

Working Together as a Parish Pastoral Council - Framework

The Corpus Christi and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is a consultative and advisory body that exists to support the Parish Priest with regard to the pastoral life of the parish, in the context of the Archdiocese of Birmingham's Diocesan Vision [‘To be a Catholic diocese which is faithful to the mission entrusted to us by Jesus Christ, full of missionary disciples who work together co-responsibly in vibrant communities of faith, joyful in their service of God and neighbour.’ This vision identifies a number of areas of focus: evangelisation and formation, liturgy and worship; social outreach, co-responsibility and children & families].

The PPC is synodal (it journeys together) and has the task of investigating the pastoral reality, to reflect on it, to share insights and to suggest actions for the benefit of the parish. By developing the PPC, the Priest acknowledges the wisdom of his parishioners and shares with them, co-responsibly¹, the task of investigating, considering and reflecting upon any pastoral matters relating to the life of the parish.

It is essential that PPC meetings occur in the context of prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit, in pursuit of the Common Good.

1. Important and specific aims of the Parish Pastoral Council are:

- i. To act as a sounding board for the Parish Priest, witnessing to the presence of Christ in the parish community
- ii. To seek out and respond to the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of parishioners, so as to inform priorities and goals
- iii. To keep abreast of initiatives within the wider Church (e.g. the Deanery and Diocese) and to support their implementation at parish level
- iv. To encourage and support the good work of existing and new groups in the parish, strengthening appropriate networks.
- v. To plan for the future of the parish (e.g. by developing and reviewing a statement of its Vision and Mission – reviewed every five years), setting long-term and short-term pastoral goals for the parish in a Pastoral Plan, informed by the Diocesan Vision.
- vi. To liaise with the Finance Committee to ensure effective collaboration and that important financial decisions are made in the best interests of the parish.

2. Membership of the Parish Pastoral Council

The membership of the Council will be decided by the Parish Priest, taking account of any recommendations from parishioners, and will include:

- i. **The Parish Priest** – ex officio (by virtue of office held)

a. ¹ Co-responsibility – for more information see <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/our-vision-co-responsibility#:~:text=Co%2Dresponsibility%20%2D%20bringing%20people%20closer,Church%20in%20the%20current%20environment>. Including the downloadable document ‘Co-responsibility in Unfolding God’s Plan’

- ii. **Twelve parishioners, who are regular attenders at mass in the parish.** Up to three additional parishioners may be co-opted, for periods agreed by the Council, from time to time. It is important that all members of the PPC develop a clear sense of the broader needs of the parish. They also need the ability to think strategically and to act impartially, in the best interests of all parishioners, as well as having the time to commit to attending regular meetings.
- iii. **Chairperson & Secretary** – the PPC may elect a chairperson and a secretary.
- iv. **Term of office of members** – normally 3 years. Members may step down from the Council by tendering their resignation in writing to the Secretary (where one is appointed), or to the Parish Priest.
- v. **Meetings** - will normally be held on a quarterly basis. Exceptionally, a meeting may be called at the request of six or more members of the PPC.
 - a. To be quorate a meeting must have six members of the Council present, including the Parish Priest (six members in total).
 - b. The Council may also hold an annual planning and recollection half day/day.
 - c. An annual Parish Forum, which all parishioners will be encouraged to attend, may also be held.
- vi. **Decision making** - will be undertaken co-responsibly within the PPC and normally be by majority vote. The Parish Priest bears ultimate responsibility for all decisions. Where appropriate, between meetings, follow up actions and decisions may be agreed by correspondence, ratified by the Parish Priest, and recorded at the next meeting of the PPC.
- vii. **Non-attendance at meetings** - members who miss three consecutive meetings, without good reason, may be asked to stand down. Any apologies should be submitted prior to a meeting.
- viii. **Agendas & Minutes** - An agenda will be circulated in advance of each meeting and brief minutes of meetings, with agreed action points, will be recorded and made available to parishioners after meetings. Normally within 14 days of a meeting.

Approved by PPC

Date: 9th September 2023