
WHAT IS THE CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL?

Why have one?

It is your parish church's register of electors; it is the list of those qualified to attend and: to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting where the elections take place for

- a/ the parochial church council,
- b/ the parish's representatives on the deanery synod.*

Any person entitled to attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting may raise any question of parochial or general church interest.

Renewal of the electoral roll takes place in 1996 and every 6 years thereafter. In a year of renewal no names are carried over from the old roll and everyone must make a new application to be included on the new roll,

What difference does it make?

By enrolling you become a voting member of the Church of England and so help to ensure that all the synodical councils of the Church - the parochial church council, the deanery synod, the diocesan synod, and the General Synod - are fully representative of its members.

Synodical government gives an opportunity for partnership between bishops, Clergy, and laity in the life of the Church:

First, the system is intended to enable church people at every level to be in touch with the Church as a whole and to play their part in decision making.

Secondly the system is intended to ensure that the laity have their place in every aspect of church life, including its doctrine and services.

PART II PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS AND COUNCILS

ANNUAL MEETINGS

6. (1) In every parish there shall be held not later than the 30th April in each year the annual parochial church meeting (hereafter in these rules referred to as 'the annual meeting').

(2) All lay persons whose names are entered on the roll of the parish shall be entitled to attend the annual meeting and to take part in its proceedings, and no other lay person shall be so entitled.

(3) A clerk in Holy Orders shall be entitled to attend the annual meeting of the parish and take part in its proceedings –

(a) if he is either beneficed in or licensed to the parish or any other parish in the area of the benefice to which the parish belongs; or

(b) if he is resident in the parish and is not beneficed in or licensed to any other parish; or

(c) if he is not resident in the parish and is not beneficed or licensed to any other parish, the parochial church council with the concurrence of the minister has declared him to be an habitual worshipper in the parish, such declaration being effective until the conclusion of the annual meeting in the year in which a new roll is prepared under rule 2 or his ceasing to be an habitual worshipper in the parish whichever is the earlier, but without prejudice to a renewal of such declaration; or

(d) if he is a co-opted member of the parochial church council in accordance with rule 14(1)(h).

(4) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) and (3) of this rule –

(a) all the members of the team of a team ministry shall be entitled to attend, and take part in the proceedings of, the annual meeting of the parish or each of the parishes in the area of the benefice for which the team ministry is established, and where the area of a group ministry includes the area of a benefice for which a team ministry is established, all the vicars in that ministry shall be entitled to attend, and take part in the proceedings of, the annual meeting of each of the other parishes in the area for which the group ministry is established;

(b) all the incumbents and priests in charge in a group ministry shall be entitled to attend, and take part in the proceedings of, the annual meeting of each of the parishes in the area for which the group ministry is established.

(5) Where two or more benefices are held in plurality and a team ministry is, or is to be, established for the area of one those benefices, then, if a pastoral scheme provides for extending the operation of the team ministry, so

long as the plurality continues, to the area of any other benefice so held, paragraph (4) of this rule shall have effect as if the references to the area of the benefice were references to the combined area of the benefices concerned.

CONVENING OF MEETING

7. (1) The annual meeting shall be convened by the minister of the parish by a notice in the form set out in section 4 of Appendix I to these rules affixed on or near to the principal door of every church in the parish, and every building licensed for public worship in the parish, for a period including the last two Sundays before the day of the meeting.

(2) The annual meeting shall be held at such place on such date and at such hour as shall be directed by the previous annual meeting, or by the parochial church council (which may vary any direction given by a previous annual meeting) or in the absence of any such direction as shall be appointed by the minister.

(3) During the vacancy of the benefice or curacy or when the minister is absent or incapacitated by illness or any other cause, the vice-chairman of the parochial church council, or if there is no vice-chairman, or if he is unable or unwilling to act, the secretary of or some other person appointed by that council shall have all the powers vested in the minister under this rule.

(4) The annual meeting shall be held at a place within the parish unless the parochial church council decide otherwise.

(5) The minister of a new parish created by a pastoral scheme, or, in the absence of the minister, a person appointed by the bishop, shall as soon as possible after the scheme comes into operation convene a special parochial church meeting, and, subject to paragraph (6) of this rule, the provisions of these rules relating to the convening and conduct of the annual meeting shall apply to a special meeting convened under this paragraph.

(6) A special meeting so convened and held in the month of November or the month of December may, if the meeting so resolves, be for all purposes under these rules the annual meeting for the succeeding year, and a special meeting so convened shall in any event be for all such purposes the annual meeting for the year in which it is so convened and held.

CHAIRMAN

8. (1) The minister, if present, or, if he is not present, the vice-chairman of the parochial church council, or, subject to paragraph (2) of this rule, if he also is not present, a chairman chosen by the annual meeting shall preside thereat.

APPENDIX II

Rule 15

GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS

Officers of the Council

1. (a) The minister of the parish shall be chairman of the parochial church council (hereinafter referred to as 'the council').
- (b) A lay member of the council shall be elected as vice-chairman of the council.
- (c) During the vacancy of the benefice or when the chairman is incapacitated by absence or illness or any other cause or when the minister invites him to do so the vice-chairman of the council shall act as chairman and have all the powers vested in the chairman.
- (d) The council may 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 deanery synod informed as to his name and address.
- (e) 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 such of the churchwardens as are members of the council, or, if there is only one such churchwarden, by the churchwarden solely. No remuneration shall be paid to any person in respect of his appointment as treasurer.
- (f) The council shall appoint an electoral roll officer, who may but need not be a member of the council and may be the secretary and if he is not a member may pay to him such remuneration as it shall think fit. He shall have charge of the roll.
- (g) If an independent examiner or auditor to the Council is not appointed by the annual meeting or if an independent examiner or auditor appointed by the annual meeting is unable or unwilling to act, an independent examiner or auditor (who shall not be a member of the council) shall be appointed by the council for a term of office ending at the close of the next annual meeting. The remuneration (if any) of the independent examiner or auditor shall be paid by the council.
- (h) For the purposes of this paragraph, where a special cure of souls in respect of a parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry, or

where there has been no such assignment but a special responsibility for pastoral care in respect of the parish has been assigned to a member of the team under section 20(8A) of the Pastoral Measure 1983, that vicar or that member, as the case may be, shall be deemed to be the minister unless incapacitated by absence or illness or any other cause, in which case the rector in the team ministry shall be deemed to be the minister.

Meetings of Council

2. The council shall hold not less than four meetings in each year. Meetings shall be convened by the chairman and if not more than four meetings are held they shall be at quarterly intervals so far as possible.

Power to Call Meetings

3. The chairman may at any time convene a meeting of the council. If he refuses or neglects to do so within seven days after a requisition for that purpose signed by not less than one-third of the members of the council has been presented to him those members may forthwith convene a meeting.

Notices Relating to Meetings

4. (a) Except as provided in paragraph 8 of this Appendix, at least ten clear days before any meeting of the council notice thereof specifying the time and place of the intended meeting and signed by or on behalf of the chairman of the council or the persons convening the meeting shall be posted at or near the principal door of every church, or building licensed for public worship in the parish.
- (b) Not less than seven days before the meeting a notice thereof specifying the time and place of the meeting signed by or on behalf of the secretary shall be posted or delivered to every member of the council. Such notice shall contain the agenda of the meeting including any motion or other business proposed by any member of the council of which notice has been received by the secretary. The notice required by this sub-paragraph shall not be required for a council meeting immediately following the annual parochial church meeting being a council meeting which has been called solely for the purpose of appointing or electing any officers of the council or the members of the standing committee thereof provided that the notice required by sub-paragraph (a) hereof has been given.
- (c) If for some good and sufficient reason the chairman, vice-chairman and secretary, or any two of them, consider that a convened meeting should be postponed, notice shall be given to every member of the council specifying a reconvened time and place within fourteen days of the postponed meeting.

Section 4

Rule 7(1)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Parish of

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held in.....

.....

on..... day of..... at.....

For the election of Parochial representatives of the laity as follows –

*To the Deanery Synod..... representatives.

To the Parochial Church Council..... representatives.

For the appointment of Sidesmen and the Independent Examiner or Auditor.

For the consideration of:

(a) A Report on changes in the roll since the last annual parochial church meeting;

(b) An Annual Report on the proceedings of the parochial church council and the activities of the parish generally;

(c) The Financial Statements of the Council for the year ending on the 31st December immediately preceding the meeting audited or independently examined;

(d) A Report upon the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church or churches of the parish;

(e) A Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod; and other matters of parochial or general Church interest.

NOTES

1. All persons whose names are entered upon the Church Electoral Roll of the parish (and such persons only) are entitled to vote at the election of parochial representatives of the laity.

2. Subject to the provisions of rule 14(3)(c), a person is qualified to be elected a parochial representative of the laity if –

(a) his name is entered on the Church Electoral Roll of the parish;

(b) he is an actual communicant which means that he has received Communion according to the use of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England at least three times during the twelve months preceding the date of the election; and

(c) he is of eighteen years or upwards (for election to the deanery synod) or of sixteen years or upwards (for election to the parochial church council).

3. Any person whose name is on the electoral roll may be appointed as a sidesman.

4. **A resolution is in operation in this parish which provides that any person entitled to vote in the elections of parochial representatives of the laity to the parochial church council or to the deanery synod or to both that council and that synod may make application on the appropriate form to the undersigned for a postal vote. The completed form must be received before the commencement of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

Signed

†Minister of the parish.

*Include where applicable.

**This paragraph should be deleted if no resolution for postal voting is in operation in the parish.

†Or 'Vice-Chairman of the Parochial Church Council' as the case may be (see rule 7(3) of the Church Representation Rules).

NOTE: In this notice 'parish' means an ecclesiastical parish.

Section 4A

Rule 11(2)

APPLICATION FOR POSTAL VOTE

Parish of

I (full Christian name and surname)

of (full postal address)

declare that my name is entered on the church electoral roll of the above parish and I hereby make application for a postal vote in any elections to which postal voting applies to be held at the forthcoming annual parochial church meeting for the parish. The voting paper should be sent or delivered to me at the above address OR* at the following address

.....

Dated..... 199...

Signed

*Delete as appropriate.