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To all Parochial Clergy and PCC Secretaries (or Churchwarden or Administrator in parishes without a PCC Secretary)

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ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS IN 2023

I am writing to all Parochial clergy, 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.

Full details of the procedures for your APCM including deadlines, timings and notice periods are set out in the Church Representation Rules 2022. Every Parish should have a copy of the Rules, so please ensure that you obtain them and are working from the most recent version. If you do not wish to buy a copy, the rules are available for free online at:

[Church Representation Rules online - contents | The Church of England](#)

Alternatively, copies of the latest (2022) edition, are available from Church House Publishing [CH Publishing CRR 2022](#) (postal address Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ) or [Amazon CRR 2022](#)

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: [APCMs - Parish Resources](#)

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 ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org and we will be happy to assist you.

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

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 recent changes was 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."

The chair, vice-chair, secretary or electoral roll officer of a PCC must, no later than 1 July in each year, give the Secretary of the Diocesan Synod written notification of the number of names there are on the roll of the parish as at the date of the annual parochial church meeting. This can be done by either emailing er@chester.anglican.org – please see enclosed document – or sending a suitable written notification to Church House. Please be aware that a certificate of the Electoral Roll is no longer needed, and an email suffices.

2. Election of PCC Members

Procedures for electing PCC Members are set out in Part 9 of the Church Representation Rules 2022.

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 will be available via our website

www.chester.anglican.org/diocese/archdeacons/visitation-services.php

Please be aware that it is highly encouraged by Bishop Julie, that every Churchwarden does the **Safeguarding Leadership Training**. For those who are in an interregnum it is a requirement.

[Chester Diocese - Safeguarding Training](#)

For further information please contact: safeguarding@chester.anglican.org clearly marked "Training" in the heading of the email.

Sidespeople

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, PCC 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.

4. Database update forms and Data Protection Notice

Usually, we would send a database update form with this letter so the Diocesan Database can be updated. This year however it will be done digitally. We will contact those who have been selected to have access to the Contact Management System (CMS) to identify the person who will be the auditor for the parish.

Training sessions on CMS and more specifically on how to update CMS electronically will be offered throughout June and July 2023 across the Diocese, following the Archdeacons' visitations. These sessions will also offer a possibility to ask questions for those who will access CMS on behalf of the parish. More information on this will follow in the next weeks.

5. Casual Vacancies for parochial representatives on Deanery Synod

The APCM must this year elect its lay representatives to the appropriate Deanery Synod for the period 1st July 2023 to 30th June 2026. 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 Layworker 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 2022 APCM. A table listing all the numbers has been sent to each PCC Secretary already, and is available on our website here: [Numbers for Deanery Synod 2023](#)
Furthermore, please also see the attached document.

Once the representatives have been elected, you should send their names and addresses to the Deanery Synod Secretary or Lay Chair by 1st July 2023 at the latest.

After the APCM Meeting

Send the Electoral Roll number preferably by email to: er@chester.anglican.org as laid out in the attached document, or as soon as you have that number.

Thank you in advance for your help with this. 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:

- Email to er@chester.anglican.org or send by post the number of people on the electoral roll as soon as possible and by 1 July 2023
- Display the results of the elections for 14 days
- Elect Officers and sidespeople at the first PCC meeting following the APCM