

PARISH GOVERNANCE: MODEL RULES

Section A: Annual Parochial Church Meeting

THE ANNUAL MEETING

Timing and attendance

M1 (1) In every parish, the annual parochial church meeting (referred to in this Part of these Rules as 'the annual meeting') must be held in the period which begins with 1 January and ends with 31 May.

(2) The following persons are entitled to attend the annual meeting and take part in its proceedings –

(a) every lay person whose name is on the roll of the parish,

(b) every clerk in Holy Orders to whom paragraph (3) applies,

(c) where the parish is in the area of a benefice for which there is a team ministry, every member of the team,

(d) where the parish is in the area of a group ministry, every incumbent and priest in charge in the group ministry, and

(e) where the parish is in the area of a group ministry which includes the area of a benefice for which there is a team ministry, every vicar in the team ministry.

(3) This paragraph applies to a clerk in Holy Orders if he or she –

(a) is beneficed in or licensed to the parish or to another parish in the area of the benefice to which the parish belongs,

(b) is resident in the parish and is not beneficed in or licensed to any other parish,

(c) does not come within sub-paragraph (a) or (b) but is declared by the PCC with the agreement of the minister to be a habitual worshipper in the parish, or

(d) is a co-opted member of the PCC under Rule M15(1)(k).

(4) A declaration under paragraph (3)(c) has effect until the earlier of –

(a) the conclusion of the annual meeting in the year in which a new roll is prepared under Rule 7, and

(b) the clerk in question ceasing to be a habitual worshipper in the parish.

Convening meeting

M2 (1) The minister* must convene the annual meeting by displaying a notice in Form M1 –

(a) in the case of the parish church or, where there is more than one church in the parish, each of those churches, on or near the principal door, and

(b) in the case of each building in the parish licensed for public worship, in a location readily visible to members of the congregation.

(2) The period for which a notice under paragraph (1) is on display must include the last two Sundays before the day of the meeting.

(3) The annual meeting must be held at a place in the parish unless the PCC decides otherwise.

(4) In a case where the minister is absent or incapacitated by illness or for some other reason or where there is nobody who is the minister within the meaning of these Rules (see [Rule 83\(1\)](#)), the minister's function under this Rule is to be carried out by –

(a) the vice-chair of the PCC, or

(b) if there is not a vice-chair or the vice-chair is unable or unwilling to act, the secretary of the PCC or some other person appointed by the PCC.

New parish: special meeting

M3 (1) Where the parish is a new parish created by a pastoral scheme, the minister of the new parish or, in the absence of a minister, a person appointed by the bishop of the diocese must, as soon as possible after the scheme comes into operation, convene a special parochial church meeting (referred to as 'the special meeting').

(2) The special meeting is to be treated for the purposes of these Rules as the annual meeting for the year in which it is held.

(3) Subject to that, the provisions of these Rules relating to the convening or conduct of the annual meeting apply to the special meeting.

PROCEEDINGS AND ELECTIONS

Chair

M4 (1) The chair of the annual meeting is –

(a) the minister, or

(b) if the minister is absent or decides to vacate the chair or if there is nobody who is the minister within the meaning of these Rules (see [Rule 83\(1\)](#)), the vice-chair of the PCC, or

(c) if the vice-chair of the PCC is absent or decides not to take the chair –

(i) a person chosen by the annual meeting, or

(ii) if the parish belongs to a benefice for which there is a team ministry and paragraph (2) applies, the rector in the team ministry.

(2) This paragraph applies if –

(a) a vicar in the team ministry has the function of chairing the annual meeting (or a share in discharging that function) by virtue of a pastoral scheme or bishop's licence, and

(b) the vicar is absent but the rector in the team ministry is present.

(3) If there is an equality of votes, the chair of the meeting has a second, casting vote, except in the case of an election taking place at the annual meeting (as to which, see [Rule M9\(8\)](#)).

Business: reports etc.

M5 (1) The PCC must provide the annual meeting with each of the following, which the annual meeting may then discuss –

(a) a report on the changes to the roll since the last annual meeting or, in a year in which a new roll is prepared, a report on the numbers entered on the new roll,

(b) an annual report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally,

(c) the financial statements of the PCC for the year ending on the 31 December preceding the meeting,

(d) the annual fabric report under section 50 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018, and

(e) a report of the proceedings of the deanery synod.

(2) The PCC must ensure that a copy of the roll is available for inspection at the meeting.

(3) The annual report to be provided under paragraph (1)(b) must include a statement as to whether the PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

(4) The annual report to be provided under paragraph (1)(b) must be prepared in the form specified by the Business Committee.

(5) The financial statements to be provided under paragraph (1)(c) –

(a) must be prepared in the form specified by the Business Committee, and

(b) must be independently examined or audited in the manner specified by the Business Committee.

(6) If the PCC approves the financial statements that have been examined or audited under paragraph (5)(b), the chair of the meeting at which they are approved must sign them.

(7) Once the financial statements have been signed under paragraph (6), the PCC must, for at least seven days before the annual meeting –

(a) publish the signed statements in such form (whether electronic or otherwise) as it decides, and

(b) make a copy of the signed statements available for inspection, on a reasonable request being made.

(8) The PCC must, before the end of 28 days beginning with the date of the annual meeting, ensure that a copy of the annual report and financial statements provided under paragraph (1)(b) and (c) are given to the secretary of the diocesan board of finance for it to retain.

Business: elections and appointments

M6 (1) The annual meeting must, in the manner provided by Rule M9, do the following things in the following order –

(a) elect in every third year^{*} parochial representatives of the laity to the deanery synod;

(b) elect parochial representatives of the laity to the PCC.

(2) The annual meeting, having conducted the elections under paragraph (1), must appoint a person who is not a member of the PCC to be the independent examiner or auditor of the PCC for a term of office ending at the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

(3) It is for the PCC to pay the remuneration of a person appointed under paragraph (2).

(4) A person may be appointed as the independent examiner of the PCC only if the person comes within the description given in section 145(1)(a)

of the Charities Act 2011 (independent person with requisite ability and experience etc.).

(5) A person may be appointed as the auditor of the PCC only if the person is eligible as the auditor of a charity under section 144(2) of that Act (eligibility as statutory auditor).

(6) The annual meeting may not appoint sidesmen; the duty to do so is imposed on the PCC by section 2(2)(f) of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

(7) In the case of a new parish (see [Rule M3](#)), a special meeting must (in addition to its other business) decide on the number of members of the PCC who are to be elected representatives of the laity until the annual meeting held in the following year; and that number need not accord with the number provided for under [Rule M15\(8\)](#).

Business: miscellaneous

M7 (1) Any person who is entitled to attend the annual meeting may ask a question about parochial church matters or bring about a discussion of any matter of parochial or general church interest –

(a) by moving a general resolution, or

(b) by moving to make a particular recommendation to the council in relation to its duties.

(2) The annual meeting –

(a) may adjourn;

(b) may determine its own rules of procedure.

(3) The secretary of the PCC, or such other person as the meeting may appoint instead, acts as the clerk of the annual meeting and must record the minutes.

Qualifications of persons to be elected

M8 (1) A person is qualified for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod or PCC under [Rule M6\(1\)\(a\)](#) or [\(b\)](#) if –

(a) the person is aged 16 or over,

(b) he or she is an actual communicant, and

(c) his or her name is on the roll of the parish and, unless he or she is aged under 18 at the date of the election, has been on the roll for at least the preceding six months.

(2) But if the person has his or her name on the roll of more than one parish, he or she must choose one of the parishes concerned for the purpose of qualifying for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod.

(3) A person may not be nominated for election under Rule M6(1)(a) or (b) unless –

(a) the person has indicated his or her consent to serve, or

(b) there is, in the opinion of the meeting, sufficient evidence of his or her willingness to serve.

(4) A person may not be nominated for election under Rule M6(1)(a) if the person is disqualified under Part 7.

(5) The annual meeting may by resolution decide that a person who serves as a parochial representative of the laity on the deanery synod for the whole or any part of each of a specified number of successive terms of office may not be nominated for election under Rule M6(1)(a) to serve as such for the whole or any part of the term of office immediately following the last of those terms.

(6) A resolution under paragraph (5) may not apply to a term of office –

(a) which began before 1 January 2020 (being the commencement date of the Church Representation and Ministers Measure 2019 which substituted the whole of the Church Representation Rules), or

(b) which the person concerned is serving as a result of having been elected to fill a casual vacancy.*

(7) A resolution under paragraph (5) may be amended or revoked by a subsequent annual meeting or special parochial church meeting.

(8) A person may not be nominated for election under Rule M6(1)(b) if –

(a) the person is disqualified under Part 7, or

(b) the person is disqualified from being the trustee of a charity (and the disqualification is not subject to a waiver which permits membership of a PCC).

Conduct of an election

M9 (1) This Rule applies in the case of every election which is to take place at the annual meeting, subject to any variations made by a resolution

under Rule M10 or M11.

(2) A candidate must be nominated, either before the meeting in writing or at the meeting, by two persons each of whom –

(a) must be entitled to attend the meeting, and

(b) must have his or her name on the roll of a parish.

(3) If the number of candidates does not exceed the number of seats to be filled, any person who is entitled to attend the meeting may move a resolution that a vote be held, in the case of each candidate, on whether that candidate should be elected.

(3A) Where a resolution under paragraph (3) is passed, a vote is to be held on the proposition, in the case of each candidate, that that candidate should be elected; and for that purpose –

(a) every person whose name is on the roll of the parish is entitled to take part in a vote held under this paragraph,

(b) each person so entitled may, in the case of each candidate, cast only a single vote for or against the proposition (and Rule M10 accordingly does not apply to the vote), and

(c) paragraphs (7) to (10) of this Rule apply to the vote.

(4) If the number of candidates exceeds the number of seats to be filled, an election must take place in accordance with the following provisions.

(5) Every lay person whose name is on the roll of the parish is entitled to vote in the election.

(6) Each person entitled to vote has as many votes as there are seats to be filled, but may not give more than one vote to the same candidate.

(7) Votes may be given by a show of hands; but if one or more persons object to that, each vote is to be given on a voting paper signed on the back by the voter.

(8) If there is an equality of votes, the election is decided by the drawing of a lot by the presiding officer.

(9) On a recount of an election or a stage of an election, either on an appeal or at the request of the presiding officer or a candidate, if the original count and the recount are identical at the point when a lot must be drawn, the original lot must be used to decide.

(10) The presiding officer for an election at the annual meeting is the chair of the meeting, unless a presiding officer is appointed under Rule M11(3).

Adoption of STV system

M10(1) The annual meeting may resolve that the election of parochial representatives of the laity (whether to the deanery synod or to the PCC or to both) is to be conducted by the single transferable vote system.

(2) A resolution under this Rule is valid only if it is approved by at least two-thirds of those present and voting at the meeting; and it does not take effect until the next annual meeting.

(3) Where a resolution under this Rule is passed, the election is to be held in accordance with the rules for the time being in force under the General Synod's Standing Orders; and those rules have effect for that purpose with whatever modifications are necessary.

Postal voting

M11(1) The annual meeting may resolve that a person entitled to attend the meeting and vote in the election of parochial representatives of the laity may apply on Form M2 for a postal vote.

(2) A resolution under this Rule is valid only if it is approved by at least two-thirds of those present and voting at the meeting; and it does not take effect until the next annual meeting.

(3) Where applications for a postal vote have been received by the date specified in the notice convening the next annual meeting and the number of candidates nominated exceeds the number of seats to be filled, that annual meeting must appoint a presiding officer; and the person appointed may not be a candidate in the election.

(4) At that annual meeting, a voting paper must be given to each person present who is entitled to vote; and completed voting papers must be returned into the custody of the presiding officer before the close of the meeting.

(5) The presiding officer must ensure that each person who has applied for a postal vote on Form M2 is given a voting paper within seven days of the close of the meeting.

(6) A vote is counted only if it is given on a voting paper –

(a) which is marked in the manner indicated on the paper,

(b) the back of which is signed by the elector, and

(c) which is returned to the presiding officer within 14 days of the close of the meeting.

Result of an election

M12(1) The result of an election held at the annual meeting, or which involved postal voting in accordance with a resolution under Rule M11, must be announced as soon as practicable by the presiding officer.

(2) A notice of the result must be displayed –

(a) in the case of the parish church or, where there is more than one church in the parish, each of those churches, on or near the principal door, and

(b) in the case of each building in the parish licensed for public worship, in a location readily visible to members of the congregation.

(3) A notice under paragraph (2) must remain on display for at least 14 days.

(4) The notice must specify the date on which the result was declared.

(5) After the end of the period for which the notice was on display under paragraph (3), the secretary of the PCC must keep a list of every member's name and address.

(6) The list under paragraph (5) must be made available for inspection, on reasonable notice being given to the secretary by a person who is resident in the parish or has his or her name on the roll; but the secretary need not provide a copy of the list.

(7) Where a member has provided the secretary with an email address, the address recorded for that member on the list must include that email address.

(8) The list in the form in which it is made available under paragraph (6) must include every name recorded on it but no other personal data.

(9) The secretary of the PCC must give the name and address of every person elected to the deanery synod as a parochial representative of the laity to –

(a) the diocesan electoral registration officer, and

(b) the secretary of the deanery synod.

Declaration as to disqualifications

M12A(1) A person elected as a parochial representative of the laity to a deanery synod may not do anything in that capacity unless and until that

person gives the presiding officer a signed declaration to the effect that the person is not disqualified under Part 7.

(2) A person elected as a parochial representative of the laity to a PCC may not do anything in that capacity unless and until that person gives the presiding officer a signed declaration to the effect that –

(a) the person is not disqualified under Part 7, and

(b) the person is not disqualified from being the trustee of a charity or, if the person is so disqualified, the disqualification is subject to a waiver which permits membership of the PCC.

(2) (3) If a person elected as a parochial representative of the laity fails to make the declaration under paragraph (1) or (2) (as the case may be) after being given a reasonable opportunity to do so—

(a) the presiding officer must declare that the person has failed to do so, and

(b) the seat in question is vacated.

SPECIAL AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

Special meeting

M13(1) The minister may convene a special parochial church meeting in addition to the annual meeting; and the minister must do so if at least one-third of the lay members of the PCC make a written representation to him or her for there to be such a meeting.

(2) The provisions of these Rules relating to the convening or conduct of the annual meeting apply, with whatever modifications are necessary, to a special parochial church meeting.

(3) The following persons are entitled to attend a special parochial church meeting –

(a) every lay person whose name is on the roll of the parish on the day which is 21 clear days before the day on which the meeting is to be held, and

(b) every clerk in Holy Orders who would be entitled to attend the annual meeting if it were to be held on the day on which the special meeting is to be held.

(4) In a case where the minister is absent or incapacitated by illness or for some other reason or where there is nobody who is the minister within the meaning of these Rules (see [Rule 83\(1\)](#)), the minister's function under this Rule is to be carried out by –

(a) the vice-chair of the PCC, or

(b) if there is not a vice-chair or the vice-chair is unable or unwilling to act, the secretary of the PCC or some other person appointed by the PCC.

Extraordinary meeting

M14(1) The archdeacon whose archdeaconry includes the parish must, subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), convene an extraordinary parochial church meeting if –

(a) at least one-third of the lay members of the PCC or one-tenth of the persons whose names are on the roll of the parish make a written representation to the archdeacon to that effect, and

(b) the archdeacon considers that the representation is made with sufficient cause.

(2) Where the archdeacon is the minister, the bishop of the diocese or a person appointed by the bishop must, subject to paragraph (3), convene an extraordinary parochial church meeting if –

(a) at least one-third of the lay members of the PCC or one-tenth of the persons whose names are on the roll of the parish make a representation to the bishop for there to be such a meeting, and

(b) the bishop or a person appointed by the bishop considers that the representation is made with sufficient cause.

(3) The duty under paragraph (1) or (2) does not arise if, in response to the representation, an extraordinary meeting of the PCC is convened under [Rule M33](#).

(4) At a meeting convened under this Rule, the person who convened the meeting must either take the chair or appoint someone else to do so.

(5) If the chair of the meeting would not otherwise be entitled to attend, he or she may not vote on any resolution before the meeting.

(6) The following persons are entitled to attend an extraordinary parochial church meeting –

(a) every lay person whose name is on the roll of the parish on the day which is 21 clear days before the day on which the meeting is to be held, and

(b) every clerk in Holy Orders who would be entitled to attend the annual meeting if it were to be held on the day on which the extraordinary meeting is to be held.

MEMBERSHIP

Members

M15(1) The members of the PCC are –

- (a) every clerk in Holy Orders who is beneficed in or licensed to the parish,
- (b) any clerk in Holy Orders who is authorised to chair meetings of the PCC under Rule M26,
- (c) any deaconess or lay worker licensed to the parish,
- (d) if the parish is in the area of a benefice for which there is a team ministry, every member of the team,
- (e) the churchwardens of the parish,
- (f) any person chosen as a churchwarden of the parish but not yet admitted to office as such,
- (g) any deputy churchwarden who is an ex officio member under a scheme under Rule M34 or M35,
- (h) if the annual meeting decides that one or more of the readers licensed to the parish or to an area including the parish whose names are on the roll of the parish should be members, the reader or readers in question,
- (i) every person whose name is on the roll of the parish and who is a lay member of a deanery synod, a diocesan synod or the General Synod,
- (j) the elected representatives of the laity, with the number being determined under paragraphs (8) and (9), and
- (k) any clerk in Holy Orders, or any actual communicant aged 16 or over, whom the PCC decides to co-opt as a member, with the number being determined under paragraph (10).

(2) A clerk in Holy Orders (other than the minister) is not eligible for membership under paragraph (1)(a) or (d) if, were he or she to become a member, the number of clerical members would equal or exceed the number of lay members.

(3) Where there are two or more clerks in Holy Orders who (but for this paragraph) would become eligible under paragraph (1)(a) or (d) on the same day, paragraph (2) applies to each of those clerks taken together; and, accordingly, in a case within paragraph (2), none of them are eligible for membership under paragraph (1)(a) or (d) (as the case may be).

- (4) A person is eligible for membership under paragraph (1)(e), (f) or (g) only if the person is an actual communicant whose name is on the roll of the parish.
- (5) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(i), a lay member of a deanery synod who is a parochial representative elected by the annual meeting of the parish is eligible only for membership of the PCC for the parish, even if the person's name is on the roll of one or more other parishes.
- (6) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(i), a lay member of a deanery synod who is a member of the synod otherwise than by virtue of election as a parochial representative and whose name is on the roll of the parish and on the roll of one or more other parishes –
- (a) must choose one of the parishes concerned, and
- (b) is accordingly eligible only for membership of the PCC for the parish if it is the parish which he or she chooses.
- (7) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(i), a lay member of a diocesan synod or a member of the House of Laity of the General Synod whose name is on the roll of the parish and on the roll of one or more other parishes –
- (a) must choose one of the parishes concerned, and
- (b) is accordingly eligible only for membership of the PCC for the parish if it is the parish which he or she chooses.
- (8) The number of representatives of the laity for the purposes of paragraph (1)(j) is –
- (a) if there are no more than 50 names on the roll, six;
- (b) if there are more than 50 but no more than 100, nine;
- (c) if there are more than 100, a further three per hundred names and, where the number of names on the roll is not divisible by 100 without fraction or remainder, for the fraction or remainder, up to a maximum of 15.
- (9) The annual meeting may by resolution vary the number of representatives there would otherwise be for the parish under paragraph (8); but a resolution under this paragraph does not take effect before the next annual meeting.
- (10) The number of members under paragraph (1)(k) is either two or any greater number which does not exceed one-fifth of the number of members under paragraph (1)(j).
- (11) A person whose name is removed from the roll of the parish on a revision under **Rule 4** ceases to be a member of the PCC on the date on which the revised roll is completed.

(12) A person who does not make a fresh application for enrolment when a new roll of the parish is being prepared ceases to be a member of the PCC on the date on which the new roll is completed.

(13) A person who is or becomes disqualified as a member of the PCC (whether under [Part 7](#) or otherwise) ceases to be a member on the date on which the disqualification takes effect.

(14) In a case within paragraph (11) or (12), the PCC may nonetheless co-opt the person concerned as a member under paragraph (1)(k).

Term of office: representatives of the laity

M16(1) A person who is a member of the PCC under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) (representatives of laity) holds office as such for a period which –

(a) begins with the conclusion of the annual meeting at which the person was elected as a representative of the laity, and

(b) ends with the conclusion of the third subsequent annual meeting.

(2) But the annual meeting may, despite paragraph (1)(b), decide that the members under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) are to retire at the conclusion of the annual meeting following their election.

(3) A decision under paragraph (2) does not affect the term of office of a member due to retire from the PCC at the conclusion of the annual meeting held after the one at which the decision was taken.

(4) A decision under paragraph (2) must be reviewed by the annual meeting at least once every six years; and if, on the review, the annual meeting revokes the decision, paragraph (1) applies unless and until a further decision is taken under paragraph (2).

(5) Where a decision is not taken under paragraph (2), one-third of the members under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) are to retire and be elected each year; but at an annual meeting at which more than one-third of the members under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) are elected, lots are drawn to decide which third is to retire in the first year after that meeting, which third in the second year and which third in the third year.

(6) A member under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) is, subject to paragraphs (7) and (8), eligible on retirement for re-election.

(7) The annual meeting may decide that nobody who is a member under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) may hold office as such after the date of the meeting for a continuous period which exceeds whatever number of years the annual meeting decides.

(8) The annual meeting may also decide that a person who, as a result of a decision under paragraph (7), has ceased to be eligible to be a member under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) may, after such interval as the annual meeting decides, again stand for election as a representative of the laity.

(9) Where a member under [Rule M15\(1\)\(j\)](#) resigns or otherwise fails to serve the full term of office, the casual vacancy is to be filled for the remainder of the term in accordance with [Rule M18](#).

(10) A reference in this Rule to the conclusion of an annual meeting is, in a case where an election held at the meeting also involves postal voting, to be read as a reference to the declaration of the result of the election.

Term of office: other cases

M17(1) A person who is a member of the PCC under [Rule M15\(1\)\(f\)](#) (churchwarden elect) holds office as such for the period which –

(a) begins when the person is chosen as churchwarden, and

(b) ends when the person is admitted to the office of churchwarden (at which point the person continues as a member, holding office as such under [Rule M15\(1\)\(e\)](#)).

(2) A person who is a member of the PCC under [Rule M15\(1\)\(h\)](#) (readers) holds office as such for the period which –

(a) begins with the conclusion of the annual meeting at which it was decided that the person should be a member, and

(b) ends with the conclusion of the next annual meeting, unless it is decided at that meeting that the person should continue to be a member.

(3) A person who is a member of the PCC under [Rule M15\(1\)\(i\)](#) as an elected lay member of a deanery synod holds office as a member of the PCC for the period which –

(a) begins with the date of election, and

(b) ends with the next 30 June following the annual meeting at which elections of parochial representatives of the laity to the deanery synod are required to be held under [Rule M6\(1\)\(a\)](#).

(4) A person who is a member of the PCC under [Rule M15\(1\)\(k\)](#) (co-opted members) holds office as such for the period which –

(a) begins when the decision to co-opt the person as a member takes effect, and

(b) ends with the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

(5) Paragraph (4)(b) does not prevent the person being co-opted on subsequent occasions for a similar term.

Casual vacancies

M18(1) A casual vacancy* among the parochial representatives elected to a PCC must be filled as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs.

(2) Where the annual meeting is not due to be held within the two months following the occurrence of the vacancy, the vacancy may be filled by the election by the PCC of a person qualified to be elected as a parochial representative.

OFFICERS

Chair and vice-chair

M19(1) The minister is the chair of the PCC.

(2) The PCC must elect a lay member as vice-chair; and the vice-chair acts as chair and accordingly has the powers vested in the chair –

(a) where there is no minister,

(b) where the minister is absent or unable to act for some other reason, or

(c) where the minister invites the vice-chair to act as chair.

(3) Where a special cure of souls in respect of the parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry or a special responsibility for pastoral care in respect of the parish has been assigned to a member of the team under section 34(8) of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 –

(a) the vicar or team member in question is to be treated as the minister for the purposes of this Rule, or

(b) if the vicar or team member is absent or incapacitated by illness or for some other reason, the rector in the team ministry is to be treated as the minister for those purposes.

Secretary and treasurer

M20(1) The PCC may appoint one of its members as secretary; but if it does not, it must appoint some other fit person.

(2) The secretary has the following functions –

(a) to have charge of all the documents relating to the current business of the PCC other than the roll of the parish (unless the secretary is also the electoral roll officer);

(b) to keep the minutes;

(c) to record all resolutions passed;

(d) to notify his or her name and address to the secretary of the deanery synod and the secretary of the diocesan synod.

(3) The PCC may appoint one of its members as treasurer or two or more of its members as joint treasurers; but if it does not, it must –

(a) arrange for the office of treasurer to be discharged by such of the churchwardens as are members of the PCC or, if only one of them is a member, by that one solely, or

(b) appoint some other fit person.

(4) Where the person appointed as secretary or treasurer is not a member of the PCC, he or she does not become a member merely as a result of holding the office in question but may be co-opted under [Rule M15\(1\)\(k\)](#).

Electoral roll officer

M21(1) The PCC must appoint a person as electoral roll officer to act under its direction for the purpose of carrying out its functions with regard to the roll of the parish.

(2) The electoral roll officer accordingly has charge of the roll of the parish and must keep it up to date in accordance with these Rules.

(3) The person appointed under paragraph (1) need not be a member of the PCC and may also be the secretary.

Independent examiner or auditor

M22(1) If the annual meeting does not appoint an independent examiner or auditor to the PCC, or the person appointed is unable or unwilling to act, the PCC must appoint some other fit person.

(2) A person appointed under paragraph (1) must not be a member of the PCC.

(3) Paragraphs (4) and (5) of [Rule M6](#) (eligibility for appointment as independent examiner or auditor) apply to an appointment under paragraph (1) of this Rule as they apply to an appointment under paragraph (2) of that Rule.

(4) The term of office of a person appointed under paragraph (1) ends at the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

(5) It is for the PCC to pay the remuneration of a person appointed under paragraph (1).

BUSINESS

Meetings: time and place

M23(1) Each year, the PCC must hold a sufficient number of meetings to enable the efficient transaction of its business.

(2) The chair must convene each of those meetings.

(3) The chair may at any other time convene a meeting of the PCC; but if the chair does not do so within seven days of receiving a demand for such a meeting signed by at least one-third of the members of the PCC, those members may themselves immediately convene a meeting.

(4) A meeting of the PCC is to be held at such place as the PCC directs or, in the absence of such a direction, as the chair directs.

Meetings: attendance

M24(1) A person is entitled to attend a meeting of the PCC only if –

(a) the person is a member of the PCC, or

(b) where the parish is in the area of a group ministry, the person is entitled to do so under paragraph (2).

(2) Where the parish is in the area of a group ministry, each of the following persons is entitled to attend a meeting of the PCC –

(a) every incumbent of a benefice in the group,

(b) every priest in charge of a benefice in the group, and

(c) if the area of the group ministry includes the area of a benefice for which there is a team ministry, every vicar in the team ministry.

(3) A person who is entitled under paragraph (2) to attend a meeting of the PCC –

(a) is entitled to receive documents circulated to the members of the PCC, and

(b) is entitled to speak at the meeting, but

(c) is not entitled to vote at the meeting.

(4) The PCC may invite such other persons to attend its meetings as it wishes.

Meetings: notice

M25(1) At least ten clear days before a meeting of the PCC (other than one convened under paragraph (8)), notice of the meeting must be displayed –

(a) in the case of the parish church or, where there is more than one church in the parish, each of those churches, on or near the principal door, and

(b) in the case of each building in the parish licensed for public worship, in a location readily visible to members of the congregation.

(2) A notice under paragraph (1) must –

(a) specify the time and place of the meeting, and

(b) be signed by or on behalf of the chair or other persons convening the meeting.

(3) At least seven clear days before a meeting of the PCC (other than one convened under paragraph (8)), notice of the meeting must be given to –

(a) each member of the PCC,

(b) where the parish is in the area of a group ministry, each person entitled to attend the meeting under Rule M24(2), and

(c) each person whom the PCC has invited to the meeting under Rule M24(4).

(4) A notice under paragraph (3) must –

(a) specify the time and place of the meeting,

(b) be signed by or on behalf of the secretary, and

(c) contain the agenda of the meeting, including any motions or other business proposed by members of which the secretary has received notice.

(5) But in the case of a meeting of the PCC which immediately follows the annual meeting and which has been called only for the purpose of appointing or electing officers of the PCC or the members of the standing committee, notice is not required under paragraph (3) if it has been given under paragraph (1).

(6) If the chair, vice-chair and secretary, or any two of them, consider for some good and sufficient reason that a meeting of the PCC which has

been convened should be postponed, each member of the PCC and each person specified in Rule M24(2) must be given –

(a) notice that the meeting has been postponed, and

(b) notice specifying the time and place of the reconvened meeting.

(7) A notice under paragraph (6)(b) must be given before the end of 14 days beginning with the date for which the meeting had been convened.

(8) In the event of a sudden emergency or other special circumstances requiring immediate action by the PCC, the chair may convene a meeting by giving every member whatever written notice is practicable.

Meetings: chair

M26(1) The chair at a meeting of the PCC (other than an extraordinary meeting under Rule M33) is –

(a) the chair of the PCC, or

(b) if the chair is not present, the vice-chair of the PCC, or

(c) if nobody is available under sub-paragraph (a) or (b) (whether to chair the whole meeting or particular items on the agenda), a person chosen by and from the members of the PCC.

(2) Where a clerk in Holy Orders who is licensed to officiate in the parish or has permission to do so is authorised by the bishop to act as the chair of the PCC –

(a) that clerk is to be the chair of the PCC for the meeting if the chair of the PCC is absent, and

(b) the references in paragraph (1) to the chair are accordingly to be read as references to that clerk.

(3) An authorisation of the kind mentioned in paragraph (2) may be given only if –

(a) the clerk in question agrees, and

(b) an application is made by the minister and PCC jointly or, where the benefice is vacant, by the PCC alone.

(4) The chair at a meeting of the PCC must vacate the chair, either generally or for the purposes of any business in which he or she has a personal interest or any other particular business, if –

(a) the chair thinks it appropriate to do so, or

(b) the meeting so resolves with the agreement of the archdeacon.

Meetings: procedure

M27(1) The quorum for a meeting of the PCC is (subject to paragraph (2)) –

(a) one-third of its members, or

(b) in the case of a meeting convened under Rule M25(8) (emergency etc.), a majority of its members.

(2) A meeting of the PCC is quorate only if the majority of the members present are lay persons.

(3) Business which is not specified in the agenda for a meeting of the PCC may not be transacted at the meeting except with the consent of at least three-quarters of the members present; and at a meeting convened under Rule M25(8), the only business which may be transacted is that specified in the notice convening the meeting.

(4) Business at a meeting of the PCC is decided by a majority of the members present and voting.

(5) In the case of an equality of votes at a meeting of the PCC, the chair has a second, casting vote.

(6) A meeting of the PCC may adjourn its proceedings to such time and place as the meeting may decide.

Meetings: minutes

M28(1) The minutes of each meeting of the PCC must record the name of each member present at the meeting and any other person attending.

(2) If one-fifth of the members of the PCC present and voting on a resolution so require, the minutes must record the name of each member voting for the resolution and the name of each member voting against.

(3) A member of the PCC may require the minutes to record how he or she voted on a particular resolution.

(4) Each member of the PCC, and any person entitled to attend meetings of the PCC under Rule M24(2), is entitled to have access to the minutes of the meetings of the PCC.

(5) Each of the following persons is entitled to have access to the approved minutes of meetings of the PCC without the authority of the PCC –

(a) the independent examiner or auditor of the PCC's financial statements,

(b) the bishop,

(c) the archdeacon, and

(d) any person authorised in writing by a person mentioned in sub-paragraph (a), (b) or (c).

(6) Any other person whose name is on the roll of the parish is entitled to have access to the approved minutes of meetings of the PCC held after the annual meeting in 1995, except any minutes which the PCC regards as confidential.

(7) Other persons may have access to the minutes of the meetings of the PCC only in accordance with a specific authorisation from the PCC; but, where minutes have been deposited in the diocesan record office under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, the need for that authorisation may be dispensed with by the chief officer of that office.

Business by correspondence

M29(1) The chair of the PCC may, if he or she considers that any business can properly be conducted by correspondence, instruct the secretary of the PCC to send proposals requiring the approval of members to –

(a) each member of the PCC, and

(b) any person entitled to attend the meetings of the PCC under Rule M24(2).

(2) Unless objection to the proposals is received from members in such numbers and within such period from the date of their being sent as the chair of the PCC may specify, the proposals are to be treated at the end of that period as approved by the PCC as if they had been approved at a duly convened meeting.

(3) Where proposals are circulated under this Rule for approval, the secretary must report to the next meeting of the PCC –

(a) whether the proposals were approved, and

(b) if objections to the proposals were received, the number of members from whom they were received.

Audit of financial statements

M30(1) The independent examiner or auditor of the PCC's financial statements –

(a) is entitled to have access to books, documents or other records (however kept) which relate to the financial statements;

(b) may require information and explanations from past or present treasurers or members of the PCC.

(2) If a person fails to comply with a requirement under paragraph (1)(b), the independent examiner or auditor may apply to the Charity Commission for an order for directions under section 155 of the Charities Act 2011.

Standing committee

M31(1) The PCC has a standing committee constituted in accordance with this Rule.

(2) If there are more than 50 names on the roll of the parish on the date on which the annual meeting is held, the standing committee is to consist of –

(a) the minister,

(b) each churchwarden who is a member of the PCC or, if there are more than two, such two or more of them as are appointed by the PCC by resolution, and

(c) at least two other members of the PCC appointed by the PCC by resolution, the number of whom must be at least equal to the number of churchwardens who are members of the committee under sub-paragraph (b).

(3) If there are no more than 50 names on the roll of the parish on the date on which the annual meeting is held, the standing committee is to consist of –

(a) the minister, and

(b) at least two other members of the PCC (each of whom may, but need not, be a churchwarden) appointed by the PCC by resolution.

(4) The PCC may by resolution remove a person appointed under paragraph (2)(b) or (c) or (3)(b).

(5) A member appointed under paragraph (2)(b) or (c) or (3)(b) holds office for a period which begins with the date of appointment and ends with the conclusion of the next annual meeting (subject to the possibility of the member's removal under paragraph (4)).

(6) The standing committee may transact the PCC's business between meetings of the PCC; but the standing committee –

(a) may not discharge a duty of the PCC, and

(b) may not exercise a power of the PCC which is subject to the passing of a resolution by the PCC or compliance by the PCC with some other requirement.

(7) If the PCC gives the standing committee any directions as to the exercise of its power under paragraph (6), the committee must exercise the power in accordance with those directions.

Other committees

M32 (1) The PCC may appoint committees for the various branches of church work in the parish; and the members of a committee appointed under this Rule may include persons who are not members of the PCC.

(2) The minister is entitled to be an ex officio member of each committee appointed under this Rule.

Extraordinary meetings

M33 (1) Where a written representation is made for the purposes of [Rule M14](#), the archdeacon or bishop must, if he or she does not convene an extraordinary parochial church meeting under that Rule, convene an extraordinary meeting of the PCC under this Rule.

(2) At a meeting convened under this Rule, the archdeacon or bishop must either take the chair or appoint a person to do so.

(3) If the chair of the meeting would not otherwise be entitled to attend, he or she may not vote on any resolution before it.

SCHEMES

Parish with more than one place of worship: election of representatives of laity

M34 (1) If there are in the parish two or more churches* or buildings licensed for public worship, the annual meeting may make a scheme for the election of representatives of the laity to the PCC in a way that is intended to make due provision for the representation of the congregation of each church or building.

(2) A scheme under this Rule may provide for –

(a) the election or choice of one or two deputy churchwardens,

(b) the delegation by the churchwardens to the deputy or deputies of such functions relating to a church or building licensed for public worship

as are specified in the scheme, and

(c) the deputy or each of the deputies to be an ex officio member of the PCC.

(3) A scheme under this Rule may include provision under [Rule M35](#).

(4) A scheme under this Rule comes into operation on the day specified in the scheme.

(5) Where a scheme is made under this Rule, a copy of the scheme –

(a) must be filed in the diocesan registry, and

(b) must be sent to the secretary of the bishop’s council and standing committee.

(6) This Rule does not affect the appointment, in parishes with more than one parish church, of two churchwardens for each church under section 1(2)(a) of the Churchwardens Measure 2001.

Parish with more than one place of worship: district church council

M35 (1) If there are in the parish two or more churches^{*} or buildings licensed for public worship, the annual meeting may make a scheme for –

(a) the establishment of a body called a ‘district church council’, the purpose of which is to carry out in relation to a specified district in the parish in which there is at least one church or building licensed for public worship such functions of the PCC as are delegated to it, and

(b) the election by the annual meeting of the district of representatives of the laity to the district church council.

(2) A scheme under this Rule must include provision for –

(a) ex officio membership of the district church council, and

(b) the chairing of the council.

(3) A scheme under this Rule may include provision delegating to the district church council such functions of the PCC as are specified in the scheme.

(4) Where there is a scheme under this Rule, the PCC may, subject to the provisions of the scheme, delegate one or more of its functions to the district church council.

(5) But none of the following functions may be delegated under paragraph (3) or (4) –

(a) functions relating to producing the financial statements of the parish;

(b) functions under [Part 2](#) of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (exercise of rights of presentation);

(c) functions as an interested party under [Part 3](#) of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 (pastoral schemes etc.).

(6) Where a scheme under this Rule is in operation, the PCC may exercise a function delegated to the district church council under paragraph (3) or (4) despite the delegation.

(7) A scheme under this Rule may provide for –

(a) the election or choice of one or two deputy churchwardens,

(b) the delegation by the churchwardens to the deputy or deputies of such functions relating to a church or building licensed for public worship as are specified in the scheme, and

(c) the deputy or each of the deputies to be an ex officio member of the PCC.

(8) A scheme under this Rule may include provision under [Rule M34](#).

(9) A scheme under this Rule comes into operation on the day specified in the scheme.

(10) Where a scheme is made under this Rule, a copy of the scheme –

(a) must be filed in the diocesan registry, and

(b) must be sent to the secretary of the bishop’s council and standing committee.

(11) If the parish is in the area of a benefice for which there is a team ministry, each member of the team may attend the meetings of a district church council elected for a district in the parish.

(12) This Rule does not affect the appointment, in parishes with more than one parish church, of two churchwardens for each church under section 1(2)(a) of the Churchwardens Measure 2001.

District church council: disqualification

(1) The provisions of these Rules on disqualification from being nominated, chosen or elected as, or from serving as, a member of the PCC apply also in relation to membership of a district church council established by a scheme under [Rule M35](#) which applies to the parish.

(2) Any enactment providing for the disqualification of a person from being a trustee of a charity and, accordingly, from being a member of the PCC also has the effect of disqualifying the person from being a member of the district church council.

Section C: ~~Joint Councils~~

Power to make scheme

M37 (1) A meeting of the parish and meetings of one or more connected parishes may jointly make a scheme for the establishment of a joint council comprising –

(a) the minister of each parish to which the scheme applies, and

(b) representatives of the laity elected, chosen or appointed in the manner and in the numbers specified in the scheme from among the persons each of whom has his or her name on the roll of a parish to which the scheme applies.

(2) The provision which may be made in reliance on [Rule 77](#) (implied power to vary) includes provision for enabling a joint council to include the minister and representatives of one or more other parishes.

(3) A reference in this Section of this Part of these Rules to a meeting of a parish is a reference to the annual meeting or a special parochial church meeting of that parish.

(4) A parish is connected to another parish if –

(a) they each belong to the same benefice,

(b) the benefice to which one belongs is held in plurality with the benefice to which the other belongs (whether or not they are held in plurality with one or more other benefices), or

(c) they are in the area of the same group ministry.

Status, property and functions of joint council

M38(1) A joint council established by a scheme under [Rule M37](#) is a body corporate; and section 3 of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 applies to the joint council as if it were a PCC.

(2) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) for the establishment of a joint council must include provision for the transfer from the PCC of each parish to which the scheme applies to the joint council of –

(a) all property, rights, liabilities and functions, or

(b) only such property, rights, liabilities and functions as are specified in the scheme.

(3) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may (in reliance on [Rule 77](#)) vary a scheme for the establishment of a joint council by providing for the transfer of specified property, rights, liabilities or functions from the joint council to the PCC of a specified parish to which that scheme applies.

(4) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may (in reliance on [Rule 77](#)) vary a scheme for the establishment of a joint council by providing for that scheme to cease to apply to a specified parish; and the scheme making the variation must include provision for the transfer from the joint council to the PCC for that parish of the property, rights, liabilities and functions concerned.

(5) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may (in reliance on [Rule 77](#)) revoke a scheme for the establishment of a joint council; and the scheme making the revocation must include provision for the transfer from the joint council to the PCC for each parish of the property, rights, liabilities and functions concerned.

(6) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may make different provision for different purposes and may, in particular, provide for –

(a) transfers of different property, rights, liabilities or functions to take place on different days;

(b) transfers of property, rights, liabilities or functions to take place on different days for different parishes.

(7) Any gift which is expressed as a gift to the PCC of a parish to which a scheme under [Rule M37](#) applies, and which takes effect on or after the relevant transfer date, takes effect as a gift to the joint council, unless all the purposes for which the gift was made relate to functions which continue to be exercisable by the PCC.

(8) In paragraph (7), the ‘relevant transfer date’ means –

(a) where all the PCC’s functions are transferred to the joint council on the same date, that date, or

(b) in any other case, the date or the first date on which one or more of the PCC’s functions are transferred to the joint council.

(9) Where a scheme under [Rule M37](#) provides for the transfer of land, the land is, by virtue of the scheme itself and without any further deed or other document, to vest subject to and with the benefit of any tenancies, covenants, conditions, agreements, easements or rights to which the

land was subject, and of which it had the benefit, immediately before the transfer took effect.

(10) Where any question arises as to the allocation of property, rights, liabilities or functions to a PCC on a transfer made by virtue of paragraph (3), (4) or (5), the question is to be resolved by the diocesan board of finance for the diocese in which that PCC's parish is situated.

(11) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) does not affect the status of any parish to which the scheme applies or any right which a person has by virtue of being a parishioner or having his or her name on the roll of the parish.

Officers, business etc. of joint council

M39(1) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) for the establishment of a joint council must include provision for –

(a) the chairing of the joint council,

(b) the meetings of the joint council, and

(c) the procedure of the joint council.

(2) Provision made under paragraph (1)(b) which entitles the representatives of a parish to which the scheme applies to attend a meeting of the joint council and take part in its proceedings does not prevent the holding of a meeting of the parish.

(3) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may include provision for the membership of a joint council to include persons other than those mentioned in paragraph (1) of that Rule.

(4) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) may include supplementary, transitional or saving provision.

(5) Provision under paragraph (4) may, in particular, apply (with or without modifications) provisions of these Rules or of the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 or any other provision made by or under a Measure.

Parish ceasing to be connected or being dissolved

M40(1) This Rule applies where a parish to which a scheme under [Rule M37](#) applies ceases, by virtue of a pastoral scheme or order or the termination of provisions of a pastoral scheme or order under section 32(2) of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, to be connected to the other parish or parishes to which the scheme applies.

(2) This Rule also applies where a parish to which a scheme under [Rule M37](#) applies is dissolved by a pastoral scheme which makes provision

under section 31(1)(b) of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011.

(3) The bishop may by written instrument under his or her hand –

(a) provide for the scheme to cease to apply to the parish which has ceased to be connected to the other parish or parishes or (as the case may be) has been dissolved, or

(b) provide for the scheme to be revoked.

(4) An instrument under this Rule which makes provision under paragraph (3)(a) must also provide for the transfer from the joint council to the PCC for the parish concerned of the property, rights, liabilities and functions concerned.

(5) An instrument under this Rule which makes provision under paragraph (3)(b) must also provide for the transfer from the joint council to the PCC for each of the parishes concerned of the property, rights, liabilities and functions concerned.

(6) Where any question arises as to the allocation of property, rights, liabilities or functions to a PCC on a transfer made by virtue of paragraph (4) or (5), the question is to be resolved by the diocesan board of finance for the diocese in which that PCC's parish is situated.

Disqualification

M41(1) The provisions of these Rules on disqualification from being nominated, chosen or elected as, or from serving as, a member of the PCC apply also in relation to membership of a joint council established by a scheme under [Rule M37](#) to which the parish belongs.

(2) Any enactment providing for the disqualification of a person from being a trustee of a charity and, accordingly, from being a member of the PCC also has the effect of disqualifying the person from being a member of the joint council.

Procedure for making scheme

M42(1) A scheme under [Rule M37](#) is valid only if it is approved by at least two-thirds of the persons present and voting at a meeting of each parish to which the scheme applies.

(2) A scheme approved under paragraph (1) by each parish to which it applies must be referred to the bishop's council and standing committee; and the scheme must be accompanied by –

(a) a copy of the resolution of each meeting at which the scheme was approved, and

(b) a statement of the number of persons attending each meeting, the number at each meeting voting for approval of the scheme and the number voting against.

(3) The bishop's council and standing committee, having had a scheme referred to it under paragraph (2), may –

(a) approve the scheme without amendment,

(b) approve the scheme subject to proposed amendments, or

(c) decline to approve the scheme.

(4) The bishop's council and standing committee may approve a scheme only if it is satisfied that the scheme makes due provision for the representation on the joint council of the laity of each parish to which the scheme applies.

(5) The provision made in the scheme for the purposes of paragraph (4) must, in particular, include provision for ensuring that the number of clerical members of the joint council does not equal or exceed the number of lay members.

(6) An amendment to a scheme proposed under paragraph (3)(b) is made only if it is approved by at least two-thirds of the persons present and voting at a meeting of each parish to which the scheme applies.

(7) A scheme under Rule M37 comes into operation on the day specified in the scheme.

(8) Where a scheme under Rule M37 is approved under this Rule, a copy of the scheme –

(a) must be filed in the diocesan registry, and

(b) must be sent to the secretary of the bishop's council and standing committee.

Notes

* See Rule 83(1) for the definition of 'minister'.

* The next elections are to be held in 2023.

* 'Casual vacancy' includes the case where there is a vacancy because not enough candidates were nominated to fill the places available: see Rule 83(9).

* 'Casual vacancy' includes the case where there is a vacancy because not enough candidates were nominated to fill the places available: see rule

83(9).

* 'Church' means any church or chapel which has been consecrated for the purpose of public worship according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England: see section 3, Interpretation Measure 1925.

* 'Church' means any church or chapel which has been consecrated for the purpose of public worship according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England: see section 3, Interpretation Measure 1925.

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