**Role Description: PCC Member**

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by law. It is a charity, whether or not it is required to register with the Charity Commission. Its lay and ordained members, some of whom are elected and some of whom serve ex officio, are charitable trustees and jointly accountable for the Council’s decisions.

Central to the PCC’s statutory role is co-operation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, social, and ecumenical. The Council is responsible for the financial affairs of the church, for the maintenance and insurance of the church building, for health and safety in church and churchyard, and for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It is the duty of the minister and PCC to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish. PCCs function most effectively when working together as a team, and all members of the PCC have the right to be kept aware of relevant issues in church life and to participate fully in all decisions made in the Council’s name.

**Duties/Responsibilities**

* Elect a Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer and appoint a Standing Committee
* Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for public worship and provide opportunities for people of all ages to meet for prayer and worship
* Develop, and maintain, a Mission Action Plan (MAP), review the life of the church and identify mission opportunities
* Support their clergy, prayerfully and personally
* Maintain, and where appropriate develop, the church building, churchyard, and other property for which the PCC is responsible
* Take the lead in demonstrating pastoral care to all who live in the community, whether members of the church or not
* Serve as the trustee body of a charity and take corporate responsibility for managing the church’s finances, ensuring that all funds are properly accounted for, the books properly maintained, and the PCC annual accounts inspected or audited and formally approved by the PCC, prior to the APCM
* Meet at least four times a year as required by law.

**Chair (named contact for support and resolution of any difficulties):**

The Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge or in his or her absence, the elected lay Vice Chair.

**Checks Required Prior to Appointment**

* As a Trustee of a charity supporting work with children and vulnerable adults, a PCC member is eligible for an Enhanced DBS check with the Child and Adult workforces. (see note 1 below).
* PCC members must have signed the personal declaration that they are not disqualified from standing for this office due to being included on a Barred List (within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006) or having been convicted of an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

**Safeguarding Responsibilities**

The Incumbent and PCC have a duty of care to ensure the well-being of the vulnerable in the church community. They should

* adopt and implement the House of Bishops’ policies on Safeguarding and a Parish Policy and Procedures on safeguarding children and adults who may be vulnerable. Multi-parish benefices may adopt one Policy and Procedure for the Benefice. (Legal responsibility continues to rest with PCC of the individual parish).
* appoint a Parish Safeguarding Representative (the ‘designated person’ with special responsibility for safeguarding children and adults), to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures. In multi-parish benefices a Safeguarding Rep may act for more than one parish.
* ensure that the Parish Safeguarding Rep and anyone having regular contact with children or vulnerable adults is appointed according to Safer Recruitment guidelines, is trained and supported, and provided with a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and codes of practice for church workers/volunteers.
* deal promptly with allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the Disclosures and Allegations policy in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
* display the Diocesan and Parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the contact details of the Parish Safeguarding Rep on church premises and on the church website, with a link to this material on the website’s front page.
* ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
* ensure that information about all safeguarding matters is securely stored during a vacancy before being passed on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent should give the information to the Parish Safeguarding Rep who will inform the new incumbent when he or she takes up the post.
* ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children or vulnerable adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
* review the implementation of the safeguarding children and adults policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually.

**Safeguarding ‘Dos & Don’ts’**

*Protecting others and protecting yourself*

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| **Do** | **Don’t** |
| * In accordance with policy and guidance, report all concerns about the safety or well-being of an individual to:-   + the Parish Safeguarding Representative   + the Diocesan Safeguarding Team   + the Police (where there is an immediate risk of harm to a person)   whichever is appropriate to the  circumstances.   * Carry out a personal risk assessment for lone working * Keep a written record of all incidents or disclosures (signed and dated) | * Offer confidentiality when you have a duty to report all concerns for safety * Investigate disclosures; simply get clarification of details and report the information shared |

**Note 1:** The Diocese of Exeter takes the position that all churches either currently do or potentially could sponsor services aimed at children and/or vulnerable adults, whether such children or adults are regularly in attendance or not, and therefore consider that all trustees of the PCC (i.e. full PCC members) are eligible for a DBS check.

The current guidance [2016] does not state that every eligible person must apply (this is different from qualifying roles for people working directly with children or vulnerable adults; they have to apply). There is however a minimum expectation that the PCC will identify a reasonable number of its members to be checked given the nature of the activities it undertakes and, as a minimum that ought to include the churchwardens and the person on the PCC with the lead responsibility for safeguarding.

The Charity Commission recommends that trustees always obtain a criminal record check when eligible to do so as it an important tool in ensuring that the person is suitable to act as a trustee. It is also likely that at some point in the future, the Church of England will require DBS checks for all PCC members. In the light of this, the Diocese of Exeter recommends that PCCs should be moving towards DBS checks for all PCC members (both existing and newly elected members).