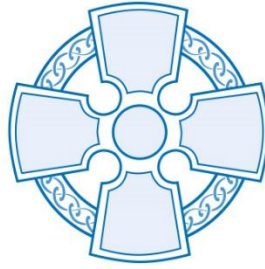


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THE CHURCH
IN WALES

**Corff Llywodraethol Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru
The Governing Body of The Church in Wales**

Standing Committee

A Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales was held by Video Conference on 11 July 2023.

Present:

Ex-officio Members

The Right Reverend the Bishop of St Asaph
The Right Reverend the Bishop of Llandaff
Mrs Hilary Wiseman, Deputy Chair of the Representative Body

Nominated by Diocesan Standing Committees

The Reverend Christine Owen
Mr Paul Whittaker
The Reverend Richard Wood
Ms Susan Fogarty
The Venerable Paul Mackness
Mr Tim Llewelyn (Chair)
The Venerable Rod Green
Dr Heather Payne (Vice-chair)
The Reverend John Connell
Dr Jayne Collier
The Reverend Justin Davies
Mr Paul Murray

Co-opted

His Honour Judge Andrew Keyser KC
Sir Paul Silk

In Attendance:

The Provincial Secretary, the Governing Body Officer, the Governance Manager and the Head of Legal Services.

Apologies

Apologies were received from the Archbishop of Wales, the Bishops of St Davids, Bishop of Swansea & Brecon and Monmouth and Professor Medwin Hughes, Chair of the Representative Body

(His Honour Judge Andrew Keyser KC was present for part of the meeting).

Prayers

Prayers were said by the Venerable Rod Green.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting, particularly the Reverend Christine Owen and Mr Paul Murray who were attending their first operational meetings. The Chair also congratulated Professor Medwin Hughes on being honoured with the title Commander of the British Empire in the recent honours list.

Minutes of meeting 18-19 May 2023

23/22

The minutes of the meeting held on 18-19 May were approved as a correct record of that meeting and would be signed on another occasion, subject to one typographical error (spelling of College) being amended.

A paper on matters arising on the minutes was noted.

Priorities, growth & resilience updates

23/23

The Provincial Secretary updated the Standing Committee on three areas of ongoing work relating to growth, financial resilience and the development of priorities for the Church in Wales.

Priorities Working Group

As part of the discussions at the residential meeting in May the Standing Committee recognised the need for the Church in Wales to determine priorities around which future work could be orientated and planned and had asked the Archbishop to form a small group to undertake this work and prepare proposals accordingly. The Priorities Working Group was scheduled to meet for a residential gathering in Shrewsbury on 31 July/1 August to map out where to find new ways to co-operate and would report back to the Standing Committee.

The membership of the Priorities group comprised:

The Archbishop of Wales
Professor Medwin Hughes CBE

The Bishop of Llandaff
 The Venerable Rod Green
 The Reverend Justin Davies
 Dr Heather Payne
 Mr Tim Llewelyn

During the discussion collaboration with the wider Church in Wales and increasing diversity of the membership of the Working Group were highlighted, matters which would be discussed with the Archbishop.

Church Growth Fund Allocation Group

The Church Growth Fund Allocation Group had met for the first time on 6 June and considered proposals for the criteria by which use of the Fund would be considered.

The Group had given consideration to the application process for use of the Fund and was impressed by the application process and supporting materials used by the diocese of Oxford for use of its Development Fund. The Bishop of Oxford had given permission for the Church in Wales to make use of these materials, which would enable the work to proceed more quickly. The Group would next meet on 11 September.

Distribution of Funds Review Group

The Distribution of Funds Working Group had met twice, and the Finance Committee of the Representative Body had undertaken work between those meetings. Detailed work was being undertaken on how the Partnership Funding and Structural Resilience Fund would work together.

A date was being arranged for the Group's next meeting, likely to be in August or early September.

The Standing Committee noted the current position on the work of all three Working Groups.

Governing Body matters

23/24

Minutes of Governing Body meeting April 2023

The draft minutes of the Governing Body for April 2023 were approved for translation and circulation to the Governing Body.

September 2023 meeting order of business

The Standing Committee received and approved a draft agenda for the Governing Body meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday 5 and 6 September 2023 at the International Convention Centre Wales, in Newport. The structure of the first morning was intended to try to encourage all Governing Body members to speak and engage with the meeting.

A progress update would be provided on the Church Growth Fund, the Distribution of Funds Review Group and the Priorities Working Group, followed by discussion in groups and a plenary item to reflect on the group discussions on the second day.

The Committee noted anticipated questions on representation of women in the Church in Wales and international ecumenical activities. The Standing Committee noted that aspects of international ecumenism would be dealt with in the video item on ecumenical matters and agreed, at the suggestion of the Bishop of St Asaph, to include a short motion for the Governing Body to debate as part of the item.

Dr Heather Payne indicated she would pose a question during Question Time to illustrate the work of the Anglican Consultative Council Science Commission to prompt thought on the relationship between science and faith.

The Committee noted that Sheran Harper, the world-wide President of the Mothers' Union would be present for the whole meeting, and would address the Governing Body in the context of the worship.

The Standing Committee agreed to include a motion with the ecumenical item, a question on the Anglican Communion Science Commission, and noted the address by the President of the MU.

At the end of the meeting, there would be an Archbishop's charge to reflect on and recap aspects of the meeting.

Summary

The Standing Committee:

- i. Endorsed the draft minutes of the Governing Body's meeting in April 2023.
- ii. Approved the draft agenda for the Governing Body's meeting in September 2023.
- iii. Agreed to include a motion with the agenda item at the September meeting on ecumenical matters, the text of which would be confirmed by the Bishop of St. Asaph.
- iv. Noted the President of the Mothers' Union would be in attendance at the meeting and would address the Governing Body.

Locations for 2024 and 2025 meetings

The Standing Committee considered the dates and locations of Governing Body meetings in 2024 and 2025.

Wednesday and Thursday 17 and 18 April 2024

The Standing Committee noted it had agreed the dates and venue for the Governing Body to meet in April 2024, with the International Convention Centre Wales being already booked for that meeting.

Wednesday and Thursday 4 and 5 September 2024

The Standing Committee had previously agreed the dates for the Governing Body to meet in September 2024. A venue was yet to be agreed.

The Standing Committee noted that staff had visited some venues in Wales that may meet the requirements for holding a Governing Body meeting, including the availability of accommodation and meals, a sufficiently large meeting hall with appropriate technical and audio-visual facilities, ease of accessibility for members, and cost.

The following potential locations had been identified as suitable for Governing Body meetings:

- University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter Campus
- City Hall Cardiff
- Venue Cymru Llandudno
- International Conference Centre Wales

The venues identified had good points and drawbacks, which were detailed to the Standing Committee.

In discussion, it was noted that the Church needed to be mindful of:

- Venue cost and value for money;
- Accessibility and convenience of location;
- Accessibility to public transport links.

The Chair declared an interest in this subject as he was a member of the Council of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

The Committee was balanced in deciding on a location, and agreed that the Chair and Provincial Secretary would discuss before making the final decision.

[Subsequent to the meeting, it was agreed the venue for the September 2024 Governing Body meeting would be the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Lampeter campus. A decision on the venue for the September 2025 meeting would be discussed in due course.]

April 2025

The Standing Committee had previously agreed that Venue Cymru, Llandudno be booked for the April 2025 meeting, and confirmed meeting dates of Wednesday and Thursday 30 April and 1 May 2025.

September 2025

The dates for the September 2025 meeting were agreed to be Wednesday and Thursday 11 and 12 September 2025. The location for the meeting would be considered in due course.

Legal matters

23/25

i. Legal Department Update

The Head of Legal Services presented a comprehensive update from the Legal Department.

Constitutional amendments on Church in Wales website

The amendments to the Constitution of the Church in Wales made by the Governing Body in April 2023 had been uploaded to the Church in Wales website.

In recent days an error in the Constitution had been identified in that a Canon repealed in 2005 had never been removed from Volume II of the Constitution. The Standing Committee noted that this had been corrected.

Drafting Sub-committee

The current membership of the Drafting Sub-committee was noted as being:

- Mr Arwel Davies (Diocesan Registrar, St Davids)
- The Reverend Dyfrig Lloyd (Cleric, Diocese of Llandaff)
- Mr Mark Powell KC (Diocesan Chancellor, Monmouth)
- The Reverend Ruth Rowan (Cleric, Diocese of Monmouth)
- Mr Llyr Williams (Diocesan Registrar, Diocese of St Asaph)

The Reverend Canon Steven Kirk, Chair of the Drafting Sub-committee, had retired at the end of June 2023, which left a vacancy on the Sub-committee and a vacant chair.

Standing Committee members were asked in February to consider possible names for a replacement member of the Committee, ideally either a Cleric, or a layperson *not* in a Registrar/Chancellor role, with some legal training or experience.

The Reverend Rebecca Stevens, a cleric who undertook a law degree prior to ordination, was considered as a new member until the end of the current triennium.

Members of the Sub-committee had also been consulted on arrangements for chairing. Given that the triennium for the Standing Committee (and its sub-committees) ran to the end of 2023, members of the Sub-committee had suggested that the Reverend Ruth Rowan be appointed as interim Chair for the remainder of the triennium. This would give Standing Committee the opportunity to consider the permanent chairing and makeup of its sub-committees at the beginning of the new triennium.

The Standing Committee noted the Reverend Ruth Rowan had been a member of the Drafting Sub-committee since 2019 and prior to entering ordained ministry had worked as a lawyer.

Following discussion the Standing Committee appointed:

- The Reverend Ruth Rowan as interim Chair of the Drafting Sub-committee; and
- The Reverend Rebecca Stevens as a member of the Drafting Sub-committee.

Both appointments were made until the end of the current triennium.

Legal Sub-committee

The Legal Sub-committee had completed an Opinion (dated 26 June 2023) for the Bench of Bishops on the Visitation Powers of the Archbishop. It was anticipated that this would be published in due course, likely as part of the Governance Reform Working Group review of the general powers of the Archbishop.

Disciplinary Tribunal and Disciplinary Working Group

The Standing Committee noted that since its previous meeting there had been one referral to the Disciplinary Tribunal.

There were no other matters before the Tribunal and no concluded proceedings on which to report.

The Church of England had published proposals for reform of its disciplinary regime ahead of the General Synod in July. Officers were currently comparing those proposals with the sketches of proposed new models for the Church in Wales's provision in advance of finalising proposals for reform for discussion with the Standing Committee and the Bench of Bishops.

Governance Reform Working Group

The Working Group had completed interviews with interested parties on the review of the powers of the Archbishop. Following the completion of the Legal Sub-committee's work on the topic, further consideration would take place at the Working Group's meeting at the end of August.

Following discussions with the Provincial Secretary, work on the makeup of the membership of the Standing Committee had been paused following the recent strategic residential meeting of the Standing Committee. The Governance Reform Working Group would await the conclusions of the groups set up by that meeting as to the future strategic direction and constitution of the Standing Committee before making any detailed recommendations.

ii. Minor Constitutional Amendments – proposals for Governing Body September 2023

The Standing Committee considered five proposals for changes to the Constitution for debate at the Governing Body in September 2023, and noted one further proposal from a member in accordance with Section 35 of Chapter II of the Constitution. A number of proposals were approved to go to the Governing Body as recommendations from the Standing Committee, concerning:

1. Gender neutral language - the Standing Committee would be authorised to approve editions to the Constitution where gendered language was replaced with gender-neutral language.
2. Sickness and incapacity - Clause 1 of Section 1.1 of Volume II of the Constitution would be amended so the provision applied to incumbents who were not subject to Common Tenure.
3. Annual meetings (Vestry and Deanery Conference – the required final dates for the holding of annual Vestry meetings and Deanery Conference meetings would be amended to 30 June and 31 July respectively.
4. Reorganisation of canons relating to relations with other Churches – a new section within Volume II of the Constitution would be created to accommodate the canons concerning relations with other Churches: the canons would consequently be removed from where currently listed.

Proposed motions and explanatory notes for each of the respective motions were discussed and approved.

iii. Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIOs)

The Standing Committee considered and discussed a template constitution whereby ministry areas would be permitted to form a CIO to protect individual members from the liability risks associated with trusteeship of an unincorporated organisation. A template CIO constitution had been approved by the Governance Reform Working Group and, subsequently, by the Charity Commission. A pilot registration project had been completed.

Following discussion, the Standing Committee agreed to return to the Governing Body with a proposal to amend the Constitution to permit wider implementation of CIOs and bring the change into effect.

The motion to support such a proposal was approved.

iv. Additional amendment

The Standing Committee was informed that, in accordance with Sections 35 (9) and (10) of Chapter II of the Constitution, the Bishop of St Asaph had tabled the following motion to amend Regulations passed by the Standing Committee in February 2023.

In Chapter V (Regulations) renumber Regulation 4.5 as 4.6 and insert:

4.5 A Diocesan Conference may make provision to delegate elections to fill casual vacancies on the list of Episcopal Electors and the supplemental list to its Standing Committee. Such elections shall otherwise proceed as set out in Regulation 4.4.

The motion would be included on the agenda of the meeting of the Governing Body in September 2023.

v. Report of the Select Committee for the Bill to reform the Archbishop's Electoral College and the Bishops' Electoral Colleges

The Standing Committee noted the Select Committee formed in relation to the above Bill had concluded its work. The Standing Committee:

- i. Received the report of the Select Committee for the Bill to reform the Archbishop's Electoral College and the Bishops' Electoral Colleges.
- ii. Resolved, in accordance with the Select Committee's recommendation, that the Bill was not 'non-controversial'.
- iii. Decided to set the Bill down for a full in person debate at the next session of the Governing Body in September 2023.
- iv. Decided to publish the Select Committee report to all members of the Governing Body (Chapter II, Section 29 (1)).

The Standing Committee requested that the Select Committee report be published online as soon as practicable, in order to encourage reflection on its contents prior to the Governing Body meeting in September.

Monmouth Review Implementation Group update

23/26

The Chair, also the Chair of the Monmouth Review Implementation Group, updated the Standing Committee about ongoing work as the Review Implementation Group was drawing to a close, and all work had been completed with the aim of preventing another similar situation.

A question was asked at the last Governing Body meeting about the Dignity Charter and how it related to the work of the Implementation Group. In particular as to what work was being done to ensure an implementation plan, clear lines of accountability, and robust processes for handling complaints.

The Chair advised the Standing Committee that this work was in hand.

Whilst the Standing Committee welcomed the regular updates provided throughout its work, it was agreed to add a comprehensive update of the work of the Monmouth Review Implementation Group to the Governing Body Agenda in April 2024.

Representative Body update

23/27

The Provincial Secretary updated the Standing Committee on the meeting of the Representative Body held on 26 June 2023. Since the Standing Committee's meeting in February the Representative Body had met twice, on 28 March and 26 June.

In June the Representative Body met with its external auditor to review the annual audit and adopt the Audit Findings report. As part of this, the trustees meet with the

auditor alone, with no staff present. The auditor gave an unqualified audit and the Audit Findings report was received by the RB.

The Representative Body also approved drafts of its annual report for the year ended 31 December 2022 and the annual report of the Common Investment Fund also for the year ended 31 December 2022. Both documents will be provided to the Governing Body at its meeting in September – this year the annual reports would only be available digitally.

Safeguarding Committee membership

23/28

The Standing Committee was informed that there were two vacancies on the Safeguarding Committee. Currently, the Committee's membership was:

- Tony Young (Chair)
- Archdeacon Alan Jevons
- The Archbishop (ex-officio as bishop with safeguarding portfolio)
- David Halse
- Laura Howe
- Howard Llewellyn
- (Two vacancies)

The Standing Committee agreed to:

- i. Appoint Siân Gwynn to the Safeguarding Committee as a lay member to the end of the current triennium, subject to satisfactory DBS; and
- ii. Noted the remaining vacancy.

It was noted the powers and duties of the Safeguarding Committee, first approved in 2021 would be reviewed by the Standing Committee in 2023.

Representation of women - interim update to the Governing Body

23/29

The Standing Committee noted at its meeting in February 2023 that an update of diocesan data would return to its agenda in July 2023, to assist the Committee with the current position in dioceses for representation of women, to provide an interim update on the subject to the Governing Body in September.

When the Governing Body approved a report on Representation of Women in the Church in May 2019, the Governing Body asked for a further report in 2025.

Dioceses had been asked to provide updates on the current / latest interim position.

The Standing Committee noted the information provided. It was reported that the diocese of Llandaff was reviewing how best to represent gender information in a changing world, though the diocese would continue to collect statistics.

Deemed business

23/30

The Standing Committee noted three items of deemed business:

1. A report from the Bench of Bishops relating to its meetings in April and June.
2. A report on its own membership, including various changes since its previous meeting.
3. A report on progress towards the Church in Wales's target of being net zero carbon by 2030.

Date of the next meeting

23/31

The meeting scheduled to take place on 28 September was discussed. It was noted the work of the Priorities Working Group was unlikely to have concluded by that date. It was therefore agreed to:

- Remove the online strategic meeting scheduled for Thursday 28 September from the calendar, and
- Hold the scheduled meeting on Thursday 30 November as an in-person meeting at the provincial Office and not online.

Retirement of the Bishop of St Davids

23/32

The Chair reminded the Standing Committee that the Bishop of St. Davids would retire on 31 July 2023. He thanked the Bishop for her significant contribution to the work of the Governing Body and the Church in Wales and wished her well in her retirement.

Closing Prayers

The Bishop of St. Asaph closed the meeting in prayer.