



Thames North Synod

Conduct of Elections

Standing Orders Appendix A

adopted 14 March 2009

Introduction

- 1 The Synod decided at its meeting in November 2007 that Elections should be held for certain places on Synod Groups, Synod Committees and for some Synod Representatives to General Assembly and Mission Council.
- 2 The Synod Returning Officer is responsible for the Conduct of the Elections

Elections

- 3.1 Annual These will be conducted for two members of the Synod Executive, for three members in Central and North London, West London, St. Albans, Lea Valley and Roding Area Committees and two members in Chiltern Area Committee.
- 3.2 Two Yearly These will be conducted for representatives to General Assembly
- 3.3 Three Yearly These will be conducted for Mission Council and for Area nominations to Ministry and Mission Fund and Nominations Committees

Timetables

- 4.1. Each year the Returning Officer will send a letter no later than 30th September to Church Secretaries, copies to Ministers,
 - 4.1.1 setting out the timetable and procedure
 - 4.1.2 indicating the vacancies for which nominations can be made by a Church Meeting
 - 4.1.3 notifying that the closing date for receipt of nominations is the 15th December or the nearest working day to that in a year
 - 4.1.4 stressing that each Church Meeting will be allowed to make nominations up to the number of vacancies but will be limited to only one nominee from any one congregation
 - 4.1.5 stressing that those nominated must have indicated their willingness to stand and that they understand that in the event of an election being necessary they will have to submit an election address of no more than 100 words
- 4.2 Every third year when Area Committees have to elect their representatives to the Ministry and Mission Fund and Nominations Committees, the Returning Officer will send a letter to the Secretaries of the Area Committees, copies to the Conveners no later than 30th September
 - 4.2.1 setting out the timetable and procedure
 - 4.2.2 reminding Area Committees that they must have received nominations no later than the 15th December or the nearest working day
 - 4.2.3 Where there are more nominations than vacancies, the Area Committee will inform the Returning Officer who will arrange an Election.

5. **Nominations**

There will be a nomination form for every election, and these must be signed by the Chair and Secretary of the Church Meeting making the nomination. A nomination form not signed will not be accepted as a valid nomination.

6. **Area Elections**

6.1 When an election is required, the Returning Officer will prepare voting papers and send them to the Synod members in the congregations in the Area no later than 15th January.

6.2 These papers should be returned to the Returning Officer no later than the by the 15th February,

6.3 The Returning Officer will be responsible for the counting of votes

6.4 The results will be circulated with the papers for the March Synod

7 **Synod Executive, General Assembly and Mission Council Elections**

Where elections are required for Synod Executive, General Assembly and Mission Council voting papers will be issued with the papers for the March Synod to Synod Voting Members and will be collected and counted under the Returning Officer's supervision.

8 **Other Elections**

8.1 Where a vacancy occurs, during the year, for an elected position on an Area Committee, the Returning Officer will consult with the Convener of the Area Committee to decide whether or not it is appropriate to fill the position and if it is to agree a timetable for the election.

8.2 Where a vacancy occurs, during the year, for any elected position other than on an Area Committee, the Returning Officer will consult with the Moderator, Synod Executive Convener and the Synod Clerk to decide whether or not it is appropriate to fill the vacancy and if it is to agree a timetable for the election.

9. **Counting of Votes**

9.1 Voting papers will initially be sorted into their appropriate election

9.2 They will then be inspected to ensure they are in order. The Returning Officer will decide whether or not a paper is spoilt

9.3 The votes on each paper will be allocated to the chosen candidate(s)

9.4 Once all the votes have been allocated, the votes for each individual candidate will be totalled

9.5 The totals will be listed in descending order of votes.

9.6 The highest totals equivalent to the number of vacancies will be elected

9.7 In the event of a tied vote the Returning Officer will arrange a re-count

9.8 If the votes are still equal, the Returning Officer will ask the Synod to decide whether there should be a further election or the Synod to decide at its meeting either by a show of hands or by a secret ballot.

10 **Results**

- 10.1 The Returning Officer will prepare a Report for the March Meeting of Synod, which will have the result of the Area Elections and which will notify the nominations received for the other Elections being held that year
- 10.2 The Returning Officer's report of the Area Elections, will
- 10.2.1 declare elected those successful in elections held,
- 10.2.2 declare elected those duly nominated but where no election was necessary
- 10.2.3 indicate the vacancies not filled

- 10.3 The Returning Officer will
- 10.3.1 ask the Synod to appoint Tellers to assist with the counting of the voting papers sent out with the Synod Papers
- 10.3.2 ask the Moderator to verify that all voting members of Synod have handed their voting papers in to be counted and then to indicate the closure of collection
- 10.3.3 supervise the counting of the votes and will verbally report the result to Synod.

11 **Challenges to the Returning Officer's Reports**

In the event of the Synod Meeting voting not to accept all or part of the Returning Officer's Reports, the result of the elections disputed will not stand and they will be referred to the Synod Executive for investigation and decision

12 **Vacancies**

Where sufficient nominations have not been received to fill all the vacancies, churches will be invited to nominate at their Church Meetings eligible persons to fill the vacancies. In the event of more nominations than vacancies being received, the Synod Executive will decide whether to ask the Returning Officer to conduct an election or to find another way to deal with the matter.