### **Parish Administration Ordinance 2008**

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

#### **Background**

- 1. 'God is a God not of disorder but of peace' (1 Corinthians 14:33). The apostle reminds us that the good order of the Christian community reflects something of the character of the God whose people we are. For this reason the rules for our parish and church administrative structures and relationship should be as clear, useful and accessible as possible.
- 2. In its report to Synod in 2005 about reforming parochial structure and administration, the Policy 4 Committee made the following comments about the administration of parochial units –

"The Church Administration Ordinance 1990 has been amended on many occasions, often in a piecemeal way. Anecdotally, there also appears to be an increasing divergence between what the ordinance says and what actually happens in practice. Further, in the longer term, the reforms [under the Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004 and the Associated Congregations (Amendment) Ordinance 2005] are best integrated into a redrafted ordinance rather than grafted onto the existing ordinance.

In view of these matters the committee considers that a review and redraft of the Church Administration Ordinance 1990 (and related ordinances) would be timely.

In undertaking such a review, the committee will be seeking to achieve an appropriate degree of flexibility in terms of how parochial units can be administered. In particular it would be the committee's intention to accommodate models of administration based on other church buildings or the parish as a whole (through its congregations) under any redrafted ordinance."

- 3. By resolution 26/05 the Synod, noting the Policy 4 report about reforming parochial structure and administration
  - gave its in principle support for the proposals about the administration of parochial units, and
  - (b) requested that the Standing Committee bring to the next session of the Synod an ordinance or ordinances which would give effect to these proposals.
- 4. In response to Synod's request, the Ordinance Reform Group (previously the Policy 4 Committee) prepared an exposure draft of a

bill for the Parish Administration Ordinance. While seeking to integrate and improve the presentation and accessibility of rules for parish administration previously contained in a number of ordinances, the exposure draft was not intended to introduce significant changes to the substance of the rules by which churches and parishes are currently administered.

- The exposure draft was presented to the Synod in 2007 and Synod members were invited to submit comments in respect of the exposure draft to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2007. The Ordinance Reform Group used those comments together with a number of the matters raised by Synod members during the debate on the exposure draft in preparing a revised version of the ordinance.
- In early May 2008 a revised Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 was circulated to all Synod members, churchwardens and parish councillors with an invitation for them to respond with comments by the end of June 2008. The comments received as a result of this further process have been reviewed in detail with many being incorporated into what the Ordinance Reform Group considers is a significantly improved ordinance.
- This report briefly outlines the objects and structure of the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (the Ordinance).

### Objects and structure of the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008

- The Ordinance comprises the following components -
  - The Ordinance itself which articulates certain objects (clause 2) and provides a mechanism by which parishes can choose to be administered as a whole rather than on the basis of their churches (Part 2),
  - Schedule 1 to the Ordinance which sets out the rules for administering a parish based on its church or churches,
  - Schedule 2 to the Ordinance which sets out the rules for administering a parish as a whole.
- 9 The objects of the Ordinance are
  - to bring together all the rules which are directly relevant to the administration of parishes in the Diocese, and
  - to continue the mechanism by which parishes can choose to be administered as a whole rather than on the basis of their church or churches, and
  - to ensure the rules used to administer parishes are (c) clearly expressed and logically ordered and can be readily used by parish officers, and

- (d) to make some changes to the rules for administering parishes which reflect both contemporary and good administrative practice.
- 10. The way in which the Ordinance seeks to achieve each of these objects is considered below.

# Bringing together ordinances for the administration of parishes

- 11. The Ordinance brings together the provisions for administering churches and parishes currently set out in the following ordinances (the "old law")
  - Church Administration Ordinance 1990
  - Church Grounds and Buildings Ordinance 1990
  - Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004
  - Use of Church Property Ordinance 1995
- 12. The Ordinance also incorporates the provisions of the Associated Congregations (Amendment) Ordinance 2005 (by virtue of being part of the Church Administration Ordinance 1990) and extensively cross-references relevant provisions of the Investment of Church Trust Property Ordinance 1990.

## Continuing the mechanism by which parishes can choose to be administered as a whole

- 13. The Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004 introduced a mechanism by which parishes can choose to be administered as a whole by reference to their constituent congregations rather than by reference to their church building or buildings. This mechanism is continued under Part 2 of the Ordinance.
- 14. Where a parish continues to be administered on the basis of its church building or buildings, the rules by which the parish is to be administered are set out in Schedule 1. If a parish chooses to be administered as a whole then the rules by which the parish is to be administered are set out in Schedule 2.

#### Clearly expressed and logically ordered rules

- 15. Schedules 1 and 2 are each divided into 9 Chapters.
- 16. The structure of the Schedules and the Chapters within each Schedule is intended to be logical and easily understood. For example the rules which set out the functions of bodies and officers of the parish (Chapter 3) appear before more detailed rules about how to convene and conduct certain meetings within the parish (Chapter 4) and rules about alternations to the church, use by other denominations, etc (Chapter 5).

17. As a general drafting technique the concept pioneered under the Discipline Ordinance 2006 of including explanatory notes within (but not part of) the ordinance has been adopted. The notes are used as a means of cross-referencing to other provisions both within and outside the Ordinance. A particular example of the use of a note is the extensive cross-referencing to the Investment of Church Trust Property Ordinance 1990 in Division 5, Part 3 of Chapter 3 of Schedules 1 and 2.

# Some changes to reflect contemporary and good administrative practice

- 18. In general the provisions in the Schedules represent a redistribution of existing provisions and do not incorporate substantive changes.
- 19. The main exceptions to the approach of not changing the substantive provisions are -
  - Rules 2.8(3)(a) and 3.4(1)(i) of Schedule 1 and rules 2.8(3)(a) and 3.3(h) of Schedule 2 deal with how casual vacancies in the office of elected members of the parish council may be filled. It is proposed to simplify existing arrangements by providing that parish councils always fill such vacancies. This change is consistent with the approach adopted under the Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004.
  - Rules 3.1(1)(g) and (2)(g) in Schedule 1 and rule 3.1(g) in Schedule 2 have been expanded to enable the churchwardens to give a report to the annual general meeting of parishioners about the exercise of their functions.
  - Rule 3.3(1) of Schedule 1 and rule 3.2(1) of Schedule 2
    have been expanded to give the parish council the right
    and power to approve budgets in the control of the funds
    and property of the parish.
  - Rule 3.3(2) of Schedule 1 and 3.2(2) of Schedule 2 have been introduced to make it clear that the parish council's right to determine matters of policy, approve budgets and authorise payments must not be exercised in a way that would prevent others exercising their responsibilities, including the responsibilities of the wardens relating to the repair and maintenance of the church. It is considered that this rule clarifies existing arrangements.
  - Rule 3.10 of Schedule 1 and rule 3.9 of Schedule 2 deal with the financial affairs of parish organisations. In essence it is proposed that the wardens take responsibility for the financial affairs of such

organisations and arrange for financial statements for such organisations to be prepared and presented to the annual general meeting of parishioners of the relevant parish or church (the equivalent of the annual vestry meeting).

- 20. The opportunity has also been taken to include an express reference to lay ministers as a category of person whom the wardens of the relevant church or parish may, with the concurrence of the minister, appoint under rule 3.13 in Schedule 1 and rule 3.12 in Schedule 2. "Lay minister" is defined under rule 1.1(1) to mean a lay person who is employed to assist the minister to undertake pastoral ministry within the parish. It is considered that this clarifies existing arrangements.
- 21. The definition of "Archbishop-in-Council" in rule 1.1(1) has been amended to mean the Archbishop acting with the concurrence of the Standing Committee. It is considered this change reflects more accurately the nature of an act of the Archbishop-in-Council.
- 22. A number of new terms or definitions have been introduced, for example 'lay minister', 'qualified person', 'annual general meeting of parishioners', and 'service of public worship', but in each case the new terms are designed to simplify and clarify existing rules.
- 23. A table comparing provisions in the new Ordinance with the corresponding "old law" is attached. The table sets out in more detail the changes included in the Ordinance.

#### **Transitional arrangements**

- 24. It is proposed that the Ordinance commence on 1 January 2009.
- 25. In order to facilitate a transition to the new Ordinance it is proposed that the Synod also pass the Parish Administration (Transitional Provisions) Ordinance 2008. The transition ordinance
  - repeals the "old law" in a way which preserves, to the extent appropriate, actions taken and persons elected or appointed under the "old law",
  - provides that references to vestry meetings and churchwardens in other legislation are deemed to be references to general meetings of parishioners and wardens under the Ordinance, and
  - makes consequential amendments to the Interpretation Ordinance 1985 and the Parishes Ordinance 1979.

#### Recommendation

26. The Standing Committee recommends that the Synod pass as ordinances the bills for the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 and the Parish Administration (Transitional Provisions) Ordinance 2008.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee ROBERT WICKS *Diocesan Secretary* 29 August 2008

### **Comparative table of provisions**

(reference to provisions in the old law are references to the Church Administration Ordinance 1990 unless otherwise indicated)

Key:	
PAO	Parish Administration Ordinance 2008
CAO	Church Administration Ordinance 1990
CGBO	Church Grounds and Buildings Ordinance 1990
PSAO	Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004
PSAO(Sch)	Schedule to the Parishes (Special Administration) Ordinance 2004
UCPO	Use of Church Property Ordinance 1995

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
Ordinance		
cl 1	cl 1, cl 1 CGBO, cl 1 PSAO, cl 1 UCPO	
cl 2	cl 2 PSAO	Object (a): The PAO incorporates much of the old law found in the CAO, the CGBO, the PSAO, the PSAO(Sch) and the UCPO. Upon the commencement of PAO, this old law will be repealed.
		Object (b): The mechanism by which parishes can choose to be administered as a whole rather than on the basis of their church or churches reflects current arrangements under PSAO. However unlike PSAO the rules for parish based administration are set out in full in Schedule 2 of PAO (with the rules for church based administration set out in full in Schedule 1).
		Object (c): In order clearly express and order the rules used to administer parishes, the structure of Schedules 1 and 2 differs significantly from CAO.
		Object (d): PAO incorporates a number of changes which reflect both contemporary and good

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
		administrative practice. These changes are outlined in the remaining comments in this table.
cl 3	cl 3 PSAO	
cl 4	-	The rules for church based administration in Schedule 1 apply to a parish unless the church or churches of the parish and the Regional Council agree that the rules for parish based administration in Schedule 2 should apply to the parish. The rules for parish based administration in Schedule 2 will also apply to those parishes which have previously adopted the model for parish based administration under PSAO.
cl 5	cl 4 PSAO	
cl 6	cl 5 PSAO	
cl 7	cl 6 PSAO	
cl 8	cl 60	
cl 9	cl 64, cl 18 CGBO, cl 7 PSAO	The PAO is to commence on 1 January 2009.
Schedule 1		
r 1.1	cl 2, cl 2, 14 CGBO, cl 1 PSAO(Sch), cl 2, 3 UCPO	New definitions for "lay minister" and "qualified person" have been introduced. The previous definition for "Other Church" under UCPO has been replaced with a new definition for "non-Anglican congregation". Previous definitions included in CAO for "annual vestry meeting", "vestry meeting" and "divine service" have been replaced with new definitions for "annual general meeting of parishioners", "general meeting of parishioners" and "service of public worship". The definition of "Archbishop-in-Council" has been revised.
r 1.2	-	The use of explanatory notes continues the practice adopted in the Discipline Ordinance 2006.
r 2.1	cl 3	
r 2.2	cl 4	

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 2.3	-	This provision provides for the explicit constitution and general characterisation of the parish council. There is no equivalent provision under CAO.
r 2.4	cl 13, 30(1), (2)	
r 2.5	cl 30(3), (4), (5)	
r 2.6	cl 32	Bankruptcy and mental illness have been added as disqualifications to a person being elected or appointed as a member of a parish council.
r 2.7	cl 34	
r 2.8	cl 35	The parish council is able to fill casual vacancies in its elected membership as of right under subrule (3)(a). Under CAO the entitlement of the parish council to fill such vacancies has to be given by the annual vestry meeting.
r 2.9	-	This rule makes explicit the fact that there are to be 3 wardens for each church of the parish. It also generally describes the purpose of the wardens. There is no equivalent provision in CAO.
r 2.10	cl 22A	
r 2.11	cl 21	
r 2.12	cl 22	Unlike CAO, the spouse of an employee who is paid from the funds of the church or parish may not be appointed or elected as a warden. Mental illness has also been added as a disqualification.
r 2.13	cl 23, 24	
r 2.14	cl 25	
r 2.15	cl 26	
r 2.16	cl 17A	
r 3.1	cl 11, 12	The business of the annual general meeting of parishioners enables the wardens to report about the exercise of their functions in paragraph (g). It also includes as an item in paragraph (h) the receipt of any separate financial

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
		statements of a parish organisation. Under CAO financial statements of such organisations are presented to the annual meeting (if any) of the organisation itself or, if there is no such annual meeting, to the parish council.
r 3.2	cl 16	
r 3.3	cl 29	Sub-rule (1) has been extended to give the parish council an express right and power to approve budgets in the control of funds of the parish or a church.
		Sub-rule (2) has been included to make explicit the extent to which the parish council can exercise its right and power to authorise payments and determine matters of policy in relation to funds and property.
r 3.4	cl 28	The functions of the parish council in paragraphs (a) and (b) have been extended to enable the parish council to fix allowances and benefits in addition to stipends and salaries of parish staff. Sub-rule (2) provides for the Archdeacon rather than the Archbishop or Assistant Bishop to resolve disputes concerning the amounts to be paid by each church of the parish for the expenses of the parish.
r 3.5	cl 29A	
r 3.6	cl 40	
r 3.7	cl 20(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), (h), (i), (2), (3)	
r 3.8	cl 41	Concurrence has been substituted for the consent of the minister.
r 3.9	cl 20(1)(k), (l), (m), (n), (o)	The reference to the Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995 has been removed.  The term divine service has been replaced with the term service of public worship in sub-rule (3).

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
		The word Registrar has been replaced with the words Diocesan Secretary in sub-rule (5).
r 3.10	cl 43(3), (6)	This rule makes wardens responsible for keeping proper financial records for parish organisations. It also requires the wardens to present such financial statements to the annual general meeting of parishioners either separately or as part of the financial statements of the church or parish.
r 3.11	cl 20(1)(e), (f), (p), (pa), (q), (2), (3)	The expression celebration of divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct of services of public worship in paragraph (b).
r 3.12	cl 20A	
r 3.13	cl 42	This rule expressly deals with paid workers of the parish and includes the appointment of lay ministers and administrators.
r 3.14	cl 20(1)(g)	The expression performance of divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct of services of public worship.
r 3.15	cl 15(1)	The period in which a minister must usually appoint a warden has been specified as within 7 days of the annual general meeting of parishioners.
r 3.16	cl 15(2), (3)	
r 3.17	cl 39	This rule includes the minister's appointment of a musician or music director.
r 3.18	cl 43(1), (2), (4), (5)	A new sub-rule (1) has been included to make explicit what is implicit under CAO, namely that the minister may establish organisations to further the work of the parish or church.
r 3.19	cl 20(1)(i)	Under CAO the responsibility for reporting details of persons elected as wardens or members of the parish council is given to the churchwardens. Under PAO the

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 5.3	cl 7 CGBO	The expression celebrate divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct of service of public worship. The limitation as to who is entitled to conduct a service of public worship or preach any sermon in a church has been extended to any associated congregation of the church.
r 5.4	cl 8 CGBO	The purposes for which a church may be used have been extended to enable use for the conduct of any activity of the parish. The provision also specifically enables the use of a church for the conduct of a service of public worship (previously the celebration of divine service). Further, the conduct of a meeting of a non-Anglican congregation (previously under the UCPO) is included as an authorised use of a church.
r 5.5	cl 9 CGBO	
r 5.6	cl 10 CGBO	
r 5.7	cl 4, 5, 6 UCPO	
r 5.8	cl 11 CGBO	
r 5.9	cl 3 CGBO	
r 5.10	cl 4 CGBO	
r 5.11	cl 5 CGBO	
r 5.12	cl 14A CGBO	The restriction in relation to the use of a burial ground has been relaxed.
r 5.13	cl 14B CGBO	
r 5.14	cl 14C CGBO	
r 5.15	cl 13 CGBO	
r 6.1	cl 46	
r 6.2	cl 47	
r 6.3	cl 47A, 47B, 47C	
r 7.1	cl 2(1)	
r 7.2	cl 47D	
r 7.3	cl 47E	
r 7.4	cl 47F	

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 8.1	cl 51	
r 8.2	cl 53	
r 8.3	cl 54	In view of the expansion of the purposes for which a church of a parish may be used, the types of questions or disputes that can be resolved have been extended to include the question of whether a church of a parish is being used for a permitted purpose.
r 8.4	cl 55	
r 8.5	cl 56	
r 8.6	cl 57	
r 9.1	cl 15 CGBO	
r 9.2	cl 44	
r 9.3	cl 45	
r 9.4	cl 48(1), (4), 50, cl 16 CGBO	
r 9.5	cl 48(2), (3)	
r 9.6	cl 49	
r 9.7	cl 59	
r 9.8	cl 61	
r 9.9	cl 62	
r 9.10	cl 63	In paragraph (a) the reference to divine service has been replaced with a reference to services of public worship.
r 9.11	cl 27	
Schedule 2		
r 1.1	cl 2, cl 2, 14 CGBO, cl 1 PSAO(Sch), cl 2, 3 UCPO	New definitions for "lay minister" and "qualified person" have been introduced. The previous definition for "Other Church" under UCPO has been replaced with a new definition for "non-Anglican congregation". Previous definitions included in CAO for "annual vestry meeting", "vestry meeting" and "divine service" have been replaced with new definitions for "annual general meeting of parishioners",

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
		"general meeting of parishioners" and "service of public worship".
		The definition of "Archbishop-in-Council" has been revised.
r 1.2	-	The use of explanatory notes continues the practice adopted in the Discipline Ordinance 2006.
r 2.1	cl 3, cl 3(1) PSAO(Sch)	
r 2.2	cl 4, cl 4 PSAO(Sch)	
r 2.3	-	This provision provides for the explicit constitution and general characterisation of the parish council. There is no equivalent provision under CAO.
r 2.4	cl 13, 30(1), cl 14 PSAO (Sch)	
r 2.5	cl 30(3)	
r 2.6	cl 32, cl 15 PSAO(Sch)	Bankruptcy and mental illness have been added as disqualifications to a person being elected or appointed as a member of a parish council.
r 2.7	cl 34	
r 2.8	cl 35	The parish council is able to fill casual vacancies in its elected membership as of right under subrule (3)(a). Under CAO the entitlement of the parish council to fill such vacancies has to be given by the annual vestry meeting.
r 2.9	cl 10 PSAO(Sch)	This rule makes explicit the fact that there are to be 3 wardens for the parish. It also generally describes the purpose of the wardens. There is no equivalent provision in CAO.
r 2.10	cl 21	
r 2.11	cl 22, cl 11 PSAO(Sch)	
r 2.12	cl 23, 24	Unlike CAO, the spouse of an employee who is paid from the funds of the church or parish may not be appointed or elected as a warden. Mental illness has also been added as a disqualification.

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 3.8	cl 20(1)(k), (l), (m), (n), (o)	The reference to the Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995 has been removed.
		Under sub-rule (3), copies of financial statements prepared for an annual general meeting of parishioners are to be made available for inspection or distribution at or near the main entrance of the place where each congregation meets.
		The word Registrar has been replaced with the words Diocesan Secretary in sub-rule (5).
r 3.9	cl 43(3), (6)	This rule makes wardens responsible for keeping proper financial records for parish organisations. It also requires the wardens to present such financial statements to the annual general meeting of parishioners either separately or as part of the financial statements of the church or parish.
r 3.10	cl 20(1)(e), (f), (p), (pa), (q)	The expression celebration of divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct of services of public worship in paragraph (b).
r 3.11	cl 20A	
r 3.12	cl 42	This rule expressly deals with paid workers of the parish and includes the appointment of lay ministers and administrators.
r 3.13	cl 20(1)(g)	The expression performance of divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct of services of public worship.
r 3.14	cl 15(1)	The period in which a minister must usually appoint a warden has been specified as within 7 days of the annual general meeting of parishioners.
r 3.15	cl 15(2), (3)	

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 3.16	cl 39	This rule includes the minister's appointment of a musician or music director.
r 3.17	cl 43(1), (2), (4), (5)	A new sub-rule (1) has been included to make explicit what is implicit under CAO, namely that the minister may establish organisations to further the work of the parish or church.
r 3.18	cl 20(1)(i)	Under CAO the responsibility for reporting details of persons elected as wardens or members of the parish council is given to the churchwardens. Under PAO the minister assumes these responsibilities in order to achieve consistency with similar responsibilities in relation to parish nominators and Synod representatives. Under PAO the minister is also responsible for ensuring that the Registry is advised when any vacancy in those offices arises (except where the vacancy arises on the election or appointment of a successor).
r 3.19	cl 18	In sub-rule (2) the expression celebrate divine service has been replaced with the expression conduct a service of public worship.
r 3.20	cl 19, cl 9 PSAO(Sch)	Records for confirmation services to include the date of baptism.
r 4.1	cl 5, 6, cl 5 PSAO(Sch)	In sub-rules (4) and (5) the references to Sunday services have been replaced with references to services of public worship.
r 4.2	cl 7, cl 6 PSAO(Sch)	In sub-rule (1) the reference to divine service has been replaced with a reference to services of public worship.
r 4.3	cl 8	
r 4.4	cl 9	
r 4.5	cl 10	
r 4.6	cl 14	

PAO	Old law	Comments on material differences
r 4.7	cl 17	In sub-rule (2) the reference to the service has been replaced with a reference to the service of public worship.
r 4.8	cl 36	
r 4.9	cl 37	
r 4.10	cl 38	
r 4.11	cl 38A	
r 5.1	cl 6(1), (2), (3), (4), (5) CGBO, cl 18 PSAO(Sch)	In sub-rule (1) the reference to celebration of divine service has been replaced with a reference to conduct of services of public worship.
r 5.2	cl 6(6) CGBO	
r 5.3	cl 8 CGBO	The purposes for which a church may be used have been extended to enable use for the conduct of any activity of the parish. The provision also specifically enables the use of a church for the conduct of a service of public worship (previously the celebration of divine service). Further, the conduct of a meeting of a non-Anglican congregation (previously under the UCPO) is included as an authorised use of a church.
r 5.4	cl 9 CGBO	
r 5.5	cl 10 CGBO	
r 5.6	cl 4, 5, 6 UCPO	
r 5.7	cl 11 CGBO	
r 5.8	cl 3 CGBO	
r 5.9	cl 4 CGBO	
r 5.10	cl 5 CGBO	
r 5.11	cl 14A CGBO	The restriction in relation to the use of a burial ground has been relaxed.
r 5.12	cl 14B CGBO	
r 5.13	cl 14C CGBO	
r 5.14	cl 13 CGBO	
r 6.1	cl 17 PSAO(Sch)	
r 6.2	cl 17A PSAO(Sch)	