

Standing Committee Report
Secunder: The Revd Henry Blair
Embargo Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery

It is my honour to formally second the report of the Standing Committee to the General Synod of 2023.

I wish to draw your attention to some of the other work of the Standing Committee over this past year that has not already been dealt with in Dr Michael's proposer's speech.

As you will have seen in your motions booklet, the Standing Committee bring to General Synod this year a motion that would allow for Standing Committee elections to take place via electronic communications technology as opposed to solely via postal ballot. It is hoped that, if passed, this will both simplify and modernise the voting procedure while maintaining anonymity and security.

Another motion which was due to be brought to General Synod this year was a proposal to change the terminology currently used in the Synodical bills process with the aim of making the process easier to understand and encourage greater participation from the membership of General Synod. However, after the discovery of an anomaly with this motion, it was decided that this would, instead, be brought to General Synod 2024.

Many here will be interested in the issue of clergy tenure and you will note that there is a motion coming from Standing Committee on this issue. It was felt that the time was right for a Select Committee to be established to deal with this matter in a comprehensive, yet wholly pastoral manner. You will find the terms of reference for this proposed select committee in your motions booklet.

The Standing Committee has also decided that a church-wide census would take place again in 2024. It was felt that the timing of this would be important as it will be an opportunity to assess the state of the Church in the post-pandemic world. The results of this census could be enormously helpful to parishes, dioceses, and the central Church and we would like to thank the bishops and diocesan councils for their role in ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated to this process. The Honorary Secretaries are currently putting together a set of proposals regarding this census which will be brought to the June meeting of the Standing Committee.

Another important issue that has been looked at in the past year is the review of the Dignity in Church Life Bullying and Harassment Policy. The terms of reference for the review group were

Standing Committee Report

Secunder: The Revd Henry Blair

Embargo Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery

agreed upon between the Honorary Secretaries, the Chief Officer and the HR Manager of the RB. Standing Committee nominated three people to sit on this review group and more information can be found in Appendix G of the Standing Committee report.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Honorary Secretaries and Standing Committee, I would like to thank all of those who have volunteered their time and energy to participate in, not just the Standing Committee, but all the committees and boards operating under the General Synod. The volunteer contribution to the life of the Church is beyond value and it is my privilege to offer all of you our sincere thanks.