

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

PART I – GENERAL

Hereford Diocese - Guide for New PCC Members Factsheet 01/07 August 2007 The Parochial Church Council

SOME HISTORY

In the long history of the Church of England, the Parochial Church Council is a relatively recent invention. Until the early years of the 20th century the administration and finances of a parish were the legal responsibility of the incumbent and the churchwardens. The members of congregations had little say in the running of the church except in electing the churchwardens. Parochial Church Councils were first given legal status in 1919. Since then a number of Acts have defined and refined the composition, functions and rights and responsibilities of the PCC.

Currently the rules governing the PCC are set out in the Church Representation Rules (CRR) 2006 [ISBN 0-7151-1012-8] which form part of the Synodical Government Measure 1969. A copy of the CRR may be obtained from the SPCK Bookshop in Hereford or from Church House Publishing, Church House, Great Smith Street, London, SW 1 P 3NZ [www.chpublishing.co.uk] price £7.99.

STATUS OF THE PCC

The PCC is a corporate body, a separate legal entity, and is therefore separate from the members of the PCC. For that reason, changes in the membership of the PCC should not result in any changes to contracts etc. entered into by previous members because it is the PCC, as a legal entity in its own right, which has entered into contracts. Another consequence is that individual PCC members should not become personally responsible for the liabilities of the PCC.

The PCC is a charity by virtue of its objectives, which are basically the advancement of religion and the making of provision for public worship, and the members of the PCC are the trustees of the charity.

PCCs are not, at present, required to register with the Charity Commission as they are classified as excepted charities by virtue of the Charities (Exception from Registration) Regulations 1996. The regulations only remove the requirement to register (and therefore submit accounts and returns to the Charity Commission) but PCCs must comply with all other aspects of charity law.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PCC

The PCC has responsibility for a whole range of things including the care, maintenance and insurance of the church and its contents and the care and maintenance of the churchyard, responsibility for the conduct of the financial affairs of the parish, rights regarding women priests, rights in relation to church appointments, functions in relation to church services etc.

It largely discharges its responsibility for the financial affairs of the parish by the appointment of a treasurer, but this does not absolve it of ultimate responsibility and for that reason the PCC should require the treasurer to make regular reports on the

financial position to PCC meetings.

The Charities Act 1993 and CRRs charge the trustees with the following specific duties in relation to finances:

- The keeping of proper accounting records. This means records that show from day to day amounts received and expended, including the matters to which they relate, and a record of assets and liabilities. The records should be sufficient to show the financial position of the PCC at any time.
- The preparation of annual financial statements and an annual report that complies with the CRRs and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- Appointment of an independent examiner or auditor and making arrangements for the examination or audit to be carried out.
- Presenting the annual report, financial statements and independent examiner's or auditor's report to the APCM and displaying those before and after the meeting.

As the annual report and financial statements are the responsibility of the PCC, the CRRs require them to be approved by the PCC and signed by the Chairman and one other PCC member before presentation to the APCM.

Another area of responsibility is that of notifying the Data Protection Commissioner, where necessary in respect of data held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

FUNCTIONS OF THE PCC

Under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 the PCC has the following functions:

- co-operation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical;
- the consideration and discussion of matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest, but no the declaration of the doctrine of the Church on any question;
- making known and putting into effect any provisions made by the diocesan synod or the deanery synod, but without prejudice to the powers of the council on any particular matter;
- giving advice to the diocesan synod and the deanery synod on any matter referred to the council;
- raising such matters as the council consider appropriate with the diocesan synod or deanery synod.

The Synodical Government Measure 1969 states:

It shall be the duty of the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance in the parish.

It then goes on to set out a number of functions of the PCC, of which perhaps the most important, and certainly the widest, is:

co-operation with the incumbent in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The incumbent and the PCC each have their own particular rights and responsibilities in the life of the church but the important theme here is partnership and co-operation.

More specifically, the PCC is responsible for the maintenance of the church buildings and churchyard, and, with the incumbent, for deciding how the church's money is to be spent. The PCC is formally the employer of any paid workers. The PCC has the right to be consulted about major changes to the forms of worship used in the parish and about the appointment of a new incumbent. It is also consulted about any pastoral scheme affecting the parish.

PCC membership will include one or more members of the deanery synod, who have an important role in linking the parish into the wider structures of the church.

OFFICERS OF THE PCC

Every PCC shall have a:

- **Chairman** - The minister of the parish shall be the chairman of the PCC.
- **Vice-Chairman** - A lay member of the PCC shall be the vice-chairman.
- **Secretary** - The PCC may appoint one of its members to act as Secretary. Failing such appointment some other fit person may act as Secretary but shall not thereby become a member of the PCC (unless co-opted)
- **Treasurer** - The PCC may appoint one or more of its members to act as Treasurer either solely or jointly. Failing such appointment, the role should be carried out by the Churchwardens or some other fit person may act as Treasurer but shall not thereby become a member of the PCC (unless co-opted)
- **Electoral Roll Officer** - Who may but need not be a member of the PCC.

TERM OF OFFICE OF THE PCC

CRR 16 states that members of the PCC "*... shall hold office from the conclusion of the annual meeting at which they were elected until the conclusion of the third annual meeting thereafter, one third retiring and being elected each year ...* "

That said a PCC member may resign his/her membership by notice in writing sent or given to the PCC Secretary and the resignation shall take effect on the date specified in the notice or, if no date is specified, on receipt of the note by the PCC Secretary.

SIZE OF THE PCC

The maximum number of elected laity on the PCC depends on the size of the electoral roll. For less than 50 on the roll that number will be six (6). For between 50 and 100 it will be nine (9) and for over 100 an additional three (3) members for every 100 up to a maximum of 15 members.

This number can only be changed by a vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, to come into effect at the following APCM.

The PCC may also co-opt additional persons up to one fifth of the elected members, or 2 whichever is the greater, being either clergy or laity. The term of office of a co-opted person shall be until the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

TASKS OF THE PCC

With the parish priest:

To think through the church's mission	To look and listen
What does it mean to be the church in this place?	To needs of groups in the congregation To developments in the local area To buildings – repairs or developments needed To the needs of people involved in areas of church life – training, resources
To plan	To make decisions
In response to church and parish needs A budget to reflect that	Priorities Best use of resources – money, people, buildings How to meet new needs and challenges Where you stand as a church
To communicate	To involve
What's been decided To promote church activities To liaise between different groups	In church activities In areas of the church's ministry
To keep legal	To elect
Insurance Accounts Building regulations including disability access Child and vulnerable adult protection Employment	Vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, electoral roll officer, members of standing committee, at its first meeting
Beyond the parish	
To put resolutions to deanery or diocesan synod	

Further reading

The PC Member's Essential Guide by Mark Tanner
Thinkinganglicans.org.uk/archives/001543.html

CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE PCC

This Code of Conduct seeks to promote the highest standards of governance within the PCC. The Code is based on the fundamental values of integrity, honesty and openness and sets out the standards of conduct and probity which members are expected to meet. The policy and its application are subject to annual review at the first full PCC meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

1. In their approach to their role, members will:
 - ensure that they understand the duty and functions of the PCC
 - give adequate time and energy to the duties of being a PCC member
 - uphold the Church Mission Statement

2. In developing and applying the PCC's policies, members will:
 - engage fully as individuals in collective consideration of issues arising and act in the best interests of the church at all times
 - abide by policies and decisions agreed by the PCC
 - individually and collectively ensure that the church's activities remain true to its mission and purpose
 - observe impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the exercise of the PCC's functions
 - act with prudence in relation to the stewardship of the PCC's resources including Finance.

3. In upholding the reputation of the PCC, members will
 - uphold PCC policy even when it differs from their personal views
 - collectively and individually avoid undertaking activities which may place at risk the church's reputation
 - not act or speak publicly on behalf of the PCC, or of St Laurence's, or encourage others to do so, without proper authority from the PCC or its chair
 - respect absolutely the confidentiality of sensitive information shared at PCC meetings

4. In their conduct at PCC meetings, members will
 - respect the authority of the Chair who will ensure that all members have the opportunity to speak, and that meetings are not dominated by a few individuals
 - respect the views of other members, and their right to express them, during PCC meetings
 - accept a majority vote by PCC as decisive and final
 - uphold the trust placed in them and honour the trust placed in other members
 - value the strengths and respect the weaknesses of fellow members
 - be willing to speak openly in PCC meetings, and to share knowledge and expertise

PART II – LUDLOW ST LAURENCE PCC (as of 12 June 2023)

COMPOSITION OF THE LUDLOW ST LAURENCE PCC

Incumbent (Rector) – Chairman (1)

Curate (1)

Churchwardens (2)

Elected lay members (7)

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE OF THE LUDLOW ST LAURENCE PCC

The majority of the LSL PCC's business is transacted in committees as defined below, with recommendations requiring formal endorsement by the full PCC being referred to the next monthly PCC meeting by the relevant committee. The principal committees of the LSL PCC, for which detailed Terms of Reference are available, are listed below. Membership of Standing Committee is restricted to members of the PCC, whilst membership of the other committees can include individuals co-opted on the basis of particular skills, knowledge or experience.

- **Standing Committee** is responsible for setting the agenda for the following PCC meeting; in emergencies it can act on behalf of the full PCC
- **Finance Committee** meets monthly to transact business relating to the finances of the Parish.
- **Personnel Committee** has responsibility for recruitment and appraisal of employed staff, hourly-paid workers and all employment issues and has oversight of the volunteer network of St Laurence's.
- **Safeguarding Committee** is responsible for all safeguarding issues relating to the church.
- **Fabric Committee** meets monthly to transact business relating to the fabric and conservation of the properties owned or rented by the Parish (St Laurence's church, No.2 College Street and St Leonard's churchyard), with responsibility for maintenance and minor works and has overall responsibility for taking forward the Vision project that seeks to bring about a major re-ordering of the interior of St Laurence's Church.
- **Liturgy Committee** has responsibility for the development of liturgy, for matters relating to music, choir etc and reports to Liturgy and for matters relating to children and young persons
- **Pastoral Care Committee** has responsibility for supporting and developing good pastoral care in the life and ministry of St Laurence's and St John's.
- **Outward Concern Committee** determines the charitable beneficiaries of outreach giving, promotes Fairtrade and encourages linkage with the Lutheran Church in Nuremburg and with at St Marks Centre, Tanzania

- **Arts@StLaurence's Committee** promotes musical activity in St Laurence's and musical outreach amongst young people.

Ad hoc working groups may be formed from time to time to organise social and/or fund-raising events in St Laurence's Church for the benefit of the Parish; these currently include National Lottery Heritage Fund and Auction of Gifts working groups

In addition, the PCC and Parish are represented on the following Ludlow Ecumenical Committees:

Churches Together Forum

Churches Together Around Ludlow (CTAL) Outreach

and on the committee of the:

Friends of St Leonard's Churchyard

MEETINGS OF THE PCC

- Every PCC must hold no fewer than four meetings in each year. LSL PCC normally meets 9-10 times a year to transact its business in accordance with its functions as defined above.
- Special meetings may be convened by the chairman at any time or at the request of not less than one third of the PCC members.
- Notice of each PCC meeting, specifying the time and place of the intended meeting and signed by or on behalf of the chairman, will normally be posted at or near the principal door of the church at least ten clear days before any meeting of the council
- The secretary will circulate to all members a call for papers at least ten days before each meeting.
- The papers for each meeting, including the agenda, will be delivered to every PCC member at least seven days before the meeting.
- Any member wishing to raise a question about a paper circulated for a meeting will do so in writing to the author of the paper, copying the chairman and the secretary, at least three days before the meeting. The secretary will circulate the question and response to all members in advance of the meeting.
- Any request for business to be taken under 'Any Other Business' will be submitted in writing to the chairman, copied to the secretary, at least three days before the meeting
- No business will be transacted at any meeting of the council unless at least one-third of the members are present thereat
- No business which is not specified in the agenda will be transacted at any meeting except by the consent of three-quarters of the members present at the meeting.
- In the case of sudden emergency or other special circumstances requiring immediate action by the council a meeting may be convened by the chairman at not less than three clear days' notice in writing to the members of the council; the quorum for the transaction of any business at such meetings shall be a majority of the then existing members of the council; no business shall be

transacted at such meeting except as is specified in the notice convening the meeting.

- The business of the council will be decided by a majority of the members present and voting thereon.
- In the case of an equal division of votes the chairman of the meeting will have a second or casting vote.
- The names of the members present at any meeting of the council will be recorded in the minutes.
- If one-fifth of the members present and voting on any resolution so require, the minutes will record the names of the members voting for and against that resolution.
- Any member of the council shall be entitled to require that the minutes will contain a record of the manner in which his/her vote was cast on any resolution.
- Minutes of meetings of the council will be available to all members of the Council. The members will also have access to past minutes which the Chairman and Vice-Chairman jointly determine to be relevant to current Council business.
- The independent examiner or auditor of the Council's financial statements, the bishop, the archdeacon and any person authorised by one of them in writing shall have access to the approved minutes of council meetings without the authority of the Council.
- Other persons whose names are on the church electoral roll may have access to the approved minutes of Council meetings held after the annual parochial church meeting in 1995 except any minutes deemed by the Council to be confidential.
- Any meeting of the council may adjourn its proceedings to such time and place as may be determined at such meeting.