

DIOCESAN SYNOD

Title: **2017 DEANERY SYNOD ELECTION FORMULA**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The triennial elections of lay parish representatives to Deanery Synods are due to take place in every parish at the Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs) in 2017. Rule 25(2) of the Church Representation Rules (CRRs) requires the Diocesan Synod to determine, by 31st December of the year preceding an election, the number of representatives to be elected from each parish. This paper offers a recommendation for the formula to be used to determine the number of lay representatives.

2. CURRENT FORMULA

The current formula in place is as follows:

Parish/BMO Electoral Roll	Number of Lay representatives on Deanery Synod			
	Column A One Parish Church	Column B Parishes with more than one Parish Church or District		
		Two	Three	Four or more
1 – 50	1	1	1	1
51 – 80	2	2	2	2
81 – 180	3	4	4	4
181 – 280	4	5	6	6
281 – 380	5	6	7	8
381 – 480	6	7	8	9
481 – 580	7	8	9	10
Over 580	8	9	10	11

3. CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES

The Church Representation Rules set out some parameters for the formula which Synod is to agree.

Firstly, it is not possible for a parish with an electoral roll membership of fewer than twenty six to have more than one lay representative elected to Deanery Synod.

Secondly, the total membership of a Deanery Synod must not be more than 150 (including maximum numbers of co-opted members) and, so far as practicable, not less than 50.

In addition, in any Deanery Synod, the total membership of the House of Laity must not be less than that of the House of Clergy.

4. CONSULTATION

The formula has remained more or less unchanged for a long period of time. Over the summer a consultation was held with Area Deans and Lay Chairs on whether they felt any changes should be made and whether the current formula is still fit for purpose, particularly mindful of the developments in *'Mission and Ministry Units'*.

12 responses were received. The majority of respondents seem content to continue with the current formula (and presumably the majority who didn't respond have no major concerns), however some comments and suggestions were made, which are worth some consideration:

- Several calls for a marked reduction in the number of representatives, citing lack of attendance and efficiency of Synods as grounds.
- Having a lower maximum number of representatives for any parish/BMO.
- Parity between the number of representative each parishes/BMOs can have on the basis that they are of equal value.
- A simplified formula – Each Parish or District with an ER of under 50 = 1 Representative. Each Parish or District with an ER of 50 or more = 2 representatives.

There were several comments on the future of Deaneries and the continuing development of *'Mission and Ministry Units'* however there was a general realisation that these are not issues that a formula can solve and are part of a larger strategic direction that will continue to develop over the next triennium.

5. PROPOSAL FOR DIOCESAN SYNOD

It seems that, of the comments made in the consultation, there is some call for simplicity, parity and smaller Deanery Synods. However there is a disparity in the size of Deanery Synods across the Diocese, for instance, Havering Deanery Synod is three times the size of Rochford Deanery Synod and Hinckford Deanery Synod has a larger number of lay representatives than Newham Deanery Synod, mainly because of the number of parishes in Hinckford Deanery.

Also, at a parish level there is great disparity, there are numerous single Church parishes, however there is a growing number of multi-Church parishes, the highest being 7 Churches in one parish. No formula will offer a perfect solution, any change will likely

impact the Deaneries in different ways, for example a reduction may well suite a number of Deaneries, but might lead to others having too small a Deanery Synod.

Having calculated the number of seats each parish/BMO would get if we stuck with the current formula there is no significant change in size, with each of the Synods experiencing a slight decrease or slight increase in total membership.

Therefore, it is proposed to retain the existing formula for use in the 2017 Deanery Synod elections. The proposal has the recommendation of the Bishop's Council.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That this Synod approve the election formula, as set out in paper DS(2016)13, for use in the 2017 Deanery Synod Elections.