
Authorisation and responsibility

District Church Councils are set up by the Instrument of the Parish of Witney (the Instrument), which states that “For each District Church there shall be a District Church Council.” Section 10 of the Instrument denotes the conditions for exceptions.

The Instrument also states: “Each District Church Council shall be responsible, by delegation of the Parochial Church Council, for the day to day life and running of its particular church, save that it may not determine any matter by law reserved to the Parochial Church Council.”

Membership

This is laid down in the Instrument. (Sections 11-13).

Chairing

As stated in the Instrument, “each District Church Council shall be chaired by the Rector (or by a Team Vicar at the Rector’s request) and shall elect from among its lay members a Vice-Chair.

If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair will be present at a meeting, the members shall elect one of their numbers to chair that meeting.

Frequency of meetings

This is as laid down by the PCC, but is normally five times a year.

Additional meetings

May be held at the request of the Rector/chair/vice-chair.

Quorum and agenda

No business of the DCC shall be transacted at any meeting of the council unless at least one-third of the members are present thereat and no business which is not specified in the agenda shall be transacted at any meeting except by the consent of three-quarters of the members present at the meeting.

District Secretary and Treasurer

At the first meeting following the Annual District Church Meeting, the DCC elects a Secretary and a Treasurer.

The secretary has charge of all documents relating to the current business of the DCC. He/she is responsible for publishing the agenda and notice of any meeting to the members, after agreement with the Chair; for keeping the minutes and recording all resolutions passed by the council; and for circulating the minutes to the members, PCC Secretary and the Parish Administrator.

The PCC secretary should receive electronic copies of draft minutes (agreed as accurate by those present at the meeting) within 14 days of the DCC meeting, and at least 8 days before a PCC meeting where possible. Hard copies of approved minutes are passed to the PCC secretary for archiving.

The responsibilities of the Treasurer are laid down in The Financial Policy and Procedures Document (reviewed 2017) Their role is to:

- Ensure that all payments are properly authorised and within the approved budget for the DCC, and keep records to account for this expenditure (receipts and/or invoices).
- Ensure, in conjunction with the churchwardens, that the procedures set by the Parish Treasurer are followed for the counting and banking of collections and other monies received by the DCC, and that accurate details are kept of the monies received, particularly any restrictions on its use.

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- Maintain a day book recording income and expenditure, the allocation of money between specific funds, and reconcile with bank statements on a regular basis.
 - Prepare an annual budget (as section 4 above) to be approved by the DCC and then submitted to the Parish Treasurer.
 - Ensure that costs associated with items of work arising from the quinquennial inspection are included on the asset management plan for each church, and in the annual DCC budget.
 - Prepare reports for each meeting of the DCC to monitor performance against the budget and then submit these reports to the Parish Treasurer with the actions proposed to address any deviances from the budget.
 - Prepare the end of the year report to be approved by the DCC and then submitted to the Parish Treasurer for incorporation into the PCC Annual Report and Accounts.

Reporting mechanism

The DCC shall submit, through its Deputy Churchwardens, a written report of its activities to each PCC meeting. This shall include all resolutions requiring PCC approval.

The District Treasurer shall copy to the Parish Treasurer his/her report made to each DCC meeting within 48 hours of the DCC meeting.

Function and delegated responsibility

The DCC is responsible to the PCC for:

Finance

- approving its annual budget which is submitted to them by the District Treasurer, and referring this to the Parish Treasurer for incorporation in the Parish Budget;
- receiving from the District Treasurer at each meeting a financial report, monitoring performance against the budget, and authorising the submission of this report to the Parish Treasurer;
- reporting at once to the Parish Treasurer any unforeseen events that make it likely that the budget will not be met;
- drawing up a plan for fund raising that will meet what is laid down in the Budget;
- seeking advance approval from the PCC for any single expenditure over £1k

Resources

- ensuring the care, maintenance and preservation of the fabric of the church, its goods and ornaments, and where appropriate, the churchyard, including the implementation of any recommendations of the most recent quinquennial report;
- drawing up an Asset Management plan for the District Church and submitting it to the PCC for incorporation into the Parish Asset Management Plan on an annual basis;
- providing annual documents for Risk Assessments and Health and Safety requirements.

Worship

- co-operating with the Rector in the provision of worship at the District Church, advising him/her in planning such worship, and supporting him/her in its delivery;

Terms of Reference of a District Council

Pastoral

- co-operating with the Rector and the Ministry Team in the pastoral care of the members of the District;

Mission

- drawing up and implementing a Mission Plan for the District church, in conformity with the Mission Plan for the whole Parish.

Notes

1. The Charities Act 1993 and the PCC 3rd Edition 2006: 1.26 While certain responsibilities can be passed down from the PCC to DCCs, this is not the case with financial responsibility which must by law stay with the PCC. DCCs cannot hold assets, they do not have body corporate status and they should not be taking financial decisions and signing contracts. Of course the PCC can decide that DCCs can operate within an agreed budget but the PCC is the only legal entity that is able to enter into a contract.

2. Pastoral Scheme I, 8.1.a authorises the Bishop by the Instrument to provide for the election by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of a District Church Council for any district (Pastoral Measure Code of Practice Annex 4, 2009 Sch. 3, paras. 4.2).

3. Church Representation Rules 18.3. The Parochial Church Council may by resolution delegate to a District Church Council such of its functions as it shall see fit but not including:

- i) the production of the financial statement of the Parish;
- ii) as an interested party under Part 1 of the Pastoral Measure 1983;
- iii) under Part II of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

Adopted by the PCC 8 November 2017

Signed *Toby Wright*

Counter-signed *Josie Holmes*

Review date: September 2022