Using contactless in your parish
Good Governance and Good Management

Introduction

This guidance is intended as a common-sense approach to the issues arising from the use of contactless card readers in churches. The recommendations set out here are intended to reflect the same principles as the ones set out in the New Treasurer's Guide which is currently being updated.

Opening an account with a Card Payment Services Provider is similar to opening a bank account, and should be authorised or confirmed by the PCC, and evidenced by a resolution. This is not just about good governance in the sense of proper procedures being followed, it is also an opportunity for the PCC to understand what's happening, and to support this initiative.

Most Card Payment Services Providers work with a single person having "administrator" level rights, such as receiving reporting. The administrator usually manages the nomination of and maintenance of the bank account to which funds are sent, and the rights of other users' access to reporting and to the system. This administrator function is often accessible from a single email address and password. It is recommended that, where practicable:

- Such an email be a generic one, such as treasurer@stmary.org or stmarytreasurer@btmail.com rather than a personal email address, so that the account is not associated with a person who may move on. In any event, the relevant email and password details should be kept in a secure place accessible to at least one other church officer, so that it can be accessed by or assigned to a new treasurer, if necessary.

- Banking reports should be supplied to a second person as well as to the account administrator, and the amounts checked as received in the bank statement

- Any changes to the banking frequency (from weekly to monthly, for instance) should be authorised by the PCC, and evidenced by a resolution.

- Where Gift Aid and giving are managed by someone other than the treasurer, that person should receive all the reporting necessary for maintaining the giving records

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In order to offer a consistent service to donors, many Card Payment Services Providers offer the option to create additional users (sometimes called 'staff' or 'employees' or 'volunteers') who do not have the "administrator" rights but who can operate the units. Creating a rota of people who have some basic training is good practice.

Donations should be accounted for gross, and the charges shown as bank charges. In practice this means that if the charge is 2%, then a bank receipt for £9.80 should be shown in the accounts as a donation of £10 and an expense of £0.20. Details of the gross donations and the charges will be supplied in the Card Payment Services Providers' reporting, which they supply as part of the banking.

All card receipts should have a clearly identified purpose associated with the transaction record, so that the treasurer can account for them properly. Where Card Payment Services Providers, such as SumUp and iZettle, are used to process both donations and receipts of fees and other income, it should be done using the functionality provided to create "products", so that an explanation is associated with every receipt.

Gift Aid or Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme (GASDS) should be claimed on all eligible donations received. Contactless donations up to £30 may be included in the GASDS claim, up to a value of £8,000 per year, where Gift Aid is not claimed. GASDS and Gift Aid should be claimed on the gross donation.

Suitable provision for donors to make Gift Aid declarations for their card donations should be made available, particularly for chip-and-pin donations and for donations over £30, as neither of these is eligible for the GASDS. Provision for Gift Aid declarations may be by an electronic process or simply by making available paper Gift Aid forms near the donation point. If paper forms are used, one is required for each donation, in the same way as Gift Aid envelopes for cash.