Diocesan Synod

Paper Reference	Item 7.2 – Diocesan Synod Elections Resolution
Meeting and Date	17 October 2026
Paper Submitted by	Miriam Longfoot
Last considered by this meeting on (meeting if applicable)	N/A
Background including any previous outcome(s)	See below
What is required of this meeting? Note/Receive/Decision/Action	To approve
State the relevant mandate	Decision-making

Diocesan Synod – Resolution regarding 2027 elections

Church Representation Rules Part 4, Section 37 (1) requires that every three years, in the year preceding Diocesan Synod elections, the Diocesan Synod determines the number of members to be elected by each House of each Deanery Synod in the Diocese. Moreover the Rules state that –

- Numbers elected to the House of Clergy must relate to the number of members of the houses of clergy of the deanery synods and must be at least two.
- Numbers elected to the House of Laity must relate to the numbers on the church electoral rolls of each deanery and must be at least two.
- The total membership of the Diocesan Synod must lie between 100 and 270.
- The membership of the Houses of Clergy and Laity must be approximately equal.

The figures work out as follows:

DEANERY	Basis for calculation		Representation 2027	
	Clergy	Electoral Roll 2026	Clergy at 21.5%	Laity by formula
Alderbury	5	786	2	2
Blackmore Vale	9	1,168	2	3
Bradford	16	1,475	3	3
Calne	9	915	2	2
Chalke	12	1,528	3	3
Devizes	11	1,215	2	3
Dorchester	11	1,231	2	3

Heytesbury		11	1,101		2	3
Lyme Bay		13	1,419		3	3
Marlborough		7	856		2	2
Milton & Blandford		10	1,010		2	3
Pewsey		9	887		2	2
Poole & North Bournemouth		28	2,634		6	4
Purbeck		16	1,040		3	3
Salisbury		20	1,463		4	3
Sherborne		9	1,427		2	3
Stonehenge		7	718		2	2
Weymouth & Portland		8	1,086		2	3
Wimborne		17	2,012		4	4
Guernsey					2	2
Jersey					2	2
General Synod					4	6
Ex-Officio					4	2
Co-opted (Up to)					5	5
Bishop's Nominations (Up to)					5	5
TOTAL		**228**	**23,971**		**72**	**76**
TOTAL (inc 3 for House of Bishops)						**148**

Please note that the co-options and Bishop's nominations are "up to" 5 in each category and not a mandatory total. Synod or the Bishop may choose either formally or informally to co-opt or nominate fewer than 5 in order to make the numbers of clergy and laity exactly equal if desired. The legal requirement is for the numbers of the houses of clergy and laity to be "approximately" equal.

Motion

Diocesan Synod and Diocesan Board of Finance Elections 2027 – The Chair of the House of Laity to move on behalf of the Bishop's Council:

"That this Synod,

a. In order to ensure a majority for the House of Laity and that the total membership of the Synod and Board of Finance lies between 100 and 270 members, determines that the formula for clergy members to be elected by the Houses of Clergy of the deanery synods shall be on a proportion of 21.5% of the membership of those Houses.
b. Further determines that the form of voting paper to be used by the deaneries in this election and for any election to fill a casual vacancy occurring during the next ensuing three years shall be Form 6 in Part 10 of Church Representation Rules, which is for elections to be decided by simple majority."

For information - the timetable for Diocesan Synod elections has been agreed by Bishop Karen in accordance with Church Representation Rules and will be:

Month	Activities
August/September 2026	Bishop approves election timetable.
October 2026	17 October – Diocesan Synod approval of election resolutions regarding numbers to be elected.
November	Confirmation of numbers to be elected sent to Deanery Synod Secretaries.
December	Rural Deans and Lay Chairs to be asked to nominate Presiding Officers for their deanery.
January 2027	
February	Bishop appoints Presiding Officers
March	Deanery Secretaries check and confirm registers of electors.
April	Election paperwork and registers of electors are sent to Presiding Officers
May	27 May – close of nominations (allowing at least 21 days from issue of papers by Presiding Officers).
June	24 June – all elections completed (allowing at least 14 days from issue of voting papers in the few instances that a vote is required). 25 June – Write to new Synod/DBF members regarding elections to Chairs of Houses, Chair DBF, Vice Chair DBF and Bishop's Council
July	Commencement of elections and appointments to remaining Boards, Committees and Groups – subject to whether a second round of elections is required to fill Chair and Council vacancies. Election timings are therefore not precise from this point.
August	1 August – start of new triennium for Diocesan Synod.
January 2028	1 January – new Vacancy in See triennium begins