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

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## ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS IN 2020

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 **May**. 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. *Please note, at the end of last year a revised set of rules was published which contains various changes : for example the APCM deadline is one month later than previously. Every Parish should have a copy of the new Rules, so please ensure that you obtain them and are working from the correct version.* If you do not wish to buy a copy of the rules they are available for free online at:

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

Alternatively, copies of the latest (2020) edition, published in late 2019, 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.parishresources.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 Monday – Wednesday), and we will be happy to assist you.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about the following five matters that must be dealt with at these meetings: the revision of the Electoral Roll, the election of PCC members, the appointment of Officers, Database Update Forms and Deanery Synod elections.

## 1. The Electoral Roll

A completely new Electoral Roll having been compiled in 2019, 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 Church Representation Rules 3 to 5, at least fourteen days' notice of the revision must be given, and the revision itself must be completed at least 15 days, but no more than 28 days, before the APCM. To enable any error corrections to be made, a copy of the revised list must then be displayed for at least fourteen days. Very importantly, one of the changes this year is that ONLY names are to be published on any publicly available lists: Church Representation Rule 5(3) states, "The roll as published, and the copy made available for inspection, must include every name entered on the roll but no other personal data."

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 July 2020 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 purple Electoral Roll Certificate supplied herewith during the APCM as the number on roll is reported, and retains it to return promptly with the remaining paperwork in the enclosed envelope?** A photocopy of this completed certificate must then be displayed in the parish for at least 14 days.

## 2. Election of PCC Members

Procedures for electing PCC Members are set out in Part 9 of the Church Representation Rules 2020.

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

Rule M8 (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. Rules M15 (8) and (9) concern 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 no more than 50 names on the electoral roll;
  - ii. **Nine** lay representatives if there are more than 50 but no 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*

Rule M16 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 (found in the Supplementary Material at the end of the Church Representation Rules). 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*

In a change to the rules, ***Sidespeople are no longer to be appointed by the APCM***, (Rule M6 (6)). Instead, they should be appointed by the PCC at its next meeting.

#### *Other Officers*

The Lay Chair, 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.

### 4. Database update forms

I have enclosed a print-out of the information currently held on the Diocese's database in relation to your parish and a green Additional Information sheet. The form should contain a list of all the licensed clergy, Readers, PCC Officers and other church workers in your parish. Our database is used to generate mailings, to create the Year Book and to assist in communications generally. It is therefore of great value if it is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. To this end I would be grateful if as soon as possible after the APCM and by 1 July 2020, you could:

- Note the data protection notice at the beginning of the form and ensure that all those listed are aware of and happy with it. In some cases, individuals request that all or some of their details are omitted from public documents. Any such cases that we currently hold on our database for your parish are listed. Please take the opportunity to review this as well. *Please do not detach the front page from the form.*
- **SIGN and DATE the Data Protection Notice.** We cannot accept a form that is not signed and dated, and will have to follow up on incomplete forms.

- Make any amendments to the officers resulting from the APCM elections in the empty boxes on the right hand side of each page, and correct any typographic or other errors in the entries that are listed. It would be a great help in particular if you could check the accuracy of the e-mail addresses of your clergy and others.
- Ensure that the correct post is listed (for instance an Emeritus Reader may wrongly be listed as Reader or an Associate Vicar as a Curate). A full list of possible posts is given on the bottom of the green sheet. Note that we no longer record Deputy Wardens and you do not need to inform us of any in your parish.
- Add the details of anyone in a parish post that has not been listed, onto the green "Additional Information" sheet (for example if you only had one churchwarden previously but now have two). Once again, please use one of the posts listed on the bottom of that sheet. Please copy the sheet as necessary if you have more than three new individuals to add.

## 5. Election of Deanery Synod members

The APCM must this year elect its lay representatives to the appropriate Deanery Synod for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2023. These members will form the electorate for the summer 2020 General Synod elections which begin in July. Anyone who is currently a Deanery Synod member having been elected as such by your PCC will cease to be so this summer, and if they wish to continue as a member they will need to be re-elected. Please note: anyone who is currently a member of General Synod or Diocesan Synod, or is a Licensed Lay Worker or Licensed Pastoral Worker in your parish is AUTOMATICALLY a member of Deanery Synod and does not need to be counted in the number of lay people you elect.

The number to be elected depends on the number of names on the electoral roll at the 2019 APCM. A table listing all the numbers has been sent to each PCC Secretary already, and is available on our website. Once the representatives have been elected, you should send their names and addresses to the Deanery Synod Secretary or Lay Chair AND send a copy to me at Church House, by 1 July 2020 at the latest. Two copies of a blue form with the correct number of available elected places for your parish are provided in this pack for this purpose and the name and address of the Deanery Synod Secretary or Lay Chair is noted on your blue form).

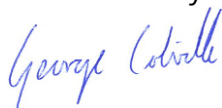
### After the APCM Meeting

Send the Electoral Roll Certificate, Database Update form and Deanery Synod Election Results form back to us in the envelope enclosed herewith (please ensure you add sufficient postage), or scan and email them to: [joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org](mailto:joanne.ridley@chester.anglican.org)

Thank you in advance for your help in ensuring that our records are up-to-date. If there are further changes throughout the year, it would be helpful if you could keep us informed in writing or by e-mail. If anything in this letter is not clear or if you require any further help, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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:

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

After the meetings:

- Return the enclosed purple electoral roll certificate to this office as soon as possible and by 1<sup>st</sup> July, either by post or scanned and emailed
- Return the enclosed blue Deanery Synod Election Results form to this office as soon as possible and by 1<sup>st</sup> July, either by post or scanned and emailed
- Return the database update form to this office as soon as possible and by 1<sup>st</sup> July, 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 and sidespeople at the first PCC meeting following the APCM