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**To all PCC Secretaries**  
(Or Churchwarden or Administrator  
in parishes without a PCC Secretary)

George Colville  
Diocesan Secretary

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## **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS IN 2018**

I am writing to all PCC Secretaries (and in parishes without a PCC Secretary to a Churchwarden or Administrator) as we have reached the time of the year when you will be making arrangements for the annual meeting of parishioners and for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) which should take place before the end of April. If you are no longer in role and do not think you should have received this letter please let me know immediately so that I can send a copy to someone else in your parish.

Full details of the procedures for your APCM including deadlines, timings and notice periods are set out in the Church Representation Rules. Every Parish should have a copy of the Rules, which are available online at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules>

Copies of the latest (2017) edition, published in October 2016, are available from Church House Publishing [www.chpublishing.co.uk](http://www.chpublishing.co.uk) (postal address Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ) at a cost of £9.99 or £9.98 for an electronic version.

The Parish Resources website is a useful tool: all of the relevant forms for the APCM can be downloaded in MS Word and Adobe .pdf formats at:

<http://www.pariahresources.org.uk/pccs/apcms/>

If you are a new PCC Secretary and haven't organised an APCM before the procedure can seem a little daunting but we are here to help: if, having looked through the Rules and visited the Parish Resources website you would like any clarification or advice please contact me or my PA, Mrs Joanne Ridley [joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org) 01928 718834 ext 252, and we will be happy to assist you.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information regarding three of the four matters that must be attended to at these meetings:

1. The Electoral Roll
2. Election of PCC members
3. Appointment of Officers

(Deanery Synods were re-elected in 2017: no new members need be elected this year.)

The fourth matter (the Database update form) is not being sent out at this time as we are reviewing if any changes are needed under the new General Data Protection Regulation. We will contact you again in due course with further information.

## 1. The Electoral Roll

A completely new Electoral Roll having been compiled in 2013, it is only necessary this year for each parish to revise its Roll, with a report on the changes being submitted to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. In accordance with the Church Representation Rules (2(1) to 2(3)), at least fourteen days' notice of the revision must be given, and the revision itself must be completed between fifteen and twenty eight-days before the APCM. To enable any error corrections to be made, a copy of the revised list must then be displayed for no less than fourteen days in the run-up to the APCM.

As in any other year, either the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary or Electoral Roll Officer of the PCC must inform me as Secretary of the Diocesan Synod before 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018 of the number of names on the roll as at the date of the APCM. Every year a significant proportion of Electoral Roll certificates are not returned with the APCM paperwork by the PCC Secretary because someone else has taken responsibility for returning them. **Please can we ask that this year, the PCC Secretary completes the blue Electoral Roll Certificate during the APCM as the number on roll is reported, and retains it to return promptly with the remaining paperwork in the enclosed envelope, rather than allowing another individual to take it away?** This would be a significant help to us in the Diocesan Office. A photocopy of this completed certificate must then be displayed in the parish for at least 14 days. **Please use the certificate we have sent to you rather than a 'homemade' version or the template from Parish Resources, as the one supplied herewith has parish-specific information which we need to properly log and file your return.**

## 2. Election of PCC Members

The procedures for election of PCC Members are set out in the Church Representation Rules 2017.

### *I. Qualification for election to a PCC*

- a. Rule 10(1) sets out the requirements. This means that a lay person must be an actual communicant, aged over 16, and unless they are under 18 have been entered on the electoral roll **for at least six months** before they may be elected to the PCC.

## **II. Number of members of the PCC**

- a. Rule 14(1)(g) concerns the number of elected lay members of the PCC (ie not counting priests, churchwardens and other ex officio members nor co-opted members).
- b. Unless your APCM resolved otherwise last year or before, the PCC should have:
  - i. **Six** lay representatives if there are not more than 50 names on the electoral roll;
  - ii. **Nine** lay representatives if there are not more than 100 names on the electoral roll;
  - iii. A further **three** lay representatives for every hundred (or part thereof) names on the electoral roll up to a maximum of **fifteen** members.

## **III. Term of office of PCC members**

- a. Rule 16 means that (unless the APCM decided last year or before to retain annual terms of office) elected members will hold office for three years, with one third retiring each year.

## **3. Appointment of Officers**

### *Churchwardens*

Churchwardens are chosen at the meeting of the parishioners (which is usually held immediately prior to the APCM and, unlike that meeting, may be attended by all parishioners not just those on the Electoral Roll). The procedure is set out in the Churchwardens Measure 2001. It is a requirement of that Measure that candidates for office as churchwardens must be nominated and seconded in writing in advance of the meeting. Each nomination paper must also include a statement, signed by the person nominated, that (s)he is willing to serve as a churchwarden and is not disqualified from doing so.

The Measure includes a provision defining the maximum period someone may serve as churchwarden. Elections continue to be for a year at a time, but under the current rules someone who has served six consecutive years as churchwarden may not be elected again as warden for the same parish until after a two-year gap. The Measure allows for a meeting of parishioners to decide that the six-year rule should not apply in their parish.

**It is important that elected Churchwardens attend a visitation service to be sworn into their role. If a Churchwarden fails to attend a visitation service it may be difficult to make arrangements to do this at an alternative time. A Churchwarden that is not sworn into post will lose the ability to act as Churchwarden. Please ensure your Churchwardens are aware of this requirement. Details on this year's visitation services are available via our website [www.chester.anglican.org/diocese/archdeacons/visitation-services.php](http://www.chester.anglican.org/diocese/archdeacons/visitation-services.php)**

### *Sidespeople*

Sidespeople should be appointed at the APCM, following Rule 10(2).

### *Other Officers*

The PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer are appointed by the PCC at its first meeting after the APCM in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. It is possible to hold a very short PCC meeting immediately following the APCM at which the only item on the agenda is the appointment of officers. An independent examiner to the PCC (or auditor if appropriate) should be appointed at that meeting if the APCM has not done so.

## After the APCM Meeting

Send the Electoral Roll Certificate and any forthcoming Database Update / Contact Details form back to us in the envelope enclosed herewith, or scan and email them to: [joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org)

Remember that if you use your own C4 (A4 paper sized) envelope you must put a large letter stamp on it so it would be much easier and cheaper to use the envelope provided.

With many thanks for your work as a PCC Secretary.

Yours faithfully

George Colville  
Diocesan Secretary

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## Checklist

Before the annual meeting of parishioners and the APCM you must:

- Publish the notices of the meetings
- Give notice of the Electoral Roll Revision
- Complete the Electoral Roll revision
- Display the revised Electoral Roll for 14 days before the meetings
- Obtain nominations for Church Wardens and PCC members (although PCC members can be nominated at the meeting)

After the meetings you must:

- Return the enclosed blue electoral roll certificate to this office as soon as possible and by 31<sup>st</sup> May, either by post or scanned and emailed
- Return the forthcoming database update form / contact information to this office as soon as possible and by 31<sup>st</sup> May, either by post or scanned and emailed
- Display the results of the elections for 14 days
- Display a copy of the Electoral Roll Certificate for 14 days
- Elect Officers at the first PCC meeting following the APCM