



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

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BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN SYNOD

Constitution and Standing Orders

As adopted June 1989, amended October 2004, November 2007, March 2015 and July 2018

In this present form effective from 12 July 2018

Note: Regarding paragraph 6 of the Constitution, further wording may be added, by way of clarification and explanation only.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN SYNOD CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

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PREFACE

1. The constitution and standing orders take their authority from the Church Representation Rules (CRR). Provision has been made for specific diocesan rules where so required or appropriate.
2. References herein to “clergy” relate to clerks in holy orders other than those who are members of the house of bishops. “Laity” refers to all other members in neither of these categories.
3. All references herein to Bishop’s Council, unless otherwise qualified, refer to the Bishop’s Council and Diocesan Synod Standing Committee.
4. The diocesan board of finance is registered under the Companies Acts and established in accordance with the Diocesan Boards of Finance Measure 1925 to be the financial executive of diocesan synod with functions and powers as contained in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

It is a requirement of the above Measure that the board “shall in the exercise of its powers and duties comply with such directions as may from time to time be given to the board by the diocesan synod”. Such directions must be clear and comprehensive and the Bishop’s Council must allow the directors of the diocesan board of finance reasonable opportunity to comment upon them and to ensure that they accord with its legal responsibilities.

5. For a motion to be carried reference herein is made to the need for the votes cast in favour to exceed in number the required proportion either:
 - (a) “of those members present and voting”. This term means that no account is taken of members abstaining (although a count may be taken for record purposes) or
 - (b) “of those members present”. This term covers all members present whether or not abstaining.
6. Any periods of notice required by these standing orders shall be deemed to consist of clear days or weeks not including the date of despatch and the date of the event before which the notice must be delivered.
7. Where the circumstance permits reference herein to the male gender includes also the female.
8. Those cross references contained herein within parentheses are to facilitate the use of these standing orders but form no part of them.
9. References to parochial church councils shall, where appropriate, include district church councils, joint parochial church councils, team councils and group councils.

PREAMBLE

From 1 April 2008 the Bishop's Council and Standing Committee, The Board of Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Diocesan Pastoral Committee, while remaining separate legal entities, will have the same membership and will meet in the same place and at the same time under the name of the Bishop's Council. The Standing Orders of the diocesan synod can formally govern its own operations and those of its subordinate bodies (e.g. the Bishop's Council and Standing Committee). The notes below therefore offer guidance at points where there may be a lack of clarity in relation to procedures in meetings of these bodies.

- Standing Order 6 refers to the chairmanship of the diocesan synod. It should be noted that when the Diocesan Board of Finance is in session it will be the Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance who will take the chair in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Board of Finance. It is intended that the agenda will clearly indicate which function the meeting is carrying out at any stage.
- Standing Order 61 defines the membership of the Bishop's Council (and hence the membership of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee and the Board of Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance).
- Standing Order 61A determines the chairmanship of the Bishop's Council. When the members of the Bishop's Council are acting in their capacity as Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance, the Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance will chair the meeting. As a function of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee is to advise the Diocesan Bishop it is anticipated he will choose not to be in its Chair and that he would use his powers under paragraph 2 of schedule 1 to the Pastoral Measure 1983 to appoint another person to take the chair.

CONSTITUTION OF DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Diocesan Synod shall consist of the following:

1. Ex officio:
 - a) The diocesan bishop (President).
 - b) The suffragan bishop(s) and such other person(s) in episcopal orders as the President may nominate.
 - c) The dean.
 - d) The archdeacons.
 - e) The proctors elected from the diocese or from any university in the diocese to the lower house of convocation, excluding the registrar of the diocese (if so elected).
 - f) The chancellor of the diocese.
 - g) The chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance.
 - h) The members elected from the diocese to the house of laity of the general synod excluding the registrar of the diocese (if so elected).
 - i) The chair of the Diocesan Board of Education
 - j) The chair of the Diocesan Advisory Committee
2. Co-opted:

Not more than 5 clerical and 5 lay members may be co-opted as desired by the respective houses of the diocesan synod according to procedures determined by them but not to preclude the right of the Bishop's Council from making its own nominations for co-option (SO 63).
3. Nominated:

The diocesan bishop may nominate 10 additional members who may be of the clergy or the laity.
4. Size of Houses:

The size of the house of clergy and house of laity shall each be aimed at a figure of 110 members with the numbers to be elected calculated according to the rules that follow.
5. Elected:

The total number of both clerical and lay seats to be filled by elections in the deaneries shall be determined by deducting the number of ex officio, co-opted and nominated members of each house from the total set on the assumption that each house co-opts 5 members and the diocesan bishop nominates 5 members of each house. The calculation for each deanery will be as follows:

House of clergy: The number of clergy members of each deanery synod as at 30 April in each year preceding elections will be divided by the sum of

the equivalent figures for the whole diocese and then multiplied by the total number of clerical seats to be filled by election.

House of laity: The number of people on the electoral rolls of all parishes in each deanery as at 30 April in each year preceding elections will be divided by the sum of the equivalent figures for the whole diocese and multiplied by the total number of lay seats to be filled by election.

In converting the results of these calculations into seats available, fractions precisely equal to and those above one half are to be treated as one seat while all others are to be ignored. If the resulting calculation shows for either house of any deanery that it has fewer than two seats then this minimum figure will be substituted without any subsequent recalculation.

The secretary will, before 31 December in the year preceding elections, notify each deanery synod secretary of the number of seats available to each house of that deanery synod.

6. Membership of the Diocesan Board of Finance

Each member of the diocesan synod shall be qualified to be a member of the Diocesan Board of Finance provided that the majority of those members shall be of the laity – Article 4 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Diocesan Board of Finance applies.

STANDING ORDERS

ROLL OF MEMBERS

1. The secretary shall keep a roll of the members of the diocesan synod constantly up to date.

PARTICIPATION BY NON-MEMBERS

2. The following persons may attend meetings of diocesan synod and shall, subject to the same obligations as members, have the right to address diocesan synod, to speak on any motion or amendment, make a personal explanation under standing order 29 or answer questions under standing order 59:
 - a) Persons whose names or job titles are included on a list prepared and maintained by the secretary, on criteria established by diocesan synod, and specifically approved by the Bishop's Council. The secretary will make this list available for inspection by members at each meeting of diocesan synod.
 - b) Any other non-member invited by the president to attend a particular meeting of diocesan synod.

TERM OF OFFICE

3. The election of members of diocesan synod by the houses of clergy and laity of deanery synods shall take place every three years and the members so elected shall hold office for a term of three years beginning with the 1 August next following their election.
4. Unless the house concerned or the president, as the case may be, fixes a shorter period of office, co-opted and nominated members shall retire on the same date as elected members.

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

5. Prior to, or during, the first meeting of the diocesan synod after the triennial elections, and where a casual vacancy occurs as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, each of the houses of clergy and laity, or where appropriate the one house concerned, shall elect one of its members to be a vice-president of the diocesan synod and chair of its house.

CHAIR OF MEETINGS

6. The president, unless on any occasion or for any item of business he nominates one of the vice-presidents or another member to take the chair, shall be chair at meetings of the diocesan synod.

In the event that the president is not present and fails to nominate then the vice-presidents will agree between themselves who shall chair particular items of business on the agenda or if only one is present then that vice-president will take the chair. In any other situation diocesan synod will appoint a chair for that meeting from amongst its members.

7. The procedure of the diocesan synod shall be regulated by the chair who shall respect the rights of members provided in these standing orders but who shall not personally in the conduct of proceedings be governed by any restrictions imposed upon members under the rules of debate (SO 26-47) if this is deemed by the chair to be in the best interests of the smooth running and effectiveness of diocesan synod.

OFFICERS OF DIOCESAN SYNOD

Secretary

8. The diocesan synod shall appoint a secretary, being either clerical or lay and either salaried or honorary, who shall:
 - a) Be responsible for the administrative arrangements for meetings of the diocesan synod;
 - b) Be in attendance at such meetings;
 - c) Prepare the draft agenda papers and minutes of the diocesan synod;
 - d) Act as secretary of the Bishop's Council;
 - e) Perform such other duties as shall be assigned by diocesan synod.

Assistant Secretary

9. The Bishop's Council may appoint an assistant secretary.

Registrar

10. The registrar or in the event of absence or incapacity the deputy registrar where appointed shall be the legal adviser to the diocesan synod and when required shall attend the meetings of the diocesan synod, its houses and the Bishop's Council.

Terms of appointment

11. Subject to any statutory provision and to these standing orders, diocesan synod shall determine the duties and responsibilities of its officers in connection with the business of diocesan synod.

MEETINGS OF DIOCESAN SYNOD

When and where held

12. The president shall summon not less than two meetings in each year at such times and places as he shall direct after consulting the Bishop's Council.

Meetings by resolution or requisition

13. If either the Bishop's Council by resolution so decides or if the president receives a requisition for that purpose signed by not less than thirty members the president shall summon a meeting of the diocesan synod to include on its agenda the specific items for which the meeting was called. Meetings held by requisition of members shall be held within eight weeks following such requisition and members will in all cases be given not less than three weeks notice of the date, time, place and agenda of such meetings.

Notice of ordinary meetings

14. The date, time and place of ordinary meetings of the diocesan synod, shall be notified to members at least ten weeks before each meeting in such manner as the president approves.

Notice of special meeting

15. In case of sudden emergency or other special circumstances a meeting may be convened by the president or (in the event of his incapacity) by either of the vice-presidents, at not less than 7 days' notice but the quorum for the transaction of any business at such a meeting shall be a majority of the members of each of the houses of clergy and laity and at least one member of the house of bishops. The notice must include the date, times and place of the meeting and only business specified therein may be transacted.

Separate meetings of houses of clergy and laity

16. Each house shall meet separately when and where it is required to do so under these standing orders and for the purposes stated. Additional meetings may be held when either:
 - a) The chair of the house has so directed; or
 - b) Diocesan synod has so directed.

Subject to any directions by diocesan synod or Bishop's Council the date, time and place of separate meetings will be fixed by the chair of each house allowing members at least 14 days' notice in writing. Unless specifically directed otherwise by diocesan synod, separate meetings of houses shall not involve formulating motions or amendments for consideration by diocesan synod or voting thereon. No business, except as authorised in these standing orders, conducted by a single house of diocesan synod has authority over the whole diocesan synod.

Subject to the provisions of these standing orders, each house shall have the power to regulate its own procedure.

AGENDA

Preparation and content

17. Every agenda of an ordinary meeting shall include the approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last ordinary meeting and of any subsequent meetings. A copy of any draft minutes will be enclosed with the agenda of the ordinary meeting at which their authorisation is sought unless previously posted or delivered to members.

Subject to these standing orders and any resolution of the diocesan synod, and without prejudice to the rights of individual members to a reasonable opportunity within the time available of bringing matters before that diocesan synod, the Bishop's Council shall settle the agenda for each diocesan synod meeting, and shall determine the order in which the business so included shall be considered subject only to any resolution of diocesan synod (under SO 45(f)). In the event that Bishop's Council does not determine the timetable for the agenda (SO 62(a)) the chair can, with the consent of diocesan synod, do so under standing order 38.

18. Resolutions from deanery synods (SO 68) and written notice of private members' motions with the names of movers, must reach the secretary not less than 25 working days before the start of the meeting of diocesan synod with a view to their inclusion in the agenda paper of this or a subsequent meeting of diocesan synod.

Circulation

19. The secretary shall post or deliver an agenda paper to every member 14 days at least before an ordinary meeting of the Bishop's Council or Diocesan Synod or a meeting by resolution or requisition (SO 13) or, in the case of a special meeting called at less than 14 days notice, at the same time as the notice.

BUSINESS OF DIOCESAN SYNOD

Permitted business

20. No business shall be considered by diocesan synod other than:
 - a) Business specified on the agenda or any paper relating thereto or arising therefrom;
 - b) Short notice motions put to and accepted by diocesan synod under standing order 21;
 - c) Urgent and other specially important business added by the president and matters arising therefrom;
 - d) Questions under standing order 57 or matters arising therefrom.

Short notice motions

21. Motions not printed on the agenda paper, but received in writing, signed and delivered to the secretary by hand or post not later than 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting of diocesan synod, shall be dealt with in the following way:
- a) The president (or chair if so delegated) shall take into consideration:
 - i. The degree of urgency inherent in the subject matter of the motions;
 - ii. The reason for failure to give due notice;
 - iii. The rights of members of the diocesan synod who have received no notice;
 - iv. Any other special circumstances which seem relevant.
 - b) If, in the light of the above considerations, the president (or chair if so delegated) takes the view that the diocesan synod might rightly decide to debate the motion, direction shall be given that copies of it be made for distribution to members at the time of the meeting of the diocesan synod, and
 - c) At a convenient moment the chair shall call upon the mover to propose “that the motion be considered at this diocesan synod”; and having allowed the mover briefly to give his reasons and one other member to speak briefly in opposition, the chair shall immediately put the proposition to the diocesan synod, and if it is supported by more than two thirds of those present and voting, the motion shall be added to the agenda paper in a position determined by the chair with the consent of the diocesan synod.

A written notice of a motion received by the secretary less than 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting of diocesan synod shall not be moved at that meeting of diocesan synod.

Varying the order of business

22. The chair may, with the consent of diocesan synod, vary the order of business: in any event it can be varied by resolution of diocesan synod using the procedural motion in standing order 45(f).

Form and length of notice for business for diocesan synod

23. a) Notice of any business for an ordinary meeting of the diocesan synod shall be in writing, signed and delivered to the secretary by hand or by post not later than the period before the meeting which is specified hereunder:

New business for the agenda (see SO 18)	25 working days
Motions and amendments arising from the agenda	5 working days
Questions under standing order 57	5 working days

b) Motions and amendments thereto arising from a debate on an item specified on the agenda paper or any paper relating thereto (known as “following motions”) may, under standing order 20(a), be in order without any prior notice if in the opinion of the chair:

- i. Due notice could not reasonably have been given prior to the debate; and
- ii. It would be the wish of diocesan synod to debate such motions or amendments;

and

- iii. Time is available to debate them.

A copy of such motion or amendment shall be delivered to the secretary unless the chair dispenses with this requirement.

c) Questions arising after a motion has been moved or resulting from a debate may be asked and answered without notice.

RULES OF DEBATE (QUORUM)

Quorum

24. To form a quorum the following minimum proportion of members is required in each of the houses of clergy and laity, together with at least one member of the house of bishops:

- a) Ordinary meetings and meetings by requisition: more than one third;
- b) Special meetings: a majority.

If quorum not present

25. The chair shall, if requested by any member, take a count of the members present and shall adjourn the meeting if a quorum is wanting. In the absence of such request no decision of the diocesan synod shall be invalidated by the absence of a quorum unless the chair’s attention is called thereto immediately upon the vote having been taken.

RULES OF DEBATE (GENERAL)

Order of speeches

26. The chair shall call upon members who desire to speak (see SO 31) and determine the order. The chair may also require them to give their name and membership or attendance entitlement. With or without the specific invitation of the chair members particularly desirous of speaking in any debate may submit their names to the secretary in writing beforehand, briefly indicating their standpoint. The chair may call upon people to speak in an order that ensures a balanced debate.

Breach of order

27. The chair shall call a member to order for failure to address the chair or any other breach of order, and in that event may order the member to end any speech which he is making.

Point of order

28. A member may rise at any time to submit a point of order under these standing orders, even so as to interrupt another speaker, but shall make any such submission succinctly.

Personal explanations

29. A member may ask permission to interrupt a debate to make a personal explanation but only so as to correct an important misunderstanding or misrepresentation of fact during that debate with regard to what has been said by the member, and for this purpose may interrupt another speaker. Such permission shall be given if in the opinion of the chair the debate is likely to benefit from such an explanation.

Interruptions otherwise not permitted

30. Save as provided in standing orders 28 and 29 the interruption of a speech (by question, point of information or otherwise) shall not be permitted.

The ruling of the chair on a point of order or the admissibility of a personal explanation shall be final.

Right of a member to speak

31. A member may speak only upon a motion or amendment or as specifically provided under:
 - a) Permitted business under standing orders 20, 23(b) and 23(c);
 - b) Points of order under standing order 28;
 - c) Procedural motions under standing order 45;
 - d) Personal explanations under standing order 29;
 - e) Asking and answering questions under standing orders 57 and 59.

Speaking more than once

32. A member shall not speak more than once upon the same matter, except:
 - a) As provided in standing orders 28, 29, 47(b) and (c) and 59;
 - b) By permission of the chair and with the consent of diocesan synod;
 - c) The mover of a motion may reply following debate on that motion except as specifically precluded in standing order 47;
 - d) The mover of an amendment to a standing order (SO 79) may speak twice but the mover of any other amendment (SOs 40-43) has no right of reply except under (b) above.

Length of speeches

33. Save as provided in these standing orders (SO 47(d)), no speech shall exceed ten minutes or, in the case of a member introducing a report, fifteen minutes, but the chair may at any time lengthen or shorten either of these periods, provided that diocesan synod shall be informed of the ruling which shall be final.

Moving motions or amendments

- 34.
- a) Every matter debated in the diocesan synod shall have been moved by a member and the member speaking to such matter will be deemed to have moved it;
 - b) A motion or amendment which, when called by the chair, is not moved by the member who has given notice thereof may be moved instead by some other member.
 - c) A member may move following motions or amendments thereto under standing order 23 (b) if the reasons given are acceptable to the chair.
 - d) When exercising a right of reply to a motion (see SO 32(c)) a member shall not introduce any new matter and shall close the debate.

Withdrawal

35. A motion or amendment, once moved, may be withdrawn by or on behalf of the mover unless more than five members object.

Reconsideration and Rescission

36. Except as provided in standing orders 76 and 77 no motion or amendment to the same effect as, or dependent on, one which has been rejected within the preceding twelve months and no motion to rescind a resolution passed within the same period shall be proposed without leave of the Bishop's Council.

Division

37. The chair may, with the consent of the mover, divide any motion or amendment in such manner as to enable the diocesan synod to express its judgement separately upon each part of the motion or amendment so divided.

Special powers of Chairman

38. In the absence of any directions of the Bishop's Council under standing order 17 to regulate the timetable of the meeting or of any overriding resolution of diocesan synod under standing order 45 the chair is authorised under standing order 7 to:
- a) Adjourn the diocesan synod, or
 - b) Adjourn the debate, or
 - c) Close the debate on a particular motion.

Declaration of interest

39. Anyone with a particular interest in any matter must first declare the nature and extent of that interest.

RULES OF DEBATE (AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS)

When permitted

40. Except as provided in standing order 41 any member may move an amendment to a motion which has been duly moved and such amendment shall be disposed of before that motion is put (see also SO 44). Amendments accepted by diocesan synod will be incorporated into the main motion before it is itself put to the vote.

When not permitted

41. Amendments to the following shall not be permitted:
- a) A procedural motion under standing order 45.
 - b) A motion in reply to any matter referred by general synod.
 - c) A motion to receive a report.

Delivery in writing

42. Before an amendment is moved, a copy thereof in writing shall be delivered to the secretary, unless this requirement is dispensed with by the chair.

Content

43. An amendment shall be a modification or variation of the main motion and shall not have the effect of negating it.

Order of consideration

- 44(a) In the event that more than one amendment to a motion is moved they may at the chair's discretion all be discussed prior to being put to the vote in the order the chair determines. The chair may have regard to:
- a) The order in which the amendments were raised;
 - b) The sequence in which they affect the motion;
 - c) Those with a wider impact before those of detail; or such other criteria as in the chair's opinion will enable diocesan synod best to express its mind.

- if lost - it shall not be moved again, except by permission of the chair, until a further hour has elapsed.
- c) “Closure” immediately If such a motion is permitted by the chair it will be put without discussion and if carried the member with a right to reply to the original motion may speak for not more than 5 minutes whereupon the motion will be put without further debate.
- d) “Speech limit” - If such a motion is permitted by the chair it will be put immediately without discussion and if carried will, subject to the chair’s sole discretion, govern the length of speeches on the question.
- e) “Suspension of standing order”
The chair and diocesan synod will take into account the special circumstances that necessitate a standing order(s) being suspended for the duration of a particular debate (or as may be specified in the motion, “session” or “meeting”) of diocesan synod. Such motion shall not be deemed to have been carried unless more than three quarters of those members present are in favour (see preface).

VOTING

Assent of three houses

48. Subject to the two next following standing orders, nothing shall be deemed to have the assent of the diocesan synod unless the three houses which constitute the diocesan synod have assented thereto. If in the case of a particular matter for which a vote by houses has been taken the president (if present) so directs, that matter shall be deemed to have the assent of the house of bishops only if the majority of the members of that house who assent thereto includes the president. Such direction shall be given either before the matter is put to the vote or immediately upon the announcement of the result of a show of hands, whether counted or not.

Procedure for decisions

49. Matters relating only to the conduct of business shall be decided by the votes of all the members of the diocesan synod present and voting. Subject to standing order 50 other matters shall be decided in like manner, the assent of the three houses being presumed, unless the chair directs, or any ten members require, that a separate vote of each house be taken. Such direction or requirement shall be made known either before the matter is put to the vote or immediately upon the announcement of the result of a show of hands, whether counted or not. (See S0 56).

Matters referred under Article 8

50. A separate vote by houses will always be taken on any matter referred to the diocesan synod by the general synod under the provisions of Article 8 of the constitution of that

synod and if the vote of the houses of clergy and laity are in favour, that matter shall be deemed to have been approved for the purposes of the said Article (see also SO 66).

Voting by houses

51. A separate vote of each house shall be taken:

- a) On any matter referred by the general synod to the diocesan synod; (see also SO 50 and 66)
- b) When under standing order 49 the chair directs or any ten members require a separate vote to be taken.

Majority required for decisions

52. Subject to any statutory requirements, decisions of the diocesan synod whether or not a separate vote is taken by houses (see preceding standing order) shall require the favourable votes of a majority of members present and voting except that the following motions shall not be deemed to have been carried unless more than the stated proportion of favourable votes is achieved:

- a) To suspend a standing order (SO 47(e)): three-quarters of members present (see preface)
- b) To accept a short notice motion (SO 21(c)): two-thirds of members present and voting

Equal voting in House of Bishops

53. Where there is an equal division of votes in the house of bishops, the president shall have a second or casting vote. (See also SO 48).

Opinion of President

54. The president shall have a right to require that his opinion on any matter be recorded in the minutes.

Voting rights of Chair

55. The chair shall (subject to the rights of the president under standing orders 48 and 53) have the same voting rights as other members and shall have no additional casting vote.

Mode of Voting

56. The chair on putting any matter to the vote shall either:

- a) Take a show of hands, the result of which as announced by the chair shall be conclusive except that the chair or any ten members of diocesan synod may then require that the hands be counted; or

- b) Call for a ballot if the chair feels that this would result in the will of diocesan synod being more truly reflected or if this is called for by a member of diocesan synod and supported by the majority of members present.

A count of hands (or a ballot) shall always be taken on a vote by houses.

QUESTIONS

(excluding those referred to in standing order 23(c))

To whom addressed

57. Subject to due notice under standing order 23(a) a question may be asked of:

- a) Any officer of the diocesan synod referred to in these standing orders;
- b) The chair of any body constituted by the diocesan synod or on which it is represented;

provided that questions which, in the opinion of the president, are not relevant to the business of diocesan synod shall not be answered. A member may ask up to two original questions at any one meeting. Supplementary questions may be asked by any member and up to three supplementary questions may be asked in respect of any original question.

Content

58. A question, if addressed to an officer, shall relate to the duties assigned to that officer and, if addressed to the chair of any body, to the business of that body; questions shall not ask for an expression of personal opinion or for the solution of either an abstract legal question or a hypothetical problem, and shall be otherwise in order.

Person authorised to reply

59. The president, or in the event of a supplementary question resulting from an answer given orally the chair, will determine who will answer all questions that are in order, particularly:

- a) The chair may ask the secretary to answer;
- b) The chair may agree that a question addressed to the chair of a body on which diocesan synod is represented be answered by a member representing diocesan synod on that body;
- c) The chair may ask anyone attending diocesan synod under standing order 2 to answer the question.

Form of reply

60. (a) The president may prior to a meeting of diocesan synod determine whether a question should be answered in writing or given orally and, subject to any such directions, the chair may likewise so determine during the session of diocesan synod and will be guided by the time available and the extent of likely interest in the answer.

(b) In the case of a written answer the text of both question and answer shall be made available to all members during the session and the same opportunity shall be allowed for supplementary questions as permitted by standing order 57.

(c) Questions and answers given orally will be minuted and those that the president determines to be of general interest that are answered in writing will be attached to the minutes of diocesan synod when these are circulated to members.

BISHOP'S COUNCIL AND DIOCESAN SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE (Herein referred to as the Bishop's Council)

61. The Bishop's Council shall consist of:

- a) Ex officio: The President (the diocesan bishop)
 All other members of the House of Bishops
 The Archdeacons
 The Dean of Wells
 The Vice-Presidents

- b) Elected: 5 members from each archdeaconry (2 clergy and 3 lay persons) elected by and from the members of diocesan synod representing or residing in the archdeaconry, provided that every member will have as many votes as there are seats to be filled but shall not give more than one vote to any one candidate. In the event of an equality of votes the election will be decided by lot. Where diocesan synod or Bishop's Council have so directed and given six months notice, the elections shall be conducted by the method of the single transferable vote.

A casual vacancy of an elected member, including an initial failure to fill all available seats, shall be filled by election in accordance with procedures laid down by Bishop's Council except that vacancies occurring within six months of the next triennial election need not be filled.

- c) Nominated: up to 5 lay or clergy members may be nominated by the president, if he so wishes, and it is anticipated that one of the nominees will be the Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance and another will be the Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education.

- d) Nominated members will retire on 31 July of the year of the triennial elections or on ceasing to be qualified. Elected members will retire on ceasing to be qualified but otherwise retain membership until such time after 31 July in the year of the triennial elections as their successors are appointed.

61A The officers of the Bishop's Council shall be as follows:
The President of the Diocesan Synod shall be chairman. When the President is not able to act, or chooses not to act as chairman for a particular item on the agenda, the Suffragan Bishop will take the chair

62. The functions of the Bishop's Council shall be:

- a) To plan the business of the diocesan synod, to prepare the agenda for its sessions, and to circulate to members information about matters for discussion;

- b) To initiate proposals for action by the diocesan synod and to advise it on matters of policy which are placed before it;
 - c) To advise the president on any matters which he may refer to it;
 - d) Subject to the directions of the diocesan synod to transact the business of the synod when it is not in session;
 - e) To appoint members of committees or other bodies or nominate members for election to committees, subject to the directions of the diocesan synod;
 - e) To establish such committees of the Bishop's Council and their terms of reference as it considers fit;
 - f) To carry out such other functions as the diocesan synod may delegate to it.
63. The Bishop's Council shall have the right to nominate persons for co-option by either the house of clergy or the house of laity of diocesan synod and will bear in mind the particular circumstances that resulted in such persons not being elected, the special needs of the house to have that person as a member and any other relevant factors.

OTHER COMMITTEES

64. Diocesan Synod shall have the power to establish such committees and their terms of reference as it considers fit.
65. The Bishop's Council and committees of diocesan synod are accountable to the diocesan synod and will be subject to these standing orders unless and to the extent that any relevant enactment provides otherwise.
- 65A The Bishop's Council shall have the power to establish groups or other bodies and their terms of reference as it considers fit

REFERENCES BY GENERAL SYNOD

66. When a reference is received from the general synod, the Bishop's Council shall ensure that members of diocesan synod receive at least two months' notice of the referral together with supporting documents and the date, time and place of the meeting at which it will be considered.
67. Prior to voting on any issue referred by general synod the diocesan synod may refer it or any matter arising from it to deanery synods and/or parochial church councils for an expression of their views. The procedure for debate on such matters shall be as follows:
- a) When the reference by the general synod is in the form of a question answering Yes or No, the question shall be put to the diocesan synod as a formal motion in the affirmative sense. No amendment shall be in order and the vote shall be taken

separately by houses under standing order 50. If the motion is defeated or the votes are equally divided the question shall be decided in the negative.

- b) When the reference invites a fuller statement of opinion, a motion containing a draft of such statement shall be moved on behalf of the Bishop's Council and amendments to such a motion shall be in order.
- c) When all motions under the foregoing paragraphs (a) and (b) have been decided, other motions arising therefrom may, if otherwise in order, be moved by any member or members.

MATTERS RAISED BY AND REFERRED TO DEANERIES AND PARISHES

Matters referred by deanery synods

68. A deanery synod may submit to the diocesan synod a motion on any matter either of general church interest or affecting the deanery or any parish within the deanery. After consideration by the Bishop's Council this may be moved in diocesan synod by a member of the diocesan synod who represents that deanery or otherwise on behalf of the deanery synod.

Matters referred by parochial church councils

69. A parochial church council or parochial church meeting may, on a resolution carried on its behalf in the deanery synod by a member of that synod who represents the particular council, request the deanery synod to take appropriate action under standing order 68.

Notice of motion to diocesan synod

70. The secretary of the deanery synod, or a member thereof duly authorised for the purpose, shall notify the secretary of the diocesan synod at least 25 working days prior to the diocesan synod session at which permission to move any motion under standing order 68 is sought.

Matters referred to deanery synods and PCCs

71. The diocesan synod may on a motion by a member ask all or any particular deanery synods and/or parochial church councils in the diocese:
- a) To express an opinion on or record approval or disapproval of any motion; or
 - b) To supply information within their knowledge; or
 - c) To exercise any other function within their competence;

and to report to the diocesan synod by a specified date.

72. Unless the motion referred to in standing order 71 was moved on behalf of, or with permission of, the Bishop's Council that body may postpone such referral for further consideration and, if in its judgement necessary, report back to diocesan synod.

73. The secretary of the diocesan synod shall advise the secretary of each body concerned giving such information as diocesan synod or Bishop's Council may direct and requesting replies to be framed, in the common form prescribed by the Bishop's Council and giving a date for reply being not less than three months from the date of referral.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

The board as diocesan synod's financial executive

74. The diocesan board of finance (hereinafter referred to as "the board") is, under the Diocesan Boards of Finance Measure 1925 (as amended), the financial executive of diocesan synod with functions and powers as contained in its Memorandum and Articles of Association and acts as a committee of diocesan synod.

The board's reporting procedures to diocesan synod

75. The board shall each year produce the following regular reports for diocesan synod members:

A report and audited accounts for the previous financial year and a draft budget for the following financial year which shall take account of:

- i. The cost of all approved commitments funded through the budget;
- ii. The cost of any new submissions;
- iii. The costed effects of policies previously approved by diocesan synod.

The report, accounts and budget referred to above will in each case be produced as early as is practicable and forwarded to diocesan synod members for consideration at a meeting of diocesan synod determined by the Bishop's Council.

Regulation of financial business in diocesan synod

76. Motions and amendments moved during the debate on the following year's draft budget and relating solely thereto will, subject to due notice under standing order 23(a) or otherwise arising from the debate under standing order 23(b), be in order during that debate.
77. No motions or amendments other than those covered in standing order 76 that directly or indirectly have the net effect of increasing expenditure and/or reducing income previously agreed by diocesan synod for the current or following year will be in order unless:
- a) It refers the matter to the board and the Bishop's Council for their consideration; or
 - b) It is moved by a member of diocesan synod authorised by the board and the Bishop's Council.

PROCEDURAL DEFECTS

78. A meeting of the diocesan synod or of any of its committees that has itself been duly summoned shall, by approving and authorising the signing of the minutes of the preceding meeting, validate the proceedings and that meeting notwithstanding any defect in the procedure for summoning or conducting that meeting; provided that if and when any such defect becomes known the secretary will, without undue delay, notify members (of the diocesan synod or the committee as the case may be) of the nature of such defect and of the meeting at which such minutes are due to be approved and invite comment (if any) upon such defect.

AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

79. A motion for the amendment of these standing orders shall not be moved before it has been considered by the Bishop's Council. The Bishop's Council shall report to the diocesan synod, orally or in writing as it thinks fit, on the implication of each proposed amendment with its views thereon before the original (or amended) motion is moved (see SO 32(d)). For the avoidance of doubt this standing order and references to it apply equally to each numbered paragraph in the preface hereto and to each numbered section of the constitution of diocesan synod.

ADMISSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

80. Apart from persons entitled to attend and participate in diocesan synod meetings under standing order 2, members of the press and general public are welcome to attend diocesan synod meetings as observers unless members vote to exclude them on any occasion or for any item of business.

MISCELLANEOUS

81. In any situation in which any difficulties arise the president shall have power to give any directions which he may consider expedient for the purpose of removing the difficulties.

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