DIOCESAN SYNOD STATUTE 2026

BE IT ENACTED by the Bishop, Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Auckland in Synod assembled:

1. The short title of this statute shall be "DIOCESAN SYNOD STATUTE 2026".

PART 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Purpose

2. The purpose of Synod includes, but is not limited to:
   a. being responsible for the vision of the Diocese in partnership with the Bishop;
   b. existing and gathering to fulfil the requirements Te Pouhere / The Constitution, and Canons of the Church;
   c. gathering as a place where the mind of the Diocese is formed;
   d. holding ultimate responsibility for the governance of the Diocese; and,
   e. gathering as a place where laity, clergy and bishops of the Diocese collaborate in making decisions.

Meeting of Synod

3. Each triennial Synod shall meet annually and at such other times as the Bishop may determine, at such times and such places as shall be prescribed by the Bishop

4. Any session may, at the discretion of Diocesan Council, in consultation with the Bishop, be conducted in part or wholly in person or online.

PART 2: MEMBERSHIP

Membership

5. The members of Synod, with the right to speak and to vote, are:
   a. the Bishop;
   b. any licensed Assistant Bishop in the Diocese;
   c. every ordained minister licensed by the Bishop in accordance with the Licensed Ministry Statute 2021, except those local priests and deacons to which clause 24 of that statute has been applied;
   d. parish lay representatives, as provided for in clauses 9 to 14;
   e. mission venture representatives, as provided for in clause 15;
   f. youth representatives, as provided in clauses 16 to 18;
   g. representatives from the Mother's Union and the Association of Anglican Women, as provided in clauses 19 and 20;
   h. every person holding a diocesan lay licence in accordance with the Licensed Ministry Statute 2021 and;
   i. the Chief Executive Officers (however designated by the respective organisation) of:
      i. Auckland City Mission (Te Tāpui Atawhai);
      ii. Selwyn Foundation;
      iii. Anglican Trust for Women and Children; and,
      iv. Vaughan Park Retreat Centre.

6. Every member of Synod belongs to one of three houses:
    a. the House of Bishops, comprising
        i. the Bishop; and
        ii. any licensed Assistant Bishop;
    b. the House of Clergy, comprising
        i. all ordained ministers, other than those included in clause 6a, and
        ii. all ministers of other Christian Churches who are members under clause 26; and
    c. the House of Laity, comprising all other members not included clauses 6a and 6b.

7. The members of Synod, ex-officio, with the right to speak but not to vote, are:
    a. the Chancellor; and
    b. the Diocesan Secretary.

8. Where a person is entitled to membership under more than one provision of this statute, they are entitled to only one vote and one right to speak in all matters.

Parish Lay Representatives

9. Pursuant to clause 5d every parish shall be entitled to elect two lay people to be lay representatives to Synod.

10. Elections shall take place at the annual general meeting following the third session of every Synod. Subject to the provisions of this statute, parish lay representatives shall hold office until the end of the annual general meeting at which the next election takes place.

11. The Diocesan Council may, as a part of a covenant under the Parish Statute 2024, provide for one of the two representatives elected under clause 9 to be a clergyperson. For the avoidance of doubt, in this event, the elected clergyperson will participate and vote as a member of the House of Clergy.

12. The election of lay synod representatives shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions for elections in the Parish Statute 2024**.**

13. In the event of a vacancy, an election shall take place at a general meeting to fill the vacancy, and the newly elected representative will hold office for the remainder of the term in clause 10.

14. In the event of a lay synod representative being unable by reason of illness or other good reason to attend a particular session of Synod, the vestry of that parish may appoint another lay person to take the place of the elected lay representative at that particular session.

Mission Venture Representatives

15. Each Mission Venture may elect up to two lay representatives to Synod:
    a. subject to any terms under Part 5 (Mission Ventures) of the Parish Statute 2024; and
    b. elected, as far as possible, in accordance with Part 3B (General Meetings) of the Parish Statute 2024.

Youth Representatives

16. The annual Youth Hui, convened under the provisions of The Youth Representation Statute 2019, is entitled to elect up to six lay representatives to Synod.

17. Each annual Youth Hui shall:
    a. elect two people to hold office as a lay synod representative for a term of three years each; and
    b. fill any vacancies that have arisen for whatever reason, electing such representatives for the remainder of that three-year term or such shorter period as the Youth Hui may determine.

18. In the event of a youth representative being unable by reason of illness or other good reason to attend a particular session of Synod, or in the event that a vacancy between the annual Youth Hui and a session of Synod, the Diocesan Council may, in consultation with the Diocesan Youth Facilitator, appoint a lay person(s) to fill such vacancy at that particular session.

Mothers' Union and Association of Anglican Women Representatives

19. The Diocesan Executive Committee of the Mothers' Union shall be entitled to elect one representative of the Mothers' Union to Synod.

20. The Diocesan Executive Committee of the Association of Anglican Women shall be entitled to elect one representative of the Association of Anglican Women to Synod.

Provisions relating to Lay Representatives

21. Clauses 22 to 25 shall apply to all members elected under clauses 5d to 5g.

22. Any lay person whose name is recorded on a roll in the Diocese may be nominated as a candidate for election as a lay representative.

23. The seat of any lay synod representative is vacated:
    a. by death;
    b. upon resignation to the Bishop in writing;
    c. upon the declaration of any tribunal acting in that behalf under the authority of the General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui; or
    d. in the event of such synod representative fails to attend any one session of the Synod without obtaining leave of absence from the Bishop.

24. In the event of any election not being duly held or being declared invalid, or of the seat of any lay representative becoming vacant a new election is to be held in accordance with the provisions for an election for that seat.

25. Any election, appointment or vacancy of any lay synod representative is to be notified to the Bishop's office within seven days.

Representatives of Co-operating Parishes

26. Any minister or lay member of any other Christian Church recognised by resolution of the General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui and duly appointed to serve in or represent a co-operating parish or co-operative venture in which this Diocese is a partner is entitled to a seat in Synod.

27. Where that member has the right to vote, this may be exercised except when the Synod shall be acting under the following provisions:
    a. Part B Clause 6(b) of the Constitution Te Pouhere (alteration of the formularies);
    b. Part E Clauses 10 and 11 of the Constitution Te Pouhere (nominating a Bishop);
    c. Part G Clause 4 of the Constitution Te Pouhere (amending the Constitution); or
    d. in respect of any proposal or matter pursuant to The Church of England Empowering Act 1928.

PART 3: ORDER OF SYNOD

Standing Orders

28. Subject to this statute, Synod shall determine Standing Orders for the ordering of its own proceedings.

29. Standing orders may only be enacted, repealed or amended by resolution of Synod.

President

30. The Bishop is the President of the Synod.

31. The Bishop may, at their sole discretion, delegate the role of President for a time to another member.

32. In the absence of the Bishop, or when the Bishop is unwilling to preside in any particular matter, or is prevented by illness or other cause from presiding, the Vicar-General (or, in turn, the Deputy Vicar-General) will be the President of the Synod.

33. Where the office of the Bishop is vacant, the President of the Synod will be a Commissary appointed by the Primate Te Pihopa Matamua.

Quorum and Apologies

34. A quorum for a meeting of the Synod shall be
    a. the Bishop, or the Vicar-General (or, in turn, the Deputy Vicar-General), or a Commissary appointed by the Primate Te Pihopa Matamua;
    b. one-quarter of the members of the House of Clergy, and,
    c. one-quarter of the members of the House of Laity.

35. The failure of any parish, body or organisation entitled to elect representatives shall not prevent the Synod from proceeding to the despatch of business.

36. If any member is unable to attend any session of Synod, they are to submit an apology, in writing to the President.

Assent

37. Every act of the Synod shall be assented to by:
    a. the President; and
    b. a simple majority in each of the three houses, present and voting.

38. The President may determine and declare the outcome of any matter upon the voices except that;
    a. Standing Orders may provide for members to call for a further count to be conducted.

PART 4: ELECTIONS

4A – GENERAL

Application

39. Part 4 will apply to any election to:
    a. Diocesan Council;
    b. General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui;
    c. Pool of Diocesan Nominators; and
    d. Clergy Remuneration and Retirement Committee.

40. No provision in Part 4 applies to the election of a Bishop under the Canons. The election of a Bishop is to be determined in accordance with the Canons.

41. No standing order of the Synod relating to elections will apply to any election conducted under Part 4, and unless clause 42 applies, these provisions do not apply to elections or appointments under the Standing Orders.

42. The President may, by motion without notice, apply Part 4 to any other election conducted by the Synod.

Notice of Elections

43. No later than 21 days before the first day of any session of Synod during which an election is required to be held, the Diocesan Secretary will give notice to members of Synod:
    a. the positions for which vacancies exist;
    b. the number of vacancies for each position;
    c. how many of those vacancies are able to be filled by laity and by clergy;
    d. details of any other statutory or canonical qualifications or restrictions relating to candidates, proposers, seconders or voters for those positions;
    e. the names and relevant association (such as parish or representative organisation) of people holding positions that are not vacant;
    f. any statement made under clause 44;
    g. any standing resolutions that may apply to any election to be held;
    h. the means by which the election will be conducted, as provided in clause 57;
    i. the proposed timeline for elections, to be formally determined in clause 48; and,
    j. any other information that will assist the Synod in nominating candidates to fill those vacancies.

44. Prior to any session of Synod during which an election is required to be held, the body to which people are to be elected may prepare a brief statement setting out details of any particular skills, experience or other attributes that they consider would be beneficial or desirable for any person filling those vacancies to have. Where the election is for every position in that body, this statement may be prepared by the Diocesan Secretary in consultation with the Bishop.

Nominations

45. Nominations are to open, and nomination forms provided for in clause 46 made available, at the time of the notice in clause 43.

46. The Diocesan Secretary will prepare, and make available to members of the Synod a reasonable time prior to nominations closing, a nomination form for each position for which vacancies exist. Nomination forms are to seek biographical information on the candidate, their relevant skills and experience, and such other information as the Diocesan Secretary considers is relevant to the particular position and that will assist members of Synod in voting.

47. Each nomination of a candidate for a position for which vacancies exist must be proposed by a member of the Synod who is eligible to vote for the candidate, and seconded by another such member. If both clergy and laity are eligible to vote for candidates, the proposer and seconder must be from different Orders.

Timing of Elections

48. On the first day of any session of Synod during which an election is required to be held, Synod will, by motion without notice, determine the timing for the election process. This must include the dates and times at which:
    a. nominations will close, being no later than the closing of that session;
    b. voting will open, being a reasonable time after nominations close and no later than 21 days after the closing of that Session; and,
    c. voting will close, being no later than 5 days after the opening of voting.

Voting in Houses

49. Where the Synod is, at any time, required to elect specific numbers of both clergy and laity to a body or organisation:
    a. the House of Clergy only shall vote to fill clerical vacancies; and,
    b. the House of Laity only shall vote to fill lay vacancies.

50. Where the Synod is, at any time, required to elect people to a body or organisation regardless of being clergy or lay, or is required to elect only clergy or laity to a body or organisation, the Synod shall vote as one.

Candidate Information

51. Following the close of nominations, and prior to the opening of voting, the Diocesan Secretary will ensure that voters are provided with information regarding all candidates, including information required by clause 46.

Electoral System

52. Elections are to be conducted according to a Single Transferable Voting process, as defined in clauses 57 to 59.

53. Elections may be conducted entirely by electronic means.

54. Every election will be conducted by secret ballot, by those members of the Synod who are eligible to vote for the candidates for positions in that election. Candidates may vote in the election if they are otherwise eligible to vote.

55. An election for each position will be held if any nominations are received for that position. No candidate will be declared elected to any position other than as the result of an election under the provisions of Part 4A.

56. Synod will appoint, by Motion without Notice, one member of each of the Houses of Clergy and Laity, who need not be eligible to vote but must not be candidates, proposers or seconders, to act as scrutineers and assist the Diocesan Secretary in certification of the elections.

Single Transferable Voting

57. Subject to clauses 58 and 59,the Diocesan Council will, in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary, approve the specific means by which the election will be held.

58. Where an election has more than one vacancy:
    a. voters express a first preference for one candidate and may express second and further preferences for other candidates;
    b. a quota for election is calculated from the number of votes and positions to be filled;
    c. the first preferences are counted and any candidate whose first preference votes equal or exceed the quota is elected;

d. if insufficient candidates are elected under clause 58c, the proportion of an elected candidate's votes above the quota is redistributed according to voters' further preferences, and;
    i. candidates who then reach the quota are elected; and
    ii. the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded;
e. the excluded candidate's votes are redistributed according to voters' further preferences; and,
f. if insufficient candidates are elected under clauses 58d and 58e, the steps described in clauses 58d and 58e are repeated until all positions are filled.

59. Where an election has only one vacancy:
    a. voters express a first preference for one candidate and may express second and further preferences for other candidates;
    b. an absolute majority of votes for election is calculated from the number of votes and positions to be filled;
    c. the first preferences are counted and, if a candidate's first preference votes equal or exceed the absolute majority of votes, that candidate is elected;
    d. if no candidate is elected under clause 59c, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded and that candidate's votes are redistributed according to voters' further preferences; and
    e. if no candidate is elected under clause 59d, the steps described in clause 59c and 59d are repeated until a candidate is elected.

Certification of Results

60. Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, Canons or any applicable statute, to be eligible to be elected to a position, a candidate must have received, in an election for that position the votes required for election within the Single Transferable Voting system.

61. The Diocesan Secretary will advise the President, and the President will certify, which candidates have been elected to any positions. The President's declaration under this clause will be conclusive proof of the validity of the outcome of the election, subject only to the dispute process in clauses 62 to 64.

Election Dispute

62. Any objection to the validity of an election under this statute must be made in writing, signed by at least five eligible voters in that election, stating the ground(s) of any such objection, and be submitted to the Diocesan Secretary within ten days of the declaration of such election.

63. The Diocesan Secretary will report such objection to the next meeting of the Diocesan Council, which shall finally determine the status of any disputed election and declare the election of any candidate valid or invalid (in which latter case Diocesan Council may fill any resulting vacancies).

64. A candidate who is initially declared elected under this statute but whose election is disputed, shall be treated for all purposes as validly elected unless and until that election is subsequently declared invalid. Any such invalidity will not invalidate any otherwise legitimate action taken in reliance on that candidate having initially been declared elected.

Variation in Procedures

65. The Synod may, on Motion without Notice, authorise any departure from clauses 43 to 61, other than clauses 54 and 60, if the Chancellor first advises the Synod that the proposed departure is likely to improve the efficiency and conduct of the election without being likely to cause any disproportionate unfairness or other inconvenience.

4B – GENERAL SYNOD TE HĪNOTA WHĀNUI

66. For the purposes of Title B, Canon I, clauses 1.1.2 and 1.1.10(d), the Diocese adopts the procedures in Part 4A of this Statute for the election of its lay and clerical representatives to General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui, subject always to the Constitution and Canons.

67. Any elected representative to General Synod may, by writing addressed to the Bishop, resign, and upon the receipt by the Bishop of that resignation, the seat of that representative shall become vacant.

68. When the seat of any elected representative to General Synod becomes vacant by death, resignation, or the declaration of any tribunal acting under the authority of the General Synod, Diocesan Council shall appoint, as a replacement representative to fill that vacancy, a person who is from the same Order as that vacating representative and is eligible under Title B, Canon I for election as a representative to General Synod.

69. If an elected representative to General Synod is unable to attend any meeting of the General Synod:
    a. that representative must immediately inform the Bishop in writing of that unavailability; and
    b. the Bishop shall, in consultation with the Diocesan Council, appoint a person who is from the same Order as that representative and is eligible under Title B, Canon I for election as a representative to General Synod, to attend such meeting in place of that representative.

70. The Diocesan Secretary shall inform the General Secretary in writing of any change in the Diocese's General Synod representatives.

PART 5: STANDING RESOLUTIONS

71. Standing resolutions are resolutions of Synod that:
    a. address matters of significance to the mission and ministry of the Diocese, are statements of policy, or other matters which are of ongoing effect and relevance;
    b. have not been completed, expired, become irrelevant, or incorporated in a constitutional document, statute, Canon, or Regulation;
    c. are of such importance that it is desirable that they have ongoing effect; and
    d. have been recognised as such by motion of Synod.

72. Prior to each session of Synod, the Standing Orders shall provide for a review of:
    a. the proceedings of previous sessions of Synod, with a view of identifying and enacting standing resolutions for those resolutions that meet the criteria of clause 71; and
    b. existing standing resolutions that may no longer meet the criteria of clause 71 and which should be repealed as standing resolutions.

73. Standing resolutions may only be enacted and repealed by resolution of Synod.