

CLLC – Common Life Liturgical Commission

A Guide to GSTHW 2014 Statute 711 (April 2015)

– seeking assent from Te Runanagnui, Diocese of Polynesia Synod, and Pakeha Diocesan Synods.

Statute 711 proposes a change to the Constitution / Te Pouhere by way of adding a definition into Section G of the Constitution, defining “Authorised Services”, alongside where other ‘definitions’ are located.

That definition states:

“**Authorised Services**” includes (a) Formularies, (b) Experimental uses as authorised by the Church of England Empowering Act 1928, and (c) other services authorised under Title G Canon XIV.’

The reason this is needed is that canon law advisors have reported that:

Although the term "Authorised Services" or similar expressions are used in the Canons, there is no definition of this important expression in the life of the Church.

The Church of England Empowering Act 1928 sets out the process by which authorised liturgies - called Formularies - are created: by altering, adding to, or diminishing, existing Formularies; or by framing or adopting new Formularies (Clause 3).

While the Constitution (which is subservient to the Act) mirrors these provisions (Part B Clause 5), There is currently no other clear provision for any other liturgical change.

There are two other processes currently in our legal framework - a provision of Title G Canon XIV (allowing approval by individual Tikanga) and Standing Resolution SRL3 (allowing approval by a Bishop), which appeared to provide separate processes for authorised liturgies. The Chancellors were asked to advise on these, and concluded that, without some form of Constitutional authority, these lower-level processes were probably invalid and should not be relied on in the future. Following discussions with the Common Life Liturgical Commission, these processes were thought to be useful and a way was sought to continue them.

Statute 711 seeks to achieve this by creating a definition in the Constitution of "Authorised Services", which provides clarity in this area and gives a Constitutional authority for the creation of authorised services outside the Formulary process. It recognises the Formularies as the primary source of authorised services, but also gives authority for General Synod to create a process through the Canons for other authorised liturgies, subject to certain limitations.

If Statute 711 is passed (which involves the 'twice round' process), then a Canon could be enacted by General Synod to allow other liturgies to be authorised. The expectation, recorded in the notes to Statute 711, is that these would be consistent with Doctrine but not become a source of Doctrine themselves, non-controversial in nature, and follow the existing authorised liturgical Forms.