

St Peter's PCC Terms of Reference

Purpose

These Terms of Reference outline the responsibilities of PCC members, including those required by Church regulations, as charity trustees and as employers.

It is intended to guide members of the PCC in how they discharge their responsibilities and is consistent with the expectations of the Diocese and the Charity Commission.

By making these commitments we hope to continue to build trust, honesty and accountability within the PCC and the wider Church.

The terms will be reviewed annually.

Audience

These Terms of Reference apply to elected members of the PCC, ex-officio and co-opted members.

General Responsibilities of the PCC

Under the [Parochial Church Councils \(Powers\) Measure 1956](#) the PCC has the following functions:

- i) co-operation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical;
- ii) the consideration and discussion of matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest, but not the declaration of the doctrine of the Church on any question;
- iii) 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;
- iv) giving advice to the diocesan synod and the deanery synod on any matter referred to the council;
- v) raising such matters as the council consider appropriate with the diocesan synod or deanery synod.

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.

Members will act in the interest of the whole Church and seek to represent and promote the interests of all members of the congregation and parish.

Members will act with honesty and integrity and exercise good judgement which may include seeking professional advice on appropriate matters on which the PCC do not have relevant expertise.

When attending meetings or other events on behalf of the PCC, members will act in the best interest of the St Peter's Church at all times.

Members must complete, on their election or appointment to office, the required Declaration that they comply with the 'Fit and Proper Persons' legislation and so are not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee.

Members must act in the best interests of St Peter's Church and avoid situations where there may be an actual or potential, real or perceived, conflict of interest between their personal interest and the interest of the PCC.

Members must declare at once any conflict of interest which may arise in relation to a matter under consideration by the PCC and refrain from participating in the PCC's decision on that matter. If in doubt about how to proceed, they should seek advice from the Chairman or Secretary.

[Responsibilities as Charity Trustees](#)

Due to their responsibility for the financial wellbeing of the parish, PCC members are also Charity Trustees. As Trustees, their role is:

- To ensure that the PCC is able to meet all its financial responsibilities, and that PCC funds and assets are used appropriately.
- To report on what the PCC has achieved, and how it has used its money and resources.
- To manage the PCC's money, and balance risk and reserves.

The [Charities Act 2022](#) and the [Church Representation Rules](#) (CRRs) charge the Trustees with the following specific duties in relation to finance:

- 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.

[Other areas of responsibility](#)

Notifying the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), where necessary, in respect of data held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and ensuring compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Meetings of the PCC

The PCC meets 6 times a year, often on the first or second Thursday of the month, namely January, March, May, July, September and November.

Members should make every effort to attend meetings and if they cannot attend will send apologies to the Chair or Secretary.

If a PCC member is unable to attend a meeting and wishes their views to be taken into consideration, an email or letter outlining these views should be sent to the Chair or Secretary who will then ensure that the views are fed into the discussion at the meeting.

Suggestions for agenda items should be submitted to the Secretary of Chairman before the meeting with a covering note or supporting documentation if required.

Members must act towards one another in meetings of the PCC as they would expect to be treated themselves, that is in a manner which is respectful, considerate and courteous, even in the face of disagreement, and which helps to build collective trust.

Members will ensure that PCC meetings are a safe environment where all members can share their views.

Terms of Office

Elected members of the PCC can serve up to two terms of office before retiring. On retirement they are eligible for re-election.

Safeguarding

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

The PCC must ensure that the parish complies with the [Safeguarding Policy Statement](#) issued by the House of Bishops in 2017 and any other relevant guidance or policies of the Diocese.

Members must familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy agreed by the PCC.

Members must be willing to undertake DBS checks and safeguarding training from time to time as required.

Failure to comply with these Terms of Reference

Any alleged failure by a member to meet these Terms must be reported in writing to the Secretary of the PCC in the first instance, detailing the nature of the alleged failure. The Secretary shall report the receipt of such a complaint to the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the PCC.

After conferring with the Vice-Chairman, the Chairman may direct the Secretary or one of the Churchwardens to enquire into the circumstances of the alleged failure and in so doing to seek an explanation from the person who is the subject of the complaint.

Upon receipt of the report of such an enquiry, if it appears that the Terms have not been observed but that the breach of the Terms is minor and the person who is the subject of the complaint accepts the finding of the inquiry, the Chairman of the PCC may, after conferring with the Vice-Chairman, issue a verbal or written warning to the person who is the subject of the complaint in question.

If it appears that the breach of the Code is major and/or the person who is the subject of the complaint contests the findings of the inquiry, the Standing Committee of the PCC may establish a panel of three members of the Committee not previously involved in the case to hear the complaint and the response to it of the person who is the subject of the complaint.

The panel shall report the outcome to the PCC and to the person who is the subject of the complaint. If the panel upholds the complaint, the PCC may in its absolute discretion resolve to do any of the following

- Issue a written warning to the person against whom the complaint has been upheld.
- Request that the person concerned stand down from being a trustee / member of the PCC.

Any alleged failures by the Secretary should be reported in writing directly to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman who will enquire into the circumstances as above with the aid of the Churchwardens or the Standing Committee as needed.

Any alleged failure by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman should be reported in writing to the Archdeacon in the first instance.

These terms of reference were adopted by the PCC on

Signed:

Chair of the Parochial Church Council

Date:

Review due: