

## **DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN- RULES FOR DEANERY SYNODS**

### **I. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Deanery Synod exists:

- a) To foster partnership in mission between: the parishes; schools; chapels; chaplaincies in key church and secular bodies; and other Church of England institutions within the Deanery.
- b) To encourage sharing, pastoral care, prayer and joint activity between the parishes in the Deanery particularly over key issues like mission planning, pastoral reorganisation, vacancies, significant changes and major events.
- c) To debate and take united action on issues of concern to the Deanery;
- d) To receive reports on and share Deanery concerns with representatives serving on General Synod, Diocesan Synod and major Diocesan Committees and other bodies to which the Deanery may decide to affiliate.
- e) To study, debate and submit responses to the Diocesan Synod and General Synod on matters that have been referred to Deaneries and to submit comments within agreed timescales.
- f) To elect officers of the Deanery Synod and to elect/appoint representatives to serve on diocesan bodies and other bodies where appropriate.
- g) To oversee the finances of the Deanery Synod and to manage any projects/initiatives that the Deanery may establish.
- h) To act on behalf of the Diocesan Synod or the Diocesan Board of Finance on any matters delegated to it and to report back in ways that shall be determined.

### **II. THE HOUSES OF THE DEANERY SYNOD**

- 1. There shall be two Houses namely the House of Clergy and the House of Laity.
- 2. The House of Clergy shall be chaired by the Area Dean and the House of Laity shall be chaired by a layperson (who shall be a member and elected by the other lay members of Deanery Synod).
- 3. The two Houses may meet separately at the request of the Chair or at the request of three members of either House. Such meetings may be held within the context of a Deanery Synod meeting with the agreement of both the Chairs.
- 4. The Clergy of the Deanery also meet as a Chapter. However, where such Chapter meetings are designated to be formal meetings of the House of Clergy this must be clearly notified in writing and at least seven days' notice must be given of such a meeting.
- 5. Even if lay ministers are invited to Chapter meetings, they remain voting members of the House of Laity only.

6. Where Houses meet separately the Chair will determine whether they invite observers or hold open meetings.
7. Where a casual vacancy occurs among the Deanery's representatives on Diocesan Synod then a meeting of the relevant House shall be held to elect a new member to Diocesan Synod.
8. No person may be a member of more than one Deanery Synod.

### **III. MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF LAITY**

1. The membership of the House of Laity shall comprise communicant members aged sixteen years and upwards who shall be appointed, elected and co-opted in accordance with the Church Representation Rules 2022 rules 16,18 and 19 and in accordance with any Scheme as provided in the CRR rules 22, 23 and 24.

### **IV. MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF CLERGY**

1. membership of the House of Clergy shall comprise all the clergy beneficed in or licensed to any parish in the deanery and all clergy holding the bishop's licence and working in an institution in the deanery as well as clergy members of General Synod and Diocesan Synod, those with PTO and others as permitted by the CRR rules 15 and 18 and in accordance with any Scheme as provided in the CRR rules 22, 23 and 24.

### **V. OBSERVERS**

1. The Deanery Synod may decide to invite any other individual to serve as an observer on either a temporary or permanent basis. This could include church wardens, lay workers, priests, ministers or lay people from other Christian denominations who worship at Local Ecumenical Projects which include the Church of England and representatives from church schools.
2. There may be certain of the above categories where an individual who is a communicant member of the Church of England and over 16 years of age might appropriately be considered for co-option. A decision to co-opt would rest with the relevant House not with the whole Deanery Synod.

### **VI. MEETINGS**

1. The Deanery Synod shall meet at least twice each year.
2. Meetings may be held via a digital forum if agreed by the Deanery Synod
3. Normally dates for the year shall be fixed at the last meeting of the previous year or by the Standing Committee.
4. If dates are not arranged for the year ahead then members should have one month's notice of any meeting of the Deanery Synod except in emergencies.
5. All minutes, agendas & papers should be dispatched at least seven days before a meeting.
6. The Quorum shall be one third of the members of each House including co-opted members. Members may not appoint alternates if they are unable to attend.

7. Meetings should last for no more than two hours (excluding any break for refreshment). If there is important business still to transact at the end of the two-hour period then the Chair may propose an extension of not more than twenty minutes which must be approved by the majority of members present and voting. The Chair shall then prioritise business that must be dealt with.
8. Emergency meetings may be called at the request of the Area Dean, the Lay Chair or six members of the Deanery Synod (including at least two members from each House). Emergency meetings shall require seven days' notice.
9. One meeting a year shall be designated as the Annual General Meeting at which a financial report shall be approved and the Standing Committee shall give a report.
10. The separate Houses shall meet when required to elect/appoint representatives and in other instances if convened by the Chair or at the request of three members.
11. Minutes of meetings shall be sent to the Diocesan Pastoral Secretary and to the Secretary of each PCC (to share with PCCS).
12. The Deanery Synod may designate all or some of its meetings to be open and may choose to combine such open meetings with other deaneries. The Chair shall decide whether those attending such meetings shall be allowed to speak.
13. Votes in the Deanery Synod shall require a simple majority of those present and voting. If necessary then the Chair may have a second or casting vote.
14. On an instruction from the Diocesan Synod, the General Synod or where nominations are required from a specific House then there shall be a vote by Houses.
15. If voting is required in an election then the simple majority method shall be used.

## **VII. OFFICERS**

1. The Officers shall comprise the following:

- a) The Area Dean (Co Chair)
- b) The Lay Chair (Co Chair)
- c) A Secretary & and Honorary Treasurer elected by the Deanery Synod
- d) A Chapter Clerk appointed by the Area Dean
- e) If there is an Assistant Area Dean then they shall serve as a Vice Chair of the Deanery Synod & the House of Clergy
- f) The House of Laity may decide to elect one or more Vice Chairs from the membership of the Deanery Synod or by co-opting an individual who shall act as a Vice Chair of the Deanery Synod & the House of Laity.

In selecting Vice Chairs the House of Laity may wish to appoint the past Chair, someone who is

likely to succeed as Chair or someone who will assist the Chair by taking on responsibility for specific tasks.

2. Where Officers are elected rather than appointed this shall normally be held at the first meeting of the Triennium.
3. The Co Chairs shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the Deanery Synod or particular items of business on an agenda.
4. The Lay Chair shall continue their term of office until the election of their successor as Lay Chair.

#### **VIII. LINKS WITH GENERAL SYNOD**

1. Each meeting of the Deanery Synod should normally have a report from the General Synod. This could be a report on the last meeting(s) or an outline of the agenda and key items for a future meeting.

#### **IX. STANDING COMMITTEE**

1. Deanery Synod shall have a standing committee ('Standing Committee') and its role is:
  - a) to set the dates & locations of Deanery Synod meetings, ensuring these are advertised in good time,
  - b) to set and circulate the Agenda for Deanery Synod meetings and to ensure minutes of Deanery Synod are kept and circulated,
  - c) to undertake any actions on behalf of the Deanery Synod which are delegated to it by Deanery Synod.
  - d) to act as the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee and consider any matters referred to Deanery Synod by the Area Dean and Lay Chair as interested parties in any Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee consultation. The statutory interested parties shall remain unfettered and independent of the Standing Committee and Deanery Synod.<sup>1</sup>
  - e) to report to Deanery Synod as soon as possible and in accordance with any set timescales,
  - f) to call additional meetings of the Deanery Synod as required, especially in respect of relevant material issued by the Diocese or Church of England,
  - g) to determine whether a Clergy or Lay member of Diocesan Synod moving out of the Deanery but remaining within the Diocese may retain their place on Diocesan Synod under rule 64 (2) (b) of the CRR.

The Membership of the Standing Committee shall comprise:

- The Area Dean and the Lay Chair (one of whom shall normally be the Chair)

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<sup>1</sup> The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee are the body at deanery level which will consider pastoral reorganisation and strategic mission planning across the deanery. The deanery MPC may also be involved in the mutual support and wellbeing of clergy and parishes and in discussions around deanery vacancies.

- The Secretary, Chapter Clerk and the Honorary Treasurer of the Deanery Synod
- Any Assistant Area Dean
- Additional lay and clergy members elected from Deanery Synod and by Deanery Synod, the number to be elected being that appropriate for the size of the deanery and to make the number of lay and clergy in the Standing Committee equal.
- The Standing Committee can co-opt other members (Deanery Synod shall determine the maximum number of such co-options which could include ecumenical representation, or those with particular skills).

#### The Quorum of the Standing Committee

- The Quorum shall be one third of the members of each House including co-opted members. Members may not appoint alternates if they are unable to attend.

#### **X. APPROVAL and AMENDMENTS**

1. The Rules were approved by Diocesan Synod on 15 July 2023 and Bishop's Council shall review these Rules once every five years and any amendments or additions that should be made or are considered desirable shall be submitted for approval by Diocesan Synod.