

## NOVEMBER 2021 GROUP OF SESSIONS

### Guide to the November 2021 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. This is the first meeting for the new quinquennium and the first time that Synod as a whole has met in person since February 2020.
3. This report falls into four parts:
  - Part I comments on practical arrangements for the November group of sessions.
  - Part II comments on general categories of Synod business.
  - Part III comments on the shape of the agenda for the November group of sessions.
  - Part IV reports on other work and recent decisions of the Business Committee.

#### Part I: Practical Arrangements for the November group of sessions Sessional Arrangements

4. The General Synod will be meeting at Church House, Westminster. On Monday 15 November, there will be an induction programme which is aimed primarily at new members. All members (whether new or returning) are encouraged to attend as the session will provide useful information. The induction programme will give the opportunity for members to engage with different aspects of the work of the national Church and General Synod. There will be a mix of seminars and presentations, supported by some recorded video guides circulated in advance of the meeting for members to engage with.
5. In the morning of Tuesday 16 November, there will be a service of Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey which will start at 10.45am. Members have been asked to dress formally for this service, and further details have been sent from the Synod team.
6. Following the service at Westminster Abbey, Synod will be formally inaugurated at Church House. It is requested that all members of Synod be present for this ceremony.
7. The formal business of Synod will begin after lunch on Tuesday. The timings of the sessions are as follows:
  - 2.45pm – 7.00pm on Tuesday 16 November
  - 9am – 12.30pm and 2pm – 4.30pm on Wednesday 17 November

8. The House of Laity will meet after Synod has been prorogued on Wednesday 18 November.

### **Synod Worship**

9. The new Chaplain to General Synod is the Revd Andrew Hammond. He would welcome the any suggestions from Synod members regarding Synod worship and is also keen to hear from any Synod members who wish to volunteer to lead or participate in Synod worship. Any members who would like to make suggestions or be involved in aspects of Synod worship at future groups of sessions should contact the Chaplain at [synodchaplain@churchofengland.org](mailto:synodchaplain@churchofengland.org).
10. The group of sessions will begin with an act of worship and there will be acts of worship throughout the group of sessions. The full details and timings of worship are listed at the start of the agenda.

### **Private Members' Motions and Diocesan Synod Motions**

11. As this is the first Synod of this quinquennium, there are no Private Members' Motions ('PMMs') at this time. Notice of any PMMs will be published as soon as practicable. Members can indicate their support for any PMM by adding their name to the list of signatures. At a physical meeting, this can be done in person. Outside of a physical meeting, this can be done through the Synod App or by email to [synod.pmms@churchofengland.org](mailto:synod.pmms@churchofengland.org).
12. Diocesan Synod Motions may be carried over into the new quinquennium. There are currently 12 DSMs from the previous quinquennium listed in Special Agenda IV. One of these, the DSM from Leeds has been scheduled time on the agenda.

### **Part II: General Categories of Synod Business**

13. 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, although inevitably, some of the subjects which come under these areas may overlap.

#### ***Standing items***

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

#### ***Legislative business***

Full details of the legislative business for a group of sessions are 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***

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

## Part III: The Shape of the November Agenda

### Standing Items of Business

14. The November group of sessions will begin with a joint **Presidential Address** by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York. It 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.
15. A minimum of 90 minutes has been allocated for **Questions**.
16. Synod will be invited to take note of the **Archbishops' Council Budget 2022**.
17. At the July 2021 group of sessions there was a following motion to the item on proposals for legislation to replace the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 (GS 2219). This motion requested the Business Committee to allow time for the implementation group to present its initial proposals at the November 2021 group of sessions. The Chair of the implementation group has informed the Business Committee that this timeline is not possible, and requested that this be presented at a future group of sessions. We will seek to accommodate this request in a future Agenda.
18. The Business Committee is aware that, following the work of the Anti-Racism Task Force and its report, *'From Lament to Action'*, a Racial Justice Commission is being established. This Commission will be invited to request time on the agenda at a future group of sessions, and the Business Committee would be pleased to accommodate this.

### Legislative Business in November

19. The General Synod's main role as set out in its constitution is to make legislation. Synodical legislation takes the form of Measures and Canons ('primary legislation') and orders, regulations and other instruments ('secondary' or 'subordinate legislation'). The Synod also makes provision for matters concerning the Church of England by means of Acts of Synod and other instruments where provision having the force of law is not required.
20. There is only one item of legislative business on this occasion. Most groups of sessions will have significantly more legislative business, as it is the core business of the Synod. On this occasion, this one item has been allocated time on the agenda:
  - a. **Vacancy in See Committees Amendment Regulation 2021 Act of Synod** – this amends the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation to reflect recommendations in Responsible Representation (GS 2202).
21. At the November 2020 group of sessions, Synod voted to approve the Standing Orders made under Section 1 of the General Synod (Remote Meetings) (Temporary Standing Orders) Measure 2020. This Measure included a 'sunset clause' which meant that the temporary Standing Orders would lapse after 12 months unless the period is extended. At its recent meeting the Business Committee discussed the possibility of extending these temporary Standing Orders but on balance decided to allow them to lapse.

22. Should there be a need in future for the Synod to meet remotely, the Measure allows for the temporary Standing Orders to be revived by a Resolution of the Synod. The Business Committee will include such a Resolution as the first item on the Agenda should it be necessary to do so in the future.

### **Ordering the Life of the Church**

23. There are a number of items relating to the initiative known as “Emerging Church of England” which being presented at this group of sessions. This includes an update on the **Vision and Strategy** and the work of the **Governance Review Group**. Synod will also be invited to engage with **Generosity and Diocesan Assets**. These items will be scheduled for further discussion at future groups of sessions.
24. The Synod will be asked to approve the re-appointment of a **member of the Archbishops’ Council**.

### **The Church and the World**

25. It has been the custom since 1970 for the Synod to submit a Loyal Address at the inauguration of each new Synod. The Archbishop of Canterbury will therefore move that a **Loyal Address** should be presented to Her Majesty the Queen.
26. The Diocesan Synod Motion from Leeds on **Wealth Gap** will be taken at this group of sessions.

## **Part IV: Other Work of the Business Committee**

### **Synod App**

27. There is an app available for use by members of Synod which provides access agendas, papers and submit requests to speak amongst other things. The latest update of the Synod App included new functions such as text search, saving reading progress, annotation, account login and a web version of the App. The web version of the App will enable members to access the App and its functions on any device with internet access.

### **Feedback on General Synod groups of sessions**

28. The Business Committee has now put in place a regular process of requesting Synod members to complete a post Synod questionnaire to give their feedback on the most recent group of sessions. 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**

29. 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>.
30. The accessibility policy was reviewed by the Business Committee in December 2020. More improvement work is under way to improve members’ experience. Further work will take place on this and staff will engage with members on

accessibility issues.

31. The Accessible Synod group will be holding a webinar as part of the induction programme and will be available during the induction day to meet with members. All Synod members are invited to engage with the Accessible Synod group.

### **List of Speakers at General Synod meetings**

32. In recent groups of sessions, the Business Committee has introduced the practice of publishing the list gathered 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 is used by the Panel of Chairs, the list just makes the information available in a more user-friendly form. The List of Speakers is normally circulated as a GS Misc for information and this will be continued for this quinquennium.

### **Record of Business Done**

33. 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.

### **Business Committee Policies**

34. The Business Committee has a number of policies covering various aspects of Synod's activities which are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. These and other guidance may be viewed on the Members' [resources section](#) on the Church of England website.
35. The [Guide to the General Synod](#) and the [Synod members survival guide](#) may be especially helpful as members prepare for the group of sessions.
36. Synod members are encouraged to be proactive in publicising the work of Synod, and social media is a great platform for this. There are several social media channels which members have used in the past. However, members are reminded of the importance of being respectful to each other and that social media comments are seen by many both within and outside the Church.
37. Synod business is recorded and livestreamed on the Church of England youtube channel, and occasionally broadcast on the BBC Parliament Channel as well. Members should consider this when participating in the chamber.

On behalf of the Business Committee, Robert Hammond  
 Chair of the Business Committee  
 October 2021

## **Membership of the Business Committee September 2021**

### **Chair (elected by General Synod)**

Canon Robert Hammond

### **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

### **Elected by the House of Laity**

Mrs Anne Foreman

Mr Clive Scowen

### **Appointed by the Archbishops' Council**

Mr Joseph Diwakar

The Secretary to the Committee is the Clerk to the Synod, Dr Jacqui Philips.

## **Forecast of future General Synod business**

This contains potential items that are likely to come to a future group of sessions, it is not an exhaustive list as other items may be added and does not guarantee that an item will be scheduled.

### **Feb 2022**

#### **Legislative Business**

- Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 2021 (Consequential Amendment to Regulations under Canon B 12) Regulations 2021
- CBF Investment Fund Amendment Resolution

#### **Non-legislative business**

- Generosity and Diocesan Finances
- Debate on Clergy Remuneration Review
- Policy paper on Governance Review Group
- Appointment of Chair of the Dioceses Commission

### **July 2022**

#### **Legislative business**

- Revised Mission and Pastoral Measure – First Consideration
- Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2022 (*deemed business*)
- Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others (Fees) Order 2022 (*deemed business*)

#### **Non-legislative business**

- Update from the Environmental Working Group on progress to Net Zero
- Policy paper on Lay Ministry
- Policy paper on revision of Clergy Discipline Measure
- Amendments to CNC Standing Orders

Dr Jacqui Philips Clerk to the Synod  
September 2021