



Diocesan Council Members' Manual

Introduction

Between the meetings of synod, the diocesan council provides leadership, direction and oversight as the “synod between synods.” With the purpose of supporting our parishes as they seek to fulfill God's mission, the council is responsible (with the support of synod staff) for overseeing the implementation of the Vision, governance of the diocese and stewardship of resources.

Accountability

Under the leadership of the bishop, diocesan council is accountable to the synod and has responsibility for the diocese as defined in Canon 3 – Diocesan Council in the [Canons, Constitution and Regulations](#).

Diocesan Council is accountable, either directly or through its committees, for:

- developing long term goals and plans for the development of the diocese;
- providing overall strategic guidance to the diocese, including endorsing the strategic direction, priorities and allocation of resources in line with the strategy;
- monitoring and assessing performance against key targets and objectives;
- developing and maintaining principles and processes for effective governance;
- ensuring there is effective management of finances and risk;
- providing advice on and assisting with the engagement of parishes;
- approving policies and procedures for the diocese and recommending modifications to canons, constitution and regulations to synod.

Responsibilities of Members

All members of diocesan council and its standing committees should discharge duties in good faith. While the diocese seeks members reflecting diverse experiences and perspectives, council members are responsible for acting on behalf of the diocese as a whole when making decisions. Members are required to address and report potential conflict of interest in accordance with diocesan policy.

It is the responsibility of all members of council to act as partners with the chair, and to work with other council members so that council functions as a deliberative and participative body. The chair is expected to facilitate effective and collaborative debate of the issues and suggestions brought forward to council. Members are expected to impartially represent the actions and decisions of council to others, maintaining confidentiality as needed.

Members are expected to prepare for each meeting by staying informed of current diocesan ministries, events, and news, and by reading all the materials listed on each meeting Agenda and as provided via the Diocesan Council Dropbox.

Members are expected to attend all council meetings and may also be asked to serve on committees (see list below). If any member fails to attend two consecutive meetings save by reason of sickness or other reasonable or unavoidable cause, the council may declare the office vacant, and the member shall be replaced by electoral process.

Members of diocesan council are members of synod for the duration of their term on diocesan council.

Council Operations

Agenda

The agenda is set by the bishop, the clerical secretary and the executive officer.

Decision-making Authority

Council exercises the authority granted to it in the Canons, Constitution and Regulations, and at the discretion of the bishop. Council retains the right to make decisions except where it has expressly delegated decision-making authority to one of its committees or a member of the synod staff. Committees may not further delegate authorities without the permission of council.

Documents

Ideally, members or committees providing items for the agenda should provide all documentation to the lay secretary and clerical secretary at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting. All council meeting documents are provided to council members for review in advance of the meeting date.

Frequency

Diocesan council meets formally five times per year in the months of January, March, May/June, September and November. The bishop, or any two members of diocesan council, may request additional meetings if deemed necessary.

Quorum

Meetings require a quorum of 50% plus 1 (one) of the voting council members to be present. Council members are expected to actively participate in meetings including reviewing meeting documentation, evaluating reports, and reading minutes. The lay secretary and clerical secretary attend ex officio. Staff members attend as required (non-voting).

Voting

A simple majority is required for all issues requiring a vote. In the case of a tie-vote, the chair shall cast the deciding vote.

E-Ballot

Where the bishop considers it necessary, an item may be presented for decision by diocesan council by email ballot. Provided that at least two-thirds of the members of council cast ballots, a measure supported by the majority of positive ballots shall be considered adopted. Any member may make a request to the bishop that a meeting of council be convened to consider the item.

Standing Committees

As per Regulation 3.07, diocesan council has the following active standing committees:

- Canon Committee
- Nominations Committee (convened as required)
- Stewardship Committee
- Finance Committee
- Supplementary Pension Committee
- Human Resources (canonically referred to as the "Personnel and Compensation Committee")
- Program Review Sub-Committee

Responsibilities of Members

Members of committees have responsibility for discharging their individual duties in good faith. While the diocese seeks committees reflective of the diverse experiences and perspectives of the entire diocese, members are to act on behalf of the whole diocese when making decisions. Members are required to address and report potential conflict of interest situations in accordance with diocesan policy.

Attendance

Meetings require a quorum of 60% of the voting committee members to be present. Members are expected to participate actively in meetings, including attending meetings, reviewing meeting documentation, evaluating reports, and reading minutes.

Decision-making Authority

The committee exercises its authorities granted to it in the Canons, Constitution and Regulations, and authorities that may be granted to it at the discretion of diocesan council and the bishop. Committees may not further delegate authorities without the permission of council.

Documents

All meeting documents are normally provided to members for review at least one week in advance of the meeting date. All items for the agenda are to be with the supporting staff member at least fourteen days prior to the date of the meeting.

Leadership

The chair is normally a member of diocesan council, selected by diocesan council. The vice-chair is selected by the chair from the committee membership and need not be a member of diocesan council.

Policies and Procedures

As appropriate, committees establish internal rules, policies and procedures.

Reporting

Committees report to diocesan council through the committee chair.

Staff and other Attendance

Staff members are assigned to committees to provide support as required. The bishop is ex officio a member of all standing committees and may attend as a member or otherwise. At the invitation of the bishop, any person may attend any committee meeting.

Terms

Members serve for a fixed term not to exceed three years, with a limit of two consecutive terms total—except where a specific role dictates the ongoing membership of a person on a committee.

Resources for Members

[Constitution, Canons and Regulations of the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of British Columbia](#)

[Diocesan Council Section](#) on diocesan website, including:

- Current list of council members
- Meeting dates and locations
- Past minutes of council

[Diocesan Council Dropbox](#), including all materials provided to council from 2018 to current.

Important Contacts

Clerical secretary – clericalsecretary@bc.anglican.ca

Lay secretary – laysecretary@bc.anglican.ca

Council executive assistant – dc@bc.anglican.ca