

GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2021

The General Synod makes the following Regulation.

Citation and commencement

1. (1) This Regulation may be cited as the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2021.
- (2) This Regulation comes into force on the day after that on which it is approved by the General Synod.

Meaning of “the main Regulation”

2. In this Regulation, a reference to the main Regulation is a reference to the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993 as amended by—
 - (a) the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2003,
 - (b) the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2007,
 - (c) the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2008, and
 - (d) the Vacancy in See Committees (Amendment) Regulation 2013.

Ex officio members of Committee

3. In paragraph 1 of the main Regulation (composition of Committee), in sub-paragraph (a)(iv), after “elected by the diocese” insert “or from a university or theological education institution in the diocese”.

Elected members of Committee

4. (1) In paragraph 1(a) of the main Regulation (composition of Committee), in paragraph (vii) (elected clergy members), after “the House of Clergy” insert “and the House of Laity”.
- (2) In paragraph 1(a) of the main Regulation, for paragraph (viii) (elected lay members) substitute—

“(viii) Not fewer than two persons elected by the House of Clergy and the House of Laity of the Diocesan Synod each of whom is an actual communicant (within the meaning of the Church Representation Rules) who is aged 16 or over and—

- (a) whose name is on the roll of a parish in the diocese,
- (b) whose name is on the community roll of the cathedral church of the diocese which is not a parish church,
- (c) who, in a case where the area of the diocese includes Westminster Abbey, St. George’s Chapel, Windsor or

the cathedral Church of Christ in Oxford, is declared by the dean to be a habitual worshipper, or

- (d) who is declared by the leader of a mission initiative in the diocese to be part of the worshipping community involved in the initiative.”

- (3) In paragraph 2 of the main Regulation (elections), in sub-paragraph (a), after “the Houses of Clergy and Laity of the Diocesan Synod” insert “, the members of each of which together constitute a single electorate,”.

Election of members to Crown Nominations Commission

- 5. (1) In paragraph 5 of the main Regulation (functions of Committee), in sub-paragraph (b) (election of members to Crown Nominations Commission), for “shall normally be taken as the final business of the second meeting of the Committee held to consider the vacancy and” substitute “shall be held at such stage in the proceedings on the Committee’s consideration of the vacancy as the Committee has decided; and after that decision has been made, the Secretary of the Committee shall notify the decision to each member who was not present at the meeting at which it was taken. Such election”.
- (2) In that sub-paragraph, before “Not less than half of the members elected shall be lay members of the Committee” insert “The Chair of the Committee shall not be eligible for election. Nor shall a member of the Committee who is in episcopal orders.”
- (3) In that sub-paragraph, after “and the dean of the cathedral, of the diocese” insert “, or be a member of staff of the National Church Institutions, of the Diocesan Board of Finance of the diocese or of the Diocesan Board of Education of the diocese (with the reference to the National Church Institutions to be read as a reference to a person or body to whom section 6 of the National Institutions Measure 1998 applies)”.
- (4) In that sub-paragraph, omit the words from “and no member shall propose” to the end.
- (5) In sub-paragraph (c) of that paragraph, for “or becomes incapable of acting as such” substitute “, resigns as a member, becomes incapable of acting as such or is otherwise unable or unwilling to participate as such”.
- (6) In that sub-paragraph, for the words from “the chairman and deputy chairman of the Committee shall jointly appoint” to the end substitute “the first mentioned member shall be replaced using the voting records of the previous election in accordance with Standing Order 134(8) to (11) of the General Synod (with the reference to the Clerk of the Synod to be read as a reference to the Chair of the Committee).”
- (7) After that sub-paragraph insert—
 - “(d) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (c), Standing Order 134(9) of the General Synod is to have effect as if there were added at the end “or, if the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Vacancy in See Committee jointly decide that there is insufficient time for a fresh election to be held before the Crown Nominations Commission is due to meet to consider the vacancy, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee—

- (a) must jointly appoint a member of the Committee to act as a member of the Commission, and
- (b) in making the appointment, must have regard to the desirability of maintaining among the members of the Commission elected under paragraph 5(b) of the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993 a similar balance of opinion and of the interests which those members represented.”.”.

Remote meetings

6. After paragraph 5A of the main Regulation insert—

“5B. Remote meetings

- (1) A reference in this Regulation to a meeting of the Committee includes a reference to a meeting which persons may attend, speak at, vote in or otherwise participate in without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.
- (2) The places at which a meeting of the Committee may be held include electronic, digital and virtual locations, web addresses and conference call telephone numbers.
- (3) A person is to be regarded as present at a meeting of the Committee if the person is at that time able to hear and be heard, and where practicable see and be seen, by the other persons present.
- (4) A reference in this Regulation to being present at a meeting of the Committee includes a reference to being present by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcast or live interactive streaming.”

Absence of archbishop

7. In paragraph 6(d) of the main Regulation (inability of archbishop to exercise functions), before “illness” insert “absence or”.

Gender-neutrality

- 8. (1) In paragraph 1(a)(vi) of the main Regulation, for “chairman” in each place it appears substitute “chair”.
- (2) In paragraph 4(a) of the main Regulation, for “Chairman” in each place it appears substitute “Chair”.
- (3) In paragraph 4(b) and (c) of the main Regulation, for “chairman” in each place it appears substitute “Chair”.

Interpretation

9. After paragraph 7 of the main Regulation insert—

“7A. Interpretation

- (1) A reference in this Regulation to a provision of a Measure of the General Synod is a reference to that provision as amended, extended or applied from time to time.
- (2) A reference in this Regulation to the cathedral of a diocese is, in the case of a diocese which has more than one cathedral, to be read as a reference to each or any of the cathedrals, depending on the context.”

Transitional provision

10. The amendments made by this Regulation do not apply in the case of a vacancy in a diocesan bishopric the consideration of which the Vacancy in See Committee of the diocese began before the date on which this Regulation comes into force but has not yet completed.

Approved by the General Synod on [] July 2021.

A.S. McGregor
Registrar of the General Synod