

# Quick Guide for Meetings from the Standing Orders

## 1. Before Debate Begins

### **SO 28 – Quorum**

A meeting can only conduct business if a quorum is present. This means the president (or authorised chair) and one-third of clergy and laity members must be present.

### **SO 29 – If Quorum Not Present**

If there aren't enough members, the chair must adjourn the meeting.

## 2. Speaking in Debate

### **SO 30 – Order of Speeches**

The chair decides who speaks and in what order. Members may need to submit their names to the secretary.

### **SO 35 – Speaking to a Motion**

Members may only speak when there is a motion or amendment under discussion.

### **SO 36 – Speaking More Than Once**

- Normally you may only speak once on a motion.
- Exception: The mover of the motion can reply at the end of the debate.

### **SO 37 – Length of Speeches**

- Normal limits:
  - 10 minutes for speeches
  - 15 minutes when introducing a report
- The chair can shorten or extend these limits.

## 3. Maintaining Order

### **SO 31 – Breach of Order**

The chair can call a member to order if they speak irrelevantly, repeat arguments unnecessarily, use inappropriate language or ignore the chair

### **SO 32 – Point of Order**

A member may interrupt to raise a procedural issue but they must be brief and about the rules, not the debate.

**SO 33 – Personal Explanation** - A member may clarify something if they have been misunderstood.

### **SO 34 – Interruptions Not Allowed**

Members cannot interrupt speeches except for points of order or personal explanations.

## 4. Motions and Amendments

**SO 38 – Moving and Seconding** - If the person who gave notice of a motion is absent, another member may move it.

**SO 39 – Withdrawal** - The mover may withdraw a motion unless more than five members object.

**SO 41 – Division of Motion** - The chair may split a motion into parts so the synod can vote on them separately.

## 5. Amendments

**SO 43 – Amendments Allowed** - Members may propose changes to a motion.

**SO 44 – Amendments Not Allowed**

Amendments cannot be made to procedural motions or motions simply receiving a report.

**SO 46 – Amendments in Writing** - Amendments must normally be submitted in writing.

**SO 47 – Types of Amendments**

You can amend a motion by removing words, removing and replacing words or adding words.

**SO 48 – Relevance** - Amendments must relate to the motion and not cancel it entirely.

**SO 49 – Order of Amendments** - Amendments are debated in the order they affect the motion.

## 6. Procedural Motions (to be used during Debate)

These allow members to change how the debate proceeds.

**SO 52 – Next Business** - Ends discussion of the motion immediately.

**SO 53 – Adjournment of Synod** - Ends the meeting.

**SO 54 – Adjournment of Debate** - Stops debate and resumes it later.

**SO 55 – Closure** - If carried, debate ends and the synod moves straight to voting.

**SO 56 – Speech Limit** - The synod can impose shorter speaking times.

**SO 58 – Suspension of Standing Orders** - Requires  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority to temporarily suspend a rule.

## 7. Chair's Special Powers

**SO 42 – Powers of Chairman**

The chair may Adjourn the meeting, End debate at scheduled times and Close debate when required.