

A Code of Conduct for Parochial Church Council members

Introduction

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) recognises that it is the corporate body with local oversight of the church, its ministries, fund etc and therefore it is essential that the conduct of PCC members who are also charity trustees is to the highest standards of integrity in order to maintain trust and confidence.

Trustees are under a general duty to act always in the best interests of the church for which they are trustees.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour PCC members should expect of themselves and one another in carrying out their role.

PCC members are asked to ensure that they are familiar with this guidance and that they seek advice from the PCC chair/secretary if they are uncertain as to what is being expected of them.

All members of the PCC are encouraged to make themselves aware of it and make every effort to follow it.

PCCs are charities and Members, being Trustees are also governed by a number of requirements as laid down by the Charity Commission. Details of which can be found on the Charity Commission website.

Values

This code has been adapted from the General Synod Members Code of Conduct, which was produced with the consideration of:

- The Charity Governance Code seven principles of good governance.
- The Nolan Principles on Standards in Public Life are as follows:
 - Selflessness: act in the best interest of the charity
 - Integrity: make decisions free from personal interests and relationships
 - Objectivity: make decisions impartially using the best evidence without discrimination or bias
 - Accountability: submit themselves to necessary scrutiny for their decisions and actions
 - Openness: make decisions openly and transparently not withholding information
 - Honesty: be truthful
 - Leadership: exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect.

Code of Conduct

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 and stay to the end.
5. Declare any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting.
6. Participate fully in the meeting;
 - i. Listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind.
 - ii. Contribute positively to the discussions.
 - iii. Try to be concise and avoid speeches and frequent repetition.
 - iv. Listen quietly to the views and comments of others.
 - v. Do not interrupt or talk over others.
 - vi. 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 and not individuals.
11. Agree that any decision reached by a majority of PCC members, once made, must be accepted
12. Fulfil any responsibilities assigned at the meeting and be prepared to report back on progress at the next meeting.
13. Anybody who causes the meeting to be interrupted by reason of unacceptable behaviours contrary to those outlined in 5 – 7 above, can be asked to leave the meeting if the behaviour continues after fair warning.
14. Where a member has been required to leave a meeting for unacceptable behaviour, the PCC may decide by a majority vote whether to allow the person to return to the meeting.

15. Repeated failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in a vote of no confidence in the person's participation at the meeting or future meetings and an invitation to consider their position on the PCC.

Finally

At the first meeting of a PCC after the Annual Parish Church Meeting, members should be encouraged to discuss this document and to indicate their assent to the principles behind it. Assent maybe by a show of hands or by subscribing to the code which then would be kept by the PCC secretary.

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