

Report of the Standing Committee meeting held on 12 February 2024

Following a reading by the Archbishop of John 8:48-59, Mr John Pascoe and Bishop Peter Hayward opened the meeting in prayer.

Australia Day Honours

Standing Committee congratulated the following members of the Church in the Diocese who were named in the Australia Day Honours list –

Mr Julian Bickersteth (AO), a member of the parish of Turramurra, for distinguished service to the museum and arts sector, and to conservation and the environment.

Professor Julie-Anne Leask (AO), for distinguished service to health and medical research, to policy advice, and to enhancing community understanding of immunisation.

Professor Charlotte Hespe (AM), a member of the parish of Broadway, for significant service to general medicine as a practitioner, academic and mentor.

Mr Adrian Jackson (OAM), a member of the parish of Caringbah, for service to the community, particularly through the church.

Dr Stuart Quarmby (OAM), the Foundation Headmaster of Wollondilly Anglican College from 2004 to 2020 and previously Deputy Head of Broughton Anglican College, for service to primary and secondary education.

Mr Angus Olsen, a member of the parish of Katoomba, awarded 2024 'NSW Local Hero' for his work as a childhood cancer illustrator and author.

Minutes of previous meeting

Standing Committee approved the minutes of 11 December 2023.

Strategic and Other Significant Matters

38/22 Request for Doctrine Commission report on the relationship between church and state, in the absence of religious freedom

Doctrine Commission Report: The Relationship of Church and State and Religious Freedom

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary.

Consideration of Doctrine Commission report

Standing Committee –

- (a) thanked the Doctrine Commission for its report, "The Relationship of Church and State and Religious Freedom", and invited the Commission to review the report in the light of feedback from members of the Standing Committee, provided by 1 March 2024, and
- (b) agreed that the report not be published on the SDS website until after it has been received by the Synod as the requesting body.

Ordinances

Ordinances passed at the last meeting

Standing Committee received from the Diocesan Secretary, the following summary of the status of ordinances passed at the Standing Committee meeting held on 11 December 2023 –

Ordinance	Status
Sydney Anglican Property (Provisional Restructuring) Ordinance 2023	Assented
Anglican Church Growth Corporation Amending Ordinance 2023	Assented
The Relay Anglican Aid Endowment Ordinance 2023	Assented
The Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid Ordinance 2011 Amendment Ordinance 2023	Assented
Synod Fund Application Ordinance 2023	Assented
Parramatta Variation of Trusts and Amendment Ordinance 2023	Assented
Parramatta Trust Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023	Assented, having received the ordinance fee
Moss Vale Variation of Trusts and Land Sale Ordinance 2023	Assented
Surry Hills Land Sale and Variation of Trusts Ordinance 2023	Assented
Ingleburn with Glenquarie Trust Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2023	Assented, having received the consent of the Parish Council

Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995 Amendment Ordinance 2024

The purpose of this ordinance is to amend the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*.

Interpretation Ordinance 1985 Amendment Ordinance 2024

The purpose of this ordinance is to amend the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985*.

Epping Trust Ordinance 2024

The purpose of this ordinance is to vary the trusts on which certain property is held and to establish the ACPT – Epping Trust.

Windsor Trust Ordinance 2024

The purpose of this ordinance is to vary the trusts on which certain property is held and to establish the ACPT – Windsor Trust.

Dundas/Telopea Mortgaging Ordinance 2019

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Sydney Anglican Property ACPT Committee.

Receipt of correspondence

Standing Committee received a letter from the wardens of the Parish of Dundas/Telopea.

Permitted loan amount under the ordinance

Standing Committee –

- (a) noted that, in November 2022, it resolved under clause 3 of the *Dundas/Telopea Mortgaging Ordinance 2019* to increase the permitted loan amount by \$600,000 from \$2,200,000 to \$2,800,000, and
- (b) agreed not to amend the permitted loan amount at this time.

Elections

Blue Mountains Grammar School

Vacancies for two persons; one not filled by the Synod session in September 2023 and the other as declared 11 December 2023.

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and noted that no vacancies will arise for directors of Blue Mountains Grammar School Ltd at the AGM to be held in June 2024.

Filling of vacancy

Mr Graham Isbister was elected.

The remaining vacancy for a person was deferred.

Diocesan Doctrine Commission

Vacancy for a person as declared 11 December 2023.

Standing Committee received a report from the Archbishop's Executive Officer.

Diocesan Ordinance Review Panel

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and declared vacancies for four persons, two of whom must be members of the Standing Committee.

Filling of vacancies

Mr Jeremy Freeman, Mr Greg Hammond OAM and Bishop Michael Stead were elected.

The remaining vacancy for one person was deferred.

Mr Freeman, Mr Hammond and Bishop Stead did not speak or vote during consideration of this matter.

Minute Reading Committee

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and declared vacancies for four members of the Standing Committee.

Filling of vacancies

Mrs Stacey Chapman, Miss Jenny Flower, and Mrs Jeanette Habib were elected.

The remaining vacancy for a member of the Standing Committee was deferred.

Mrs Chapman, Miss Flower and Mrs Habib did not speak or vote during consideration of this matter.

New College Limited

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and –

- (a) noted that two vacancies will arise for Members of New College Ltd at the conclusion of the AGM to be held in May 2024, and
- (b) agreed to consider filling the vacancies at a future meeting, with effect from the conclusion of the forthcoming AGM.

Ordinance Reviewers

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and declared vacancies for eight members of the Standing Committee.

Filling of vacancies

Mrs Stacey Chapman, Archdeacon Anthony Douglas, Mr Jeremy Freeman, Mr Mark Streeter, Dr Robert Tong AM, and Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo were elected.

The remaining vacancies for two members of the Standing Committee were deferred.

Mrs Chapman, Archdeacon Douglas, Mr Freeman, Mr Streeter, and Ms Warwick-Mayo did not speak or vote during consideration of this matter.

Robert Menzies College

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and noted that no vacancies will arise for Members of Robert Menzies College Ltd at the AGM to be held in May 2024.

SCECGS Redlands

See also Casual Vacancies

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and –

- (a) noted that a vacancy for one person to be appointed as a director of SCECGS Redlands Ltd will arise at the conclusion of the AGM on 30 April 2024, and
- (b) agreed to consider at a future meeting making a recommendation to SDS to fill this vacancy.

SCEGGS Darlinghurst

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary and –

- (a) noted that vacancies for three persons to be appointed as directors of SCEGGS Darlinghurst Ltd will arise at the conclusion of the AGM on 27 May 2024, and
- (b) agreed to consider at a future meeting making recommendations to SDS to fill these vacancies.

Anglican Community Services (Anglicare)

Anglican Media Council

Anglican National Superannuation Board

Campbelltown Anglican Schools Council

Diocesan Retirements Board

Endowment of the See Corporation

Living Faith Council

Ministry Training and Development, Council of

Social Issues Committee

Stipends and Allowances Committee

Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee

Sydney Anglican Loans Board

Sydney Diocesan Services

Tertiary Education Ministry Oversight Committee

William Clarke College, Council of

These matters were deferred.

Casual Vacancies

- (a) SCECGS Redlands – the Rev Timothy St Quintin had resigned and a vacancy was declared for a person.

Declaration of urgency

Standing Committee agreed to consider making a recommendation to Sydney Diocesan Services regarding the filling of the vacancy for a person as Director of SCECGS Redlands Ltd at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation for appointment

Standing Committee recommended to Sydney Diocesan Services that it appoint Ms Megan Coall to fill the vacancy for a person as Director of SCECGS Redlands Ltd.

Sydney Diocesan Services, Glebe Administration Board and other Diocesan Organisations

Sydney Diocesan Services Minutes

Standing Committee noted that the minute book of the Sydney Diocesan Services.

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

Standing Committee received a report concerning the Sydney Diocesan Services.

Synod

65/23 Conversion Practices Legislation

Standing Committee noted that Synod passed resolution 65/23 in the following terms –

‘Synod –

- (a) reaffirms Synod Resolution 31 of 2018, in particular that –
 - (i) ‘the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney does not practise, recommend or endorse “gay conversion therapy”, defined as psychological practices that ‘seek to re-orient sexual attraction to heterosexuality’, and that
 - (ii) Synod ‘values prayer for same-sex attracted Christians who wish to live celibate lives, noting that prayer is not a form of “gay conversion therapy”’,
- (b) notes that the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2023 (NSW), introduced by Mr Alex Greenwich, has been closely modelled on the *Victorian Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021*, and adopts its expansive redefinition of Conversion Practices by including the broad and vague concept of suppression, according to which the following are illegal –
 - (i) a religious leader meeting one-on-one with a member of their congregation to encourage them not to act on same-sex attraction by practising celibacy,
 - (ii) religious teaching that someone is ‘broken’ because of their sexual orientation or gender identity,
 - (iii) the provision of support through group prayer to a young person to help them fight a desire to act on their feelings of same-sex attraction,
 - (iv) a religious leader telling a member of their congregation that they will be excommunicated if they continue their same-sex relationship,
 - (v) parents declining to support their child’s request for puberty blockers if a health professional recommends it, or otherwise restricting their child access to any health care services that would affirm their child’s gender identity, and
 - (vi) a teacher telling a student that God does not accept them unless they keep the sex they were assigned at birth and dress accordingly

(All examples from <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/change-or-suppression-practices/have-you-experienced-a-change-or-suppression-practice/>),
- (c) notes the pre-election commitments of the Premier and other members of the ALP that its legislation would prohibit ‘dangerous and damaging’ conversion practices, but that it would not ban a consenting individual seeking prayer or other advice and assistance, nor would it ban the expression of religious belief through religious teaching,

- (d) notes that the government's Consultation Paper on Banning Conversion Practices has proposed an approach that is very similar to the Victorian legislation and the Bill introduced by Mr Greenwich, which is inconsistent with the ALP's pre-election commitments,
- (e) calls on the Minns Labor Government to uphold its commitments regarding LGBTQ conversion therapy by introducing legislation that –
 - (i) bans dangerous and damaging practices that seek or promise to change sexual orientation, but does not use the broad and vague concept of 'suppression',
 - (ii) does not prohibit a consenting individual from seeking the support and assistance that they consider appropriate for themselves,
 - (iii) does not prohibit religious instruction and guidance that encourages church members to live in conformity with the ethical teaching of the Scriptures by not acting on desires that are contrary to this teaching,
 - (iv) does not expose parents to prosecution for failing to affirm and support their child's sexual orientation or gender identity, and
 - (v) does not introduce a bias towards gender-affirming treatment and the threat of prosecution for health professionals who recommend a different treatment approach, and
- (f) encourages Sydney Anglicans to meet with, or write to, their local MP to express their concerns and requests, and notes that Freedom for Faith has developed resources to assist in organising meetings and writing letters (<https://contactyourmp.org.au>).

and noted a response from the Hon Michael Daley MP, NSW Attorney General.

Other Matters

Productivity Commission Draft Report on Philanthropy within Australia

Standing Committee noted a submission dated 22 January 2024 made on behalf of the Diocese by Bishop Michael Stead as Chair of the Religious Freedom Reference Group to the Productivity Commission Draft Report on Philanthropy.

The Archbishop made a statement.

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Standing Committee in prayer for this matter.

Draft Standing Committee Policy on managing conflicts of interest

Standing Committee noted a report from the Chair of the Governance Policy Review Committee.

Finance Committee's terms of reference

Receipt of report

Standing Committee received a report from the Diocesan Secretary.

Adoption of terms of reference

Standing Committee amended the Finance Committee's terms of reference as shown in a marked form of the Committee's terms of reference.

Standing Committee meeting dates for 2025

Standing Committee agreed to the following meeting dates for 2025 –

10 February	28 July
24 March	18 August
28 April	20 October
26 May	17 November
23 June	8 December

noting that third ordinary session of the 53rd Synod is proposed to be held in the weeks commencing Monday 15 and Monday 22 September 2025.

Date of next meeting

Monday 25 March 2024.