



*a daring*  
**HOPE**  
SYNOD 36

Report from

**Remuneration and  
Nomination Committee**

# Report

## Context

The Remuneration and Nomination Committee (the Committee) assists and advises the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) in fulfilling its obligations for human resource matters, through oversight of nomination and remuneration policies and practices. In doing so, the Committee assists management to create and promote a culture of capable, engaged and service-oriented people operating in an environment that values diversity, talent management, safety and engagement in delivering against the Synod strategy.

### ***Tell us what your key priorities since the last Synod have been***

The Committee has overseen and has continued to focus on governance in the areas of:

- Recruitment for Synod governing bodies
- Recommend processes to improve recruitment, selection and appointments to Synod governing bodies
- Evaluation of governing body performance
- Succession planning and KPIs for the General Secretary
- Remuneration for Synod office, ministry agents and governing bodies
- Participating in Project Plenty - Governance Fit for Purpose workgroup
- Diversity and inclusion

## Shared Life, Flourishing Communities

### ***In what ways have you been approaching the challenge of making disciples of Jesus?***

We have updated the Governing Body Skills matrixes so that they are still consistent with Uniting Church regulations and by-laws, but also bolster our board skill and experience in aspects such as youth and young adult ministry, and diversity. This has made a difference to recruitment to fill board vacancies in 2021. There is more work to do, but we have started meeting regularly with board chairs to inform and facilitate how we can disciple and develop board members.

### ***In what ways have you been drawn into Transforming your Community?***

The Committee has a charter responsibility to “oversee the strategy and approach to the creation of a diverse and inclusive workplace and member of Synod governing bodies”. When looking at gender for example, the Australian Institute of Company Directors identified that women on ASX200 boards has been increasing about 2 percentage points per year since reaching the 30% target in 2019 (currently 34.2% as at 30/5/21). The Church’s Leadership in Women program identified that across leadership of the church (excluding agencies and schools) there is almost a 50:50 male to female representation. However, a closer analysis identified that for high levels of leadership which includes Synod governing bodies, there is a 75:25 male to female representation. Voting patterns by the

Synod evidence an under representation of females appointed to the Synod Standing Committee despite attempts over recent years to ensure strong females are nominating:

	Nominated males	Elected males	Nominated females	Elected females	% females elected
29th Synod 2011	17	8	3	2	20%
30th Synod 2013	10	8	2	2	20%
31st Synod 2014	10	8	3	2	20%
32nd Synod 2016	14	8	5	2	20%
33rd Synod 2017	8	7	6	3	30%
34th Synod 2019	11	7	4	2	22%
35th Synod 2020	6	6	6	1	14%

Diversity and inclusion on governing bodies remains an issue, not just because of the shift in thinking in contemporary governance practices, but to be representative of the community we serve. The Committee has taken some steps to improve diversity, such as:

- Updated the Governing Body Skills matrix to include diversity, including first peoples, multi-cultural and gender.
- Increased the candidate pool for recruitment by releasing an online mechanism for people within the church to register their interest in becoming a Board member, and
- Working with an external recruitment agency to increase the representation from the Community on our governing bodies.

The Committee is working on a number of other initiatives which will continue to be progressed during the next Synod term, including a Diversity and Inclusion policy and consideration of quotas.

***In what ways have you been sought to reshape your part of the Synod, to be Fit for Purpose and wise stewards of all that God has given you?***

Development of a talent pool of governing body candidates has been a priority of the Committee. An online expression of interest process was implemented, and the Synod engaged the services of Directors Australia to identify skill-based candidates for the talent pool. The pool currently has 29 candidates who are available to be contacted if their skills and interests are consistent with a governing body vacancy.

The Chair of RNC has regularly participated in the Fit for Purpose working group for Project Plenty, and two members were involved in the Synod leadership programme.

The Committee has carefully considered recommendations regarding ministerial stipends and allowances during a period of time where Commonwealth and State governments responses to COVID-19 were causing temporary fluctuations in the benchmark indices considered by the Committee. This may need to be considered again in 2022 if the COVID-19 pandemic continues to result in government initiatives

The RNC has worked with Chairs of governing bodies to ensure they not only have the right skills, but also the experience and passion to best facilitate healthy and vital mission.

***In what ways have you sought to collaborate with others across the Uniting Church as an expression of our commitment to doing Life Together?***

The Committee Chairperson invited the Chairpersons from other Synod governing bodies to an information session and workshop on governance. An external speaker challenged the Chairpersons on how their respective governing body would respond to Shared life Flourishing Committees and the benefits of good governance. Information sessions were held on the structure and relationships across Synod governing bodies, recruitment, succession planning, remuneration, skills development and performance reviews. A workshop on governing body capabilities identified general support for a revision of the current governing body skills and attributes. This identifies a maturing approach towards governance capabilities by Chairpersons and a continuing need for Chairpersons to collaborate on governance more generally.

## Threats and opportunities as we step into the future together

The Committee, with the Synod Standing Committee and the Office of the General Secretary will be responsible for the execution of the succession plan for the next General Secretary. The succession plan was approved by the Synod Standing Committee in July 2021. This will be an extensive process over 2022 and 2023 leading up to the 37<sup>th</sup> Synod where the next General Secretary will be elected.

RNC is working with Synod executive, the Fit for Purpose working group in Project Plenty, and Synod executive to have fit for purpose governance across the Church. There are a number of challenges with the existing governance arrangements. These include that there are a large number of governance committees (over 35) with varying approaches to size, composition and the need for Uniting Church members. There are inconsistencies and irregularities in names, such as the Finance, Investment and Property Board, which is technically not a Board. Governance body composition does not reflect the diversity of the church, for example, Synod Standing Committee currently is currently over 75% male.

To move to a fit-for-purpose governance model that reflects the Church's mission, improves diversity and inclusion, as well as navigates the complex stakeholder and risk environment of the Church, the RNC work with Synod office, Synod Standing Committee and Project Plenty to:

- Streamline the structure, composition and principles for governance committees, along with the names, sizes and positioning, to be aligned with Uniting Church polity and regulations, fit for purpose and consistently applied.
- Improve the way the RNC reviews the suitability of potential governing body members to ensure governing bodies are fit for purpose in the next season of the Church, including how the outcome of the review of the suitability of each nominee for SCC elected members positions under By-Law Q2.2.8(2)(a) is presented for Synod's discernment.
- Develop a consistent and appropriate position on the need for Uniting Church membership/affiliation and education to ensure appropriate governance on behalf of the Church.
- Revise Governing Body principles and charters to provide clarity and consistency, and to reflect contemporary governance practices, such as whether an individual can be a member of multiple committees or whether the membership conditions for a committee with a charter reflects the needs and requirements of that committee.

- As part of a coordinated approach across the Synod office, develop a policy and proposal for improving diversity and inclusion. This will include, but not be limited to, a Diversity and Inclusion policy, consideration of quotas, recruitment processes, training, consultation and identification of supportive strategies.
- Replace the self-assessment process for governing bodies with a combination of feedback from the areas they serve and independent review.
- Develop a capability development program for governance members that complements the online training, includes interactive education and on-the-job mentoring, as well as keeping up-to-date with developments from governance and research institutions.
- Continue to pilot, consult and then approve the revised capabilities matrix

Note: these changes may involve proposing modifications to the regulations and by-laws.

## Proposals to the 36th Synod

It is proposed that the 36<sup>th</sup> Synod receive this report.

## Contact for report questions

Name	<b>Dr Natalie Smith</b>
Position	Remuneration and Nomination Committee Chairperson
Email	enxsmith@gmail.com
Phone	N/A