way which was explained to members on Tuesday afternoon following the statement made by the Secretary General. Unfortunately, that has not entirely solved the problem and Crystal Interactive have informed staff that some duplicate votes are still being recorded.

So far as further formal counted votes are concerned, Crystal have informed Synod staff that they are now able to remove duplicate votes from the voting figures following the end of the voting period for a formal counted vote. Removing duplicate votes takes approximately two minutes. There will therefore need to be a short delay between the ending of the voting period and the announcement of the result. This was the method adopted on the voting test that was carried out on Wednesday morning immediately before worship. Synod staff have been told by Crystal Interactive that on that test vote they were readily able to identify and remove duplicate votes and that the figures provided to the Registrar and the Chair were the correct ones.

Synod staff will continue to monitor the situation carefully and report to the Synod on the accuracy of further formal counted votes. A report will also be made to the Business Committee.