



Saint Thomas of Canterbury Roman Catholic Church

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## ST THOMAS' CHURCH - PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

### Terms of Reference

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is a leadership group through which Priests and people work together in partnership to strive to discern the Holy Spirit among God's people in the Parish and furthering the mission of Christ in Canterbury. It does this through building up a vibrant Christian community that is rooted in Baptism and marked by its faith, worship and service.

To fulfil its role, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) needs to be a representative body in which the diversity of the Parish community is reflected. It is a means whereby all parishioners can take part in discussions that relate to the Parish, its mission and its future development.

### Membership

The Council should comprise twelve members as follows:

- The Parish Priest, who shall (in accordance with the Code of Canon Law 536) be President of the Council.
- The Assistant Priest (ex-officio member of the PPC).
- The Deacon.
- The Head Teacher of St Thomas' Primary School (or his / her representative).
- Eight members elected from the Parish at large, representing, as much as possible, the diversity of the Parish (age, sex, ethnic background), and appointed by the Parish Priest. Elected members should serve for a minimum of three years. After three consecutive years of service, members may put themselves forward for nomination (at the meeting before the AGM) for a further three-year term, subject to the approval of the Parish Priest. People should not serve more than two consecutive terms of membership but can stand at a later date.

### Officers

The Officers of the Council will, in addition to the role of President, be:

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- Secretary

These will be elected annually at the first meeting after the AGM, at which point the term of office will begin. The President of the Parish Pastoral Council will open this meeting and organise the election, at which point the meeting will be handed over to the new Chairman. The outgoing officers will relinquish their posts at the closure of the AGM.





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The Chair and the Secretary shall be elected from and by the lay members of the PPC and for a one-year term of office. The election of a Chair and Secretary will take place at the first meeting of the PPC after the AGM.

The Chair is to chair meetings when delegated to do so by the President and is to assist the President in the preparation of the agenda for meetings.

The Secretary takes minutes of the meetings and, after approval by the President and the Chairperson, distributes them to PPC members. The President, in consultation with the Chairperson, will prepare a note of the meeting for presentation to the Parish.

## Vacancies

In the case of the resignation of an elected member, the Parish Council continues until the next AGM when the election of new elected members takes place as usual.

In the case of the resignation of an appointed member, the President may choose whether or not to appoint a new appointed member, with the appointment running until the end of the resigning member's period of office.

## Meetings and Council Business

The Parish Pastoral Council shall meet at least four times a year.

- (a) A full Parish Meeting (AGM) will be held annually to receive and discuss a report from the Council and to make recommendations for further action.
- (b) There will be a full meeting of the Council within two weeks of the AGM, and as frequently as is deemed necessary throughout the rest of the year.
- (c) The normal quorum for a meeting will be half of the Council membership, including at least one officer.
- (d) Council meetings will not be open to casual attendance by parishioners at large.
- (e) An agenda for a meeting will be circulated to all members one week before the meeting, and minutes within two weeks of the said meeting.
- (f) Parishioners will be encouraged to submit items to be discussed through any members of the Council.
- (g) Full minutes of meetings will be made available to all who wish to see them (subject to any confidential items being removed first). A summary of the proceedings and recommendations will be posted in the narthex and a short summary of the minutes should be published in the newsletter.





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- (h) The Council will discuss reports from its Working Groups and with appropriate notice, discuss any items of Parish business put up by members of the Council or other parishioners.
- (i) Members who may be absent from a vital meeting may vote by proxy through the Chairman or Secretary (this must be done in writing or by email, and clearly state the item from the agenda concerned). If members do not respond before the meeting, their vote will be counted as null and void.

## Changes to the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference can only be changed with a majority vote of the whole Council. Members may vote by proxy (see above) if they are unable to attend the meeting. However, the final decision on any changes to be made rests with the President of the Council.

## Other Parish Committees

The Parish Finance Committee is a separate body (required by Canon Law and appointed by the Parish Priest) which, together with the Parish Priest, has responsibility for the financial management of Parish resources.

The Parish Priest, who is a standing member of the Finance Committee, will ensure communication between the two committees is facilitated as necessary.

