

STANDING COMMITTEE OF GENERAL SYNOD

The Constitution, Duties and Powers of the Standing Committee as provided by the resolution of the General Synod dated the 9th May 1967, as amended

1972, 1974, 1975, 1980, 1989, 1992, 1996, 2011, 2013 and 2023.

Rules

- (1) Defining the Constitution of the Standing Committee.
- (2) Prescribing its Duties and Powers.

PART I.

CONSTITUTION

1. The word "diocese" shall signify any diocese or united diocese under the jurisdiction of one bishop and the words "in writing" shall include communication by email.
2. The Standing Committee shall consist of ex officio, elected, and co-opted members.
3. No person shall be eligible to be, or shall continue to be, a member of the Standing Committee who shall not be a member of the General Synod.
4. The ex officio members shall be:
 - (a) the archbishops and bishops; and
 - (b) the honorary secretaries of the General Synod, who shall act as honorary secretaries of the Standing Committee.
5. (1) The elected members shall consist of -
 - (a) one clerical and one lay member for each diocese, being in each case a member who is forty-five years or over at the date of election; and
 - (b) one clerical and one lay member for each diocese, being in each case a member who is under forty-five years of age on such date.

Provided that:

- (i) if on the 1st December immediately before any election date there are in any diocese four or fewer beneficed or licensed clergy under the age of forty-five years, and
- (ii) if the diocesan council of such diocese (or, if there is more than one diocesan council, all the diocesan councils of such diocese) represent to the Standing Committee not later than 1st March immediately before any election date that in relation to that election in respect of that diocese this sub-section should apply as if for the references therein to "forty-five years" there were substituted references to "fifty-five years",

the Standing Committee shall have power to direct accordingly¹.

¹Under 2011, cap III, s5 it is provided that 'In the year 2011 the representatives and supplementals elected under the provisions of Section 5(1) of Chapter I of the Constitution shall be elected for a period beginning on 1st January 2012 and terminating on the day

- (2) Every elected member shall retire from office at the conclusion of business on the first day of the first ordinary session of each General Synod.
- (3) The vacancies so caused shall be filled by election by ballot in accordance with the following rules, the clerical members-elect of General Synod for each diocese being entitled to nominate and to vote for the clerical members for that diocese, and the lay members-elect of General Synod for each diocese being entitled to nominate and to vote for the lay members for that diocese:
 1. The Honorary Secretaries shall, not later than six weeks prior to the first ordinary session of each General Synod, send to each member-elect of the House of Representatives a copy of these rules.
 2. (1) Each clerical member-elect may nominate
 - (a) a clerical member-elect for the diocese who is forty-five² years or over on the first day of the forthcoming session of the General Synod; and
 - (b) a clerical member-elect for the diocese who is under forty-five* years on such date.
 - (2) Each lay member-elect may nominate
 - (a) a lay member-elect for the diocese who is forty-five* years or over on the first day of the forthcoming session of the General Synod; and
 - (b) a lay member-elect for the diocese who is under forty-five* years on such date.
 - (3) Nominations shall be in writing, shall indicate that the consent of each person being nominated has been obtained, shall be signed by the member-elect of General Synod making the nomination and countersigned by the member-elect being nominated, and shall be sent to the Honorary Secretaries so as to reach them by the date appointed by the Honorary Secretaries, which shall be no later than three weeks before the first day of the forthcoming session of the General Synod.
 - (4) Where a member-elect nominates by email it shall only be valid where:
 - (a) the nomination and the confirmation of consent to the nomination provided for in (b) below are sent to an email address designated by the Honorary Secretaries (email nominations and confirmations sent to an Honorary Secretary's personal email address are not valid); and,
 - (b) the member-elect being nominated confirms by email (separately or forwarded with the nominator's email) that they consent to the nomination; and,
 - (c) both the nomination and the consent are sent to the Honorary Secretaries at the designated email address so as to reach them not later than the date appointed by the Honorary Secretaries, which shall be no later than three weeks before the first day of the forthcoming session of the General Synod.
3. (1) Where more than one person has been nominated for a particular place, the Honorary Secretaries shall prepare a voting ballot, which may be either electronic or physical (but not both), setting out in alphabetical order the names of those persons who shall have been nominated, and shall, not later than fourteen days before the first day of the forthcoming session, send the ballot to each person entitled to vote for that place. If sent by post, the voting paper shall be accompanied by an envelope marked "voting paper" and addressed to the Honorary Secretaries.
- (2) Where only one person has been nominated for a particular place, such person shall be declared elected.
- (3) Where no nomination is received for a particular place, the Honorary Secretaries shall so

preceding the first ordinary session of the General Synod 2015.'

²In the case of any diocese where the Standing Committee has so directed, for "forty-five" read "fifty-five"

report to the General Synod on the first day of the forthcoming session, and an election to fill such place shall be held on the second day of such session at the commencement of business.

4. The ballots must be returned to the Honorary Secretaries, whether electronically (via the electronic means specified by the Honorary Secretaries) or by post (to Church of Ireland House, Church Ave., Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 CF67), so as to reach them by the appointed date, which shall be not later than four days before the first day of the forthcoming session. The Honorary Secretaries shall thereupon count the votes and report the result to the General Synod on the first day of the forthcoming session.
 5. For each place the person who shall receive the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie, it shall be decided by lot under the direction of the Honorary Secretaries.
- (4) Any casual vacancy by death, resignation or otherwise occurring among the elected members not less than three months before the first ordinary session of each General Synod shall be filled by the clerical or lay representatives, as the case may be, of the diocese for which such vacancy shall have occurred, the election to be conducted in accordance with the following rules:
1. The honorary secretaries shall, within three weeks after they have been informed of the vacancy, send a list of eligible candidates to the clerical or lay representatives, as the case may be, of the diocese for which the vacancy shall have occurred.
 2. Each such representative may nominate one of the eligible candidates, such nomination to be in writing, indicating that the consent of the person being nominated has been obtained, and to be sent to the honorary secretaries so as to reach them not later than fourteen days following the date of issue of the list of candidates.
 3. Where only one person has been nominated for a particular place, the honorary secretaries shall report this to the next meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall declare such person to be elected.
 4. Where more than one person has been nominated to fill the vacancy, the Honorary Secretaries shall prepare a voting ballot, which may be either electronic or physical (but not both), setting out in alphabetical order the names of those who have been nominated, and shall issue said ballot to each of those entitled to vote with instructions to vote thereon for one person only. The instructions shall also state whether the casual vacancy has occurred amongst the members elected under section 5(1) (a) or (b). Section 3 of this Part shall be sent with the ballot. If sent by post, the voting paper shall be accompanied by an envelope marked "voting paper" and addressed to the honorary secretaries.
 5. The ballots must be returned to the Honorary Secretaries either electronically (via the electronic means specified by the Honorary Secretaries) or by post (to Church of Ireland House, Church Ave., Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 CF67) so as to reach them not later than fourteen days following the date of their issue.
 6. The Honorary Secretaries shall examine the ballots so returned and report the result to the next meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall declare the person who shall have obtained the greatest number of votes to be elected.
 7. If the voting results in a tie for the first place between two or more persons, a further voting ballot, which may be either electronic or physical (but not both), on which shall be set forth in alphabetical order the names of such persons, shall be issued by the Honorary Secretaries to those who are entitled to vote, with instructions to vote for one only of the persons named and to return the ballots within fourteen days from the date of issue.
 8. The honorary secretaries shall examine and report on the second voting papers, and the Standing Committee shall declare the person who shall have obtained the greatest number of votes to be elected.
 9. If such second voting shall result in a tie between two or more persons, it shall be decided by

lot under direction from the chair.

- (5) Any casual vacancy by death, resignation or otherwise occurring among the elected members less than three months before the first ordinary session of each General Synod shall not be filled pending the said session of the General Synod.
6. (1) There shall be seven co-opted members.
 - (2) Every co-opted member shall retire from office at the conclusion of business on the first day of the first ordinary session of each General Synod.
 - (3) The vacancies so caused shall be filled by election by the ex officio and elected members by ballot, either electronic or physical (but not both), in accordance with the following rules:
 1. Prior to the first ordinary session of each General Synod the Standing Committee shall appoint the date by which nominations must be received and the date by which ballots must be returned. On the conclusion of the session of the General Synod, the Honorary Secretaries shall inform each ex officio and elected member of the dates so appointed.
 2. Each ex officio or elected member may nominate not more than seven persons, being members of the General Synod. Such nominations shall be in writing, shall specify the diocese which each person being nominated represents in the General Synod, shall indicate that the consent of each person being nominated has been obtained, and shall be sent to the Honorary Secretaries so as to reach them not later than the appointed date.
 3. Immediately after the close of nominations, the Honorary Secretaries shall prepare a voting ballot, either electronic or physical (but not both), setting out in alphabetical order the names of those persons who have been nominated under rules 2 and 3, and the dioceses which each such person represents in the General Synod. They shall distribute this ballot to each ex officio and elected member. The ballot shall be accompanied by (a) a statement setting out the record of attendance of any person nominated, who served as a member of Standing Committee in the previous triennium (b) if sent by post, an envelope marked "voting paper" and addressed to the Honorary Secretaries.
 4. Each ex officio and elected member may vote for not more than seven of the persons whose names appear on the ballot.
 5. The ballots must be returned to the Honorary Secretaries, either electronically (via the electronic means specified by the Honorary Secretaries) or by post (to Church of Ireland House, Church Ave., Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 CF67), so as to reach them not later than the appointed date. The Honorary Secretaries shall thereupon count the votes, and the result of the count shall be attached to the agenda for the next meeting of the Standing Committee.
 6. The seven persons who shall have received the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie, it shall be decided by lot under the direction of the Honorary Secretaries.
 - (4) Any casual vacancy by death, resignation, or otherwise occurring among the co-opted members shall be filled, as soon as conveniently may be, at a meeting of the Standing Committee by election by the members present.
7. Any member who shall have retired in accordance with section 5 or 6 shall be capable of being re-elected either to fill the vacancy occasioned by such retirement or any other vacancy then or at any future time occurring, for which such member shall be in other respects duly qualified.
 8. Any elected or co-opted member may, in writing addressed to the honorary secretaries, resign from the Standing Committee.

PART II.

POWERS AND DUTIES

9. The Standing Committee shall exercise all such powers and duties as may from time to time be conferred upon it by the Constitution of the Church of Ireland.

(See Appendix)

10. The Standing Committee shall possess and may exercise such of the powers vested in the General Synod as shall from time to time be committed to it by the General Synod.
11. The Standing Committee may deliberate and confer upon all matters affecting the interests of the Church of Ireland and cognizable by the General Synod, may make such inquiries as it shall deem to be requisite, and may communicate with all such bodies and persons as it shall consider necessary; provided that any action taken by the Standing Committee, not already sanctioned by the General Synod, shall be submitted to the General Synod for approval at its next session.
12. The Standing Committee shall watch any legislation or proposals for legislation which may be brought forward in Oireachtas Éireann or in the Parliament of Northern Ireland or in the Parliament of the United Kingdom and which may affect the interests of the Church of Ireland, and may take such action with respect thereto as it may deem necessary.
13. (1) The Standing Committee shall act as a permanent committee on educational endowments with a view to preserving and regulating all such endowments connected with the Church of Ireland in all matters not sufficiently provided for by existing organisations; it may enter into communication with any commissioners or other body having jurisdiction to deal with educational endowments upon the management of which it may be deemed expedient that the Church of Ireland should be represented; it shall have full power in the name of the General Synod to arrange the principle and method according to which the representatives of the Church of Ireland shall be appointed or selected as members of any board or body constituted by any scheme dealing with educational endowments, provided that, as far as it rests with the Standing Committee, local trustees shall not be superseded without their own consent; and it shall have full power on behalf of the General Synod to take such action as may be deemed expedient before any court, commissioners or other body upon the occasion of the making or alteration of any such scheme.
- (2) The Standing Committee shall take such steps as may be deemed expedient and as occasion may require in the case of the making or alteration of any scheme of educational endowment by any court or body having jurisdiction in that behalf to see that so far as possible bodies are incorporated such as would be satisfactory to the Church of Ireland for holding such educational property and endowments as it may be impracticable or undesirable to vest in the Representative Body.
- (3) The Standing Committee shall present copies of any scheme, original or altered, in respect of which it has taken action, to the next ordinary session of the General Synod.
14. The Standing Committee shall make all necessary arrangements for meetings of the General Synod, shall defray the working expenses of the General Synod and of the Standing Committee, and shall pay such further sums as may from time to time be expressly authorised by the General Synod.
15. The Standing Committee shall, in respect of the synod hall,
- (a) maintain the buildings, furniture and premises in good order and condition;
 - (b) pay all rents, rates, taxes, insurances and other charges necessarily or properly payable;
 - (c) make such additions and improvements as may from time to time be authorised by the General Synod;
 - (d) have power at its discretion to permit its use, in whole or in part, by other bodies, and to receive payment for same.

16. The Standing Committee is authorised to draw against the annual income of the General Purposes Fund for such extraordinary expenses as it may find to be absolutely necessary, any such expenditure to be submitted for confirmation and approval to the next ordinary session of the General Synod.
17. The Standing Committee shall pay to the Registrar of the Court of the General Synod all fees to which that Registrar shall be entitled according to the second schedule appended to the Rules of such Court.
18. The Standing Committee shall each year appoint an accountant or firm of accountants, duly qualified to audit the accounts of the Representative Body, and shall cause a copy of the report of such auditor to be submitted to the General Synod.
19. The Standing Committee is authorised to administer a Priorities Fund established in pursuance of a resolution of the General Synod, 16th May 1979; to receive contributions to such Fund; and to sanction on behalf of the General Synod payments out of such Fund. It shall report annually on such Fund, such report to include financial statements of the Fund showing receipts and payments therefrom together with the certificate of the Auditor appointed to audit the Accounts of the Representative Body.
20. The Standing Committee shall, at a meeting to be held as soon as conveniently may be after each triennial election, appoint such number of persons as it shall decide, in addition to the honorary secretaries of the General Synod, to form a legal advisory committee, and may from time to time fill by election any vacancy which may occur on the said committee: provided that only persons qualified to hold the office of a diocesan chancellor shall be eligible for appointment to the legal advisory committee.
21. The Standing Committee shall have power to:
 - (a) determine the number of members which shall form a quorum;
 - (b) appoint sub-committees of its members and determine the quorum for each such sub-committee;
 - (c) appoint advisory committees and determine the quorum for each such committee;
 - (d) appoint delegates to represent the Church of Ireland at conferences;
 - (e) appoint and pay such officers and servants at it shall deem necessary, and obtain such other paid assistance as may from time to time be required;
 - (f) remove officers and servants, when it shall think proper to do so.
22. The Standing Committee shall make to each ordinary session of the General Synod a report on its proceedings, which shall include a statement of its receipts and expenditure during the year, audited by an auditor to be appointed each year by the Representative Body.

APPENDIX

POWERS AND DUTIES CONFERRED UPON THE STANDING COMMITTEE

BY THE CONSTITUTION, 2003.

EXPERIMENTAL USE OF SERVICES

1. Any form of Service and any Lectionary and any Catechism which a Liturgical Committee appointed by the General Synod has recommended for experimental use with a view to its permanent use being authorised by resolution and bill under the provisions of this section may be used without the enactment of a statute from such date and for such period, not exceeding fifteen years, as may be appointed by the House of Bishops and notified by it to the Standing Committee of the General Synod ... (Chapter I, section 26 (3)).

DIOCESAN BOUNDARIES

2. The power of transferring any portion of a diocese to another diocese or union of dioceses contiguous to such transferred portion may in any particular case be exercised on behalf of the General Synod by the Standing Committee, if it is requested to do so by the synod or synods of every diocese affected thereby. (Chapter I, section 31 (2)).

ARCHDEACONS

3. If the diocesan synod, with the consent of the Standing Committee of the General Synod, shall so determine, there may be two or more archdeacons in any diocese. (Chapter II section 38 (a)).

FEEES FOR SEARCHES AND CERTIFICATES

4. ... for every search in a register of baptisms or of burials and for every single certificate of baptism or of burial the fees prescribed from time to time by the Standing Committee of the General Synod ... (Chapter III, section 25 (2)).

COURT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

5. The Standing Committee of the General Synod shall forthwith after the first ordinary session of each General Synod elect ten lay judges, to constitute the list of lay judges, and shall also from time to time fill by election any vacancy or vacancies which may occur in the list of lay judges for the time being and shall report to the following session of the General Synod. (Chapter VIII, section 32).

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND PENSIONS BOARD

6. Any casual vacancy occurring by death, resignation or otherwise shall be filled by election, in the case of a member elected by the General Synod, by the Standing Committee of the General Synod (Chapter XIV, Section 16(b)).