

JULY 2022 GROUP OF SESSIONS

Report of the General Synod Business Committee and Guide to the Group of Sessions

Introduction:

1. The Business Committee is an elected committee of the General Synod. It 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. The Business Committee prepares a report for each group of sessions. This report sets out the business and practicalities for the July 2022 group of sessions and gives an overview of the work of the Committee since its last report in February 2022.

Setting the Agenda for the July group of sessions

3. The Business Committee strives to set the agenda in a way that ensures that there is a balance of subjects, and a mix between items brought by dioceses through Diocesan Synod Motions (DSMs) or individual members through Private Members' Motions (PMMs) and those put forward by the Archbishops' Council or its sub-committees. It ensures that there is adequate time available for legislative business and sufficient time for standing items such as questions and farewells.
4. For the July 2022 group of sessions, being held from Friday 8 July to Tuesday 12 July, the Business Committee considered the number of DSMs and PMMs pending. It has taken the decision to bring at least three DSMs to this group of sessions. Those selected were based on the length of time they have been waiting and whether there is a particular deadline for the item to be taken. This is why the DSM from Guildford, 'Age Verification on Pornography Websites' (GS 2274A and GS 2274B) has been taken before older DSMs since it relates to legislation currently progressing through Parliament.
5. There are a number of items of legislation at this group of sessions, including the Diocesan Stipends Fund (Amendment) Measure (GS 2255) which had been laid before Synod on 23 March for deemed first consideration. The Clerk received requests from more than 25 members for it to be debated, so this is included on the agenda for first consideration. There are a further eight legislative items at this group of sessions, four of which are for deemed approval. Further details can be found below.
6. There are a number of financial items on the agenda, including the 2023 Archbishops' Council Budget and proposals for Apportionment; the independent review of the Lowest Income Communities Funding and Strategic Development Funding; and Spending Plans for 2023-25.
7. As with the February 2022 group of sessions, the Business Committee has decided to schedule two sets of 'question time' to allow more time for this important part of the Synod process. These will take place on the evenings of Friday and Saturday.

8. There will be group work taking place on Sunday afternoon. This will give members the opportunity to engage again with the Living in Love and Faith work and the Vision and Strategy work. There will be two sessions, so members will be able to engage with each of these issues. Details regarding the group work will be available on a Notice Paper and members are strongly encouraged to participate in this.
9. At this group of sessions, the elections for the central members of the Crown Nominations Commission will be held on Sunday evening. This will take place in a context of prayer and will be managed by the external voting company, Civica Electoral Services (CES) which has been managing the elections to Synod and of Synodical bodies. Members will be sent an email from CES with a link to the online portal which will open at 8.30pm and close at 9.30pm. Members will need access to a device (ie smartphone, tablet or laptop) to access the portal and will only be able to vote during these 60 minutes. Staff will be available to advise any members during this time, and will provide a small number of devices for use by members. The results will be announced before prorogation on Tuesday morning.
10. The Business Committee is delighted that this group of sessions will be attended by a number of Ecumenical guests, as well as those from the Anglican Communion. Details about those attending, including a brief biography can be found in Notice Paper Five.
11. There will be a Presidential Address by the Archbishop of York and one of the Archbishops will move that a Loyal Address be presented to Her Majesty The Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee.
12. A sculpture inspired by the LLF process has been installed in York Minster and will be on view until September. Members of Synod will have the opportunity to view and interact with it before the service on Sunday morning. There will also be a multimedia installation in Spring Lane building.

Practicalities for the July group of sessions

13. This group of sessions will be the first residential meeting since July 2019. It is being held at the University of York, and accommodation and catering on campus is arranged for all members by the Synod Support Team. The meetings will be held in the Central Hall, with group work on Sunday afternoon in the Spring Lane Building. Members of the Business Committee will be running tours of the campus on Friday lunchtime to help new members to orient themselves. Details of how to find your accommodation, dining room and map of the campus will be sent to you by email from Synod support. Members who have requested a parking hanger will be able to collect this at check-in.
14. Following the process by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, and House of Laity to co-opt UK Minority Ethnic Members, the Business Committee will be arranging a brief induction programme on Friday morning for these new members, as well as others that have joined since February through casual vacancies. Synod Support Staff will be contacting those new members directly about this. Any member who missed the November induction would also be welcome to join us.
15. As with the February 2022 group of sessions, we will be providing basic Zoom access to the meeting to those unable to attend in person due to illness or other reasons. The Synod Support Team will contact members regarding this, and will

arrange access to the Zoom call and voting platform.

Worship

16. Worship is arranged on behalf of Synod by the Synod Chaplain, Revd Andrew Hammond. He can be contacted on synodchaplain@gmail.com and would welcome feedback from members regarding the worship. He would particularly like to hear from any volunteers wishing to lead worship.
17. As this is a body of the Church of England, worship is integral to the Synod meetings. Each session starts with worship and concludes with worship. Holy Communion is celebrated in the Berrick Saul Building every day except Sunday, as Holy Communion will be celebrated in York Minister that morning. Transport is available for members to travel to the Minister on Sunday morning at a small cost. Tickets are available from the Information Desk in the foyer in the Central Hall during Synod.

Agenda items for the July group of sessions

18. The following sets out a brief summary of each of the papers being presented at the July group of sessions. It is hoped that members will find this useful.
 - [GS 2256 Agenda](#): This is the key paper for the group of sessions as it sets out the business for the meeting. This should be read alongside the Order Papers which will be published about an hour before each session starts on the Synod App and website (and available in the Foyer of Central Hall). Please note that the agenda is subject to change during the group of sessions if business necessitates.
 - [GS 2257 Report of the Business Committee](#): This report will be discussed as one of the first items on the agenda. Members will have the opportunity to comment on the agenda or on the content of the Report during the take note debate.
 - [GS 2258 Route map to Net Zero Carbon by 2030](#): This provides an update on progress towards net zero carbon as requested by the motion from the February 2020 group of sessions.
 - [GS 2259 War in Ukraine](#): This is a topical item and will enable Synod to engage with this issue which is the most serious destabilisation of the post-WW2 world order for decades.
 - [GS 2260 See of Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission](#): This follows the Take Note debate in February 2022 at which members were told that a final proposal for changes to the Standing Orders would be brought to the July 2022 Synod. Members will be able to debate a series of non-technical policy proposals on Saturday before considering the specific amendments to the Standing Orders giving effect to proposals on Tuesday.
 - [GS 2261 Review of Strategic Development Funding \(SDF\) and Lowest Income Communities Funding \(LInC\)](#): An Independent Review of SDF and LInC funding reported in March 2022. This will be an opportunity for members to engage with the reviewers and to clarify and learn from the review.
 - [GS 2262 Spending Plans of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council](#): This item is focussed on the spending plans of the Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council for financial distributions over 2023-2025 and indicative

distributions for the subsequent six years. These are plans developed in the light of the Vision and Strategy work.

- [GS 2263 Safeguarding and Independence: Update and Next Steps](#): This item will include a presentation by Maggie Atkinson, Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Board and Meg Munn, Chair of the National Safeguarding Panel. This will give Synod the opportunity to engage with this important issue.
- [GS 2264 Church of England Pensions \(Application of Capital Funds\) Measure](#): This Measure further extends the period during which the Church Commissioners are permitted to resort to capital to meet their obligations under the pre-1998 clergy pension scheme.
- [GS 2265A and GS 2265B Insurance Premium Tax](#): This Diocesan Synod Motion from Lincoln seeks to address the impact of insurance premium tax on churches and other charities.
- [GS 2266A and GS 2266B Assisted Suicide](#): This Private Members' Motion by Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester) which aims to affirm that the current legislation in relation to Assisted Suicide referenced in Section 2 of the Suicide Act 1961 (and its application through the Director of Public Prosecutions guidelines) should remain unchanged.
- [GS 2267 Archbishops' Council Annual Report](#): There will be a presentation on the Archbishops' Council's Annual Report and members will be given an opportunity to ask questions on the work of the Council in 2021.
- [GS 2268 Archbishops' Council Budget 2023 and Proposals for Apportionment 2023](#): This is a regular item for the July group of sessions, as under its Standing Orders, General Synod must be invited to approve the Archbishops' Council's annual budget and its proposals for the diocesan apportionment. Proposals for the budget and apportionment must be sent to General Synod members by 30 June of the preceding year.
- [GS 2269 Amending Canon No 42](#): This Amending Canon implements a recommendation from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse that the role of diocesan safeguarding adviser be changed to one of diocesan safeguarding officer. Diocesan safeguarding officers would have responsibility in the diocese, independent of the bishop, for the professional leadership on and management of matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- [GS 2270 Affirming and Including Disabled People in the Whole Life of the Church](#): this item will give members the chance to address disability issues and reflect on the importance of diversity and inclusion in the life of the Church.
- [GS 2255 Diocesan Stipends Funds \(Amendment\) Measure](#): This legislation will allow dioceses more freedom to be generous with their historic wealth to other dioceses in the Church of England, and enable a more equitable sharing of this wealth.
- [GS 2271 Resourcing Ministerial Formation](#): The Resourcing Ministerial Formation review has found that significant changes to the current system of funding for the training of ordinands are required, and this item will enable members to shape the ongoing development of the proposals.

- [GS 2272 Church of England \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Measure](#) and [GS 2273 Amending Canon No 43](#): This Measure and Amending Canon cover a wide range of provisions which would not merit free-standing legislation. Many of the provisions are of a technical nature.
- [GS 2254A](#) and [GS 2254B Review of Qualifications for PCC Membership and Entry on the Church Electoral Roll](#): this is a Diocesan Synod Motion from Canterbury which calls for a review of the qualifications for membership of parochial church councils and the electoral roll in light of the existence of bishops' mission initiatives.
- [GS 2274A](#) and [GS 2274B Age Verification for Pornography Websites](#): this is a Diocesan Synod Motion from Guildford and calls for the Government to introduce legislation requiring pornographic sites to have in place age verification systems preventing access by people under the age of 18.
- [GS 2275 59th Report of the Standing Orders Committee](#), [GS 2276 60th Report of the Standing Orders Committee and Amendments to the Standing Orders for Membership of the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission \(CNC\)](#): This sets out the technical changes relating to the CNC membership which will be finalised after the Synod has voted on the underlying proposals on Saturday morning.
- [GS 2277 Report by the Clergy Conduct Measure Implementation Group](#): In July 2021 Synod took note of the report from the Lambeth Working Group on the reform of the Clergy Discipline Measure. That report recommended the creation of an Implementation Group to bring forward legislative proposals to Synod for the replacement of the CDM. These proposals are now ready for debate before Synod in advance of legislation in 2023.

Deemed business:

- [GS 2278 Legal Officers \(Annual Fees\) Order 2022](#) and [GS 2279 Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Officers and Others \(Fees\) Order 2022](#): These are the usual annual fees orders providing for the annual retainers paid to diocesan registrars and for court fees in the ecclesiastical courts.
- [GS 2280 Church of England Funded Pension Scheme \(Amendment\) Rules 2022](#): These Rules make amendments to the provisions in the Rules of the Church of England Funded Pensions Scheme (which applies to service by clergy from 1998) in relation to retirement on grounds of ill health.
- [GS 2281 Clergy Discipline Measure 2003](#) – Amending Code of Practice: This Code makes amendments to the existing Code of Practice. One set of amendments removes the presumption from current guidance that it will always be necessary to pause CDM proceedings pending the outcome of the police investigation or a criminal trial. The other amendment transfers responsibility for publishing details of penalties by consent from dioceses to the President of Tribunals.

Contingency Business

- [GS 2282A](#) and [GS 2282B Reduce Parochial Fees for Marriages](#): this is a Diocesan Synod Motion from Blackburn and seeks to set the fees relating to marriages at nil or a minimal amount. It will only be debated if changes to the agenda during the group of sessions means additional time is available.

Work of the Committee

19. The Business Committee has met twice since the February 2022 group of sessions. The Committee has elected Fr Paul Cartwright as Vice-Chair of the Committee.
20. The Committee has reviewed the feedback from members on the February 2022 group of sessions and have taken forward the following suggestions from members:
 - Members requested the possibility of a short break in the afternoon. The Business Committee will suggest to Chairs that a short break should be incorporated into the changeover of Chairs between items of business.
 - Members noted that there was a lack of clarity regarding supplementary questions and which questions are in order. Detailed guidance will be provided to Chairs and members, both on the Questions Notice paper and on the website.
 - Members expressed concern that using only two microphone podiums slowed the debates. The Synod Support Team are looking into the possibility of having four podiums at Church House for the February 2023 group of sessions. The layout of the Central Hall makes this more problematical in York but the situation will be reviewed following this year's meeting.
 - Members welcomed the additional session for question time in February 2022. This is being repeated at the July 2022 group of sessions.
 - Members felt that there should be better explanations of what constitutes a point of order. Chairs will be supported during the debates by staff to address any points of order and the Business Committee is looking to prepare some guidance for members.
 - Members appreciated the ability to join remotely through Zoom. The Business Committee are continuing with the trial of hybrid arrangements in York and will assess this further when reviewing the July 2022 sessions.
 - There was feedback about the behaviour of members. The Business Committee has revisited the informal code of conduct ([GS Misc 1175](#)) and will consider further work alongside other suggestions for improving Synod.
21. The Business Committee would welcome feedback from members on any aspect of Synod. This can be done formally through the post-Synod feedback questionnaire or more informally either at the proposed fringe meeting or by email to synod@churchofengland.org.
22. The Appointments Committee is a committee of Synod, responsible for appointing members to Synodical bodies, as well as other bodies. The Business Committee would encourage members to engage with this and either put forward yourself or others for roles which match your skills and experiences. Further details can be found in [GS Misc 1324](#).

Elections Review Group (ERG)

23. The Business Committee and the Appointments Committee has appointed members to the Elections Review Group which is a sub-committee of the Business

Committee. The ERG will be chaired by Clive Scowen (London) and will focus on the following:

- Review the process for the 2021 General Synod elections, including engagement with stakeholders such as dioceses, Synod members and Civic Electoral Services.
- Put forward proposals for amendments to the election rules for the next General Synod elections
- Act as steering committee for amendments to the Church Representation Rules and other rules pertaining to the election of members of the General Synod.
- Advise the Business Committee on any other changes related to elections and produce a report to the Business Committee for consideration by General Synod.
- Consider submissions made by former synod member Michael Stallybrass and bring forward such proposals as it considers appropriate to amend the Church Representation Rules relating to proceedings of parochial church councils.

24. The ERG will start its work shortly and it is expected to give an update report to the February 2023 group of sessions.

Accessibility

25. The Business Committee's statement on Accessibility ([GS Misc 1201](#)) was last reviewed in December 2020 but the Committee regularly engages with the Accessible Synod Group to bring improvements to each group of sessions. Feedback from members on how to improve this would be welcomed.

Synod App

26. Members are encouraged to download the Synod App. This gives you access to all papers, supporting documents; and the ability to submit requests to speak and amendments. If you have any issues accessing this, the Synod Support team can advise.

Record of Business Done

27. The transcript from the February 2022 group of sessions is now available on the website [here](#).

Business Committee Policies

28. 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.

29. The [Guide to the General Synod](#) and the [Synod Members' Survival Guide](#) may be especially helpful as members prepare for the group of sessions.

30. Synod members are encouraged to be proactive in publicising the work of Synod, and social media is a great platform for this. The hashtag used on Twitter is #Synod. 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.

31. 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
June 2022

Membership of the Business Committee June 2022

Chair (elected by General Synod)

Canon Robert Hammond

Elected by the House of Bishops

The Rt Revd Martin Gorick, Bishop of Dudley

Elected by the House of Clergy

Fr Paul Cartwright (Vice-Chair)

Revd Mark Ireland

Revd Jody Stowell

Elected by the House of Laity

Mr Clive Scowen

Mrs Michelle Obende

Mr Nic Tall

Appointed by the Archbishops' Council

Mr Joseph Diwakar

The Secretary to the Committee is the Acting Clerk to the Synod, Jenny Jacobs.

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.

The dates for the February 2023 group of sessions are still to be finalised but, in keeping with the commitment to give as much notice as possible, members are requested to hold the smaller date envelope of Monday 6th to Thursday 9th February 2023 for Synod.

February 2023

Legislative business

- Clergy Conduct Measure – First Consideration
- Diocesan Stipend Fund (Amendment) Measure – Revision Stage, final drafting/Final Approval
- Miscellaneous Provisions Measure and Amending Canon No 43 – Revision Stage
- Church of England Pensions (Amendment) Measure – Revision Stage
- Approval of form of electronic service register under Canon F 12

Non-legislative business

- Policy paper on revision of Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011
- Policy paper from the Governance Review Group
- DSM: Reduce Parochial Fees for Marriages (if not taken in July)
- Engagement with “Living in Love and Faith” Next Steps

For and on behalf of the General Synod Business Committee
Canon Robert Hammond, Chair
June 2022