



Changes to the Church Representation Rules

A new set of Church Representation Rules came into effect on 1st January 2020.

The new Rules are intended to be easier to understand and aim to simplify local church governance as well as to make it more flexible and adaptable to suit the local context.

The new Rules are also designed:

- to be compliant with recent data protection legislation
- to provide for electronic communication
- to ensure better representation of mission initiatives in the Church's structures
- to enable PCCs to do business by correspondence.

The new Rules include many significant amendments in how they are laid out and expressed, as well as quite a few substantive changes. This summary touches on some of the most pertinent issues for parishes and deaneries but it is not intended to be comprehensive. However, it is important to realise that previous versions of the Rules are effectively redundant and should not be relied upon. Similarly, please make sure to use up-to-date forms available from the 'PCC and Church Officers' page of the diocesan website.

Electoral Roll

1. The declaration statements on the Electoral Roll application form have been changed to include those who are also members of churches that are not 'in communion' with the Church of England, but have a Trinitarian doctrine.
2. The Electoral Roll may now be published online, rather than on paper, at the discretion of the PCC. A copy must still be available for inspection on a reasonable request being made.

3. The published version of the Electoral Roll (and the copy available for inspection) is only to list the names of those on it, no other personal information (eg address) may be included.
4. There is no requirement to remove names from the Electoral Roll between APCMs.

APCM – Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Annual Meetings can now be held during the period 1st January to 31st May.

1. The formal charity Annual Report (including accounts) of the PCC must be in a format allowed by General Synod.
2. The Annual Report must now also include a formal statement concerning safeguarding, as directed by the House of Bishops' guidance.
3. The Annual Report may be published online, rather than on paper, at the PCC's discretion.
4. If the Annual Meeting wishes to appoint some or all of the parish's Licenced Readers to the PCC, this must be done annually at each APCM. Readers with PTO, or who have Emeritus status, cannot be appointed to the PCC by the APCM and must stand for election alongside any other lay member of the parish if they want to serve on their parish's PCC. (Please note: Readers are not ex-officio on any Synod, PCC, or committee).
5. The Annual Meeting no longer appoints Sidesmen or women, this task is now undertaken by the PCC.
6. As well as Deanery Synod representatives and PCC members, an Annual Meeting may also separately elect the members of a Joint Church Council, where such a council exists (see below)
7. In a tied election, lots are drawn by the Presiding Officer.

Parochial Church Councils

1. It is the task of the PCC to appoint Sidesmen and women.
2. Only members of the PCC may attend PCC meetings. People who are not members of the PCC may only attend at the specific invitation of the PCC.
3. There is no longer any minimum number of PCC meeting that must be held in any 12 month period. The PCC must simply meet sufficient times to transact the business it needs to do.
4. Within a Team Ministry (single Benefice) all the clergy licenced to the Team are members of all PCCs within that Team and may attend all PCC meetings. Thus, each member of a Team Ministry is a Charity Trustee of each parish in their Team.

However, within a Group Ministry (multiple Benefices) while the licenced clergy within the Group Ministry may attend all PCC meetings of all PCCs within that Group Ministry and take part in all discussions, only the clergy licenced to the specific parish who's PCC is meeting, may vote on any resolution. Thus, clergy are only Charity Trustees of the parishes within their own benefice.

5. On any PCC the lay members must be in a majority. If the licencing of a Team Vicar or Curate would give the clergy a majority or equal presence on a PCC to that of the laity then that clergy person cannot become a member of the PCC.
6. A PCC meeting is only quorate if at least one-third of the members are present and the lay members are in a majority. An emergency meeting of the PCC is only quorate if a majority of the members are present and the lay members outnumber the clergy.
7. Emergency meetings may be called with whatever notice period is deemed practicable.
8. An Independent Examiner or Auditor is entitled to view all approved copies of PCC minutes.
9. The business of the PCC may be conducted by correspondence (email) if considered appropriate by the Chair. Any decisions made by the PCC in this way must be reported to the PCC at its next meeting.

Standing Committee of the PCC

1. The PCC may limit the scope and powers of its Standing Committee, or give directions to its Standing Committee which the Standing Committee must then follow.
2. The Standing Committee may not exercise any power that would require a resolution of the PCC.
3. The size of the Standing Committee is now dependent on the number of people declared as on the Electoral Roll of the parish at the Annual Meeting.
 - a. If ER more than 50 then the Standing Committee consists of the Minister, 2 Churchwardens and at least 2 other people appointed by the PCC from its own lay membership.
 - b. If ER is 50 or less then the Standing Committee consists of the Minister and at least 2 people appointed by the PCC from its own lay membership.
4. The Term of Office for members of the Standing Committee is until the end of the next Annual Meeting.

Deanery Synod

1. The Term of Office for members of a Deanery Synod runs for 3 years from the 1st July following a normal election year – ie. 2020 and then every 3 years thereafter.
2. Although a newly elected Deanery Synod representative would only take up their position on the Synod from 1st July, they are however immediately a member ex-officio of their parish PCC following their election.
3. Co-opted members of a Deanery Synod (clergy or laity) cannot vote in the elections of those standing for other synodical bodies (eg Diocesan Synod).
4. Mission initiatives created through a BMO (Bishop's Mission Order) may now have their own separate representation on the appropriate Deanery Synod as directed by the Bishop.

Joint Church Council

1. While all existing Joint Parochial Church Councils, Team Councils and Group Councils, created under the previous versions of the Church Representation Rules will continue as is, no new councils of these types may be created. In all future situations, a Joint Church Council or Joint Council will be created. The provisions relating to District Church Councils continue largely unchanged.
2. Unlike its predecessors, a Joint Church Council is a body corporate with governing documents that are identical to a PCC. A JCC has a legal identity in its own right and is a charity in the same way that any PCC is also a charity in English law. All members of a JCC are Charity Trustees.
3. Normally the clergy representatives on a JCC would consist of the Team Rector and specified, not necessarily all, Team Vicars.
4. A JCC does not have any ex-officio members. Lay members are separately elected by their respective Annual Meetings.
5. The lay members of a JCC must always be in the majority.