

CHURCHWARDENS MEASURE 2001
CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES 2020
DIOCESE OF LONDON

ANNUAL MEETINGS, ELECTIONS ETC. IN 2020
SUPPLEMENTARY DIRECTIONS

The Bishop of London, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 10 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and rule 78 of the Church Representation Rules, makes the following supplementary directions to enable meetings to take place by virtual means.

These directions are supplementary to the directions made on 20th March 2020.

Application

1. The provision made by this instrument applies to each parish in the Diocese of London.

Interpretation

2. In this instrument –

“the Measure” means the Churchwardens Measure 2001; and

“CRR” means the Church Representation Rules.

Meeting by Virtual Means – Annual Parochial Church Meeting

3. Part 9, Section A of the CRR (“Annual Parochial Church Meeting”) applies with the following modifications.
4. A reference to ‘the annual meeting’ includes a reference to a meeting which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.
5. A reference to a place where the annual meeting is held, or is to be held, includes a reference to more than one place, including electronic, digital or virtual locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
6. Notice of the annual meeting, including details of how those entitled to be present and to vote at the meeting may participate in the meeting shall be published in accordance with Part 9, Section A, Rule M2 of the CRR and in such other manner as the minister may consider appropriate to ensure that notice of the meeting is as far as possible given to all those whose names are included in the church electoral roll of the parish
7. A person is to be regarded as present at the annual meeting at any given time if the person is at that time able to hear and be heard, and where practicable see and be seen, by the other persons present.

8. A vote may be taken by such electronic method of voting as may be determined by the annual meeting.

Meeting by Virtual Means – Annual Meeting of Parishioners

9. Section 5 of the Measure (“Meeting of the Parishioners”) applies with the following modifications.
10. A reference to ‘the meeting’ includes a reference to a meeting which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.
11. A reference to a place where the meeting is held, or is to be held, includes a reference to more than one place, including electronic, digital or virtual locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
12. Notice of the meeting, including details of how those entitled to be present and to vote at the meeting may participate in the meeting shall be published in accordance with section 5 of the Measure and in such other manner as the minister may consider appropriate to ensure that notice of the meeting is as far as possible given to all those entitled to participate
13. A person is to be regarded as present at the meeting at any given time if the person is at that time able to hear and be heard, and where practicable see and be seen, by the other persons present.
14. A vote may be taken by such electronic method of voting as may be determined by the meeting.

Meeting by Virtual Means – Deanery Synods

15. Part 3 of the CRR (“Deanery Synods”) and the Model Rules for Deanery Synods apply with the following modifications.
16. A reference to any meeting of the Deanery Synod includes a reference to a meeting which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.
17. A reference to a place where the meeting is held, or is to be held, includes a reference to more than one place, including electronic, digital or virtual locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
18. Notice of the meeting, including details of how those entitled to be present and to vote at the meeting may participate in the meeting shall be published in accordance with the Model Rules for Deanery Synod and in such other manner as the joint chairs may consider appropriate to ensure that notice of the meeting is as far as possible given to all those entitled to participate.
19. A person is to be regarded as present at the meeting at any given time if the person is at that time able to hear and be heard, and where practicable see and be seen, by the other persons present.
20. A vote may be taken by such electronic method of voting as may be determined by the standing committee.

General

21. The provisions made by this Instrument have effect in spite of any inconsistent provision in the CRR or the Measure; and any such provision is accordingly to be ignored.
22. A reference in this Instrument to being present at the meeting includes a reference to being present by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcast and live interactive streaming.
23. This Instrument shall remain in force unless and until revoked in writing by the Bishop of London

Date 1st September 2020

Signature

+ Sarah London

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note does not form part of the Instrument)

This instrument has been made by the bishop of the diocese in the light of the continuing national situation relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The instrument is made under the bishop's powers contained in the section 10 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and Rule 78 of the Church Representation Rules 2020.

For 2020, the time for holding a meeting of parishioners to choose churchwardens is extended until 31 October (instead of 31 May). Similarly, the period for holding an Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) is extended to 31 October. The APCM may now be held by using Zoom or other virtual means instead of a physical meeting.

Churchwardens who were chosen in 2019 continue to hold office until 31 January 2021 unless their successors are admitted to office before that. If a churchwarden is serving the sixth successive period of office, that sixth successive period is extended so that disqualification under section 3 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 (disqualification after six periods of office) arises only at the end of that extended period. The annual meeting to elect new churchwardens may also now be held by using Zoom or other virtual means instead of a physical meeting.

The term of office of current representatives of the laity on deanery synods is extended until 30 November. Deanery Synod meetings may also now be held by using Zoom or other virtual means instead of a physical meeting.

The term of office of representatives of the laity on parochial church councils is also extended. A representative of the laity whose term of office was due to expire this year will expire but where the APCM is deferred under the provisions of the Bishop's earlier instrument dated 20th March 2020, the representative's term of office will expire only at the end of the deferred APCM.

If, before this instrument is made by the bishop, a parish has already held its annual meeting of parishioners and APCM for 2020, the effect of the Bishop's instrument of 20th March 2020 remains as follows:

- the churchwardens chosen in 2019 remain in office, and the churchwardens chosen in 2020 will take up office when they are admitted to office (which could be as late as 31 January 2021);
- the previously elected representatives of the laity on the deanery synod (i.e. those elected in 2017 or to fill casual vacancies since the 2017 elections) continue in office until 30 November 2020 (rather than 30 June, as would otherwise have been the case) and the newly elected representatives of the laity on the deanery synod (i.e. those elected in 2020) will not take up office until 1 December 2020 (rather than 1 July);
- newly elected representatives of the laity on the PCC will already have taken up office immediately at the conclusion of the 2020 APCM.

Note that in 2020 APCM's should elect members of the laity to represent the parish at Deanery Synod for the next triennium. This is important because the members of deanery synod will be the electors in 2021 elections to the Diocesan Synod and also in the deferred election for a new General Synod.

PCC Secretaries must therefore, as already required by the Church Representation Rules, give the diocesan electoral registration officer the information specified in CRR rule M12(9) (i.e. name and addresses [including email where provided] of every person elected to the deanery synod as a parochial representative of the laity as soon as possible after the APCM has taken place. In practice this should be done by sending the information to your Area Office Administrator.

Note that for APCM's and for Annual meetings to elect Churchwardens, you may need to be prepared to run an election at the meeting. Some points to note:

- For the annual meeting to elect Churchwardens, nominations will need to be submitted before the start of the meeting, so these may need to be invited in advance.
- For the APCM, nominations, e.g. for candidates to be elected to serve on the PCC, may be submitted either before or at the meeting.
- For a simple election, it may be possible to conduct this by a show of hands. However for anything involving three or more candidates it may be necessary to prepare in advance to use the 'polling' facility on Zoom, by inserting the names of known candidates into the system before the meeting, and having someone ready to add the names of other candidates duly nominated at the meeting itself. It is hoped that some simple guidance on this, including answers to FAQ's, will be available shortly.

Don't forget also when preparing for the APCM that the Church Representation Rules 2020 have made some minor changes to the business to be conducted at the meeting. See Section 9 of the CRR 2020 at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules/church-representation-rules-online-part-9>, particularly model rules M4 to M12.