

The role, responsibilities, duties and tasks of the Church Council

There is a useful (and very detailed) resource to help PCCs in England dealing with financial matters provided by the central C of E structures which is available at <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/pccs/>

There is also (on the C of E website) a very long document called 'PCC Accountability Guide.' It seems to deal essentially with financial matters <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/pcc-accountability-guide>

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It is interesting to realise that in the part of the Church of England on the off shore island that the roles, duties etc of the PCC have formal legal status. This is because in England the Church of England is legally an 'established' church. The key measures concerned are the *Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956* and *Synodical Government Measure 1969*. So, for example, 'Functions of Parochial Church Councils' on the gov.uk website, is formally part of UK law.

Functions of Parochial Church Councils.

- (1) It shall be the duty of the incumbent and the parochial church council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish.
- (2) The functions of parochial church councils shall include—
 - (a) co-operation with the incumbent in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical ;
 - (b) the consideration and discussions of matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest, but not the declaration of the doctrine of the Church on any question ;
 - (c) making known and putting into effect any provision made by the diocesan synod or the deanery synod, but without prejudice to the powers of the council on any particular matter;
 - (d) giving advice to the diocesan synod and the deanery synod on any matter referred to the council ;
 - (e) raising such matters as the council consider appropriate with the diocesan synod or deanery synod.
- (3) In the exercise of its functions the parochial church council shall take into consideration any expression of opinion by any parochial church meeting.”.

Although there are a few differences this is clearly the basis of the information about Chaplaincy Church Councils in the Diocese of Europe which can be found as part of the Constitution of the Diocese on the diocesan website. There is information about membership, eligibility, as well as roles. For the sake of completeness below is the complete text of the relevant section of the Diocesan Constitution.

Chaplaincy church councils

30 (a) There shall be a chaplaincy church council established for each chaplaincy which shall consist of —

(i) the chaplain who shall be chairman of the council ex officio save as may be permitted under paragraph 43(d) of this *Constitution*;

(ii) all other clerks in Holy Orders licensed to the chaplaincy;

(iii) any deaconess or lay worker licensed to the chaplaincy;

(iv) the churchwardens as referred to in paragraph 31 of this *Constitution*;

(v) all persons whose names are on the electoral roll of the chaplaincy and who are lay members of any deanery synod, archdeaconry synod, Diocesan Synod or the General Synod;

(vi) such, if any, of the licensed readers whose names are on the electoral roll of the chaplaincy, as the annual meeting may determine;

(vii) such numbers of representatives of the laity as the annual meeting of the chaplaincy may decide, and so that the number determined may be altered from time to time by a resolution passed at any annual meeting, but such resolution shall not take effect before the next ensuing annual meeting; and

(viii) co-opted members, if the council so decides, not exceeding in number one-fifth of the representatives elected under subparagraph (1)(vii) above, being either clerks in Holy Orders or actual lay communicants of sixteen years of age or upwards. The term of office of a co-opted member shall be until the conclusion of the next annual meeting: but without prejudice to his being co-opted on subsequent occasions for a similar term, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the *CRR*.

(b) The representatives of the laity referred to in sub-paragraphs (a)(vii) above shall be persons whose names are entered on the roll of the chaplaincy, are of sixteen years or upwards and are actual communicants as defined in rule 54(1) of the *CRR* except that the archdeacon may dispense from this last requirement provided at least two-thirds of the members of the council are actual communicants. Where less than two-thirds of the members would be actual communicants the non-communicants shall not be elected except with the consent of the diocesan Bishop.

(c)(i) A lay member of the council shall be elected as vice-chairman of the council.

(ii) The council shall appoint one of their number to act as secretary of the council. If no member is appointed so to act the council shall appoint some other fit person with such remuneration (if any) as they shall think fit. The secretary shall have charge of all documents relating to the current business of the council except that, unless he is the electoral roll officer, he shall not have charge of the roll. He shall be responsible for keeping the minutes, shall record all resolutions passed by the council and shall keep the secretary of the Diocesan Synod and any archdeaconry or deanery synod informed as to his name and address.

(iii) The council may appoint one or more of their number to act as treasurer solely or jointly. Failing such appointment, the office of treasurer shall be discharged by some other fit person or jointly by the churchwardens. No remuneration shall be paid to any person in respect of his appointment as treasurer.

(d) It shall be the duty of the chaplain and the council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the chaplaincy.

(e) The functions of the council shall include —

(i) co-operation, with the chaplain, in promoting in the chaplaincy the whole mission of the Church;

(ii) the consideration and discussion of matters concerning the Church of England or any other matters of religious or public interest, but not the declaration of the doctrine of the Church on any question;

(iii) making known and putting into effect any provision made by the Diocesan Synod, the archdeaconry synod or the deanery synod, but without prejudice to the powers of the council on any particular matter;

(iv) administering the financial affairs of the chaplaincy including the collection and administration of all moneys raised for purposes of the chaplaincy and the keeping of accounts in relation to such affairs and moneys;

(v) the care, maintenance, preservation and insurance of the fabric and of the goods and ornaments of the church unless this duty has been otherwise devolved;

(vi) giving advice to the Diocesan Synod, the archdeaconry synod or the deanery synod on any matter referred to the council;

(vii) raising such matters as the council consider appropriate with the Diocesan Synod, the archdeaconry synod or the deanery synod.

(f) In the exercise of its functions the council shall take into consideration any expression of opinion by any annual, special or extraordinary church meeting of the chaplaincy.