

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE MAY 2021**Proposed Deliverance****The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the order of business for the first two days.
3. Appoint Rev Colin Renwick to be Precentor until May 2022.
4. Appoint Mr Roy Pinkerton to index the verbatim record.
5. Invite Commissioners to submit to the Procedure Committee via email: **pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk** by Monday 24 May at 12pm, nomination(s) of Commissioner(s) to serve on the Selection Committee.
6. Approve the Overture amending the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) as set out in Appendix C and transmit the same to Presbyteries for their consideration under the Barrier Act, directing that returns be sent to the Principal Clerk not later than 31 December 2021.
7. Pass as an Interim Act the text of the Overture amending the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) as set out in sections 1 and 2 only (but not section 3) of Appendix C.
8. Instruct the Committee to develop the fast tracking of deliverance approval necessitated by online Assemblies and continue in future Assemblies.
9. Instruct the Committee to continue its work on General Assembly reform, including engagement with the Legal Questions Committee's work on the Church Courts Act, reflection on the report of the Special Commission on the Effectiveness of the Presbyterian Form of Church Governance, and to share proposals with Presbyteries for early consultation, prior to reporting to the General Assembly of 2022.
10. Invite the Legal Questions Committee to explore the feasibility of legislation enabling all or part of future General Assembly business to be conducted online, and report to a subsequent General Assembly with draft legislation if appropriate.
11. Urge the Scottish Bible Society to pursue its ongoing efforts to address the challenge of global Bible translation and distribution.
12. Support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to improve people's experience of the Bible and its impact on their life.
13. Endorse the Society in its efforts to encourage confidence in the Gospel and in providing Scripture resources for mission purposes.
14. Commend the Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members.

Report**1. THE VERY REV DR W MARTIN FAIR**

Very Rev Dr Martin Fair's year as Moderator has been distinct. He was just the right person to be the first to moderate an online General Assembly and to lead us all in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout his year he has adapted, thrived and encouraged, and enabled others to do so. Prayer and reflection resources have been greatly appreciated by the whole church family and beyond, particularly by those leading worship who have been able to have occasional time off. While actual travel has been minimal, Martin has zoomed around cyberspace; engaging with ministers, congregations, Presbyteries, military personnel, ecumenical partners at home and abroad and many more.

His series: 'It's a Fair Question' has been able to open up conversations on significant issues facing the church, nation and the world.

The Church is indebted to Martin for his dedicated service at this time, and we wish him and Elaine well as they adapt to their new normal.

2. THE PRECENTOR

The Committee is grateful to Rev Colin Renwick for his willingness to be Precentor at the General Assembly. During Covid-19 constraints his work has been limited, and we hope that General Assembly 2022 will be one where we are able to gather and be led in praise.

3. PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATION

The Presbytery returns show that there are in all the Presbyteries 1,010 charges, whether vacant or not and that there are 173 other ministers (excluding retired ministers) who are members of Presbyteries. Representation is calculated for each Presbytery in accordance with Act III 2000 and the total number of Commissioners is currently made up as follows: 327 Ministers, 327 Elders and 21 Deacons.

4. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

In light of this Assembly being held online, changes are required to the Standing Orders and these are set out in Appendix B. The relevant section of deliverance is contained in the Report of the Legal Questions Committee.

5. PROPERTY**5.1. Moderator's Residence**

Following the annual inspection of the Moderator's flat in January 2020, several minor repairs and improvements were carried out. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the property was little used during the year. Repairs to the roof area have been completed, the costs being shared by the other proprietors in the block. The motor of the external hoist is being replaced and a cover installed to deal with the problem of water ingress.

Last year's inspection highlighted a number of more serious defects in this property, which has a dual purpose: that of providing a high-quality venue for official entertaining on the ground floor and as living accommodation for the Moderator and family members on the upper floor. The latter aspect of the flat is far from ideal, since there is no kitchen, no study, only one living room and two bedrooms on the upper floor, which is inaccessible for anyone with a mobility issue. It has therefore been agreed to review the long-term future of the Moderator's residence, in terms of expenditure, accessibility and necessity.

5.2. Assembly Hall

Since both meetings of the General Assembly were held online and there were no external lets (apart from the Hall being used for the New College Student Induction Week), there was little use of the Hall in 2020, but no reduction in net expenditure. Problems highlighted in earlier reports continue to cause concern: increasing repair and maintenance costs, a limit on the revenue that may be generated through short-term lets, and restricted disability access. To these must be added the cost of replacing critical items of equipment installed many years ago. As changes to health and safety regulations mean that lift breakdowns due to water accumulating in the sump are costly to repair, a permanent solution is being sought, so that the Hall is ready for use when the current restrictions are lifted. It should be noted that the University of Edinburgh is undertaking a major renovation of New College, designed to stop the spread of fire and protect the fabric of their building.

Given the role of the General Assembly as the supreme decision-making Court of the Church of Scotland, the place where its decisions are currently debated and determined may no longer be wholly fit for purpose. Since "a well-equipped space in the right place" is clearly as important for the Church as a whole as it is for individual congregations, it has been agreed to explore options for the future of the building.

6. PRESBYTERY DEVELOPMENT

The work of Presbytery Development has two strands. The first strand is the restructuring of the existing Presbyteries to form a smaller number of larger Presbyteries, with the aim of establishing around ten new Presbyteries. This major piece of work is being led by the Principal Clerk, who has been facilitating discussions and supporting dialogue between groups of Presbyteries. The approach has been that an outcome which best reflects geographical and cultural connections is more solidly achieved by being shaped from the ground up rather than being centrally imposed. Progress with this restructuring is set out as follows:

	New Presbyteries Formed	Date of Commencement
1	Aberdeen/Shetland	1 June 2020
2	Fife	1 January 2021
3	Clyde	1 September 2020
	Presbyteries currently in Discussion	Proposed Date for Overture to GA and Date of Commencement
4	Aberdeen/Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and part of Moray	GA 2022 1 January 2023
5	Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Inverness, part of Moray, Abernethy, Lochaber, Lochcarron-Skye, Uist and Lewis	GA 2022 (possibly) 1 January 2023 (possibly)
6	Angus, Dundee, Perth, Dunkeld & Meigle, Stirling	GA 2022 Summer 2022?
7	Edinburgh, West Lothian, with discussions to be entered into with Lothian, Duns, Melrose & Peebles and Jedburgh	GA 2021 1 January 2022 for Edinburgh-West Lothian Wider reform under discussions

8	Glasgow	Cumbernauld charges have now been transferred
9	Hamilton and Lanark	GA 2021 1 January 2022
10	Ardrossan, Irvine & Kilmarnock, Ayr, Wigtown & Stranraer, Annandale & Eskdale, Dumfries & Kirkcudbright	GA2021 30 September 2022
11	Argyll and Falkirk considering direction of travel	
12	The Presbyteries of England, the Presbytery of the International Charges and the Presbytery of Jerusalem are discussing what Presbytery Reform means for them in their unique position.	

The second strand of Presbytery Development is concerned with exploring, encouraging and supporting ways in which Presbytery life will develop within the newly shaped Presbyteries. This is presently an open space where fresh and inspired thought can take place as Presbyteries seek to find new ways of working which will best shape the Church of the future. The Committee will be consulting with Presbyteries in the coming months to identify matters of common interest or concern which, building on the Conference held by the Committee in March 2020, could usefully be shared and discussed in conference for the benefit of all Presbyteries and the national base.

6.1 Communication with Presbyteries

Communications which are clear, informative and responsive give confidence in process and build space for creative thought. Good communication between Presbyteries and the General Assembly, through its Business Committee, will be increasingly important as the restructuring of the Presbyteries, and the general work of reform, progresses. The Committee is considering ways in which good communications with Presbyteries may be developed, and will be consulting with Presbyteries in the coming months.

6.2 Presbytery Accountability to the General Assembly

During the last year Presbytery Reviews have not taken place due to Covid-19 limitations. The Committee is working towards a peer review process including reporting to the General Assembly. In the meantime, a number of Presbyteries have been invited to make a five-minute presentation to this Assembly in order that good news stories might be shared.

7. ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

The Assembly Arrangements Sub Group is tasked with ensuring all preparations are in place for the General Assembly to occur. Due to the ongoing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, the decision to hold the 2021 General Assembly online was made by the Assembly Business Committee in January 2021. Following the first online General Assembly in October 2020, the Sub Group has carefully reflected on the Commissioner experience in considering the format of this Assembly. As a result, a number of significant changes to the usual practice of the General Assembly are proposed to reduce the screen-time Commissioners are exposed to, and to help the Assembly to focus its time on discussion and decision making.

These significant changes include business being scheduled only for the afternoons of Monday to Thursday, and the length of the Assembly reduced by a day. Conveners' speeches have been filmed in advance, and are available for

Commissioners to watch as part of their preparation for the business of the Assembly. We are also introducing a 'fast track' process, by which only those items selected for discussion by Commissioners will be debated in full. These changes are proposed in the Order of Business and by amendment of the Standing Orders of the General Assembly, the latter of which can be seen in Appendix B.

7.1 Assembly Hub

To enable Commissioners to engage fully in the Assembly, further investment has been made to the 'Assembly Hub', where Commissioners, Members, Delegates and Representatives can lodge requests to speak, propose new sections of deliverance or amendments, as well as vote (if authorised to do so) on matters before the Assembly. To ensure that this software can be utilised, training events have been organised for all who will need to access the Assembly Hub.

7.2 Virtual Backgrounds

We are conscious that an online Assembly means that Commissioners are joining from their homes. To safeguard privacy, a number of virtual backgrounds will be made available for Commissioners to download. All Commissioners, Members, Delegates and Representatives are invited to make use of this resource.

7.3 Covid Compliance

We have worked closely with the Church of Scotland Health and Safety Team to ensure the General Assembly Hall is a Covid Compliant workspace, and are ensuring that robust procedures are in place and followed by all who are required to be present in the Assembly Hall.

7.4 Celebration of Holy Communion

Standing Order 21 asks that provision be made for the celebration of Holy Communion as part of the business of the Assembly. The Assembly Business Committee recognise that there will be divergent opinion across the Church of Scotland regarding online Communion, and therefore have scheduled Communion to take place outwith a business sitting of the Assembly. No Commissioner will be required to attend this session but it will also be open to the whole membership of the Church, and streamed live to enable participation from anyone who wishes to partake of the Sacrament in this way.

8. MONITORING OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECISIONS

The Committee was given the remit to monitor decisions of the General Assembly and report any non-compliance or failure to implement decisions and instructions. The Covid-19 pandemic caused work patterns and priorities to change and understandably some Assembly decisions have not been implemented. The Committee has been monitoring the implementation of recent Assembly decisions and will be noting reports of completed instructions at this Assembly. We will follow up on any instructions remaining open.

9. GENERAL ASSEMBLY REFORM

The Committee's predecessor, the Assembly Arrangements Committee, was instructed by the General Assembly of 2019, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, "to bring proposals to the General Assembly of 2020 which would lead to a reduction in the membership of the General Assembly". This was in the context of noting that the current one in four ratio had been in place since 1997, and from 2000 to 2017 there has been a 55% reduction in Church membership, yet the size of the Assembly had remained unchanged.

The Committee therefore brings an Overture to this Assembly which proposes a reduction in the number of commissions from one in every four charges and ministerial appointments to one in every five. This is a simple way of

achieving a meaningful reduction in the number of Commissioners to the Assembly.

The Report of the Assembly Arrangements Committee to the General Assembly of 2019 mentioned this as a possible option. It was noted that such a change would reduce costs (particularly, of course, for an in-person meeting) and is good stewardship of resources. It would also benefit Presbyteries who find it difficult to fill commissions.

According to our most recent calculations, based on the Presbyteries' returns for the 2021 Assembly, changing from one in four to one in five would reduce the number of Commissioners from around 700 to a figure more in the region of 550. As this is a Barrier Act matter, even if the Overture is passed at next year's Assembly, the change could not take effect until 2023. Given that this adjustment has been trialled in advance and a year has effectively been lost with the cancellation of the Assembly of May 2020, with this matter not being brought to the shortened October 2020 Assembly (which considered only the most urgent essential business), the Committee believes it is right to act more quickly. Believing this to be a change that is sought, the Committee therefore proposes the passing of an Interim Act to enable the change to take effect for the Assembly of 2022.

The 2019 Report also noted that consideration was being given to the number of former Moderators currently receiving an automatic commission. In parallel to reducing the overall number of Commissioners, the Committee proposes removing the additional commissions for all former Moderators (along with equalising elder/minister) and instead that the five most recent past Moderators be appointed as *ex officio* members of the General Assembly. It is recognised that former Moderators bring a significant amount of expertise and experience to the debates; however, unless this aspect is changed, as the number of overall commissions is reduced, the former Moderators will comprise an increasing proportion of the membership of the General Assembly. If the change is made, Presbyteries will remain entitled to give commissions from amongst their allocation to any former Moderators who are members of that Presbytery, in addition to the five with automatic membership. The Overture covers this proposal; however, this aspect of the Overture is not proposed for inclusion in the Interim Act.

The Covid-19 restrictions have necessitated altered work flow in an online setting, and we hope that many practices and lessons from this time will be carried into future Assemblies whether online or offline. The Committee has considered many aspects of General Assembly reform and will reflect further on these alongside the report of the Special Commission on the Effectiveness of the Presbyterian Form of Church Governance, and in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee which will be bringing a revised Church Courts Act to the Assembly of 2022. The Committee will continue to consult widely, especially with Presbyteries, prior to bringing further proposals to next year's Assembly. Current legislation does not include the possibility of remote access at General Assembly, and we propose that the Legal Questions Committee consider this and if appropriate include such provision in the revised Church Courts Act.

10. FASTI ECCLESIAE SCOTICANAE

The *Fasti* is a record of the ministers of the Church of Scotland since the 17th century. Good progress has been made towards fulfilling the instruction of the General Assembly of 2019: "to proceed with preparation of Volume XII of the *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, to cover the period from 1 October 1999 to 30 September 2020 and to be published in 2021". Roy Pinkerton has taken on the role of Editor and Alison Murray was appointed Editorial Assistant. In the early months of 2020 draft entries were sent to about 1,900 ministers for checking and updating, responses were processed and edited, and by the end of November 2020 the text of the volume was finalised and to a large extent made

ready for publication. The Editorial Team is grateful to all those ministers who responded to their request for information. Negotiations are now underway with APS Group Scotland to produce the volume, which it is hoped will appear in early to mid-Summer. At the time of writing, the actual date of publication and the purchase price have not been finalised, but those who would like to know these details when they become available are invited to register their interest by e-mailing: fasti@churchofscotland.org.uk

11. REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE MODERATOR

The 2019 Special Commission on Structural Reform proposed that the new Business Committee of the General Assembly should be given a remit: *“to advise the Moderator on his or her official duties if so required and to have oversight of the election, role and function of the Moderator”*.

A small Sub Group of the Committee was established in 2020 to consult as widely as possible in carrying out this remit with the aim of presenting a report and recommendations to the General Assembly of 2021. The Covid-19 pandemic caused delays and so the Committee will bring its recommendations to the General Assembly of 2022.

It has been important for the Group to hear from former Moderators and to that end many online interviews have already taken place, memories and experiences have been generously shared and important themes highlighted. The Moderator has a national and international role so investigating how the role is perceived both from within the Church and externally is essential to this study.

Many individuals and Groups will be canvassed for feedback, including spouses and Chaplains, Presbyteries, Faith Nurture Forum, Faith Impact Forum, CrossReach, National Office staff, the Communications Department, COSY Focus Group, Path of Renewal Ministers, the media, politicians, ecumenical partners and faith groups. The approach taken will be via online surveys or, in some cases, videoconferencing. Others with views on this remit are welcome to contact the Sub Group.

In the name of the Committee

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
SUSAN J PYM, *Vice-Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Secretary*

Addendum

Ms Judith J H Pearson

The Committee was greatly saddened to hear of the death of Judith Pearson, former Convener of the Assembly Arrangements Committee. Judith served the Committee faithfully and after a time as Vice-Convener to the Very Rev Dr Derek Browning, took up the Convener'ship for the remainder of that term. She will be fondly remembered for her gentle and gracious impact upon the life of the Church.

In the name of the Committee

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
SUSAN J PYM, *Vice-Convener*
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Appendix A

REPORT OF THE SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY

‘The words I have spoken to you bring God’s life-giving Spirit’.

John 6:63b (Good News Bible)

Extraordinary times demand extraordinary responses. In 2020 churches everywhere were faced with the challenge of major change in how and where their congregations worshipped; for many this was unknown territory and a new experience. 2020 was something of a transformational year for the Scottish Bible Society too as the Team worked hard to meet the emerging needs and opportunities for the Bible.

The need for new and creative Bible-based resources – online and in print – was clearly a priority for churches across Scotland in their congregational life and in their mission within the community. Our regular resources, including the ‘Read and Pray’ guide offering daily Bible readings, was necessarily supplemented by a range of new opportunities for Bible engagement for all during a time of uncertainty and change.

Over the Summer we worked with congregations and Youth Groups to distribute over 6,500 ‘Bags of Discovery’ – an all-age resource based on the themes of power, hope and love. Designed to integrate the Bible into the everyday lives of families, these resources proved to be hugely popular as churches added a variety of goodies into bags for local families. The Book of Ruth was part of the ‘Bag of Love’. It was augmented by an audio drama giving people an opportunity to connect with Ruth from a different perspective.

With church buildings closed, it was a challenge to see how Christmas would be celebrated. We put together a range of resources to help churches and individuals reconnect with the first Christmas story and to have cause to celebrate even in dark times. Almost 12,000 printed copies of our new Advent Reader were ordered. We were encouraged by feedback telling us that the Reader helped some people to feel more connected with others, ‘just as though they were in church’. The light of Christmas was shared through our ‘Christmas Windows’ campaign to encourage homes across the country to display images of the Christmas story in their windows.

The success of the Advent Reader led us to produce an Easter Reader. In the midst of the changes and challenges in our world over the past year this Reader helps anchor us in the unchanging truth and wonder of the Easter story. Printed copies sold out within a few days of the pre-sale notice, which was really encouraging.

Providing new print resources was part of the Scottish Bible Society’s 2020 story, but the demand for digital resources was greater than ever. When we launched our Bible 2020 Smartphone App at the start of the year, we could not anticipate how much of a global connection it was going to provide during a global pandemic. Its aim, to provide a forum for ‘anyone, anywhere’ to share daily selected Bible readings in a multitude of languages and post the reading of them aloud on to a video wall, exceeded expectation. 250,000 people across 130 countries engaged with it. In a period of just three months Bible verses had been read on the app almost half a million times.

Putting voice to God’s word was also shared through the launch of *The Outspoken Bible*, a series of Podcasts from the Scottish Bible Society.

‘Faith Comes by Hearing’ was the theme of one of our international projects. The response to an appeal to provide a Proclaimer (described as ‘the little black box that can change lives’) for villages in Mozambique was extraordinary. Thanks to the prayers and generous financial gifts of congregations, volunteers and donors, we also supported other projects including:

- The 'Bread of Life' project in Peru. The Peruvian Bible Society continued their vital ministry during lockdown and supplied over 6,000 children with food, Bibles and spiritual guidance.
- Support in providing Bible paper for the printing and distribution of Bibles to thousands of people in China where the church is still growing so fast that there continues to be a shortage of Bibles.
- Helping the Syrian Bible Society to distribute Bibles to children in cities and towns across the country. The horrors of war, displacement and now Covid-19 have not stopped this ministry and by the end of 2020 over 100,000 children had received a Bible.

Bible based trauma healing has been a growing ministry in Scotland since 2018, with over 100 facilitators now trained to run healing groups through Scotland's churches. During 2020 the Scottish Bible Society offered four trauma healing training courses - one residential in March and three online throughout the year. We are seeing an increasing demand for this vital ministry and will continue to train facilitators to run healing groups as part of the ministry of the church.

A walk outdoors has become a vital way of coping with lockdown restrictions and emerging mental health issues for many. As Spring approaches and signs of new life are appearing around us, the Scottish Bible Society launched its latest all-age resource: 'Wonder Walks'. Downloadable from our website, the 'Wonder Walks' packs offer families and individuals resources to appreciate the wonders of the world around them during their walks and experience God's love and live-giving Spirit. We pray that we can all walk with wonder and joy in our journey of faith.

Appendix B

PROPOSED STANDING ORDERS

The Standing Orders in their current form shall apply save for amendments as follows which shall, where there is any conflict with an existing Standing Order, apply in preference:

Generally: references to "laid on the table" shall be read as "circulated electronically in advance".

New Standing Order 8 - Assembly Hub: All Commissioners, Members *ex officio*s, Corresponding Members, Delegates, Visitors (if any) and Youth Representatives shall require to use the Assembly Hub software application (the "Assembly Hub") to participate in the General Assembly. All such persons shall be supplied in advance with login details to the Assembly Hub and training on its use shall be made available. In particular, the Assembly Hub shall be used throughout the General Assembly to do the following:

- to follow the business of the General Assembly, read sections of deliverance and vote on them;
- to submit notices of motion (to amend an existing section of deliverance, to propose a counter-motion to an existing section of deliverance, or to propose a new motion);
- to second a notice of motion; and
- to indicate a request to speak (ask a question, make a comment or raise a point of order).

Amendments to specific Standing Orders:

Standing Order 5: No hard copy of the volume of Assembly Reports, Proposed deliverances or Assembly Papers shall be supplied; these documents will be supplied electronically.

Standing Order 15: The Order of Business shall be prepared and circulated electronically in advance.

Standing Order 20: No material shall be circulated through boxes.

Standing Order 25: No Panel of Tellers shall be appointed.

Standing Order 26: The list of Acts of Assembly shall be circulated electronically in advance.

Standing Orders 45 & 46: Any person who is entitled to do so and who wishes to ask a question or to make a comment on a Report is encouraged to give advance notice of their intention by entering a "request to speak" on the Assembly Hub against the relevant section(s) of deliverance.

Standing Order 87: Video recordings of all Conveners' speeches shall be uploaded to the Church's website at least one week before the opening day of the General Assembly and shall be available to be watched there, with all Assembly attendees encouraged to watch speeches in advance of that Standing Committee's business slot at the Assembly. The recordings of Conveners' speeches will **not** be replayed during business sessions of the Assembly. On rising to present the Report of his or her Standing Committee, a Convener shall state that his or her speech is available to view on the Church's website, shall present a short summary of key points from his or her Committee's Report lasting a maximum of two minutes and shall then state that he or she presents the Report and moves the deliverance as a whole, (or, if he or she is not a Commissioner, he or she shall ask the Principal Clerk to move the deliverance) with any debate then following.

Standing Order 89: Commissioners, Members and Youth Representatives are encouraged to register a notice of motion in advance in the Assembly Hub against a section of deliverance and in any event before the start of the relevant Standing Committee's business slot, i.e. before debate on the relevant Report starts. For each Standing Committee's business slot, after the Convener has presented the Report and moved the deliverance, and after questions for elucidation have been taken, the Moderator shall state, as at that time, which sections of deliverance have **not** had any notice of motion or request to speak registered against them in terms of this Standing Order or Standing Orders 45 & 46. The Moderator shall then allow a short period for any final request to speak to be registered. After that period, the Moderator shall confirm in respect of which sections of deliverance there has been no notice of motion or request to speak registered and shall confirm that such sections of deliverance have been agreed to by the Assembly without further procedure. Next the Moderator shall confirm that where a request to speak or notice of motion has been registered against a section of deliverance, there shall be an opportunity for debate in the usual manner until that section of deliverance is agreed and shall state to which sections of deliverance this applies. Debate shall then proceed in the usual manner according to Standing Orders.

Standing Order 95(i): Conveners' speeches shall be limited to 10 minutes in duration.

Standing Order 105: The vote on each section of deliverance which is debated shall be taken and conclusively determined by using the voting mechanism in the Assembly Hub. The result of the vote shall be displayed on the livestream and announced in each case by the Moderator. It shall be at the Moderator's discretion in each case to request whether the actual voting figures are minuted. In the event of a failure in the technology operating the Assembly Hub, the Assembly shall vote using Zoom Polls or shall use such other voting mechanism as may be prescribed at the time by the Procedure Committee. In no circumstances shall a second vote be taken on a matter which has already been the subject of a vote by electronic voting.

Standing Orders 106 - 110: A dissent shall be entered or adhered to by sending an email to: pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk with the subject line stating "Dissent against....[insert name of Standing Committee and number of relevant section of deliverance]. To be recorded in the minute, any such email must be received by the Clerks by the time of close of the last session of the Assembly.

Appendix C

OVERTURE AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT III 2000)

The General Assembly adopt the Overture the tenor whereof follows, and transmit the same to Presbyteries for their consideration under the Barrier Act, directing that returns be sent to the Principal Clerk not later than 31 December 2021.

The General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of Presbyteries, hereby enact and ordain that the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *In section 2, delete the words "one in every four or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".*
2. *In section 4, delete the words "one in every four, or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".*
3. *Delete sections 6(c) and (d) and substitute:
"(c) The five most recent past Moderators who are (i) eligible to receive a Commission, and (ii) not members of the Assembly by virtue of section 6(b) or otherwise members *ex officii*, shall be members of the General Assembly *ex officii*. They shall be appointed in addition to their Presbytery's number of Commissions in terms of section 2 but no equalising minister or elder shall be appointed. Their Presbytery shall remain entitled to give Commissions from amongst their allocation in terms of section 2 above to any other former Moderators eligible to be commissioned."*