

Email voting by PCCs

The conduct of business by PCCs is governed by the Church Representation Rules. They do not allow PCCs to conduct business by email; meetings must be held instead. However, PCCs are allowed to vary the rules if they have the consent of the Diocesan Synod. On 14 May 2016 the Diocesan Synod delegated its power to consent to variations to the Bishop's Council.

On 18 July 2019, the Bishop's Council granted permission to all PCCs in the Diocese to adopt the addition to the Church Representation Rules set out below, following a successful three year trial. This permission is not time limited, and it is no longer necessary to inform Church House Hove that the addition has been adopted. This addition allows PCCs to make a limited number of urgent decisions by email, but with careful safeguards to ensure that the majority of business continues to be discussed at a full PCC meeting with the opportunity for debate.

- A maximum of ten items of business a year can be conducted by email.
- Only urgent business can be conducted by email.
- Any one PCC member can require the business to be transacted at a meeting instead, either by saying so, or by voting against the proposal.
- The proposal can only be approved by the PCC if *either* at least 72 hours' notice has been given and at least 60% of the members of the PCC have voted in favour and no-one has objected at the end of that period *or* every member has voted in favour.
- Any proposal approved by email must be minuted at the next meeting.
- The ability of the Standing Committee to transact any business which it has power to do in between meetings is not affected, and nor is their ability to take informal soundings from other PCC members if they wish. This amendment only applies to business which needs to be transacted by the full PCC.

Any PCCs who wish to adopt the ability to vote by email should pass a resolution at a PCC meeting in the following terms:

"This PCC resolves to adopt the following addition to the General Provisions relating to PCCs set out in Appendix 2 of the Church Representation Rules as they apply to this PCC, to authorise the business of the PCC to be conducted by electronic means.

Addition to the General Provisions relating to PCCs set out in Appendix 2 of the Church Representation Rules as they apply to the PCC of ... to authorise the business of the PCC to be conducted by electronic means:

19 (a). Documents and other writings mentioned in a Notice convening a Meeting of the PCC under the General Provisions relating to Parochial Church Councils (Church Representation Rules 2017 Rule 15 Appendix 2) may, if a PCC member so consents, be communicated to that

member by electronic means - otherwise such documents and other writings shall be posted or hand delivered to the member.

(b). Each member consenting to the use of electronic means of communication shall provide the PCC Secretary with his or her current email address.

(c). At the written direction of the Chair (or failing him or her the vice-Chair for the time being) the PCC may conduct up to ten items of business, including the passing of any Resolution, in each calendar year through the use of electronic mail save that any member who so desires shall be served with the relevant paperwork by post or hand delivery. The direction of the Chair must state that the item of business is urgent and give the reason for the urgency.

(d). At least 72 hours' Notice shall be given to each member within which to respond to the business or other matter touched on in the Notice.

(e). The proposed Resolution shall not be capable of amendment but shall be passed or rejected in accordance with the wording of the proposed Resolution and shall require a majority of at least 60% of the members of the PCC to vote in favour.

(f). The proposed Resolution shall not be considered passed before the end of the Notice period unless every member of the PCC has voted in favour.

(g). Any member of the PCC is entitled to object to the transaction of any particular item of business by email, in which event it may not proceed by email and shall be remitted to a meeting. If any member of the PCC votes against the proposal, the matter shall be remitted to a PCC meeting unless a subsequent revised proposal concerning the same matter is approved by email.

(h). Any Resolution made or other business transacted by the PCC in this way shall be recorded in the Minutes of the PCC at its next Meeting."