



THE ROLE OF THE P.C.C. SECRETARY

When you come new into role, the job can seem very intimidating. However, help is at hand. Almost everything you need to know from the “legally required” point of view is set out in the Church Representation Rules (CRR) published by Church House Publishing. No PCC Sec should try to operate without a copy – it is a lifesaver and will end many arguments about “how things should be done”. The most recent version is the 2017 edition. You can also view this online for free at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules>

Who can be PCC Sec?

Someone appointed from the PCC or someone co-opted for the role – if they are not a PCC member they can be paid. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1. (d))

The PCC Sec can, but need not, be the electoral roll officer (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1.(f))

What is the role?

First of all there are the requirements set out in the CRR

The PCC Sec has **charge of all documents** relating to the current business of the Council (except electoral roll unless they are the electoral roll officer) (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1. (d) (iii))

The PCC Secretary is responsible for keeping them safely. They are also responsible for Record management. **“Keep or Bin”** sets out how long different types of document should be held and what should happen to them beyond that point. A copy of this guide will be provided at the training session. Note the latest edition is dated 2009 (there are no plans to update this – checked in June 2018).

The PCC Sec is responsible for **keeping the minutes**, (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1. (d) (iii)) including the names of members present (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (a))

Minutes should be made available to all members of the Council. The Chairman /Vice Chairman can also agree that past minutes are made available to members if relevant to current business (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (d))

The independent examiner or auditor, the bishop, the archdeacon or any person authorised by one of them in writing shall have access to the *approved* minutes of the Council without the authority of the Council. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (e))

Other people who are on the electoral roll may have access to the *approved* minutes of meetings held after the APCM in 1995 except those the Council deems to be confidential. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (f))

Other people can only have access to the *approved* minutes of the Council with the specific authorization of the PCC except where they have been lodged with the diocesan records office (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (g))

The PCC sec can help the effective running of the PCC by writing clear minutes and by ensuring that decisions are accurately recorded.

The PCC Sec is responsible for **recording all resolutions** passed by the Council. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1. (d (iii))

If 1/5th members present and voting on a resolution so require the minutes shall record the names of the members voting for and against the resolution. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (b))

Any member can require that the minutes contain a record of how he voted of any resolution. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 12. (c))

The PCC Sec can play an important role by making sure that the wording of the resolution makes sense that it accurately reflects the wishes of those proposing and seconding it and that people understand what they are voting on.

The PCC Secretary should **keep the Secretary of the Diocesan Synod** (The Diocesan Secretary) **and Deanery Synod informed of their name and address** (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 1. (d) (iii))

[Certification of numbers on the Electoral Roll] either the Chairman , Vice Chairman , PCC Sec or Electoral Roll Officer has to notify the Secretary of the Diocesan Synod (Diocesan Secretary) in writing not later than 1st June of the number on the electoral roll as at the APCM. (CRR4). This can be entered via the national statistics database. If you are unsure who the contact register is for your PCC please contact the diocesan office. You can use the email address parishreturns@oxford.anglican.org If no one else does it the PCC Secretary must make sure it is done. A copy of that notification has to fixed at or near to the principal door of every church or building licensed for public worship in the parish at the same time and stay there for not less than 14 days.

There is a requirement to have not less than 4 PCC meetings a year, and if only 4 they should be spaced quarterly as far as possible, convened by Chairman or following requisition signed by not less than 1/3rd PCC members.(CRR Appendix II Rule 13 2.)

Notification about meetings

An emergency meeting, requires 3 clear days' notice in writing, (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 8.)

All other meetings require at least 10 clear days before any meeting of the council notice specifying the time and place of the intended meeting, signed by or on behalf of the Chairman, or those convening the meeting should be posted at, or near, the principal door of every church or building licensed for public worship in the parish. CRR Appendix II Rule 13 4. (a)

Not less than 7 days before the meeting a notice specifying the time and place of the meeting signed by or on behalf of the secretary shall be posted or delivered to every member of the council. It can be emailed if the member has authorized the use of the electronic email address.

The notice has to contain the agenda including any motion or business proposed by any member of the Council received by the Secretary. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 4 (b))

(The only exclusion is the meeting following the APCM for appointing officers) (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 4. (b))

If any 2 of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary decide for a good and sufficient reason that a convened meeting should be postponed, notice shall be given to every member of the Council specifying the reconvened time and place within 14 days of the postponed meeting.(CRR Appendix II Rule 13 4. (c))

Quorum : No business shall be transacted unless at least 1/3rd of the members are present and no business which is not on the agenda can be transacted except with the consent of ¾ of the members present.(CRR Appendix II Rule 13 6.)

The business shall be transacted in the order set out on the agenda unless the council by resolution determine otherwise. (CRR Appendix II Rule 13 7.)

Normally it is the responsibility of the minister of the parish to give notice of the annual meeting by putting a specific notice (section 4 of Appendix 1) on or near the principal door of every church or building licensed for public worship in the parish for a period to include at least 2 Sundays before the day of the meeting. If the priest is ill or there is a vacancy in

the parish the Vice Chairman or if necessary the PCC Sec shall convene the meeting (CRR7 (3))

The secretary of the PCC (or another person appointed by the meeting in their place) shall act as **clerk of the annual meeting and take the minutes** (CRR 9.9). They should keep a list of the names and addresses of members of the Council which needs to be made available for inspection on reasonable notice to a person resident in the parish or on the electoral roll, but they are not required to provide a copy of the list (11.9).

Deanery Synod Members

Not later than 31st Dec in the year preceding the election of lay people to the deanery synod the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod (Diocesan Secretary), shall send information to the PCC Secretary about the number of deanery synod representatives to be elected at the APCM so that thought can be given about who would be appropriate. The Secretary to Diocesan Synod also sends that info to the Deanery Synod Secretary (CRR 25 (3)). The current triennium for Deanery Synod is 2017 – 2020. *Note:* Representatives do not need to be elected every year only vacancies filled where people step down.

The PCC Sec has to **send the diocesan electoral registration officer** (Petronella Spivey based at Church House Oxford) and **the Secretary of the Deanery Synod the names and addresses of the lay people who have been elected to the deanery synod.** (CRR 11 (9))

If a **casual vacancy** arises and the APCM is more than 2 months away the PCC can elect someone to fill the vacancy. **The PCC Sec is responsible for informing the Diocesan Electoral Registration Officer** (Petronella Spivey) **and the Secretary of the deanery synod about who has been elected.**(CRR 48 (1))

However we all know there is more to being PCC Sec than that

The PCC Secretary also has a vital role in

Helping to plan and prepare effective agendas

Careful thought about the purpose, shape and time allocation within meetings can make a big difference. People need to be clear about the matters to be discussed and the type of outcome needed for each item. It is important that background papers are well prepared and available in plenty of time so that people can think about them.

Effective Communication within and outside the Parish

The PCC Sec can act as key communication hub making sure the right information gets to the right people. It can be time consuming but makes an enormous difference, helping the Church to run as smoothly as possible, and increasing the sense of belonging to the church locally and in the deanery and diocese – even globally as we think of our partners in the world-wide church.

We currently send two mailings a year specifically to PCC Secretaries if we think there is enough useful information to send. It goes by email with a paper copy to those who prefer to receive it that way. It has a cover sheet explaining who needs to see what and contents list for the clergy so that they are kept in the loop,

Do use the tools that can help you – particularly the People Database with contact info for people in the deanery and diocese, and the diocesan website www.oxford.anglican.org for information about different areas of diocesan work and contact for staff at Diocesan Church House.

Correspondence and Parish Dates

As a minimum the PCC Sec has a role in efficiently responding to correspondence, bringing it to meetings / standing committee in a timely manner, responding in an appropriate manner and filing it carefully.

THANK YOU letters - a short note or card can be greatly appreciated and often gets overlooked – it can give recognition to those who have helped the parish in particular ways and a boost to those who work faithfully in the background.

The PCC Sec can also act as information conduit between different parts of parish life, providing key information for the parish magazine or website. They can do their best to ensure (!) That dates for parish events work with events already planned, and that they are publicized effectively, so that everyone has parish dates well in advance – not just the PCC. It is also good to keep alert to changes legislative and otherwise that the parish needs to be grappling with.

Processing Documentation and keeping overview of processes

- **Sending Data protection forms to Church House Oxford** (after APCM or during the year for new people) except those relating to church wardens whose forms go to your archdeacon. Forms have recently been updated in accordance with the changes in Data Protection (GDPR) which came into force on 25th May 2018. The form may be found on the diocesan website at <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/support-services/parish-support/annual-meeting-electoral-roll-resources/>

- **Finance and Membership Statistical Returns** either on line or by returning the paper forms directly to Church House Oxford or via the Deanery Lay Chairs as agreed locally.
- **CRB** – bringing requirements to the attention of the PCC if you have people with sole/significant involvement with children and young people

Building Relationships and TLC

Offering support to clergy, treasurers, church wardens and others. The PCC Secretary is often in a position to see where things are going wrong and quietly help to build or restore relationships and offer support and encouragement. The PCC Secretary often has a pastoral ministry as well as one of administration.

Parishes vary enormously, both in the size, scale and complexity of parish activity and in the number and skills of their members. The role of the PCC Secretary can vary enormously too, both in response to parish requirements and resources and due to the time, skills and energy levels of the PCC Secretary themselves. The PCC Secretary can be a blessing to a parish or a curse. Try not to take on more than you can handle, and do it as well as you can. Remember that the Church Representation Rules can answer lots of questions and that your colleagues in neighboring parishes and at Church House probably have experience of the rest and will be pleased to help.

Thank you for taking on this important role.

Please remember to notify the diocesan office at Church House Oxford of any change of PCC Secretary as soon as possible. Send to Caroline Todd at:

Email: caroline.todd@oxford.anglican.org

All new office-holders will need to complete form M4 for data protection purposes.

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