

# **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO** **ST. LAURENCE'S PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETINGS** **CONSTITUTION, MAY 2024**

Proposed additions are shown in red and deletions in blue.

## ***A. OBJECTIVE OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

To facilitate the active participation and collaboration of all parishioners in supporting and developing the life, worship and witness of the parish community, building up the Body of Christ and fostering pastoral and missionary action, as well as working with, supporting and advising the parish priest in his responsibilities.

## ***B. REMIT OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

Although the Parishioners' Open Meeting has no executive authority, and any votes taken are consultative, participation in the Parishioners' Open Meeting should be seen as an opportunity to play a responsible role in discerning and implementing the way forward for the parish in partnership with the parish priest who will always give full consideration to the views expressed. Its role is to facilitate rather than substitute for the active participation of the whole parish community in contributing to the life and mission of the Church.

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and core teams are subsidiary bodies of the Open Meeting, which aim to support effective day-to-day management of the parish and to ensure clear responsibilities for actions agreed by the parish. As stated in its constitution: "The PPC remains accountable to the wider Parish community. The PPC should seek to implement ideas or pastoral initiatives agreed at Open Meetings. If a formally called Open Meeting of the Parish expresses and records a vote of no confidence in the PPC, its members shall be deemed to have resigned and a new PPC should be constituted within 2 months."

## ***C. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

Membership of the Parishioners' Open Meeting is open to all those who worship at St Laurence's Church or School. Any parishioner may attend any meeting and propose items for the agenda.

## ***D. OFFICERS OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

~~The Parishioners' Open Meetings shall have a chairperson and secretary elected from amongst its members.~~ be chaired by the Chairperson of the PPC (or, in their absence, the Vice Chairperson) and minuted by the Secretary of the PPC.

The role of the chairperson shall be:

- To agree dates for the Parishioners' Open Meetings with the parish priest
- To publicise these dates in the parish bulletin and church noticeboards, call for agenda items and agree the agenda with the parish priest
- To chair the meetings, ensuring all voices are heard fairly, but keeping the meetings to time
- To publish the minutes of the meetings in the church and on the parish website

The role of the secretary shall be:

- To record the minutes of each meeting, and send these to the chairperson and parish priest in a timely manner

~~The above officers should submit themselves for reappointment or replacement at not more than three yearly intervals. The election shall be by a simple show of hands at a regular Open Meeting. In the event of a tie in a contested election, the parish priest shall have the casting vote.~~

In the event of a loss of confidence by the parish priest in the ability of either officer to fulfil their roles effectively, the parish priest may call for elections at any time before the three years is up.

#### ***E. MEETINGS OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

Open Meetings or open sessions of the PPC shall be held not less than ~~three~~ four times per year. One of these meetings shall be the Annual General Open Meeting of the Parish, which all parishioners are encouraged to attend. The exact frequency and dates of meetings will be agreed by the parish priest, in consultation with members of the Parishioners' Open Meeting PPC. Open Meetings may also be called at the request of at least 10 members of the parish. A quorum will consist of ten attendees, including the chairperson (or nominated deputy) and parish priest, who must both be present.

#### ***F. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OR STANDING ORDERS***

Proposals for amendments to the constitution may be made by any attendee. A two-thirds majority of those attending, which must include the vote of the parish priest, is required to confirm a change.

The constitution shall in any event be reviewed at a meeting of the Parishioners' Open Meeting at not more than three yearly intervals.

#### ***G. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF THE PARISHIONERS' OPEN MEETING***

If, in the judgement of the Bishop or of the Parish Priest (always with the agreement of the Dean and Bishop), the Parishioners' Open Meeting ceases to operate in the best interests of the parish, the Open Meeting and its constitution or standing orders will be temporarily suspended by the parish priest. The Open Meeting will then be reconstituted within two months of any such suspension.

*Adopted 14 May 2009*

*Edited to implement name change, 29 May 2020*

*Proposed changes for approval, 21 May 2024*