

RULES (STANDING ORDERS) FOR DEANERY SYNODS

DRAFT

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INTRODUCTION

Under rule 28(1) of the *Church Representation Rules*, diocesan synods are to “make rules for deanery synods” providing as follows (as well as for “such other matters consistent with these rules as the diocesan synod think fit”):

- (a) that the rural [i.e. area] dean and a member of the house of laity elected by that house shall be joint chairmen of the deanery synod and that they shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the synod or particular items of business on the agenda of the synod;
- (b) that there shall be a secretary of the deanery synod;
- (c) that a specified minimum number of meetings shall be held by the deanery synod in each year;
- (d) that on such matters and in such circumstances as may be specified in the rules, voting shall be by houses, but that otherwise decisions shall be taken by a majority of the members of the synod present and voting;
- (e) that there shall be a standing committee of the synod with such membership and functions as the rules may provide;
- (f) that the synod shall prepare and circulate to all parochial church councils in the deanery a report of its proceedings;”

Rule 28(2) then helpfully moderates all that by stating that “Subject to any such rules, the deanery synod shall have power to determine its own procedure”. Nevertheless, many dioceses, including Durham, adopted comprehensive and very formal parliamentary-style rules based on a model set generated some years ago by Church House. They have in most cases remained frozen in time, while life, attitudes, and modern communications have changed rapidly.

This document constitutes updated rules for Durham Diocese which appear comprehensive, but are in fact much more permissive, and recognise current realities. In particular, they have been revised to achieve specific goals:

- **They offer much more flexibility in how deanery committees are constituted**, so that they can better fulfil their considerable delegated responsibility. At the same time they contain safeguards for the elected synod that avoid a free-for-all or over-centralisation. Additionally they encourage different ways of working, e.g. through task-and-finish working groups.
- **They allow for better succession planning for key officers and committee members, as well as management of transitions in leadership from one triennium to the next.** At the same time they guard against people holding onto power year after year, and provide encouragement to keep the leadership fresh.
- **They create considerably more scope for roles to be shared**, and protection against clerical domination.
- **They acknowledge the reality of the power, speed and convenience of electronic communications**, without assuming that everyone is happy to rely on email or social media, and building in protection against a Twitter-storm developing before synod even goes home.
- **They acknowledge (and encourage) creative approaches such as open meetings and café synods**, and reverse the assumption that most business would be done by formal debate. However, rules of formal debate remain, ready for occasions when vital issues are being considered and every voice must be allowed to be heard in a balanced and disciplined way.
- **They remove onerous requirements such as audit of the deanery accounts**, but retain the discipline of reporting and encourage financial planning in the deanery.
- **They encourage timely and focused communications in both directions with parishes** alongside the traditional discipline of proper record-keeping through minutes.
- **In the planning of business they encourage explicit links to the diocesan business cycle.**

It is hoped that these rules will prove to be useful but not onerous— in the background, but there when needed – and not forgotten and ignored as in the past. We outgrew the old ones many years ago. These rules too, should be updated or pruned as circumstances continue to evolve.

11th January 2017

THE SHORT GUIDE

This section gives an overview, and points you to the rules you need – even when you need to dive in deeper, this is the place to start.

MEMBERSHIP, OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

- **Membership of the synod**, including the option to co-opt, is for the most part governed by the Church Representation Rules (see page 20).
- **Data protection** and electronic communications need to be handled properly, and this is covered by the general provision on communications (page 8) and rules 1-3 (page 9), as well as regular reference to communications “by hand, post or electronic means”.
- These rules make additional provisions to avoid abuse of **co-options**, and to allow you to enhance the life of the synod by **involving non-members** in a managed way (rules 4-6 on page 9 and 36-39 on page 13).
- **Succession planning, and management of the transition between triennia** can be tricky. New members may not be confident to stand for a position, and long-standing officers can simply roll on year, after year, after year. In addition, members have not had a chance to get to know each other by the first meeting. Rules 8-11 (page 9) relax the rules to **allow appointments to be rolled over** past the triennial elections (one year maximum). They also set **limits on terms of office** (which synod can consciously set aside if need be).
- **Assistants** to the lay chair, secretary and treasurer (as well as the Area Dean) are explicitly allowed for, and their involvement in committees is written in (rules 8 and 9 on page 10).
- **Standing Committee** membership is more flexible than before, and allows limited co-options with synod’s agreement (rule 10 on page 10). In many cases, it may no longer be necessary to have a separate Mission and Pastoral Committee (see separate paper on *Forming a Deanery Leadership Team*).

PLANNING THE SYNOD’S BUSINESS

- Rules 16-34 cover the **planning of business** and the **run-up to meetings**. They are designed to make sure that members know what is coming up and when, and can have input to what will be discussed, and that the run-up to the meeting happens in an orderly, unhurried, and well-communicated fashion.

When	What
<i>Annually (autumn recommended)</i>	Set and publish the program of meetings (minimum 2 full synods) taking account of what’s happening in the wider church.
<i>Four weeks before ordinary meetings (one week before special meetings)</i>	Notice given to members of the time, place and main business proposed or already received.
<i>Three weeks before ordinary meetings</i>	Deadline for members to give notice of new business to the Deanery Secretary.
<i>One week before ordinary meetings</i>	The final agenda and paperwork are sent to members.
<i>Three days before the meeting</i>	Deadline for members to send motions or amendments arising from the agenda to the Deanery Secretary.
<i>At the meeting</i>	No new AOB may be brought except with consent Notice of late amendments/motions may be waived by chair Procedural motions may be moved

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- The **internet and social media** create new opportunities, but also new challenges. Rules 40-42 (page 14) acknowledge that internet access could be helpful (being able to get key facts there and then could avoid both bad decisions and unnecessary adjournments), or unhelpful (intrusion into the meeting, or unofficial opinions circulating on Twitter before a discussion is even complete). Equally **recordings** and **live streaming** may be part of life, but in a synod context, members’ rights also need to be protected.
- Most synod business is, today, conducted in **informal discussions and using creative approaches** and this is usually designed to increase engagement and draw in those who would find making a formal speech

intimidating. Rules 50-52 (page 15) make ‘informal mode’ the default, while placing the expectation that the chairs will nevertheless still try to ensure that vocal individuals don’t dominate, and a variety of opinions is able to be given a good hearing.

- Even so, there are occasions when **formal debate may be appropriate or necessary** and rules 53 and 54 (page 15) cover that eventuality.
- The General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74) are provided to give **a framework for a formal debate**. Members will probably be unaccustomed to working in this way, so the chair will need to prepare carefully and prime members. Although the details may appear complicated, the **principles of debate** are simple:
 - Debate is always on **a clearly and carefully worded motion**, which can make all the difference between a good and a bad debate. The motion may, of course, have been handed down from elsewhere!
 - The debate consists of **a series of speeches**, which must remain **on topic**, and **should not rehearse the same arguments** over and over. The chair:
 - decides the **order of speeches** and sets the **time limit** on them,
 - monitors the speakers for **‘hesitation, deviation or repetition’**,
 - and decides the **flow of debate** if amendments have been moved.
 - The **first speech is by the proposer** or a representative, and should set out the issues.
 - Subsequent speeches should draw out **arguments for and against**, and members may only speak once.
 - **Amendments** should be brought in when the basic issues are already on the table, and are like **a debate within a debate** (members may be invited to speak again – once only per amendment).
 - Immediately after the proposer of an amendment has spoken, **the proposer of the main motion should normally be given a chance to say whether they would be inclined to accept the amendment** (this is not an absolute requirement, but is a matter of courtesy and can save time being wasted).
 - If amendments are passed before the main motion is voted on, **members should be clearly informed of the amended motion** (on screen would be helpful).
 - The **last speech is a response from the proposer** (whether on a motion or amendment).
 - The **proposer then formally moves** (or can withdraw) their motion or amendment.
 - At any time in debate, **Points of Order can be raised** to make a short explanation or to help the chair move business on with a **procedural motion** (rules 68-71 on page 17). These might be useful as follows:
 - **Adjournment of the synod** may be helpful if people are simply **too tired to continue** with any business (it might be helpful to set a date there and then for a special meeting to continue the business, and give immediate notice after the end of the synod).
 - **Adjournment of a debate** might be necessary if it proves that **key information is lacking or disputed, or if action needs to be taken** before a conclusion can be reached. It may even be possible to resolve the issue and pick up the debate later in the agenda. Being creative, a debate could be split in this way with part early in an agenda, but final consideration and voting later.
 - **Passing to next business** is a way of acknowledging that **the debate should not be pursued further**, without going to a vote.
 - **Closure of the debate** is simply **a mechanism for managing time** – a motion for closure allows the synod to signal that there has been enough discussion even if people still want to speak!
- **Voting** will normally be uncontroversial, and by show of hands. Rules 75-78 (page 17) provide some ways of handling a vote where there is doubt, or on issues where the manner of voting is important.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING

- **Business should be reported promptly, and actions followed up**, but minutes are not formally approved till the next meeting and are often slow to be polished and prepared. There has always been an official requirement for **a quick summary report** for PCCs and members, and good practice would be for this to be available on a website or by other electronic means (see rule 79 on page 18).
- **Minutes** are principally for members, and form part of the papers distributed with final agendas. They are normally approved at the next meeting, but that can be deferred in special cases (rule 25 on page 12).

- The **synod is part of a chain of synodical government**, so rules 80 and 82-86 (page 18ff) make the **relationship to PCCs and to Diocesan Synod explicit** and make sure that business that is passed up or down is handled in an appropriate manner.

GENERAL PROVISIONS AND INTERPRETATION

THE AREA DEAN

For the purpose of these rules, the term Area Dean refers to any person appointed by the Diocesan Bishop to serve as Area Dean within the deanery, or to perform any or all of the Area Dean's functions in relation to the synod of the deanery. Notwithstanding that these rules normally confer only attendance and speaking rights on an Archdeacon or Bishop's commissary, under this provision the Diocesan Bishop may appoint some or all of the Area Dean's functions in relation to the Deanery Synod to such a person. In that case, it must remain clear that they attend and participate in the role of Area Dean, not as Archdeacon, and the standing committee and lay chair should work with them in managing the role conflict.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

It is assumed within the rules that electronic communications will be more and more the norm. However, officers and the Deanery Secretary in particular, shall have regard for the recorded communications preferences of synod members, and shall continue to provide hard copy communications where that is requested. By the same token, noting that email addresses and other online user names may change frequently, members shall have a responsibility for providing up-to-date information. Those accepting electronic communications must also accept responsibility for checking the sources regularly and systematically.

PERIODS OF NOTICE

Any period of notice required by these rules shall be deemed to consist of clear days or weeks, not including the date of the event before which the notice must be delivered. Unless delivery is by electronic means, the date of despatch is also to be excluded.

QUORUM AND MAJORITY

Where a quorum or majority is expressed as a fraction of membership, and the result is not a whole number, it shall always be rounded up. For all such purposes, any person ordained bishop who is a full voting member of the synod (by virtue of holding the office under Bishop's Licence, or having Permission to Officiate in the deanery) shall be considered a member of the House of Clergy (there is no separate House of Bishops).

DEPUTIES AND PROXIES

No member of the synod or one of its committees may send a deputy to participate or vote by proxy. A parish may send an observer to synod meetings only, in accordance with rule 36.

FRESH EXPRESSIONS AND BISHOP'S MISSION ORDERS

Where there is a Bishop's Mission Order or Extra Parochial Place with formal governance and deanery synod representation, any reference to Parochial Church Councils and Meetings and their secretaries should be taken to include the governance bodies of those places and mission initiatives.

PROCEDURAL DEFECTS

A meeting of the synod or any of its committees of which the minutes have been approved and signed shall be deemed to have been duly summoned and held, notwithstanding any defect in the procedure for summoning or conducting such meeting. No proceedings of such a meeting shall be invalidated by accidental omission to give the required notice of the meeting to any member.

VARIATION OF RULES

Any of these rules which have been made by resolution of the diocesan synod shall not be varied, revoked or suspended except by a further resolution of that synod. Procedure in any situation not covered by the rules shall be agreed by a vote of the Deanery Synod.

MAKEUP OF THE SYNOD, OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SYNOD

Roll of members

1. The secretary shall maintain an up-to-date roll of the members of the synod. The roll shall include any person notified by the secretary of the Diocesan Synod and qualified as an ex-officio member. Entries on the roll shall contain (at a minimum):
 - (a) the name, address, category and parish of each member;
 - (b) a record of members who have requested that they require notification and other communications by hand or by post under the applicable rules;
 - (c) the preferred email address for all other members.
2. It shall be the duty of members and PCC secretaries to notify the secretary of changes. All communications sent using last-known information shall be deemed to have been delivered.
3. Personal information on the roll shall be managed with regard to Data Protection good practice as set out on the Information Commissioner's Office website (<http://ico.org.uk>), and the secretary shall be deemed to be the Data Controller unless otherwise determined by the synod. Notification to the Information Commissioner is not required provided that the data is used solely for the purposes of administering the Deanery Synod and its committees, and not made public or shared with other organisations.

Co-opted members

4. Co-option of additional members of either house must be agreed by a vote of that house on a motion moved on behalf of, or by permission of, the standing committee of the synod. Unless the house concerned fixes a shorter period of office, co-opted members shall retire on the 31st day of May in the year of the triennial elections.

Participation by non-members

5. The following shall have the right to attend and speak, but not to move any motion or amendment or to vote in the synod:
 - (a) the Bishop or a duly appointed commissary;
 - (b) the Archdeacon;
 - (c) the Registrar of the diocese;
 - (d) visitors invited by either of the joint chairs or the standing committee;
 - (e) persons appointed by the standing committee of Diocesan Synod under rule 6.

Members of General Synod appointed to attend meetings

6. If there is no member of a Deanery Synod who is a member of the General Synod, Bishop's Council may, if it thinks fit, require diocesan General Synod members to appoint one of their number. That person shall report to the Deanery Synod on the proceedings of the General Synod. They shall also be entitled to receive copies of all communications circulated to members of the synod, and to participate in meetings in accordance with rule 5.

THE JOINT CHAIRS

General

7. There shall be joint chairs of the synod, being the Area Dean and a member of the house of laity elected triennially by that house. During the absence or incapacity of one, the functions exercisable jointly may be performed by the other alone.

Election and term of office of lay joint chair

8. Before the commencement of the first full synod meeting after any triennial election, or in the event of a vacancy, the house of laity shall meet alone to appoint the lay joint chair.
 - (a) A lay member appointed by the Area Dean, who shall not be the previous lay chair, shall chair the meeting and oversee the election.
 - (b) The meeting shall choose a clerk, and minutes shall be kept and submitted to the Deanery Secretary to be kept on record.

- (c) The meeting may agree to re-confirm the appointment of the previous lay chair, and to meet again to conduct an election within one year. That meeting will be conducted in accordance with rule 8, with the exception of this provision.
- (d) An elected lay chair, unless she or he resigns or ceases to be qualified, shall continue in office until the commencement of the meeting at which a successor is elected.
- (e) In the case of a tied election the decision shall be by lot.
- (f) Except by resolution of the house of laity, no person may serve as lay chair for more than nine years continuously. A person who ceases to be eligible under this rule may not stand for election for a period of three years.
- (g) With consent of the whole synod, the house of laity may also appoint an assistant lay chair following the same procedures and provisions.

OFFICERS

Appointment and term of office

- 9. The synod shall appoint from among its members a secretary and a treasurer, and may also appoint assistants. They may be elected or co-opted members from within either house.
 - (a) Appointments may be made by election, or by a majority vote of the whole synod.
 - (b) The synod may agree to re-confirm the appointment of the previous office holders, and to review the appointments within one year.
 - (c) In the event of a vacancy in any office, the synod shall appoint a successor as soon as possible. The persons appointed, unless they resign or cease to be qualified, shall serve until the conclusion of the meeting at which their successors are appointed.
 - (d) Except by resolution of the synod, no person may serve in a particular office for more than nine years continuously. A person who ceases to be eligible under this rule may not stand for election for a period of three years.

STANDING COMMITTEE

Membership

- 10. There shall be a standing committee of the synod, which shall in all cases have a majority of lay members. The standing committee shall consist of:
 - (a) the Area Dean and Lay Chair, the Assistant Lay Chair (if appointed), any person appointed as acting, assistant or associate Area Dean in the deanery, the Deanery Secretary, and the Deanery Treasurer, all of whom shall be members ex officio;
 - (b) persons elected by the synod from among the members to an agreed number of places, with regard to the requirement of a lay majority;
 - (c) no more than three persons co-opted by the Standing Committee from among the members of the synod, whose co-option must be confirmed by the whole synod.

Elected and co-opted members

- 11.
 - (a) Elected members shall retire on the election of successors or on ceasing to be qualified.
 - (b) Co-opted members shall retire on the 31st day of May in the year of the triennial elections, or earlier if determined by the synod or standing committee.
 - (c) Elections shall take place as soon as practicable after any triennial elections to the synod.
 - (d) Except by resolution of the synod, no person may be elected or co-opted to serve on the standing committee to serve for more than nine years continuously. A person who ceases to be eligible under this rule may not stand for election or be co-opted for a period of three years.
 - (e) Voting for lay and clergy categories of members shall be by the relevant houses unless synod decides by resolution that all members shall vote in all categories.
 - (f) Not later than the last meeting before the triennial elections, the synod shall decide whether the next elections of officers and standing committee members shall be conducted at a meeting (and by what method), or by postal or electronic voting (using the same procedure with essential modifications as for Diocesan Synod elections).

- (g) Elections shall be by simple majority, and tied elections shall be decided by lot, which shall be jointly overseen by the Area Dean and Lay Chair.

Functions and Name

12. The standing committee may be known locally by another name (such as Deanery Leadership Team) where the committee has a wider delegated remit in relation to deanery planning, parish share, or similar matters. The principal functions acting as standing committee shall be:
- (a) to initiate and advise on proposals;
 - (b) to ensure that the synod is adequately informed on questions raised, matters referred to it by the Bishop and/or Diocesan or General Synod, and on other matters of importance to the deanery;
 - (c) to prepare the annual timetable of meetings, and the agenda for each of them;
 - (d) to consider the way that particular items of business will be conducted;
 - (e) to transact the business of the synod between meetings;
 - (f) to do such other things as the synod may delegate to it.

Quorum

13. A quorum of the standing committee shall be a majority of the members, or four, whichever is the greater, provided that at least one of the joint chairs (or an assistant) shall be present.

Procedure

14. Subject to these rules and to any resolution of the synod, the standing committee shall determine its own chairing and procedures.

OTHER COMMITTEES

15. There is no requirement for additional committees, and the synod may determine that all delegated business is handled by the standing committee. However:
- (a) the synod may constitute additional committees with such chairs, membership, term of office, functions, mode of appointment and other procedure as it thinks fit;
 - (b) such committees may be constitutional and long-term, or created on a time-limited 'task-and-finish' basis;
 - (c) at a minimum, the synod (or the standing committee on the synod's behalf) shall agree and keep under review the terms of reference, and delegated authority of any other committees.

CALLING AND HOLDING MEETINGS

MEETINGS OF THE SYNOD

Required annual quota of meetings

16. The synod shall hold at least two meetings at least in every year (beginning each 1st April), at such times and places as the joint chairs shall decide after consulting with the standing committee. In so doing, they shall:
- (a) take into account accessibility to all members;
 - (b) arrange the synod's business timetable to align with the diocesan business planning cycle;
 - (c) wherever possible avoid conflicts with published dates for meetings of the General Synod, Diocesan Synod, and other diocesan bodies.

Other meetings

17. The joint chairs may summon additional meetings of the synod at any time, under the provisions for ordinary or special meetings below. They must also do so if they receive a written requisition for that purpose.
- (a) Such a requisition must be signed by not less than a quarter of the members of the synod, must clearly state the background and purpose of the proposed item(s) of business, and must identify who is authorised to act on behalf of the petitioners in communications. Copies must be sent to both joint chairs, the Deanery Secretary, any deputies or assistants, and the Archdeacon).
 - (b) If they fail to respond to a requisition within 28 days of receipt, those members may summon a meeting. In such a case, rules 19 and 20 governing special meetings shall be followed, and the Deanery Secretary shall support the process of calling the meeting.

- (c) Those requisitioning the meeting must submit to the Deanery Secretary any motion, together with the name of the mover and any supporting information, for distribution to all members in advance of the meeting. Relevant additional information may be distributed with the consent of, or on behalf of, the standing committee.
- (d) If the meeting was called by requisition, it shall nevertheless normally be chaired by one of the joint chairs in accordance with rule 47. Unless agreed by a majority of those attending the meeting, and with consent of the joint chairs, the business shall be conducted strictly under the General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74).

Notice of ordinary meetings

- 18. The date, time and place of ordinary meetings of the synod, when fixed, shall be announced to members as soon as possible in such manner as the joint chairs may approve. (This requirement may be satisfied by publication of an annual calendar of meetings.) Not less than four weeks before each meeting a notice outlining significant planned business, and inviting other business, shall be delivered to every member, by hand, post or electronic means.

Notice and Provisions for Special meetings

- 19. In the case of sudden emergency or other special circumstances the joint chairs may summon a special meeting at not less than one week's notice of the time, place and agenda.
- 20. The quorum required for business at a special meeting shall be a majority of the members of each house, and only business specified on the agenda may be considered or transacted.

Separate meetings of the houses

- 21. For part or all of any meeting, either house shall sit and vote separately if the synod so resolves, the house itself so decides, or these rules (or any rules of the house) so provide.
- 22. Each house may determine its own procedure consistently with these rules.
- 23. The Area Dean and lay chair shall preside over any separate meetings of their respective houses, but if either is absent, the members present shall choose a chair under the direction of the person clerking (see rule 47).

AGENDA

Content

- 24. Subject to these rules and to any resolution of the synod, and without prejudice to the rights of individual members to a reasonable opportunity of bringing matters before the synod, the standing committee shall settle the agenda for each of the meetings of the synod, specifying clearly all business:
 - (a) of which due notice has been received and which is in order;
 - (b) of an earlier meeting not disposed of or withdrawn;
 - (c) of the Diocesan Synod which is of concern to the synod, and particularly any matters referred to the Diocesan Synod by the General Synod;and shall determine the order, timing and manner of debate or discussion in which the business on the agenda shall be considered.
- 25. Every agenda shall include the approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last meeting, and an opportunity to raise matters arising that are not covered elsewhere in the agenda; provided that:
 - (a) in exceptional circumstances such as a special meeting, synod may decide to adjourn the approval of previous minutes and approve all outstanding sets of minutes at the following ordinary meeting (the approval of a set of minutes and matters arising may be adjourned to the next ordinary meeting once only); and
 - (b) the chair may decide whether to allow discussion of a matter arising, to treat it as a separate matter of urgent business at the same meeting, or to refer it to the standing committee for inclusion on a future agenda as a substantive item.

Circulation of Agendas

26. The secretary shall deliver an agenda to every member seven days at least before a meeting, by hand, post or electronic means.

NOTICE OF BUSINESS

General

27. Members may give notice of any proposed business for a meeting in writing, delivered to the Deanery Secretary by hand, post or electronic means. A description of the business, any motion, and the name of the mover must be included.

Length of notice

28. Subject to rule 19, twenty one days' notice is normally required for new business, and three days' notice for motions and amendments arising from the published agenda. The secretary shall then be responsible for informing the joint chairs.

Addresses, papers and discussions

29. Notice may be given for an address, paper, or presentation, or proposing a topic for consideration by other means, with or without the moving of a formal motion. The final format will be for determination by the standing committee.

Powers to dispense with notice of a motion

30. Notice of a motion arising from the agenda or of an amendment may be dispensed with by permission of the chair or by resolution of the synod, but a copy shall, if the chair so requests, be signed and delivered to the secretary.

Procedural motions

31. A procedural motion as defined in these rules (68-74) may be moved without notice, unless express provision is made to the contrary.

Urgent business permitted to be considered

32. Nothing shall be considered except business on or arising from the synod agenda; provided that with the consent of the chair and the synod urgent matters (AOB) may be considered when all other business has been completed.
- (a) Notice of urgent matters (AOB) must be given to the joint chairs before the start of the meeting, and the chair's decision on procedure for each item of urgent business will be final.
 - (b) Urgent business that is not considered or completed may be carried over to the following meeting, subject to normal notice being given to the secretary.

MINUTES AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS

35. The secretary shall prepare minutes of every meeting which shall be circulated to members, by hand, post or electronic means.
- (a) They shall also maintain a record of those attending, and those giving apologies, which shall be made available on request. This may be, for example, in the form of a simple sign-in sheet.
 - (b) The record may be in the form of a copy of the roll of members signed by those attending.
 - (c) Numbers attending and giving apologies shall be recorded in the minutes.

PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

GUESTS (INCLUDING PRESS)

36. Subject to any directions by the synod, standing committee or joint chairs, non-members (including representatives of the press) may attend meetings of the synod as observers.
37. Non-members may be required to sit only in a designated area, or to wear clear identification, in order to avoid confusion over quorum, or when a vote is taken.

38. Any member of the synod may formally move that representatives of the press and/or other guests shall withdraw during the whole or part of the business before the synod. If the motion is seconded and carried, it shall be binding. A resolution that they be allowed to remain shall be advisory only.
39. Where a category of guests has been specifically invited by the standing committee or either of the joint chairs (for example, parish treasurers), those guests may be allowed to speak or participate in general discussion as specified in the invitation, or at the discretion of the chair of the meeting. They shall not be allowed to vote on formal motions, although as a matter of good practice their collective mind on a matter may be tested and recorded.

USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Personal use

40. Personal electronic equipment connected to the internet such as mobile phones, tablets and computers is permitted in direct connection with the business of the synod (papers, reference and note taking), provided that:
 - (a) they are not used to communicate with persons outside the meeting room except by permission of the chair on a case-by-case basis;
 - (b) system sounds and other intrusive alerts and notifications are turned off.

Recording and transmission

41. No member or guest shall transmit or make an electronic recording (photographs, audio or video) of any part of the business, except by permission of the chair on a case-by-case basis.
42. Any member of the synod may move that permission to record or transmit shall be withdrawn for the whole or part of the business before the synod. If the motion is seconded and carried, it shall be binding.

QUORUM

One-third of each house

43. Except as provided in rule 20, a quorum shall be one-third of the members of each house of the synod. Unless at least a quorum in each house is present at the point of voting, no business shall be decided except a motion to adjourn a debate or the meeting.

If quorum not present

44. The chair shall, if requested by any member, take a count of the members present and shall immediately put a motion to adjourn the meeting if the quorum is not met. If the adjournment motion falls, only business of a general or informative nature may be taken.
45. All other business outstanding at the time of adjournment must be taken forward to the next agenda unless it is withdrawn or ceases to be relevant.
46. No decision of the synod shall be invalidated by the absence of a quorum unless the chair's attention is called thereto immediately upon the vote being taken.

CHAIRING

Chair of meeting

47. The joint chairs shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the synod or particular items of business in the agenda of the synod.
 - (a) If either is absent, the other shall preside.
 - (b) If both are absent, or they jointly so decide, the meeting shall choose a chair under the direction of the secretary or assistant secretary.

Powers of the Chair

48. Subject to these rules, the overall procedure and timings at any meeting of the synod, or of either house, shall be regulated by the person who chairs.

49. The order of business may be varied at the discretion of the chair, or by a resolution of the synod on a motion by any member which shall be put forward by the chair without debate.

Informal procedure for addresses, papers and general discussion

50. Subject to the planning decisions of the standing committee, the chair shall oversee and determine the conduct of any part of a meeting during which the item under consideration is:
- (a) an address, paper, exhibition or presentation, whether by a member or a visiting speaker;
 - (b) a round-table or general discussion in any form.
51. Even when the General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74) have not been invoked formally, the chair must at all times seek to apply their principles, and ensure a balanced discussion with a variety of contributions.
52. Where no amendments have been put forward, a simple formal motion may be put after either general discussion or formal debate, but the voting rules (75-78) always apply. Subject to the directions of the chair, the proposer must always be given adequate opportunity to respond to the points made in discussion before formally moving the motion and voting takes place. In doing so, they should not introduce new arguments which might generate debate.

When the General Rules of Debate apply

53. If the standing committee has determined that an item of business would be more effectively handled under the disciplines of formal debate, or the chair presiding decides that it is necessary, the General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74) shall apply for the whole or part of that item of business.
- (a) The chair shall remind synod members briefly of the main points of the procedure to be followed, and that if they are unsure they may call for a Point of Order to request clarification at any time.
 - (b) During debate, the Deanery Secretary shall make a copy of the rules available for reference by any member on request.
 - (c) The chair's decision where matters of procedure are unclear, or do not appear to be covered by the rules, shall be final.
54. Where amendments have been put forward, including on a motion following an informal presentation and discussion, the amendment shall normally be considered under the General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74).

GENERAL RULES OF DEBATE – ONLY APPLICABLE SUBJECT TO RULES 54-54

Speaking

55. The chair shall determine the order in which speakers are called, and speakers shall have the right to notify the chair in writing in advance of the direction of their argument and whether they generally support or resist the motion or amendment. Anyone wishing to speak, including those who have not given notice should raise their hand until the next speaker is called. (If a person has given notice, but does not raise their hand, the chair may not call them.) Every speaker called shall speak from the place directed. They shall identify themselves by name, parish and role, and address their speech to the chair not the synod, ensuring that:
- (a) the content of their speeches is succinct and relevant to the matter under debate;
 - (b) they do not repeat arguments already made by other speakers;
 - (c) when speaking on an amendment, they confine themselves to the matter of the amendment rather than the substantive motion;

and the chair shall direct any speaker who does not follow this rule to return to their seat.

Length of speeches

56. The chair shall take into account the allotted time for the item of business, and set the speech limit to ensure depth and breadth of participation.
- (a) The chair may lengthen or shorten the limit with advance notice which shall not be open to debate or question.
 - (b) The clerk to the meeting shall monitor timings and advise the chair, who will notify the speaker if their time limit is approaching and ask them to stop as required.

Speaking more than once

57. No member shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment under debate except that:
- (a) the mover of a motion shall have a right of reply to the debate before a vote is taken;
 - (b) a speech on an amendment shall not be deemed a speech on the main motion;
 - (c) with the permission of the chair, to avoid debates becoming side-tracked by misunderstandings, a member may ask to make a brief Point of Order or personal explanation at any time.
58. During formal debate, the chair may nevertheless at any time suspend rules 56-57 for so long as the purposes of the synod would be more usefully served by a different mode of operation, and shall give clear notice of the procedure to be followed under rule 50.

Division of text

59. The standing committee or the chair may, with the consent of the mover, divide a motion or amendment to enable the synod to vote separately upon each part, for example to ensure that a motion on a principle does not fall because of disagreement over a matter of detail.

Moving instead of another member

60. If the member who gave notice of a motion or amendment on being called to speak chooses not to move it, another member may do so instead. If no member is willing to move it, the chair may direct that the motion lapses, or with the agreement of at least a quarter of the members present debate may proceed on the basis of the background paperwork provided in advance.

Withdrawal

61. A motion or amendment which has been moved may be withdrawn by the mover, but only with the consent of the synod.

Opportunity for questions

62. Immediately after a motion has been moved, the chair may give members an opportunity to ask questions of the mover or speaker, solely for the purpose of elucidating facts or seeking clarification.

One motion at a time

63. During the debate on a motion or amendment, no other motion shall be moved except a procedural motion (rules 68-74), and no other amendment may be moved on the same motion before the prior amendment is decided; provided that the chair may permit two or more motions or amendments to be debated concurrently before either is voted on if circumstances suggest that this would better facilitate the item of business.

Motions to reconsider or rescind a prior decision of the synod

64. No motion or amendment shall be discussed or debated without both the agreement of the standing committee and the explicit consent of the synod, if:
- (a) it has substantially the same effect as, or depends upon, one which has already been rejected within the current triennium; or
 - (b) it has the effect of rescinding a resolution which was passed within the same period.

AMENDMENTS

Amendments not allowed

65. No amendment shall be moved to:
- (a) a motion to receive a report;
 - (b) a motion on a question referred by another body;
 - (c) another amendment.

Content and effect of amendments

66. An amendment may supplement, replace or alter all or some of the words or punctuation of the original motion, provided that:
- (a) it is relevant to it, and

- (b) it shall not have the effect of substantially negating the original motion.

Order of consideration

67. Amendments shall be moved in the order they affect the motion, as determined and announced by the chair.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Procedural motions to interrupt or terminate a debate or meeting

68. With the consent of the chair, who may consult the synod, procedural motions may be moved at any point in a debate, but not so as to interrupt the speech of any member. The valid motions are:
- (a) that the synod be adjourned (automatically adjourning the debate in progress);
 - (b) that motion or amendment under debate be adjourned;
 - (c) that the synod pass to next business (noting that under rule 64(a), the item cannot then return to the synod within the triennium except by special permission);
 - (d) that debate on the item be closed (in this case, the mover of the motion or amendment then responds and the matter is put to the vote);
 - (e) that the matter under discussion be referred back (e.g. to the standing committee).
69. A motion under rule 68(a) or (b) is inadmissible on questions referred by General Synod or Diocesan Synod if it would have the effect of delaying a vote beyond the time limit set. In the case of motions under rule 68(c), (d) and (e):
- (a) such motion may not be moved on any question referred by the General Synod;
 - (b) debate shall be limited to a brief speech by the proposer and, unless the chair permits further speeches, a brief reply by the mover of the original motion or one other member.

Procedural motions on amendments

70. Adjournment or closure may be moved on amendments, and can be helpful to the motion in the long term. Motions to pass to next business may only be moved on a main motion, and are equivalent to it being defeated.
71. Adjournment of an amendment also has the effect of adjourning debate on the original motion. Closure on an amendment leads to a vote on it, and resumption of the debate on the main motion (amended or unamended).

Resumption of interrupted business

72. Unless otherwise determined, business interrupted by an adjournment of the synod shall be resumed as the first item of business at the next meeting. Business halted by an adjournment of debate may be resumed at the same meeting if appropriate, or at a future meeting if and when the standing committee so decides.

Reference back

73. If a motion to refer a matter back specifies no one to whom the matter is to be referred, this question shall be decided by the standing committee.

Procedural motions to suspend a rule

74. By permission of the chair, a member may move that any of these rules be suspended during a particular debate or meeting.
- (a) Unless the suspension is within the chair's discretion under the rule concerned, and the chair consents, such motions shall be put to a vote and deemed carried if at least three quarters of those members present and voting are in favour.
 - (b) Any such suspension falling outside the normal discretion of the chair must be recorded in the minutes, and reported to the secretary of the Diocesan Synod.

VOTING

General

75. Decisions shall normally be taken by a majority of the members of the synod present and voting, except that a separate vote of each house shall be taken in the following cases:

- (a) where the decision is made under a rule which specifies otherwise;
- (b) if the chair so rules;
- (c) if not fewer than five members so request;
- (d) on a matter referred by the Diocesan or General Synod and so directed.

Votes by houses

76. In a vote by houses, decisions of the synod shall be taken by a majority of the members of each house present and voting. A motion falls unless passed in both houses.
77. The voting on a vote by houses shall be counted and recorded in the minutes.
- (a) Members may request that the way they have voted on a specific motion is recorded.
 - (b) General recording of the manner of individual votes shall be exceptional, and only by consent of three quarters of the members present.

Mode of voting

78. Unless otherwise specified, or in the event that the result of a vote is unclear to the chair, voting shall be by show of hands without a count, except that:
- (a) the chair must order a count if no fewer than five members so request either before or immediately after the result is announced;
 - (b) the chair may choose to order a count on any other vote.

Special majorities

79. The synod may resolve by formal motion, with or without debate, to set a special majority (a higher threshold) for a vote of particular significance (two thirds or three quarters of those present and voting, or greater than half of the total membership would be good examples). It may on no account not set a lower threshold.

RELATIONSHIPS AND REPORTING – DIOCESAN SYNOD AND PCCs

REPORTS TO PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS

Report of proceedings

80. Within two weeks after each meeting of the synod the Deanery Secretary shall distribute a brief report which has been approved by the standing committee, or, if delegated, the joint chairs.
- (a) The report shall include an outline of the proceedings, results of voting on key motions, and actions agreed.
 - (b) It shall be made available to synod members and to the secretaries of the Parochial Church Councils in the deanery, by hand, post or electronic means.
 - (c) If preferred, the report may be in the form of first draft minutes. However, a short bullet-point summary on the deanery website or via social media would meet all requirements of this rule.

MATTERS RAISED BY PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS AND MEETINGS

Mode of representation

81. Any Parochial Church Council or Parochial Church Meeting in the deanery may, on a motion moved by a member representing that parish, bring before the synod any matter either of general Church interest or affecting that parish.
- (a) Where the matter may be of wider interest, the motion may ask that a representative of the deanery on the Diocesan Synod be instructed to bring such matter before that synod on behalf of the deanery, possibly for onward reference to the General Synod.
 - (b) Subject to any direction by the synod, the standing committee shall choose a representative.
 - (c) The standing committee should consider whether, in such cases, it would be appropriate for the item to be taken partially, or wholly, under the General Rules of Debate (rules 55-74).

FINANCIAL BUSINESS – ANNUAL REVIEW

82. The standing committee shall not later than the 31st day of March in each year submit to synod:
- (a) a report and financial statements of any funds held by the synod for the year ending on the 31st December immediately preceding;

- (b) a statement showing the estimated expenditure of the synod in the current year;
- (c) proposals for raising the income required to meet such expenditure.

REFERENCES BY THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OR GENERAL SYNOD

When considered

83. The standing committee shall schedule business that is referred by the Diocesan Synod or General Synod as early as possible, taking account of any timetable laid down by the referring body.

Prior notice and documents required

84. Unless the standing committee otherwise decides:
- (a) at least 28 days' notice of such matters shall be given to every member;
 - (b) relevant reports or other documents prepared by or on behalf of the General Synod, Diocesan Synod or Bishop's Council shall be circulated in advance as directed by them.

Procedure of debate and "following motions"

85. Matters debated due to referral must be put to synod un-amended, and may be in several parts, all of which must be voted upon. However, synods are at liberty to debate locally originated "following motions" provided that they are related to the subject matter, but do not seek to amend the original motion. If passed, it forms part of the synod's response.
- (a) When the reference is in the form of a question requiring the answer 'Yes' or 'No', the question shall be put to the synod as a formal motion in the affirmative sense, using the wording provided, where applicable. No amendment shall be allowed and a separate vote of each house shall be taken under rules 76-77. If the motion is defeated, the question is deemed to have been decided in the negative.
 - (b) When the reference invites a statement of opinion, a motion containing a draft of such statement shall be moved on behalf of the standing committee, and amendments to that motion shall be allowed. The General Rules of Debate shall apply (rules 55-74).
 - (c) When all motions under paragraphs (a) and (b) have been decided, following motions arising from them may, if otherwise in order, be moved by any member.

Report on result

86. The decisions on every matter that has been referred (together with the number of votes on each matter in each house), together with the results of voting on every following motion, shall be reported to the secretary of the Diocesan Synod.

Consultations within the deanery

87. Subject to any timetable laid down by the referring body, the synod or standing committee may refer any question to the Parochial Church Councils or Parochial Church Meetings in the deanery before voting on the matter referred, but should in all cases give full consideration to the matter itself, and is not in any way bound by the opinions received.

APPENDIX

Church Representation Rules 24, 25, 27 and 27A governing membership of deanery synods and related matters

DEANERY SYNODS

Membership

24. (1) A deanery synod shall consist of a house of clergy and a house of laity.
- (2) The members of the house of clergy of a deanery synod shall consist of –
- (a) the clerks in Holy Orders beneficed in or licensed to any parish in the deanery;
 - (b) any clerks in Holy Orders licensed to institutions in the deanery under the Extra-Parochial Ministry Measure 1967;
 - (c) any clerical members of the General Synod or diocesan synod resident in the deanery;
 - (d) such other clerks in Holy Orders holding the bishop's licence to work throughout the diocese or in more than one deanery and resident in the deanery subject to any direction which may be given by the members of the house of clergy of the bishop's council that, having regard to the number of parochial and non-parochial clergy in the deanery, such clerk shall have membership of a specified deanery synod other than the deanery where he resides provided that no person shall thereby be a member of more than one deanery synod in the diocese;
 - (e) one or more clerks in Holy Orders holding permission to officiate in the diocese who are resident in the deanery or who have habitually attended public worship in a parish in the deanery during the preceding six months. One clerk may be elected or chosen for every ten such clerks or part thereof, elected or chosen in such manner as may be approved by the bishop by and from such clerks.
- (3) Where an extra parochial place is not in a deanery it shall be deemed for the purposes of these rules to belong to the deanery which it abuts and if there is any doubt in the matter a determination shall be made by the bishop's council and standing committee.
- (4) For the purposes of paragraph 2(e) of this rule the relevant date shall be the 31st December in the year immediately preceding any election of the parochial representatives of the laity, and as soon as possible after that date the rural dean of the deanery shall inform the bishop of the number of clerks in Holy Orders who are qualified for membership of the deanery synod by virtue of that sub-paragraph.
- (5) Not later than the 1st July following the election of parochial representatives of the laity to the deanery synod the secretary of the said synod shall send to the diocesan electoral registration officer appointed in accordance with rule 29 a list of the names and addresses of the members of the house of clergy, specifying the class of membership, and shall keep the said officer informed of subsequent changes in membership.
- (6) Subject to the provisions of rule 1(4), the members of the house of laity of a deanery synod shall consist of the following persons, that is to say –
- (a) the parochial representatives elected to the synod by the annual meetings of the parishes of the deanery;
 - (b) any lay members of the General Synod or a diocesan synod whose names are entered on the roll of any parish in the deanery;
 - (c) if in the opinion of the bishop of the diocese any community of persons in the deanery who are in the spiritual care of a chaplain licensed by the bishop should be represented in that house, one lay person, being an actual communicant member of the Church of England of sixteen years or upwards, chosen in such manner as may be approved by the bishop by and from among the members of that community;

- (d) the deaconesses and lay workers licensed by the bishop to work in any part of the deanery;
- (e) such other deaconesses or lay workers holding the bishop's licence to work throughout the diocese or in more than one deanery and resident in the deanery subject to any direction which may be given by the members of the House of Laity of the bishop's council that, having regard to the number of deaconesses or lay workers in the deanery, such person shall have membership of a specified deanery synod other than the deanery where they reside provided that no person shall thereby be a member of more than one deanery synod in the diocese.
- (7) The house of clergy and house of laity of a deanery synod may co-opt additional members of their respective houses, being clerks in Holy Orders or, as the case may be, lay persons who shall be actual communicant members of the Church of England of sixteen years or upwards:

Provided that the number of members co-opted by either house shall not exceed five per cent of the total number of members of that house or three, whichever is the greater.

The names and addresses of co-opted members shall be sent by the secretary of the deanery synod to the diocesan electoral registration officer appointed in accordance with rule 29.

Election and choice of members

25. (1) The parochial representatives of the laity elected by annual meetings shall be so elected every three years, and shall hold office for a term of three years beginning with the 1st June next following their election.
- (2) The numbers to be so elected from the several parishes shall be determined by resolution of the diocesan synod not later than the 31st December in the year preceding any such elections, and those numbers shall be calculated by reference to the numbers of names on the rolls of the parishes as certified ... under rule 4 or the number of parish churches or districts in each parish or a combination of both such methods, in each case in such manner as the diocesan synod shall determine provided that such resolution shall not make it possible for a parish with fewer than twenty-six names on the roll to have more than one representative.
- (3) Not later than the 31st December in the year preceding any such elections, the secretary of the diocesan synod shall certify to the secretary of each parochial church council the number of such representatives to be elected at the annual meeting of the parish ... and shall send to the secretary of each deanery synod copies of the certificates and information relating to the parishes of the deanery.
- (4) Any person to be chosen as mentioned in rule 24(2)(e) or 24(6)(c) shall be so chosen every three years and shall hold office for a term of three years beginning with the 1st June next following the date on which he is so chosen.
- (5) A direction by the appropriate members of the bishop's council making provision under rule 24(2)(d) or 24(6)(e) for the membership of the clerks in Holy Orders or the deaconesses or lay workers therein mentioned may provide for the choice by a class of such persons of some of their number to be members, and for the term of office of persons so chosen.
- (6) The diocesan synod shall exercise their powers under this and the last preceding rule so as to secure that the total number of members of any deanery synod in the diocese shall not be more than 150 and, so far as practicable, shall not be less than 50:

Provided that the maximum number of 150 may be exceeded for the purpose of securing that the house of laity is not less in number than the house of clergy.

For the avoidance of doubt it is hereby declared that the number of 150 specified in this paragraph includes the maximum number of members who may be co-opted by each house.

[...]

Representation of cathedral clergy and laity

27. (1) Any diocesan synod may provide by scheme for the representation on such deanery synod as may be determined by or under the scheme –
- (a) of the dean or provost, the residentiary canons and other ministers of the cathedral church of the diocese, or any of them; and
 - (b) in the case of a cathedral church which is not a parish church, of lay persons who are on the roll of members of the cathedral community (hereinafter in these rules referred to as “the community roll”) required to be kept under section 9 of the Cathedrals Measure 1999 or, in the case of Westminster Abbey, St George’s Chapel, Windsor and the cathedral church of Christ in Oxford, who are declared by the dean to be habitual worshippers at the cathedral church and whose names are not entered on the roll of any parish.

[...]

Representation of persons to whom mission orders relate

- 27A.(1) Any diocesan synod may, at the request of the bishop or bishops who has or have made a bishop’s mission order under section 47 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 which is in force, provide by scheme for representation on such deanery synod as may be determined by or under the scheme of such persons to whom the order relates as may be specified in or under the scheme.