

# Synod Membership Ordinance 1995 Amendment Ordinance 2019

## Explanatory Report

### Key Points

- The Declaration to be made by all sitting members should be expanded to incorporate a Statement of Faith to be consistent with what is required of members of governing bodies of Diocesan Organisations administered by the Synod
- Given the reach of the gospel through Anglican Schools, it is appropriate that a small number of heads of Diocesan Schools be included as members of Synod
- The Purpose of the Bill for the Synod Membership Ordinance 1995 Amendment Ordinance 2019 (the **Bill**) is to make changes to the membership of the Synod and expand the Declaration to be made by members of Synod

## Recommendations

1. Synod receive this report.
2. Synod pass the Bill as an Ordinance of the Synod.

## Background

3. At its meeting on 7 August 2019, the Council of the Northern Region (the **Council**) resolved to promote a Bill to Synod to amend the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995*.
4. After a meeting between some members of the Council and some members of the committee set up to look at the "Composition, purpose and role of Synod" pursuant to the request of Synod under resolution 43/17 (the Committee), a number of suggested changes were agreed between the two parties.
5. At the August meeting of Standing Committee a report from the Council detailing the Council's changes was noted. At the same meeting a report from the Committee was also presented. The Standing Committee deferred the Committee's recommendations to a future meeting so further thought could be given to changes they were proposing.

## General Discussion

6. Within the Northern Region there are a number of Anglican Schools which are constituted by an Ordinance of the Synod and are subject to the Ordinances, Policies and Rules made by the Synod as the governing body of the Diocese.
7. Anglican Schools within the Diocese have the privilege of forming large communities of people, many of whom are not otherwise connected to the Diocese. This provides a large range of opportunities for students, as well as their parents and siblings, to hear the gospel through the work of each school.
8. It seemed anomalous to the Council that this was not acknowledged and reflected in some way in the composition of the Synod.

9. The Council considered various alternative approaches such as specifying in clause 5 "Heads of Nominated Diocesan Schools" with the Standing Committee then nominating three schools. However, it was felt that it would be better for the Heads, in consultation with the Archbishop, to recommend three individual Heads to the Standing Committee for election under Part 8.
10. Problems could arise if three schools were the permanent nominees of the Standing Committee or schools were nominated but the relevant Heads were unwilling to be active members of the Synod. Some schools might feel that they were being unfairly treated if their school was never nominated by the Standing Committee.

### **Statement of Faith**

11. The current Synod Membership Ordinance simply requires lay members in clause 6 to declare that each is a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia and not a member of any other Church. Members of governing bodies of Diocesan Organisations are now required to make a declaration of belief in the form of the Statement of Faith. It was considered by the Council to be anomalous that members of organisations which were governed by Synod had to make such a declaration but members of Synod themselves were not required to do so.

For and on behalf of Northern Region Council.

CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS  
**Bishop**

27 August 2019