

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JAMES, CHRISTLETON

### COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

FOR THE PCC:

In adopting this policy, the PCC will need to decide:

- Who will receive complaints? It was agreed that the Wardens and the Rector should receive complaints
- Who will review complaints? It was agreed that the **Standing Committee** should act as a Complaints Committee. This should be reviewed at the first meeting after the APCM each year.
- the timescales that will apply to complaints made to your PCC: see below

The Policy and Procedure should be adapted accordingly, including the link to the Diocesan Bullying and Harassment policy in the blue box below. Having decided how to proceed the PCC will need to pass a resolution appointing the Complaints Committee, authorising it to act as such and requiring it to report back on its work.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is committed to its role which primarily includes “*cooperation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.*” But there may be a time when you need to complain. This complaints procedure is for those who are unhappy about matters for which the PCC is responsible that have affected them. Prior to using this formal procedure the PCC encourages an informal approach to the Rector or a Churchwarden to see if the matter can be resolved in that way.

But if your complaint is about:

**Safeguarding of Children or Vulnerable Adults;** please in the first instance contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser at [insert contact details].

**The Rector or another minister;** please raise the matter with the Rector. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon, at [insert contact details]. You may wish to read the leaflet “I have a complaint about misconduct by a member of the clergy – what can I do?” at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1937470/makingcomplainta4.pdf> .

**Bullying or Harassment** (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policy on this.

**Your employment by the PCC;** if you are a PCC employee please refer to and follow the grievance procedure provided for in your terms and conditions of employment.

#### Making a complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing or by email to the PCC Secretary whose name and contact details are set out below. The PCC Secretary will ensure that your complaint is:

- treated seriously
- handled fairly without bias or discrimination
- treated confidentially.

You should complain within 3 months of the event that you are complaining about. You need to set out:

- your full name and address

- what you think went wrong and how it has affected you including enough details to show why you are aggrieved
- what (if anything) you think the PCC should do to put it right

If someone else complains on your behalf, the PCC will need written confirmation from you saying that you agree for that person to act for you.

The PCC Secretary should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

### **How your complaint will be dealt with**

The PCC Secretary will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within 10 days of its receipt and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC's Complaints Committee. If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the Complaints Committee it will meet without them being present.

The PCC's Complaints Committee will look fairly into your complaint including seeking the views on the matter from any individuals, whether members of the PCC or otherwise, to which your complaint refers. The Complaints Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf but it will be the Complaints Committee that makes any decisions. The Complaints Committee and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially.

The Complaints Committee may invite you to present your complaint to them. If so, you may attend with a friend / representative if you wish. The meeting should be held as informally as possible. The Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting, introduce the members and emphasise confidentiality. The meeting will be minuted by the Committee.

The PCC Secretary will write to you with the conclusions from the PCC Complaints Committee's review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Secretary will aim to respond to you in this way as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after receipt of your complaint.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, can appeal (see appendix 1)

If you remain dissatisfied, you may wish to consider contacting the Charity Commission as while Parochial Church Councils are independent bodies they are charities and as such are regulated by the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission can be contacted either via their website <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity> or by writing to them at Charity Commission First Contact, PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG.

The Church Wardens

Email: [thechurchwardens@gmail.com](mailto:thechurchwardens@gmail.com)

PCC of St James, Christleton  
Charity Registration Number 1133992

## Appendix 1: Appeals procedure

### **Appeal Procedure** **Following the outcome or a complaint hearing** **Based on ACAS Guidelines**

- If you are not satisfied with the response to a complaint/grievance, you are entitled to appeal the decision.
- You should put in writing the reason for your appeal within 5 days of receiving the original outcome. Also explain what you would like to happen.
- Possible reasons for an appeal:-  
You believe the outcome was wrong and why you believe this is the case.  
You consider the procedure was wrong or unfair and the reasons you believe this.  
You have new evidence to be considered.
- We will hear your appeal and consider if a different outcome is appropriate.
- The person/persons hearing your appeal will not have been involved in the original meeting.
- You will be notified in writing of the date, time and location of the meeting.
- You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting, please name your companion prior to the meeting.
- The final outcome will be notified to you as soon as possible after the appeal meeting, in writing.
- The outcome may be delayed if further investigation is required.
- This decision will be the end of the process.