

**The Parish Church of**

**ROLE DESCRIPTION: PCC Member**

***Thank you for volunteering to be a member of the Parochial Church Council and congratulations on being elected or co-opted. We have set out below what you need to know about your important and distinctive role in church governance. Please don’t be put off by its length and detail – it just goes to prove how important you now are in the life of the church!***

**1. The Parochial Church Council**

a) Constitution and membership

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the governing body of a parish church. It is also a charity. A PCC with an annual income of more than £100,000 must be registered with the Charity Commissioners; those with an income below this threshold, whilst not currently required to register, must comply with all other charity laws. The PCC has legal status and the Church Representation Rules apply.

The PCC is a team made up of members of clergy and lay members of the church. Together they are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community. Some of the responsibilities are devolved to the Minister and Churchwardens but according to the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 section 2 ‘It shall be the duty of the minister and the PCC to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish’.

Members of the PCC are drawn from two sources, those **elected** at the Annual Parish Church Meeting, and those who are **ex officio** members. The following are ex officio members · All Priests and Deacons licensed to the parish · Deaconesses and Licensed Lay Workers licensed to the parish · The churchwardens · Any person on the electoral roll who is a member of deanery, diocesan or general synod Additional members may be co-opted onto the council by the PCC during the course of the year. The number of elected members on a PCC is governed by the Church Representation Rules and is based on the number of people on the electoral roll, but the APCM can determine (to take effect in a year’s time) how many elected members a PCC shall have. It is also possible for the PCC to **co-opt**  a further small number of members who have equal voting rights and identical responsibilities.

Persons who are eligible to be members must be 16 years old or over, have been on the electoral roll of the parish for at least 6 months and be someone who receives communion. Persons may not be nominated, chosen or elected to the PCC if they are a) disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993. b) included in a Safeguarding & Vulnerable Group Act 2006 barred list or have been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 of the Children & Young People Act 1933, or c) disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbent) Vacation of Benefice) Measure 1997.

Members of the PCC have the right to be consulted, to know what is proposed, and to have the opportunity to express an opinion on it. The Minister is Chair of the PCC though she or he may on occasion ask another member to chair a particular meeting. A treasurer, a secretary and vice-chairman will usually be elected to office at its first meeting after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). The PCC will also appoint a standing committee, typically the Minister as chair, the churchwardens, the treasurer and two elected members.

b) Prayer, worship and mission

Prayer and Worship are at the heart of the work of the PCC. The PCC should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for public worship and provide an opportunity for people of all ages to meet for prayer and worship.In practice this might mean agreeing on the format and timings of services that will meet the needs of the church members, providing facilities for younger members and families, setting up Bible study or Prayer groups and so on.

The PCC also has an important part to play in promoting the mission of their church, amongst the congregation and in the wider community, and members of the PCC should demonstrate their commitment to the Christian ethos, through leadership, by example and by witness, in the parish. The PCC is encouraged to develop, and maintain, a Mission Action Plan (MAP), to review the life of the church and identify mission opportunities.

c) Pastoral care

The PCC and its members have a duty to support their clergy, prayerfully and personally. They have a duty to support the members of the congregation and to extend a welcome to all who visit the church, to members of the church community and to those visiting the church at other times. The church has a duty of pastoral care to all who live in our communities, whether members of the church or not, and PCC members are expected to take the lead in demonstrating that care.

Taking care of and protecting vulnerable people within the Church is a matter of great and increasing importance. It is also a legal responsibility. Under section 5 of the Safeguarding & Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 the PCC must have due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and every PCC annual report should include a statement as to whether the council has complied with that duty. The PCC needs to ensure that one of its members has lead responsibility for safeguarding in respect of its activities, that it gives regular consideration to safeguarding at its meetings and that its employees and volunteers are recruited safely. Safer recruitment includes carrying out DBS checks on those who hold qualifying positions as set out in the Church of England’s latest Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance. All trustees (e.g. full PCC members) of a charity that sponsors services aimed at children or vulnerable adults are eligible for a DBS check. People with criminal records or other relevant history relating to safeguarding issues are disqualified from membership of PCCs and synods. PCC members must also complete the appropriate level of Safeguarding Training as may from time to time be required by the Diocese.

Further information about Safeguarding, and Equality and Diversity, is contained in Appendix One.

d) Financial matters

The PCC will appoint a treasurer, and sometimes an assistant treasurer, to manage the day to day finances of the parish. The treasurer does not need to be a qualified accountant (though a very large parish might consider it appropriate to appoint a qualified accountant). He/She must understand how to maintain books, must have a good knowledge of the parish and the work of the church, and importantly must have the full confidence of the PCC membership. The treasurer will keep members informed on the financial situation and present a full report to each PCC meeting.

e) Trusteeship

PCC members are, by virtue of their appointment Trustees of a charity and are responsible for managing the Church’s finances. They must ensure that all funds are properly accounted for, the books properly maintained, and the PCC annual accounts inspected or audited, and formally approved by the PCC, prior to the APCM. In law, the PCC is a body corporate. This means that it is a separate body from the people who serve on it so PCC members are not liable for any debts incurred by the PCC. However, the trustees do have certain responsibilities under the Charities Act. The basic requirements which the law places on Trustees is set out in Appendix Two but PCC members should acquaint themselves with guidance on the Church of England Website [www.parishresources.org.uk](http://www.parishresources.org.uk/) where they can read the document ‘Trusteeship, an Introduction for PCC Members’ which provides more detailed guidance.

e) Buildings

Together with the Churchwardens, the PCC is responsible for the care and maintenance of the fabric of the church, and any other buildings owned by the church. In practice the PCC may appoint a Fabric subcommittee to assist them but the PCC members should be aware of any issues relating to the buildings and they have the responsibility of deciding on them and voting on items of expenditure.

**2. PCC Meetings**

The PCC is required by law to meet at least four times a year (one meeting may follow on from the APCM) though some PCCs may decide to meet more frequently. There is a strong argument for holding more frequent, but shorter, meetings and in any event good practice suggests a maximum two hours for each meeting as a general rule.

The PCC should take time at these meetings to consider and discuss, and if appropriate vote upon, matters concerning the Church of England generally or referred to the PCC by the Bishop or by the deanery, diocesan or General Synod. The PCC may also on occasion decide to send information, an opinion or a motion to the deanery synod. The PCC meeting should be a forum for open discussion with every member feeling able to ask a question or voice an opinion.

**3. Length of Service**

This church operates a three year rule whereby it is expected that elected PCC members will (all things being equal) remain in post for three years and then ‘move over’ for a new person to join. This is not always possible and some members will offer more than one ‘tour of duty’, particularly if they have a particular skill or responsibility (such as treasurer, secretary or perhaps relating to fabric or publicity/IT)

 **4. Your Minister’s and Congregation’s expectations of you as a PCC member.**

You have been elected or co-opted because we believe you are:

* a committed member of the congregation who can represent the views of other parishioners
* interested in and involved with the life of the church and the local community
* willing to learn and to share ideas, experience and gifts
* caring, and able to listen to another’s point of view even if you disagree with it.

A PCC Member has a significant role in the running of this Parish Church, which is a part of the Diocese of Ely and the Church of England. Everyone in such a position is expected to conduct themselves in church and in their lives in the community in a decent, respectful and safe way which is not capable of bringing the Parish Church, the Diocese or the Church of England into disrepute. A failure to adhere to this principle may result in the removal of the PCC Member from office.

For more information please refer to the document *The Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Officers and Bodies Practice Guidance* which can be found on-line at

[*roles-and-responsibilities-practice-guidance.pdf (churchofengland.org)*](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/roles-and-responsibilities-practice-guidance.pdf)

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| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Date Appointed |  |
| I have read this Role Description and understand the church’s expectations of me | SignedDated |
| Incumbent | SignedDated |

**Appendix One**

**Safeguarding in the Church of England**

The Church takes the safety of everyone within the church very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the Church safeguarding policy. In particular, the Church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately raise this with Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Those who work with children, young people and/or adults who are vulnerable should have a commitment to:

* Treat individuals with respect
* Recognise and respect their abilities and potential for development
* Working in ways that meet and develop the personal, spiritual, social and pastoral needs
* Promote their rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless it is unsafe
* Ensure their welfare and safety
* The promotion of social justice, social responsibility and respect for others
* Confidentiality, never passing on personal information, except to the person you are responsible to, unless there are safeguarding issues of concern which **must always** be reported to the person named above.

The PCC and the incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. In terms of safeguarding, with the incumbent the PCC will promote a safer church for all in the church community, and ensure there is a plan in place to raise awareness of, promote training and ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously by all those in the church community.

This will include specifically

* **Adopting** The House of Bishops’ ‘Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement and The House of Bishops’ and diocesan safeguarding policies and practice guidance, while being responsive to local parish requirements.
* **Appointin**g at least one appropriately experienced designated parish safeguarding officer to work with the incumbent and PCC. Who may also be the DBS administrator for church officers who work with children or vulnerable adults but if not, the PCC should appoint another individual.
* **Safely Recruit, Support and Train**: by ensuring that all church officers who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults are a)
	+ recruited following the House of Bishops’ Safer Recruitment practice guidance;
	+ aware of and work to House of Bishops’ safeguarding guidance (includes both policies and practice guidance);
	+ attend diocesan safeguarding training at least every three years.
* **Provide** appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children and vulnerable adults.
* **Display**: a formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops’ ‘Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement’ and thecContact details of the PSO, churchwarden and any other local leaders together with information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues.

**Equality and Diversity**

The parish church is called to offer a Christian welcome to everyone irrespective of ethnicity, gender or gender orientation, age, religion, or background. The Diocese of Ely has also adopted a Dignity at Work policy which is available on the Diocese of Ely website and which applies equally to paid employees and volunteers. PCC members are expected to be active agents of the above calling and policy and always to behave with courtesy, respect, dignity of office, sensitivity, fairness, and to be conciliatory and even-handed.

**Appendix Two**

**General duties of a Charitable Trustee.**

For more information please go to the Charity Commissioners’ Website at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission) and search for Trustee Duties or to [www.parishresources.org.uk](http://www.parishresources.org.uk/) and search under Trusteeship

| Your legal duty | It’s vital that you |
| --- | --- |
| Act in your charity’s best interests | Deal with conflicts of interest |
| Manage your charity’s resources responsibly | Implement appropriate financial controlsManage risks |
| Act with reasonable care and skill | Take appropriate advice when you need to, for example when buying or selling land, or investing (in some cases this is a legal requirement) |

Trustees who act in breach of their legal duties can be held responsible for consequences that flow from such a breach and for any loss the charity incurs as a result. When the Commission looks into cases of potential breach of trust or duty or other misconduct or mismanagement, it may take account of evidence that trustees have exposed the charity, its assets or its beneficiaries to harm or undue risk by not following good practice.