



Standing orders for the Diocesan Synod

revised 2021



DIOCESE of OXFORD

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes

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**STANDING ORDERS
for the
OXFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD**

(Originally approved by the Oxford Diocesan Synod, 27 February 1988, and amended up to and including 17 March 2018).

Latest revision approved by Oxford Diocesan Synod
20 March 2021

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SYNOD

Roll of members

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

Procedure for co-options

2. The standing committee constituted under standing order 73 shall have the right to nominate persons for co-option by the house of clergy or the house of laity or otherwise to determine who else may nominate such persons but in other respects the procedure for co-opting members shall be determined by the respective houses.

Participation by non-members

3(a). Any visitor attending by invitation of the president may, with the permission of the chair, address the synod but shall have no right to move any motion or amendment or to vote.

3(b). The president in consultation with the standing committee may invite any Church in the diocese which is not in communion with the Church of England but to which the provisions of the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988 apply to send one representative chosen by itself to observe the proceedings of the synod and to participate to the extent permitted for any visitor under SO3(a) above; the period of such arrangement and all other conditions relating to it shall be such as the president in consultation with the standing committee shall think fit from time to time.

[adopted 22 November 2003]

TERM OF OFFICE

Co-opted and nominated members

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 last date for the return of results in the triennial elections.

THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

5(a). The bishop of the diocese, or the person acting with the delegated authority of the bishop of the diocese, shall be the president of the synod.

Election of vice-presidents

5(b). Before the first meeting of the synod after the triennial elections or in the event of vacancy in either office the houses of clergy and laity shall each hold a special meeting to elect one of their number to be a vice-president of the synod. A member of the appropriate house appointed by the president shall act as chair for such meeting. Whoever so presides shall have a vote in the election and in the case of an equality of votes the decision shall be taken by lot.

Deputies for Chair of Houses of Laity and Clergy

5(c). A vice-president of the synod may appoint a member of the bishop's council of the same house as that vice-president to act as vice-president of the synod for a particular meeting of the synod or of the appropriate house. A person so appointed shall have all the powers of a vice-president of the synod for the duration of that meeting.

[adopted November 1997]

Vice-Presidents not to serve as elected members of the Standing Committee

5(d). A vice-president of the synod shall on being elected to that office be deemed to vacate their office on the standing committee if previously elected to that committee under SO 73, and shall remain disqualified from being elected under that standing order while serving as a vice-president.

[amended 15 November 2015]

CHAIR OF MEETING

Meetings of the synod

6. The president shall be chair of meetings at the synod unless the president nominates one of the vice-presidents or another member to take the chair.

Separate meetings of the houses

7. The president and each vice-president shall be chair of the house of which they are each a member but need not preside over its meetings if and to the extent that standing orders of the house so provide.

Powers of chair

8. Subject to these standing orders and the directions of the president, the procedure of the synod and its houses shall be regulated by the respective chair of each.

OFFICERS

Secretary

9. The diocesan secretary, being either ordained or lay and either salaried or honorary, shall be the secretary of the synod and shall:

(i) be responsible for the administrative arrangements for meetings of the synod and the bishop's council and standing committee;

- (ii) be in attendance at such meetings;
- (iii) prepare the draft agenda papers and minutes of the synod including, in consultation with the chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, that part of the agenda that deals with financial business (as defined in SO76) to be considered at meetings of the standing committee together with the minutes of such business;
- (iv) act as a secretary of the standing committee when it is dealing with both ordinary business and financial business (as defined in SO76);
- (v) perform such other duties as the synod shall assign.

Assistant Secretary

10. The standing committee may appoint an assistant secretary.

Registrar

11. The registrar or in the event of absence or incapacity the deputy registrar or another suitable person acting on the registrar's behalf shall be the legal adviser to the synod and when required shall attend the meetings of the synod, its houses and the standing committee.

Terms of appointment

12. Subject to any statutory provision and to these standing orders, the terms and conditions of service on which officers are appointed shall be determined by the standing committee.

MEETINGS OF THE SYNOD

By whom convened

13. The synod shall meet upon the summons of the president.

When and where held

14. The president shall summon not less than two meetings in each year at such times and places as the president shall direct after consulting the standing committee.

Meetings by request

15. If either the standing committee by resolution so requests 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 synod which shall be held within eight weeks following the resolution or request.

Notice of ordinary meetings

16. The date, time and place of ordinary meetings of the synod, when fixed, shall be announced to members as soon as possible and, in any event, not less than six weeks before each meeting.

Notice of special meeting

17. In case of sudden emergency or other special circumstances a meeting may be convened at not less than 7 days' notice but the quorum for the transaction of any business at such meeting shall be a majority of the members of each house and only business specified in the notice may be transacted.

18. Every notice under standing orders 16 and 17 shall be in writing and issued by the secretary.

SEPARATE MEETINGS OF THE HOUSES

When and where held

19. Each house shall meet separately when:

- (i) It is required so to do under these standing orders;
- (ii) It has so decided in accordance with its own standing orders;
- (iii) The chair of the house has so directed; or

(iv) The synod has so directed;

and subject to any directions by the synod or the house concerned, the date, time and place of any separate meeting shall be fixed by the chair of that meeting.

AGENDA

Content

20(a). Subject to these standing orders and any resolution of the synod, and without prejudice to the rights of individual members to a reasonable opportunity within the time available of bringing matters before that synod, the standing committee shall settle the agenda for each of its meetings, specifying therein all business of which due notice has been received and which is in order, and shall determine the order in which the business so included shall be considered.

20(b). The standing committee may defer to the agenda of a later meeting of the synod the consideration of motions duly submitted for debate if in their opinion this would facilitate the more effective dispatch of the synod's business, save that the standing committee shall report to the next immediately following meeting of the synod on any exercise of its powers under this provision such report to include full details of all motions so deferred. *[adopted 21 November 1990]*

Circulation

21. The secretary shall make available an agenda paper to every member at least 21 days before a meeting or, in the case of a special meeting called at less than 21 days' notice, at the same time as the notice.

Business permitted to be considered

22. Save for urgent or other specially important business added thereto by direction of the president, and such matters as may arise therefrom no business shall be considered at a meeting other than that specified in the agenda (or any notice paper relating thereto) or arising from business so specified.

Order of business

23. In considering the order of business the standing committee shall give special consideration to items:

- (i) brought before the synod at the request or direction of the president;
- (ii) referred to the diocesan synod by the General Synod or by a deanery synod in the diocese;

and may also allot special times at which such items shall, unless previously disposed of, be taken and set time-limits for debates on any motions, where it considers this to be necessary.

Varying the order of business

24. The order of business may be varied by resolution of the synod or, unless any member objects, by the chair.

NOTICE OF BUSINESS

Form of notice

25. Subject to standing order 17, notice of any business for a meeting of the synod shall be in writing, delivered to the secretary by hand, by post or by email not later than the period before the meeting which is specified in standing order 26. *[amended 17 March 2018]*

Length of notice

26. The following periods of notice shall be required:

New business for the agenda	35 days
Motions and amendment arising from the agenda	7 days
Questions under standing order 70	7 days

When not required

27. Notice of the following business shall not be required:

- (i) a motion or amendment moved by permission of the chair; provided that the full text of such motion or amendment, except by permission of the chair, shall be provided to the secretary before it is moved;
- (ii) business adjourned under standing order 54 or 55 to a specified time or meeting;
- (iii) a procedural motion specified in standing order 51 (subject as provided in that standing order);
- (iv) a supplementary question by a member who has asked a question under standing order 70.

GENERAL RULES OF DEBATE

Quorum

28. One third of the members of each house shall form a quorum of the synod which shall be necessary for the consideration of all business except the adjournment of the synod under standing order 54 or of a debate under standing order 55.

If quorum not present

29. If a quorum is not present, the chair shall adjourn the synod until such time as they shall determine. Any member may call the attention of the chair to the absence of a quorum at any time before the question is put on a motion or amendment. A quorum shall thereafter be deemed to be present and it shall not be in order to query again the presence of a quorum until after the chair has conclusively announced the result of the vote on that question.

Order of speeches

30. The chair shall call upon members who desire to speak and may require them to give their names to the secretary in writing. The chair shall also determine the order in which they speak.

Breach of order

31. The chair shall call a member to order for failure to address the chair, irrelevance, tedious repetition of argument previously put forward by the same or any other member, unbecoming language, reading a speech without permission of the chair, disregard of the authority of the chairs, or any other breach of order, and may order the member to end any speech.

Points of order

32. A member may submit a point of order under these standing orders at any time and for this purpose may interrupt another speaker. A member

raising a point of order shall state what they have to say in the form of a succinct question.

Personal explanations

33. A member may ask permission to interrupt a debate to make a personal explanation but only so as to correct an important misunderstanding of fact during that debate with regard to what that member said, or to explain some matter of strictly personal concern, and for this purpose, may interrupt another speaker. Such permission shall be given only if any person interrupted consents and if in the opinion of the chair the debate is likely to benefit from such an explanation.

Interruptions otherwise not permitted

34. Save as provided in standing order 32 and 33 the interruption of a speech (by question, point of information or otherwise) shall not be permitted, but where it occurs in breach of this standing order it shall be reckoned as a speech on the question before the synod and shall preclude the interrupter from speaking further on that question. The ruling of the chair on a point of order or the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open to question.

Speaking to a motion

35. A member shall not speak unless upon a motion or amendment save as provided in standing order 32, 33 and 70.

Speaking more than once

36. A member shall not speak more than once upon the same question, except;

- (i) as provided in standing orders 32 and 33;
- (ii) by permission of the chair and with the consent of the synod;
- (iii) the mover of a motion (but not an amendment) may reply; such reply shall not introduce any new matter and shall close the debate;
- (iv) the mover of an amendment to a standing order may speak twice.

Length of speeches

37. Save as provided in these standing orders, no speech shall exceed five minutes or, in the case of a member moving a motion (other than a procedural motion under standing order 51) or introducing a report, ten minutes, but the chair may at any time lengthen or shorten any of these periods; provided that the chair shall inform the synod of the ruling, which shall not be open to debate or question.

Moving motions or amendments

38(a). Every matter debated in the synod shall have been moved or seconded, except that no seconder will be required for:

- (i) a motion moved by the chair, or by a member on behalf of a committee in relation to the report of that committee;
- (ii) a procedural motion under standing order 51;
- (iii) an amendment.

38(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.

Withdrawal

39. A motion or amendment, once moved, may be withdrawn by or at the request of the mover unless more than five members object.

Reconsideration and Rescission

40. 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 by the standing committee.

Division

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

Reference-back motions not permitted

42. During the debate on any motion it shall not be in order to move a further motion to refer back to that motion or any recommendation to which it relates but if otherwise permissible an amendment to this effect may be moved. Where a motion so amended is carried but specifies no one to whom the matter is to be referred, this question shall be decided by the Standing Committee. No amendment shall be moved for the reference back of any matter referred by the General Synod to the diocesan synod.

Special powers of chair

43. Unless the synod otherwise provides, the chair shall:

- (i) adjourn the synod at the hours fixed in accordance with the standing orders;
- (ii) adjourn the debate on any question at the hour fixed for the commencement of other business in accordance with standing order 23;
- (iii) close the debate on any motion at the hour appointed in accordance with standing order 23, whether or not there are other members who still desire to speak, and thereupon the provisions of standing order 56(ii) shall apply.

AMENDMENTS

When permitted

44. Except as provided in standing order 45 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 or any other further amendment is moved.

When not permitted

45. Amendments to the following shall not be permitted:

- (i) a procedural motion under standing order 51;
- (ii) a motion to receive the report of a committee under standing order 93;
- (iii) a motion under standing order 100(a) in reply to any question referred by the General Synod.

Amendments to amendments

46. No amendment may be moved to an amendment, except by the permission of the chair.

Delivery in writing

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

Form of amendments

48. An amendment may be made:

- (i) by leaving out words; or
- (ii) by leaving out words in order to insert other words; or
- (iii) by inserting or adding words.

Content

49. An amendment shall be relevant to and shall not have the effect of negating the main motion or amendment.

Order of consideration

50. Amendments shall be moved and put to the vote in the order in which they first affect the main motion or amendment to which they relate, and if more than one amendment has been received affecting the same place in that motion or amendment, they shall be moved and put to the vote in the order determined by the chair. By the chair's permission, during the debate on an amendment, other amendments may be discussed but not moved.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Content

51. Subject to these standing orders, the following procedural motions may, with the consent of the chair, be moved with or without notice but not so as to interrupt the speech of any member:

- (i) "That the synod do pass to the next business" ("next business");
- (ii) "That the synod do now adjourn" ("adjournment of the synod");
- (iii) "That the debate is now adjourned" ("adjournment of debate");
- (iv) "That the debate be now closed" ("closure");
- (v) "That all further speeches on this question be limited to...minutes" ("speech limit");
- (vi) A motion to vary the order of business;
- (vii) A motion to suspend a standing order.

When not permitted

52. A motion shall not be moved:

- (i) for the next business, the closure or a speech limit on any question referred by the General Synod to the diocesan synod;
- (ii) for next business on an amendment or another procedural motion.

Next business

53. The following rules of debate shall apply:

- (i) the motion may be moved either in the form “That the synod do forthwith pass to the next business” or in the form “That the synod do pass to the next business before the question is put”.
- (ii) a motion for next business shall take precedence over all amendments of which notice has been given.
- (iii) if such a motion is carried, the original motion shall lapse either forthwith or before the question is put, as the case may be, and not be reconsidered during the same meeting of the synod.
- (iv) if negatived, such motion shall not be moved again on the original motion unless that motion be substantially amended.
- (v) during discussion on a motion “That the synod do pass to the next business before the question is put” it shall be in order to debate the merits of the original question.

Adjournment of the synod

54. The following rules of debate shall apply:

- (i) the motion to adjourn may but need not specify a time for the next sitting of the synod or the resumption of the business interrupted.
- (ii) the mover shall be allowed to speak for not more than three minutes; the mover of the original motion, if any, or, if not, some other member may speak for not more than three minutes in reply, the question shall then be put without further debate.
- (iii) if a motion to adjourn is carried and the diocesan synod has not by the same resolution appointed a time for its next sitting, such sitting shall be held at the time appointed in accordance with standing order 14.
- (iv) subject to any resolution of the synod, the business interrupted shall be resumed at the next meeting.
- (v) if negatived, the adjournment of the synod shall not be moved again except by the permission of the chair, until a further hour has elapsed.

Adjournment of debate

55. Standing order 54 shall, unless the context otherwise requires, apply also to this motion except that:

- (i) if such a motion is carried and the synod has not by the same or a later resolution appointed a time for resuming the interrupted debate, it shall be resumed only by direction of the standing committee.
- (ii) if the question is an amendment, the debate on the main motion shall also stand adjourned.

The closure

56. The following rules of debate shall apply:

- (i) if such a motion is permitted by the chair, it shall be put forthwith without discussion.
- (ii) if the closure is carried, the member, if any, who has a right of reply on a motion superseded by the closure shall be given an opportunity to speak for not more than five minutes in reply, and the motion or amendment shall be put without further debate.

Speech limit

57. The following rules of debate shall apply:

- (i) if this motion is permitted by the chair, it shall be put forthwith without discussion.
- (ii) notwithstanding the time limits imposed by standing order 37, on this motion being carried, no speech shall exceed the number of minutes specified therein, but the chair may, for any special reason of which the chair shall be the sole judge, allow a longer or shorter time to any member; provided that when so doing the chair shall inform members of the ruling and in exercising the chair's discretion shall have particular regard to any member who has a right of reply to the debate.

Suspension of standing orders

58. After notice, or by permission of the chair, without notice a member may move that a standing order be suspended during a particular debate or meeting. Such motions shall not be deemed to have been carried unless at least three-fourths of those members present and voting are in favour.

Assent of three houses

59. 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 synod have assented thereto, but if in the case of a particular question the president (if present) so directs, that question 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.

Procedure of decisions

60. Questions relating only to the conduct of business shall be decided by the votes of all the members of the diocesan synod present and voting, and every other question shall be decided in like manner, the assent of the three houses being presumed, unless the president (if present) requires, or any ten members require, that a separate vote of each house taken.

Matters referred under Article 8

61. If the votes of the house of clergy and laity are in favour of any matter referred to the diocesan synod by the General Synod under the provisions of Article 8 of Schedule 2 of the Synodical Government Measure 1969 (being the Schedule which contains the Constitution of the General Synod), that matter shall be deemed to have been approved for the purposes of the said Article.

Voting by houses

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

- (i) on any question referred by the General Synod to the diocesan synod;
- (ii) on any other question, except a question relating only to the conduct of business, where this is required under standing order 60.

Majority required for decisions

63. Subject to any statutory requirements, decisions of the synod when no separate vote is taken by each of the houses shall require the votes of a majority of all the members of the synod present and voting; and decisions of the synod when a separate vote is taken by each of the houses shall, subject as aforesaid and to standing order 59 require the votes of a majority of all the members of each house present and voting; provided that a motion to suspend a standing order shall require the votes of at least three-fourths of the members of the synod present and voting.

Equal voting in house of bishops

64. Where there is an equal division of votes in the house of bishops, the president shall have a second or casting vote.

Opinion of president

65. The president's opinion on any question shall be recorded in the minutes if the president so directs.

Voting rights of chair

66. The chair (subject to the rights of the president when acting as chair) shall have the same voting rights as other members and shall have no second or casting vote.

Mode of voting

67. The chair on putting any question to the vote shall take a show of hands or such other method as the chair shall direct, the result of which as announced by the chair shall be conclusive, and may at the chair's discretion order the hands (or other indications) to be counted and shall do so on a vote by houses.

Requests for separate voting

68. Where the president requires, or any ten members require, a separate vote of each house, or where the president gives a direction under standing order 59 (that the president's assent shall be necessary to carry a proposal in the house of bishops), such requirement or direction shall be made or given before the question is put or immediately upon the announcement of the result of a vote under standing order 67, whether counted or not.

Procedure for count of hands (or other indications)

69. The counting of hands (or other indications) on a separate vote of each house shall be conducted under the direction of the chair.

QUESTIONS

To whom addressed

70(a). Subject to due notice under standing orders 25 and 26 a question may be asked of: -

- (i) any officer of the diocesan synod referred to in these standing orders;
- (ii) the chair of any body constituted by the synod or on which it is represented;

provided that the person asked may, without reason given, refuse to answer the question. A member may ask up to two original questions at any one meeting and a member who has asked a question may ask one supplementary question in respect of each such original question.

70(b). Any member may, in the light of the answer given to a question, ask without notice one supplementary question in respect of and arising from each question asked.

70(c). The member who asked the question shall have priority in asking the first supplementary question.

70(d). A supplementary question shall be strictly relevant to the original question and to the answer given.

[sub-paras (b)-(d) added May 1998]

Content

71. 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 opinion or for the solution of either an abstract legal question or a hypothetical problem, and shall be otherwise in order.

Persons authorised to reply

72. If the person of whom the question is asked is a member or official of the synod that person shall reply personally and, if not, the reply may be given by one of its members nominated by the president; provided that: -

- (i) the president may instruct the secretary to reply on the president's behalf;
- (ii) a member who is absent may authorise another member to deputise for them.

THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE

Composition

73. The Bishop's Council and Standing Committee (in these standing orders referred to as "the standing committee") shall consist of:

Ex-officio members

The president and the vice-presidents

All other members of the house of bishops

The archdeacons

The chair and the vice-chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance

The Dean of Christ Church or (particularly where the post of Dean is vacant or the Dean is unable or unwilling to act in this capacity) such other member of the Chapter of Christ Church (who shall then become a member of the diocesan synod) as the Chapter, after consultation with the president, may appoint for the purpose

[amended 3 March 2001]

Elected members

The following persons elected from amongst the members of the synod;

One clergy person to be elected by the members of the house of clergy representing the Archdeacons of Oxford, from among their number.

Two clergy persons to be elected by the members of the house of clergy representing the Archdeacons of Berkshire, from among their number.

Two clergy persons to be elected by the members of the house of clergy representing the Archdeacons of Buckingham, from among their number.

Two clergy persons to be elected by the members of the house of clergy representing the Archdeacons of Dorchester, from among their number.

Two lay persons to be elected by the members of the house of laity representing the Archdeacons of Oxford, from among their number.

Three lay persons to be elected by the members of the house of laity representing the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, from among their number

Three lay persons to be elected by the members of the house of laity representing the Archdeaconry of Buckingham, from among their number

Three lay persons to be elected by the members of the house of laity representing the Archdeaconry of Dorchester, from among their number

Nominated members

Up to seven persons being either ordained or lay may be nominated by the president from among the members of the synod, in such a way as to ensure that a majority of the members of the standing committee (excluding from this calculation either of the chair or vice-chair of the board of finance who are ordained) are lay persons.

[amended 17 March 2018]

[NB: The persons who are members of the standing committee are also members of the standing committee of the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance and as such are the directors of that company].

Elections to Standing Committee

74. The elected members of the committee shall be elected by the house of which each is a member, immediately after the election of a new synod. The procedure for their election shall be as provided in standing orders 86-89.

75. The synodical functions of the Standing Committee shall be:

- (i) to plan the business of the synod, to prepare the agenda for its sessions, and to circulate to members information about matters for discussion;
- (ii) to initiate proposals for action by the synod and to advise it on matters of policy which are placed before it;

- (iii) to advise the president on any matters which may be referred to the standing committee;
- (iv) subject to the directions of the synod to transact the business of the synod when it is not in session;
- (v) subject to the directions of the synod to be responsible for the management of its funds and property which said funds and property shall be vested in the Diocesan Board of Finance of the diocese as constituted under the Diocesan Boards of Finance Measure 1925;
- (vi) to prepare the annual estimates of expenditure and any supplementary estimates of expenditure that may be required in accordance with standing orders 112 and 116;
- (vii) to advise the synod on such action as may be needed to raise the income necessary to finance such expenditure and to carry out the synod's instructions in this respect;
- (viii) to oversee expenditure by bodies in receipt of the synod's funds against estimates of expenditure approved by the synod;
- (ix) to advise the synod of the financial aspects of its policy and on any other matter that the synod may refer to it;
- (x) to appoint members of committees or nominate members for election to committees, subject to the direction of the synod;
- (xi) to act as the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee for all the functions given to that committee by the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011. *[amended 17 March 2018]*
- (xii) to carry out such other functions as the synod may delegate to it.

Procedure

76. (i) the agenda for each meeting of the standing committee shall be divided into two pairs namely ordinary business and financial business.
- (ii) "Financial business" shall be matters arising under sub-paragraphs 75(v)-75(ix) hereof. "Ordinary business" shall be all other business. If any doubt or dispute arises as to whether an item for the agenda is ordinary business or financial business the decision of the president shall be final.
- (iii) the president of the synod shall be chair when the standing committee is considering ordinary business. The chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance shall be chair when the standing committee is considering financial business.

- (iv) no proposal involving income or expenditure shall be debated at a meeting of the standing committee unless it is accompanied by a statement of the financial implications.
- (v) the right to attend meetings of the standing committee is confined to its members and officers. Non-members may attend by invitation of the chair and speak with the consent of the meeting.

Sub-committees

- 77. (i) The standing committee may appoint sub-committees for such purposes as they shall think fit.
- (ii) A sub-committee may include persons who are not members of the standing committee.
- (iii) The procedure of sub-committees shall be in accordance with standing orders 80 to 84.
- (iv) Each sub-committee shall report to the standing committee at least annually.

Term of office

- 78. (i) The elected members of the standing committee shall retire on election of their successors or on ceasing to be qualified.
- (ii) Nominated members of the standing committee shall retire on 30 September in the year of triennial elections.

Reports

(see also standing orders 126 and 127)

- 79. The standing committee shall present an annual report to the synod on its work and the work of its sub-committees together with such other reports as may be required to be presented or as the synod may request.

OTHER COMMITTEES

Statutory committees of the synod

80. The synod shall establish such committees or other bodies as may be required by law (to be known as “statutory committees”) with such membership, functions and procedure as may be provided in the relevant enactment. Subject thereto, these standing orders shall apply to such committees or other bodies.

Committees other than statutory committees

81. The synod, or the standing committee acting on the synod’s behalf and subject to any directions the synod may give, may at any time constitute such other committees as in the opinion of the synod are necessary or desirable and may delegate to a committee so constituted, with or without conditions, such functions of the synod as it thinks fit.

Membership of committees of the synod

82. Subject to any directions of the synod and to any statutory provision, the standing committee shall determine the number of members of a committee and whether they should be appointed or elected. A committee may include persons who are not members of the synod. The president or a member nominated by the president, being either a suffragan bishop or an archdeacon or an archdeacon’s commissary, shall be a member of every committee.

Duration of membership

83. The standing committee may, subject to these standing orders and any resolution of the synod, at any time dissolve a committee or alter the number of its members or its composition and shall determine the term of office of its members.

Sub-committees

84. Every committee constituted by the synod (or by the standing committee on the synod's behalf) may appoint sub-committees for such purposes as it thinks fit.

Electors

85. Any elected members of a committee may be elected by the whole synod without discrimination as to houses or by the three houses voting separately. In the absence of any direction by either the synod or the standing committee, they shall be elected by the whole synod.

Nominations for election to committees

86. Every nomination shall require a proposer and seconder who shall be qualified electors but the standing committee may (except in an election to itself) collectively nominate candidates. Nominations, which shall be in writing and accompanied by signed evidence of the candidate's willingness to serve, shall be delivered to the secretary within such period (not being less than 14 days) as may be specified. If the number of nominations is no more than that of the seats to be filled, all candidates shall be declared elected.

Voting in elections

87(a). The names of the candidates shall in any other event be circulated to every qualified elector with directions approved by the president as to voting arrangements (to include whether voting is to take place on paper, by suitable electronic means, and that voting is to be completed within such period (not being less than 14 days) as shall be specified).

87(b). Subject to paragraph (c) below, each elector shall 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 shall be decided by lot.

87(c). Where the synod or standing committee has directed that the election shall be conducted upon the principle of proportional representation, the rules with the necessary modification, made by the General Synod under Church Representation Rules and for the time being in force, shall be used.

Casual vacancies

88. Save as otherwise provided a casual vacancy in the office of any elected member of any committee (including membership of the standing committee) shall be filled as follows:

(a). by two requests for nomination to the vacancy issued during the period of six months from the date when the vacancy shall have arisen or (if such requests shall not have resulted in the vacancy being filled by the expiry of such period) then

(b). by standing invitation to relevant electors to nominate to such vacancy by a date not later than the expiry of a period of twelve months from the date when the vacancy shall have arisen or (if such invitation shall not have resulted in the vacancy being filled by the expiry of such period) then

(c). by appointment to the vacancy of a suitably qualified person by such members of the standing committee as it shall consider appropriate to represent the interests of the relevant electors.

[amended 16 June 2001]

Directions by Standing Committee

89. The conduct of elections to committees shall, subject to these standing orders, be in accordance with any directions by the standing committee.

PROCEDURE OF COMMITTEES

Chair

90. The president shall be chair of every committee of which the president is a member; however, the president may elect not to be the chair and in which case, the committee shall, subject to any direction by the synod or the standing committee, at its first meeting elect a chair from among its own members. In the absence of the chair, a chair for that meeting may be similarly elected.

Quorum

91. Not less than one-third of the total members of a committee shall form a quorum but a committee may act notwithstanding a vacancy in its membership.

Voting

92. Questions submitted to a meeting of a committee shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting, save that in the case of an equality of votes the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Reports

93. Every committee shall report at such times and in accordance with such procedure as may be determined by the standing committee; provided that each report shall be presented by a member of the committee which is responsible for the report, on the motion "That this report be received". No amendment to such motion shall be permitted but if carried it shall not be deemed to commit the synod to the acceptance of any matter in the report.

General

94. Subject to these standing orders and to any directions by the synod of the standing committee, a committee shall have power to determine its own procedure.

REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

95. The procedure for appointing or electing representatives to serve on any committees or other bodies which are not statutory committees or responsible to the synod but on which it is required or permitted to be represented shall be determined in each case by the standing committee.

DOCTRINAL MATTERS AND FORMS OF SERVICE

Requirement of early circulation

96. If notice is given of a motion, whether or not under standing order 100, which raises any question touching doctrinal formulae or the services or ceremonies of the Church of England the standing committee shall include it on the agenda of the earliest convenient meeting of the synod; provided that, save by permission of the chair and the consent of the synod, copies of such motion, together with a report thereon by the standing committee, shall be sent to members at least three months before it is finally voted on by the synod.

REFERENCES BY THE GENERAL SYNOD

When considered

97. When a reference is received from the General Synod, whether under Article 8 of the Constitution of that synod or otherwise, the standing committee shall include it on the agenda of such meeting of the diocesan synod as the committee may consider appropriate.

Prior notice and documents required

98. Unless the standing committee decide to the contrary for any reason:

- (i) members of the diocesan synod shall receive at least three months' notice of the reference; and

(ii) a report or other document prepared by or on behalf of either the general synod or the standing committee of the diocesan synod shall be circulated.

Consultations within the diocese

99. The diocesan synod, before voting on a reference, may refer any question arising from it to the deanery synods or parochial church councils or parochial church meetings in the diocese for the expression of their views.

Procedure of debate

100(a). When the reference by the General Synod is in the form of a question requiring the answer 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 a separate vote of each house shall be taken under standing order 62. If the motion is defeated, the question shall be decided in the negative.

100(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 standing committee and amendments to such a motion shall be in order.

100(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.

Report on result

101. The decision on such motions and on any related motions not specifically included in the reference, together with any opinion recorded by the president and the number of votes cast in each house, shall be reported by the secretary of the diocesan synod to the secretary of the General Synod.

REFERENCES BY THE DIOCESAN SYNOD TO DEANERY SYNODS AND PARISHES

Matters referable

102. The diocesan synod may on the motion of any member invite all or any deanery synods or parochial church councils or parochial church meetings in the diocese:

- (i) to express an opinion on or to record approval or disapproval of any matter; or
 - (ii) to supply information within their knowledge; or
 - (iii) to exercise any other functions within their competence;
- and to report to the diocesan synod by a specified date.

Report on proposal to refer matters

103. The standing committee shall report to the diocesan synod on any proposal under the last preceding standing order and, if necessary, consideration of such proposal shall be postponed or adjourned until the standing committee has so reported.

Circulation of reference.

104. The secretary of the diocesan synod shall send a copy of any resolution under standing order 102 to the secretary of each body concerned, together with such instructions and other information as the diocesan synod or the standing committee may direct.

Form and date of reply

105. Subject to any direction by the diocesan synod, where a reference under standing order 102 invites approval or disapproval of any proposal, those bodies to whom such reference is sent shall be requested to frame their replies in the common form prescribed by the standing committee and shall be informed of the date of reply which shall not be less than three months later than the date of the resolution by the diocesan synod.

Report on replies received

106. At the earliest convenient meeting of the diocesan synod after the period for replies has expired, the standing committee shall report, orally or in writing as it thinks fit, on the outcome of the reference.

MATTERS RAISED BY DEANERY SYNODS AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS AND MEETINGS

By deanery synods

107. A deanery synod may, on a motion moved by a member of the diocesan synod who represents that deanery, bring before the diocesan any question of general Church interest or affecting the deanery or any parish within the deanery.

By parochial church councils and meetings

108. A parochial church council or parochial church meeting may, on a motion moved on its behalf in the deanery synod by a member of that synod who represents the particular council or meeting, request the deanery synod to take appropriate action under the last preceding standing order.

Notice to diocesan synod

109. Notice of a motion to be moved in the diocesan synod under standing order 107 shall be given by the secretary or a member of the deanery synod duly authorised for the purpose to the secretary of the diocesan synod.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

Duties of Standing Committee

110. The standing committee shall be responsible for advising the president and the synod on the determination of priorities in the allocation of any funds at the disposal of the synod.

Duties of Diocesan Board of Finance

111. The Diocesan Board of Finance of the diocese as constituted under the Diocesan Boards of Finance Measure 1925 shall be responsible for the custody of the synod's funds and employment of all persons in receipt of salaries paid directly from those funds.

Presentation of budget

112. The standing committee shall not later than the 30th day of October in each year prepare a budget giving estimates of expenditure and income for the next ensuing financial year and recommending the manner in which the necessary funds shall be raised.

113. The budget shall then be presented by the chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, or another person nominated by the standing committee if the chair is unable to be present, to the next meeting of the synod for approval.

114. An item of expenditure shall not be included in the budget unless the purpose of the expenditure has been approved by the standing committee or the synod at a meeting preceding the meeting of the synod at which the budget is submitted or has appeared in the budget for the preceding year.

Amendment of budget by synod

115. The synod may increase (*subject to standing orders 117 and 120*) or reduce the expenditure shown in the budget on the main heads of expenditure but shall have no power to amend items within the main heads. It shall be the responsibility of the standing committee to decide how any such increases or reductions shall be effected.

Supplementary budget

116. If the standing committee during any financial year either:
- (i) anticipates that expenditures sanctioned by the budget for that year will be inadequate; or
 - (ii) is so instructed by the synod,

it shall submit to any meeting of the synod before the end of that year a supplementary budget together with recommendations as to how the additional expenditure can be met.

Motions involving expenditure

117. Notwithstanding the provisions of standing orders 26 and 27(i), except with the consent of the standing committee no motion or amendment involving expenditure shall be put to the vote unless thirty-five days' notice has been given to the standing committee.

Money resolutions

118. Subject to standing order 124, the standing committee shall not expend or engage to expend any of the synod's funds for which it is responsible without the authority of a resolution in the following form (to be known as "money resolution"): "That the synod authorise (or direct) the standing committee to expend a sum not exceeding (a named sum)"; provided that no amendment which would make a motion take the form of a money resolution shall be in order.

Moving of money resolutions

119. No motion framed as a money resolution shall be moved otherwise than by a member authorised by the standing committee.

Amendment of money resolutions

120. Save by the consent of the standing committee and subject to standing order 117 an amendment (other than an amendment moved by a member on behalf of the standing committee) shall be out of order if its effect would be to increase the expenditure which a motion framed as a money resolution seeks to authorise.

Reference back of money resolutions

121. A money resolution may be so amended as to provide that the motion be referred back to the standing committee for further consideration.

Presentation of Accounts

122. The standing committee shall present the audited accounts for the preceding financial year to the synod in like manner to the budget not later than 31 July.

Report on excess expenditure

123. In presenting the accounts for the preceding year to the synod the standing committee shall report any net expenditure in excess of the funds voted for in that year and give the explanation of those responsible, together with its comments and recommendations as to how the excess expenditure shall be sanctioned and financed by the synod. *[Amended 17 March 2018]*.

Emergency expenditure

124. Notwithstanding the provisions of standing orders 114 and 118 if the president and the chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance are satisfied that expenditure which has not been authorised by a money resolution is essential and that there is insufficient time to consult the standing committee and the synod, they may authorise such additional expenditure and notify their decision to the standing committee and the synod at the earliest opportunity.

Annual Reports

125. Every committee or body responsible to the synod or in receipt of assistance from the funds of the synod shall submit an annual concise report to the standing committee as to the action taken by it or on its behalf under its terms of reference so that the standing committee can then report to the synod in accordance with standing order 79.

126. Any matter on which it is proposed to submit a particular recommendation to the synod or on which, in the opinion of the body concerned or of the standing committee, debate on the synod is desirable, shall be the subject of a separate or motion and shall not be included in an annual report.

127. The chair shall move “that this synod do take note of the standing committee’s report” and the motion shall forthwith be voted upon without debate unless a member of the synod shall have given two days’ notice in writing to the secretary that that member wishes to debate the motion appended to that report or has given notice in accordance with standing order 26 of a motion or amendment. Should such notice have been received the chair shall call on a member of the standing committee to move “That the synod do take note of this report.”

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Form of meetings

128. A meeting of the diocesan synod, the standing committee and any other committee or sub-committee referred to in these standing orders:

(i) need not be held at a particular place (and a reference to the place where a meeting is held includes a reference to more than one place, including electronic, digital, or virtual locations, web addresses, conference call numbers, or similar);

(ii) may be held, and any votes at it may be cast, by such means which enable those participating to hear and be heard and, where practicable, see

and be seen and includes telephone conference, video conference, live broadcast or live interactive streaming or similar means, and a person is regarded as being present at a meeting held by such means;

(iii) may be held without any number of those attending, speaking, voting or otherwise participating in the meeting being together at the same place.

Admission of Press and public

129. Subject to any directions by the synod or the standing committee, any member of the synod may move that the representatives of the Press and members of the public shall withdraw during the whole or part of the business before the synod. If the motion is carried, the chair shall request the representatives of the Press and the public to withdraw.

Periods of notice

130. Any period of notice required by these standing orders shall be deemed to consist of clear days or weeks, not including the date of dispatch and the date of the event before which the notice must be delivered.

Procedural effects

131. 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 and no proceedings thereat shall be invalidated by the accidental omission to give the required notice of the meetings to any member.

Amendment of standing orders

132. A motion for the amendment of these standing orders shall require the previous consent of the standing committee.

Most recent amendments of standing orders

“SO[41] as amended by resolution of the Diocesan Synod on 17 March 2018”

The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Together, we are the Church, called and sent by God as disciples of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. We are a living, growing network of more than a thousand congregations, chaplaincies and schools.

Together, we are called to be more Christ-like: to be the Church of the Beatitudes: contemplative, compassionate and courageous for the sake of God's world.

Together, we work with God and with others for the common good in every place in one of the great crossroads of the world.

Together, we are called to proclaim the Christian faith afresh in this generation with joy and hope and love.

Together, we are called to dream dreams and see visions of what could be, and see those visions come to birth.



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