



**DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN**

Rules for Deanery Synods

[Approved by Diocesan Synod on 22nd November 2025]

Effective from 1st July 2026

RULES FOR DEANERY SYNODS - DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

INTRODUCTION

Definitions

1. Terminology and abbreviations used within these Rules:

BCDT	Bishop's Council of Diocesan Trustees.
CRRs	Church Representation Rules, as amended from time to time.
Deanery Partnership	One or more deaneries formed as a partnership by the bishop.
DiocS	Diocesan Synod
Lay Co-Lead	For a Deanery Partnership covering two or more deaneries, the Lay Co-Lead is appointed by the bishop and may be one of the elected Deanery Lay Chairs from within the Deanery Partnership. For a Deanery Partnership which is coterminous with a single deanery, the Lay Co-Lead is the deanery's elected Lay Chair.
LMP	Local Mission Partnership: a collaborative grouping of benefices as approved by the bishop.
Partnership Dean	For a Deanery Partnership covering two or more deaneries, the Partnership Dean is an ordained priest appointed by the bishop and may be one of the deanery's Rural Deans. For a Deanery Partnership which is coterminous with a single deanery, the Partnership Dean is the deanery's Rural Dean. Partnership Deans are normally licensed as assistant archdeacons.
PCC	Parochial Church Council
Synod	Unless otherwise indicated "Synod" refers to the deanery synod.
Triennial Election	The election of deanery synod members held every three years at annual parochial church meetings.

Rules

2. These Rules have been set by the DiocS in conformance with the requirements of the CRRs and in combination with which they are to be read. Particular attention must be paid to Part 3 of the CRRs. In the event of any conflict between these Rules and the CRRs, the latter are to take precedence. These Rules shall not be varied, revoked or suspended except by resolution of the DiocS.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SYNOD¹

Roll of Members

3. The Secretary shall maintain an up-to-date roll of all the Synod members. The roll shall include the name, postal address and parish of the members. Email addresses, where provided by members, shall also be included.

Participation by non-members

4. The following shall have the right to attend and speak but not to move any motion or amendment or to vote in the Synod:-
 - i) the bishop, suffragan bishops or a duly appointed commissary
 - ii) the archdeacon, if not otherwise a member of the Synod
 - iii) the registrar of the diocese
 - iv) visitors invited by either the joint chairs or the Standing Committee
 - v) persons appointed under Rule 5.

Members appointed to attend meetings

5. The following persons shall be sent copies of all notices and other documents circulated to Synod members, and invited to attend and speak at its meetings, but not to move any motion or amendment or to vote.
 - i) If there is no member of the Synod who is a member of the General Synod the BCDT shall appoint one or more members of the General Synod who represent the diocese.
 - ii) the Partnership Dean and Lay Co-Lead, if not otherwise members of the Synod.

THE JOINT CHAIRS

General

6. The joint chairs of the Synod shall be the rural dean and a member of the house of laity elected triennially by that house. During the absence or incapacity of one, the functions exercisable jointly may be performed by the other alone. If the lay chair resigns from the office, or ceases to be a member of the Synod, the position falls vacant immediately². In all other circumstances, the holder shall continue in office until the commencement of the first meeting following the next triennial election.

Election of lay chair

7. Before the commencement of the first meeting of the Synod after any triennial election, or in the event of a vacancy in office, the house of laity shall meet to elect the lay chair. A member of the house laity appointed by the rural dean shall chair the election. That chair shall have a vote but no casting vote in the election and in the case of an equality of votes the decision shall be taken by lot.

CHAIR OF MEETINGS

Meeting of the Synod

8. The joint chairs shall agree between them who shall chair each meeting of the Synod or particular items of business on the agenda. If either is absent, the other chair shall preside. If both are absent, the meeting shall elect a chair.

Separate meetings of the houses

¹ CRRs 15 and 16 define the membership of the houses of clergy and laity respectively. Further details regarding co-options are provided in CRR18

² Refer to CRR Part 7 for details of grounds upon which Synod membership is lost.

9. The joint chairs shall preside over any separate meetings of their respective houses, but if the chair of a house is absent a member of that house chosen by the members present shall take the chair.

OFFICERS

Appointment and term of office

10. At the first meeting following each triennial election the Synod shall appoint a secretary and a treasurer from among its own members.

- i) Prior to making the appointment, it shall be in order for the appropriate house to co-opt a person onto the Synod using the process defined in CRR18 so that the co-optee may be appointed to one of these offices.
- ii) At least one of the appointees must be lay.
- iii) The two posts may be held in combination with each other.
- iv) Exceptionally, and subject to (ii), the posts may be held by the rural dean or lay chair.
- v) The person(s) appointed, unless they resign or cease to be qualified, shall serve until the conclusion of the meeting at which their successors are appointed.

STANDING COMMITTEE

Membership

11. There shall be a Standing Committee of the Synod consisting of the joint chairs, secretary, treasurer and persons elected in accordance with Rule 12. The Synod may co-opt further persons to the Standing Committee in accordance with Rule 13.

Elected members

12.

- i) Elections to the Standing Committee shall be held at the first meeting of the Synod following each triennial election.
- ii) An election to fill a casual vacancy shall be held at the first meeting of the Synod following the vacancy being formed, and, if left unfilled, at all subsequent meetings until the vacancy is filled.
- iii) In the case of a deanery consisting of a single LMP, two clergy and two lay members of the Synod shall be elected to the Standing Committee by the Synod voting together and not by houses.
- iv) In the case of a deanery consisting of two or more LMPs, one clergy and one lay member of the Synod shall be elected to the Standing Committee by the Synod members representing parishes within each LMP, each LMP's members voting as a whole and not by houses.
- v) The outgoing Standing Committee shall make no nominations.
- vi) Elected members shall retire on the election of their successors or on ceasing to be qualified.
- vii) Elections shall be by simple majority.

Co-opted members

13.

- i) The Synod may co-opt on to the Standing Committee up to two additional members.
- ii) Co-options may only be made if they result in either an equality of lay and clergy places or a majority of lay places no greater than two.
- iii) Any co-options shall be made on a majority vote of the whole Synod.

Functions of the Committee

14. The functions of the Standing Committee shall be to:

- i) initiate and advise the Synod on proposals,
- ii) ensure that members are adequately informed on questions raised and other matters of importance to the deanery,
- iii) prepare the agenda for Synod meetings,
- iv) transact the business of the Synod between meetings,
- v) make such appointments and do such other things as the Synod may delegate to it.

DEANERY MISSION AND PASTORAL COMMITTEE Composition

15.

- i) The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee shall be co-terminus with the Standing Committee.
- ii) For a deanery which is not also a Deanery Partnership, if either the Partnership Dean or the Lay Co-lead are not members of the deanery, they shall be invited to participate in all meetings of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee and shall be sent copies of all notices and other documents circulated to the committee members.
- iii) The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee shall invite such other people to participate in its discussions as it considers appropriate.
- iv) Those attending meetings of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee by virtue of either (ii) or (iii) shall have the right to speak but shall not vote on any resolution.

Functions of the Committee

16. The functions of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee shall include the following: -

- i) Maintenance, through its members, of links with all parishes within the deanery.
- ii) In the case of a deanery with a single LMP:
 - a) to prepare and maintain a deanery Mission Action Plan and an affordable Ministerial Deployment Plan,
 - b) to submit the deanery Mission Action Plan and Ministerial Deployment Plan to the Synod for approval,
 - c) to submit the Ministerial Deployment Plan for endorsement by the AMPC prior to submission to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee.
- iii) In the case of a deanery with two or more LMPs:
 - a) to promote ministerial and missional collaboration between the LMPs,
 - b) to support each LMP in the preparation and maintenance of a LMP Mission Action Plan and an affordable LMP Ministerial Deployment Plan,
 - c) to endorse the LMP Mission Action Plans,
 - d) to submit the LMP Ministerial Deployment Plans to the Synod for approval,
 - e) to submit the LMP Ministerial Deployment Plans for endorsement by the AMPC prior to submission to the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee.
- iv) Identification of opportunities for mission and growth and the initiation of appropriate action.
- v) Formulation of well-judged proposals for pastoral re-organisation and their subsequent submission for approval by the Synod and the AMPC.
- vi) Supporting each PCC in understanding and, if possible, consenting to any pastoral reorganization proposals affecting it.
- vii) Undertaking any specific studies that BCDT, the AMPC, the archdeacon or the Partnership Dean and Lay Co-lead (acting jointly) may direct.
- viii) Reporting on its work to the AMPC.

OTHER COMMITTEES

Constitution

17. The Synod may constitute additional committees with such chairs, membership, term of office, functions, mode of appointment and other procedure as it thinks fit.

PROCEDURE OF COMMITTEES

By whom determined

18. Subject to these rules and any resolution of the Synod, the chairing and other procedures of a committee shall be determined by itself.

MEETINGS OF THE SYNOD

Meetings required annually

19.

- i) The Synod shall hold at least two meetings every year at such times and places as the joint chairs shall decide after consulting with the Standing Committee and taking account of the dates fixed for DiocS meetings.
- ii) In any year in which triennial elections are held, a meeting of the Synod must be held in the period 1 July to 31 October, and the provision of Rule 23 must not be applied, unless an exception is permitted by the bishop.

Meetings by request

20. The joint chairs shall summon and hold a meeting of the Synod within eight weeks of receiving a requisition for such a meeting signed by at least a quarter of the Synod members.

Notice of ordinary meetings

21. The date, time and place of ordinary meetings of the Synod, when fixed, shall be notified to members as soon as possible, and not less than 21 days before any such meeting, by post, hand delivery or electronically.

Special meetings

22. In the case of sudden emergency or other special circumstances the joint chairs may summon a special meeting at not less than seven days' notice, but the quorum required for business at such a meeting shall be a majority of the members of each house and only business specified in the notice may be transacted.

Provision for remote or hybrid meetings

23. A remote or hybrid meeting is one in which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in without all the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same venue.

- i) A Synod meeting convened under Rules 19(i), 20 or 22 may be conducted in a remote or hybrid format if:
 - a) a majority of the Standing Committee are of the opinion that, on the balance of probabilities, it will result in higher levels of both attendance and participation by Synod members, and
 - b) no more than one Synod meeting is held in either a remote or hybrid format in any 12 month period.
- ii) A Synod meeting convened under Rules 19, 20 or 22 may be conducted in a remote or hybrid format at the direction of the bishop.
- iii) A person is to be regarded as present in a remote or hybrid meeting of the Synod

if they are able to hear and be heard by, and where practical to see and be seen by, the other persons present.

- iv) Prior to a remote or hybrid meeting of the Synod, the joint chairs shall consult with the Diocesan Secretary or Deputy Diocesan Secretary and agree how any votes within the meeting are to be conducted.

SEPARATE MEETINGS OF THE HOUSES

When held

24. Either house shall sit and vote separately if the Synod so resolves, the house itself so decides or these Rules or the rules of the house so provide. Each house may determine its own procedure consistently with these rules.

AGENDA

Content

25. Subject to these Rules and any resolution of the Synod the Standing Committee shall set the agenda for each meeting of the Synod, specifying all business: -

- i) for which due notice has been received and which is in order,
- ii) not disposed of at an earlier meeting nor subsequently withdrawn,
- iii) referred to it by the DiocS or BCDT,

and shall determine the order in which the business on the agenda shall be considered. The agenda may specify times at which items shall be taken and set time limits for debates on any motions.

Circulation

26. The secretary shall post or deliver by hand or electronically an agenda paper to every member 14 days at least before a meeting, or in the case of a meeting called at less than 14 days' notice, at the same time as the notice.

Approval of minutes

27. Every agenda shall include the approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last meeting.

Business permitted to be considered

28. Nothing shall be considered at a meeting of the Synod except business on or arising from the agenda; provided that at the request or by consent of both joint chairs urgent matters may be considered but not decided.

Varying the order of business

29. The order and timing of business may be varied by resolution of the Synod or, unless a member objects, by the chair.

NOTICE OF BUSINESS

Form of notice

30. Subject to Rule 22, notice of any business for a meeting of the Synod shall be in writing, signed and delivered to the secretary, by hand, by post or electronically not later than the period before the meeting which is specified in Rule 31.

Length of notice

31. The following periods of notice are required: -

New business for the agenda	28 days
Motions and amendments arising from the agenda	7 days

Dispensing powers

32. Notice of a motion arising from the agenda or of an amendment may be dispensed with by permission of the chair or by resolution of the Synod, but a copy shall, if the chair requests, be signed and delivered to the secretary.

Procedural motions

33. A procedural motion mentioned in these Rules may be moved without notice, unless express provision is made to the contrary.

POWERS OF CHAIR

Procedure

34. Subject to these Rules, the procedure at any meeting of the Synod or either house shall be regulated by the person who presides.

MINUTES

Circulation

35. The secretary shall prepare minutes of every meeting which shall be circulated to members and shall record the names of those attending.

QUORUM

One-third of each house

36. Except as provided in Rule 22, a quorum shall be one-third of the members of each house of the Synod.

Inquorate meeting

37.

- i) If requested by any member, the chair shall take a count of the members present and shall adjourn the meeting if it is inquorate.
- ii) No decision of the Synod shall be invalidated by the absence of a quorum unless the chair's attention is called to it immediately following the vote being taken.
- iii) Following an adjournment under (i), the chair may allow general discussions to proceed in accordance with Rule 43.
- iv) If a quorum is re-established before the general discussions are closed, the Synod meeting may resume at the point on the agenda where it had been adjourned.

DEBATE AND DISCUSSION

Moving motions or amendments

38.

- i) Every matter debated in the Synod shall have been moved by a member
- ii) If the member who gave notice of a motion or amendment, on being called, chooses not to move it another member may do so instead.

Opportunity for questions

39. Immediately after a motion has been moved the chair may give members an opportunity to ask questions of the mover or speaker, solely for the purpose of elucidating facts.

One motion at a time

40. During the debate on a motion or amendment no other motion shall be moved except a procedural motion under Rule 51; provided that the chair may permit two or more motions or amendments to be discussed but not voted on if, in the chair's opinion, this would facilitate the proper conduct of the Synod's business.

Reconsideration and rescission

41. 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 the agreement of the Standing Committee.

Speaking more than once

42. Subject to Rule 43, no member shall speak more than once on a motion or amendment under debate except that: -

- i) the mover of a motion shall have a right of reply to the debate on the motion,
- ii) a speech on an amendment shall not be deemed a speech on the main motion,
- iii) a point of order, in the form of a succinct question, may be made at any time whether or not another member is interrupted,
- iv) a member may ask the chair's permission to interrupt a debate to make a personal statement but only to correct an important misunderstanding of fact regarding what that member has said in the debate.

General discussion

43.

- i) The chair may at any time suspend Rule 42 for so long as the chair considers the purposes of the Synod would be more usefully served by a general discussion.
- ii) The chair may direct that such discussion shall be held in informal groups.
- iii) A general discussion under this Rule shall be conducted in accordance with Rule 66.
- iv) No motion or amendment shall be moved or put to the vote during such discussion.
- v) The number of speeches made by any member while it continues shall be disregarded for the purpose of Rule 42 when that Rule is declared by the chair to be again in force.

Speaking

44. Every speech shall be addressed to the chair and shall be succinct and relevant to the matter under debate.

Length of speeches

45. The chair may at any time

- i) impose a speech limit of not less than 2 minutes,
- ii) vary or revoke such limit,
- iii) shall inform members of each ruling which shall not be open to question.

Withdrawal

46. A motion or amendment which has been moved may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of the Synod.

Division of text

47. The chair may, following consultation with the mover, divide any motion or amendment so as to enable the Synod to vote separately upon each part.

AMENDMENTS

Content

48. An amendment shall be relevant to and shall not have the effect of negating the motion.

Exclusions

49. No amendment shall be moved to: -

- i) a procedural motion under Rules 51 – 56,
- ii) a motion to receive the report of a committee,
- iii) a motion, under Rule 62(i),
- iv) another amendment.

Order of consideration

50. Unless the chair rules otherwise, amendments shall be moved in the order in which they affect the motion.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Content

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

- i) that the Synod be now adjourned (“adjournment of the Synod”: see Rule 53),
- ii) that the debate be now adjourned (“adjournment of the debate”: see Rule 54),
- iii) that the Synod do now pass to the next business (“next business”: see Rule 55),
- iv) that the debate be now closed (“closure”: see Rule 56).

When not permitted

52. A motion shall not be moved: -

- i) for next business or the closure on any question referred by the DiocS or BCDT,
- ii) for next business on an amendment or another procedural motion.

Adjournment of the Synod

53. The following rules of debate shall apply: -

- i) The mover shall be allowed to speak for not more than two minutes; the mover of the original motion, if any, or, if not, some other member, may speak for not more than two minutes in reply; the question shall then be put without further debate.
- ii) If the motion is carried, and subject to any resolution of the Synod, the business interrupted shall be resumed at the next meeting.
- iii) If the motion is not carried, the adjournment of the Synod shall not be moved again, except by permission of the chair.

Adjournment of the debate

54. The following rules of debate shall apply: -

- i) The mover shall be allowed to speak for not more than two minutes; the mover of the original motion, if any, or, if not, some other member, may speak for not more than two minutes in reply; the question shall then be put without further debate.
- ii) If the motion is carried, and subject to any resolution of the Synod, the debate interrupted shall be resumed if and when the Standing Committee so decides.
- iii) If the question adjourned is an amendment, the debate on the main motion shall also stand adjourned.
- iv) If the motion is not carried, the adjournment of the Synod shall not be moved again, except by permission of the chair.

Next business

55. The following rules of debate shall apply: -

- i) The motion may be moved either in the form “that the Synod passes to the next business immediately” or in the form “that the Synod passes to the next business before the question is put”.
- ii) The mover shall be allowed to speak for not more than two minutes; the mover of the original motion, if any, or, if not, some other member, may speak for not more than two minutes in reply; the question shall then be put without further debate.
- iii) If the motion is carried, the original motion shall lapse either immediately or before the question is put, as the case may be, and shall not be reconsidered during the same meeting of the Synod.
- v) If the motion is not carried, the motion for next business shall not be moved again on the original motion unless that motion be substantially amended.

Closure

56. The following rules of debate shall apply: -

- i) If such motion is permitted by the chair, it shall be put immediately 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.

VOTING³

General

57. Decisions shall be taken by a majority of the members of the Synod present and voting, except that a separate vote of each house shall be taken in the following cases: -

- i) if the chair so rules,
- ii) if at least five members so request,
- iii) on any matter referred by the DiocS or BCDT,
- iv) where otherwise required.

Votes by houses

58. On a vote by houses, the motion shall be deemed to have the assent of the Synod only if supported by majorities in both houses of the members present and voting.

Mode of voting

59. Unless otherwise provided, voting shall be by show of hands without a count, except that, either before or immediately after the result of a vote is announced, the chair: -

- i) may order a count,
- ii) shall order a count if a member so requests.

Recording votes

60. The results of all votes shall be recorded in the minutes.

³ Refer to CRRs for rules concerning elections to Diocesan and General Synods
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REFERENCES BY THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OR BCDT

When considered

61. References by the DiocS or BCDT shall be included in the agenda of such meeting as the Standing Committee shall consider appropriate. If necessary, the joint chairs shall exercise their powers under Rules 19 or 22 to convene an extra Synod meeting to conform with any timing requirement of the reference.

Procedure of debate

62.

- i) When the reference is in the form of a question requiring the answer Yes or No, the question shall be put to the 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 in accordance with Rule 58.
- ii) When the references 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.
- iii) When all motions under paragraphs (i) and (ii) have been decided, other motions arising from them may, if otherwise in order, be moved by any member.

Report on result

63. The decision (together with the number of votes in each house) on every matter referred and on every additional motion shall be reported by the Synod secretary to the Diocesan Secretary.

REPORTS BY THE SYNOD TO PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS

Report of proceedings

64. Within six weeks following a Synod meeting, the secretary shall prepare and circulate to the deanery's PCC secretaries a report approved by the Standing Committee of the proceedings of that meeting. Such reports may be in the form of the draft minutes.

MATTERS RAISED BY PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS

Mode of representation

65.

- i) Following an affirmative vote by a PCC on any matter either of general Church interest or affecting the parish, a Synod member representing that parish may bring the matter before the Synod in the form of a motion.
- ii) Such a motion, or a separate motion following it, may require the matter to be brought before the DiocS.
- iii) If the Synod supports bringing the motion before the DiocS, the Standing Committee shall take such action to do so as is necessary under the DiocS Standing Orders.

ADDRESSES, PAPERS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

Procedure determinable by chair

66. The chair shall determine the procedure for any part of a meeting during which the item under consideration is not a motion or amendment but is:-

- i) an address or the presentation of a paper, whether a report or other document, by a member, a visiting speaker, or on behalf of a Synod committee,
- ii) a general discussion, including a discussion permitted by the chair under Rule 43.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

Annual Review

67. In each year the Standing Committee shall submit to the Synod:-

- i) Not later than 30 June a report and independently verified accounts for the preceding financial year.
- ii) Not later than 30 November:
 - a. a statement showing the estimated expenditure of the Synod during the next financial year,
 - b. proposals for raising the income required to meet such expenditure.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Admission of Press and public

68. 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 members of the public to withdraw.

Periods of notice

69. Any period of notice required by these rules shall consist of clear days or weeks, not including the date of dispatch and the date of the event to which the notice relates.⁴

Procedural defects

70. 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 despite any defect in its summoning or conduct. None of its proceedings shall be invalidated by the accidental omission to give the required notice of the meeting to any member.

⁴ For instance, Rule 26 requires agenda papers to be sent at least 14 days before a meeting. For a meeting on 16th June, the agenda papers would have to be sent no later than 1st June.