THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH IN WALES VOLUME I

CHAPTER IV C PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATION

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PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATION

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Chapter IV

C: PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATION

Part I: Annual and Other Vestry Meetings

1.

(1) In every Parish there shall be an Annual Vestry Meeting.

(2) The business of the Annual Vestry Meeting shall be to receive and discuss:

(a) a report and accounts for the previous year from the Parochial Church Council made in accordance with the Church in Wales Accounting Regulations;

(b) reports on the proceedings of the Deanery and Diocesan Conferences each year;

(c) any other reports requested by the Council or allowed by the meeting; and

(d) with the consent of the Meeting, any other business of which notice has been given.

(3) The Annual Vestry Meeting shall elect the following, and in this order:

(a) a Churchwarden, in accordance with section 13;

(b) subwardens, where designated under the Regulations;

(c) the Parochial Church Councillors;

(d) the Sidespersons, where required;

(e) in every third year, the lay parochial representatives on the Deanery Conference and an equal number of supplemental lay representatives; and

(f) where appropriate, the lay parochial representatives on the Diocesan Conference;

provided that no cleric shall vote in the election of a lay person.

(4) The Annual Vestry Meeting shall appoint an independent examiner or auditor who shall not be a member of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish.

(5) No person shall be eligible for election or appointment unless his or her consent to nomination has first been obtained.

(6) In a parish annexed to a Cathedral, subsection (2)(*a*) shall not extend to property and accounts relating to the Dean and Chapter, except with their consent.

2.

Further Vestry meetings may be called at any time and in particular a further Vestry Meeting shall be called at the request in writing of at least one-fourth or thirty of the Qualified Electors of that parish.

3.

Appeals

In the case of a dispute as to the right of a person to attend, speak or vote at any Vestry Meeting, the Chairman's ruling thereon shall for that meeting be conclusive, but any such person shall have the right to appeal to the Area Dean, provided always that where the Incumbent is the Area Dean the appeal shall lie to the Archdeacon.

Part II: The Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll

4.

(1) In every parish there shall be an electoral roll ('the Roll').

(2) A lay person who is over sixteen years of age shall be entitled to have his or her name entered on the Roll if he or she:

(a) (i) is a Communicant; and

(ii) is not a member of any religious body which is not in communion with the Church in Wales, without the written dispensation of the Diocesan Bishop from this requirement;

(b) is resident in the parish, or, if not so resident, has habitually attended public worship in that parish during a period of six months prior to enrolment;

(c) has signed a form of application for enrolment; and

(d) does not have his or her name entered on the Roll of another Parish in Wales, save with the consent of the Parochial Church Councils of both parishes.

(3) Any person satisfying the criteria in Section 4(2) above may apply to the Parochial Church Council for his or her name to be entered on the Roll, provided he or she signs a declaration in a form as approved from time-to-time by the Standing Committee.

5.

Removal from the Roll

A person's name shall be removed from the Roll if he or she:

(a) has died; or

(b) becomes a Clerk in Holy Orders; or

(c) signifies in writing his or her desire that his or her name should be removed; or

(d) becomes, without the written permission of the Bishop, a member of any religious body which is not in communion with the Church in Wales; or

(e) has the written dispensation of the Bishop pursuant to section 4(2)(*a*)(ii) withdrawn; or

(f) ceases to reside in the parish, unless after so ceasing he or she continues habitually to attend public worship in that parish; or

(g) is not resident in the parish and, save if prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause, has not attended public worship in that parish during the previous six months; or

(h) at any time after the entry of his or her name on the Roll has his or her name entered on the roll of another parish, save with the consent of the Councils of both parishes; or

(i) was not entitled to have his or her name entered on the Roll originally.

Appeals

6.

(1) A list of all names appearing on the Roll shall be produced by the Parochial Church Council for inspection by any Member of the Church in Wales in the vestry of the parish church or in the parish church itself at any reasonable time, and any dispute arising out of this section and of regulations made hereunder shall be settled by the Archdeacon.

(2) Any person whose application to have his or her name entered on the Roll has been refused by the Parochial Church Council, or whose name has been removed from the Roll, may appeal in respect thereof in writing to the Archdeacon, who thereupon shall appoint one or more lay Communicants as a court to consider and determine the appeal. The court so appointed shall be entitled to inspect all papers and to be furnished with all relevant information connected with the appeal and the decision of such court shall be final.

(3) The Archdeacon shall take such steps as he or she may think fit to ensure in any Parish due compliance with the relevant provisions of section 4 and of Regulation 7 of the Regulations relating to Parochial Administration.

7.

Any Qualified Elector of a Parish may lodge with the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council an objection in writing, on grounds of lack of qualification, to the addition of a name or names to the Roll of that Parish, or may in like manner object to the removal of a name or names therefrom. Such objection shall be considered by the Council, and should the Council not allow the objection the objector may appeal in writing to the Archdeacon, whereupon the matter shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of subsection 6(2).

Part III: The Parochial Church Council

8.

Powers and Duties

(1) In every Parish there shall be a Parochial Church Council (“the Council”), which shall meet at least four times in every year.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Incumbent and the Council to consult together and co-operate in all matters of concern and importance to the Parish.

(3) Except in the case of a Cathedral where the Cathedral Scheme or the Cathedral's Constitution and Regulations state otherwise the functions of the Council shall include:

(a) promotion of the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, in the Parish;

(b) consideration and discussion of matters concerning the Church in Wales or otherwise of religious or public interest, but the discussion of any doctrinal matters by the Council shall not extend to any formulation or declaration of doctrine;

(c) propagation and implementation of any provision made by the Governing Body, the Representative Body, or the Diocesan or Deanery Conferences, but without prejudice to the powers of the Council on any particular matter;

(d) the discharge of the duties placed upon it by any Regulations made under the provisions of the Constitution;

(e) preparation of the parochial budget, which shall include: the various church expenses, the parochial contributions to the diocesan share and home and overseas missions, and any other branches of church work, together with arrangements for raising the moneys required;

(f) advising on any matter properly referred to the Council;

(g) communication with the Diocesan or Deanery Conferences on such matters as the Council deems appropriate;

(h) an annual review of the expenses for which the clergy should be reimbursed by the parish; and

(i) the production of a report and accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 1993 or any modification or re-enactment thereof and any regulations made thereunder and in accordance with the Church in Wales Accounting Regulations (such report and account being signed by the Chairman).

(4) All Parish finances (except special trusts which otherwise provide, the incumbent's discretionary fund and in a Parish annexed to a Cathedral property and accounts relating to the Dean and Chapter) shall be under the control of the Council.

(5) In the exercise of its functions the Council shall take into consideration any expression of opinion by any properly constituted church meeting.

(6) The Council shall be the normal channel of communication between the parishioners and the Bishop and shall have the right to make representations to the Bishop concerning the affairs of the Church, the cure of souls in the Parish, alterations in services, and ornaments.

Composition

9.

(1) The members of the Council shall be:

(a) *ex-officio* members whose offices are set out in the Governing Body Regulations relating to Parochial Administration;

(b) elected members elected in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations; and

(c) members co-opted in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations.

(2) The number of clerical members shall in no case exceed the number of lay members.

Qualification for Membership

10.

Every lay member of the Council shall be a Qualified Elector of that Parish, over eighteen years of age.

11.

Every lay member of the Council, before assuming office shall sign, in a book to be kept for that purpose by the Secretary of the Council, a declaration in the following form:

I, J... S..., declare that I am a Communicant over eighteen years of age and that my name is properly entered on the electoral roll of this Parish, that I will faithfully and diligently perform my duties as a Parochial Church Councillor during my year of office, and that I agree to accept and be bound by the Constitution of the Church in Wales.

General

12.

Subject to the provisions of the Constitution and the Governing Body Regulations relating to Parochial Administration, the Council:

(a) shall make standing orders for its own procedure; and

(b) may appoint committees (including a Finance Committee) as necessary from amongst the members of the Council, and make standing orders governing the powers and procedure of any such committee (including powers of co-option); provided that all acts and decisions of any committee, unless previously authorised, must be ratified by the Council.

Part IV: Churchwardens

13.

(1) In every Parish there shall be two Churchwardens to whom the provisions of the Governing Body Regulations relating to Parochial Administration shall apply, who shall be Qualified Electors of that Parish and over the age of eighteen, one to be elected by the Annual Vestry Meeting and the other to be appointed at that Meeting by the Incumbent; provided always that where in any Parish it was customary, before the passing of the Welsh Church Act 1914, to have more than two Churchwardens the number shall remain unchanged, and the method of appointing them shall continue in force, until the Diocesan Conference otherwise orders.

(2) In a vacancy or suspended incumbency where a cleric in charge has been appointed, the appointment of a Churchwarden under subsection (1) shall be made by him or her.

(3) In a vacancy or suspended incumbency where no Cleric in charge has been appointed, or in the case of the incapacity of the Incumbent, the appointment of a Churchwarden under subsection (1) may be made by the Area Dean.

(4) The Churchwardens when admitted are officers of the Diocesan Bishop. They shall discharge such duties as are by custom assigned to them; they shall be foremost in representing the laity and in consulting and co-operating with the Incumbent; they shall use their best endeavours to promote peace and unity amongst the parishioners, and by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion; they shall also maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of public worship; and they shall discharge the duties placed upon them by the Church Fabric Regulations.

14.

Every Churchwarden before being admitted to office shall make and sign in the presence of the Bishop, the Chancellor, the Archdeacon or a person appointed for that purpose by the Archdeacon, a declaration in the following form:

> *I, J…S…, declare that I am a Confirmed Communicant over eighteen years of age and that my name is properly entered on the electoral roll of the Parish of …., that I will faithfully and diligently perform the duties of Churchwarden of such Parish during my year of office, and that I agree to accept and obey any decision of the Bishop or of the Diocesan Chancellor as to my right at any time to hold the office of Churchwarden.*

Part V: General Parochial Administration

15.

It shall be the duty of the Incumbent and Churchwardens of every Parish to complete:

(i) a Log Book and Terrier relating to each church and every other building in the Parish used for public worship and belonging to the Church in Wales; and

(ii) an Inventory of the respective contents thereof, and of any other articles belonging to the church and used in connection with the church in any place in the Parish;

which documents shall be completed in such form and at such times as may from time to time be prescribed by the Representative Body or the appropriate Committee thereof. Provided that, in the case of a Cathedral (except the Cathedral Church of St Woolos), the responsibility for completing the Log Book, Terrier and Inventory shall be that of the Dean and Chapter.