

## **Considering joining the PCC?**

We are delighted that you are considering joining the PCC. People join the PCC for all sorts of reasons, but our aim in this brief leaflet is to clarify why the PCC exists, what it does and how we work. If you have any questions that aren't answered here, don't hesitate to get in touch with an existing PCC member.

### **What is the PCC?**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the key decision-making body of a Church of England parish. It consists of clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish.

#### **A. IT IS THE EXECUTIVE BODY OF A CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH**

The PCC is an ecclesiastical entity, defined as the executive body of a Church of England parish. An executive body exists to ensure a parish carries out its duties, and the PCC Measure lists what those duties are. So the PCC is responsible for sharing the leadership, management and administration of a parish with the incumbent. Technically it is what is called in law a 'body corporate'. This is good news, because it means it is a separate body from the people who serve on it, so no one on the PCC can be made liable for any of its debts, although it does have certain legal responsibilities (see below).

#### **B. IT IS A BODY OF TRUSTEES FOR A CHARITY**

The PCC is also a legal entity, a charity, and the PCC members are trustees of that charity. As trustees there are certain legal responsibilities, and also guidelines for best practice in terms of governance.

#### **C. IT IS A PAROCHIAL CHURCH 'COUNCIL'**

A council is a body of people elected to manage the affairs of a group of people. This is a body which is formally constituted and has an elected membership. These two things mean it is not self-determining (it doesn't decide what it does but has a formal constitution that directs its activities) or self-selecting (people are elected, not selected, onto the council).

### **What is the PCC responsible for?**

The Code of Conduct for PCC Members details the powers and duties of the PCC.

- It exists to co-operate with the minister in sharing leadership
- It exists to ensure legal compliance with charity law and ecclesiastical law, in particular in the areas of finance, employment and appointments
- It exists to care for the buildings and churchyard so that they may be best suited for the purpose of the church's ministry and mission
- It exists to be a channel of consultation within the wider Church through its synodical structures on matters that affect the Church locally and nationally

These structures were put in place to ensure a means by which the Church of England could 'talk' about important matters, enabling local churches to have a voice in wider Church issues, and decisions of the wider Church to be permeated down through the life of local churches.

### **What is my role as a PCC member?**

Put very briefly, to work with the other members of the PCC to ensure the effective running of the parish. This will involve:

- **Prayer** - Members are encouraged to pray for the meetings, other members and the life of the parish. There are various resources we can provide to help with this.
- **Attendance and preparation** - PCC members should aim to attend meetings and to read minutes, financial statements and papers before each meeting, considering how best to contribute to the items to be discussed.
- **Contribution** - Each member of the PCC is valued for what they bring: their gifts, skills, experience and knowledge. We expect people to offer these in service of the aims of the PCC, both in the meetings and outside the meetings in the wider life of the church. Inevitably new members can feel somewhat daunted at the outset of their time on the PCC but be assured we will do everything we can to make you feel at home and quickly able to offer your unique contribution.
- **Values** - PCC members are part of the leadership of the church; therefore they are expected to model the core values at the heart of church life in their own spiritual journey and the practical outworking of that in their daily lives. Whilst none of will do this perfectly, part of our way of working will be to help each other live as disciples of Jesus.
- **Connection** - It also helps if PCC members attend major activities not just in the parish but in the diocese and deanery, so that they feel part of the wider church family and are aware of what is going on.

### How does the PCC operate?

We meet 4 - 6 times a year. The meeting is chaired by the PCC Vice Chair and each member receives an agenda for the meeting along with accompanying documents at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

We have a big job to do, which is often complex and difficult. But through the years we have seen God at work, and we know he has called us to serve his purposes in the world. It will be great to have you as part of the PCC to shape the next chapter of St Mary's Church Newick.

### Tasks of the PCC

With the Rector:

- **To think through the church's mission**  
What does it mean to be the church in this place?
- **To look and listen**  
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**  
Ensuring appropriate arrangements for public worship and prayer; In response to church and parish needs; A budget to reflect that; Monitor and evaluate the church mission action plan
- **To make decisions on**  
Priorities; Best use of resources – money, people, buildings; How to meet new needs and challenges; Where you stand as a church
- **To communicate**  
What's been decided; To promote church activities; To liaise between different groups
- **To be involved**  
In church activities; In areas of the church's ministry
- **To care**  
For their clergy, prayerfully and personally; For others through the demonstration of good pastoral care; For the fabric of the church along with the Church Wardens

- **To keep legal**  
Insurance; Accounts; Building regulations including disability access; Child and vulnerable adult protection and safeguarding; Employment; Governance - ensuring policies and procedures are followed and up to date
- **To elect**  
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

### **Checks required prior to appointment**

- As a Trustee of a charity supporting work with children and vulnerable adults, a PCC member should have an enhanced DBS check and also, if appropriate, complete the relevant safeguarding training.
- At least two nominations at APCM, who will have signed a form stating that they have no concerns regarding the applicant's suitability for the role.
- Read and signed the personal declaration that they are not disqualified from standing for this office due to being included on a Barred list.

### **A Code of Conduct for PCC Meetings**

1. Try to attend all meetings, sending apologies to the PCC Secretary for any necessary absences.
2. Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, papers and any emails before the meeting.
3. Talk to the Chair before the meeting if clarification of any matter is needed.
4. Arrive on time. Stay to the end.
5. Draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting.
6. Participate fully in the meeting:
  - a. Listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind.
  - b. Contribute positively to the discussions.
  - c. Try to be concise and avoid speeches and frequent repetition
  - d. Listen quietly to the views and comments of others.
  - e. Do not interrupt or talk over others.
  - f. Add to the discussion only in a way relevant to the matter under discussion. Do not pursue tangential or irrelevant points.
7. Help others concentrate on the meeting by avoiding side conversations.
8. Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
9. Observe the authority of the Chair of the meeting.
10. Challenge ideas, not individuals.
11. Always have the best interests of the PCC and church in mind.
12. Agree that any decision reached by a majority of PCC members, once made, must be accepted and be supported.
13. Fulfil any responsibilities assigned at the meeting and be prepared to report back on progress at the next meeting.
14. Anybody who causes the meeting to be interrupted by reason of unacceptable behaviours contrary to those outlined above, can be asked to leave the meeting if the behaviour continues after fair warning.