



PCC COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Complaints

The Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) of the Priory Benefice are committed to their roles 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 Incumbent 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 Jenny Leccardi at safeguarding@leeds.anglican.org or 07872005189.

The Incumbent or another minister; please raise the matter with the Incumbent. If the matter remains unresolved you could contact the Archdeacon, at archdeacon.pontefract@leeds.anglican.org

Bullying or Harassment (by adults); you may find it helpful to consult the Diocesan policy on this at <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/human-resources/clergy>

Your employment by the PCC; if you are a PCC employee please refer to and follow the grievance procedure provided in your terms and conditions of employment or the Parish Grievance Policy

Making a complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing or by email to the relevant PCC Secretary. The PCC Secretary will ensure that your complaint is:

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

If your complaint is about the PCC secretary, then you can raise your complaint with the Vicar, The Revd Canon Paul Cartwright, 07852174303, fr.paul.cartwright@gmail.com

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 (or the Vicar if appropriate) should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

How your complaint will be dealt with

The PCC Secretary (or the Vicar if appropriate) will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within 7 days of its receipt.

For the consideration of an individual complaint, the PCC will form a Complaints Committee made up of 3 members of the PCC. If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the PCC, then they will not be part of the Complaints Committee who review your complaint.

The Complaints Committee will look fairly into your complaint including seeking 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 (or the Vicar if appropriate) will write to you with the conclusions from the Complaints Committee's review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Secretary (or the Vicar if appropriate) will aim to respond to you in this way as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after the receipt of your complaint. This will be the PCC's final response to your complaint.

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.

Whistleblowing

If you wish to blow the whistle on any concern, you should follow the Complaints procedure as laid out in the first paragraph on page 2, putting your concerns in writing to the PCC Secretary or the Vicar as appropriate.

The policy of the PCC is to safeguard the interests of all of its employees and volunteers when they act as alerters regarding any neglect or abuse, mental, physical, emotional, sexual, racial/ethnic or financial, of service users or any similar abuse of colleagues.

The PCC accepts that it is bound by legislation in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and guarantees that procedures will be invoked in ways which do not prejudice the whistleblower's own position and prospects.

The PCC will protect the employee and volunteers against victimisation and provide support throughout the investigation process.

The PCC is committed, through training, to ensuring that employees and volunteers:

- have knowledge and understanding of protection procedures;
- are committed to emphasising that harassment is unacceptable;
- are enabled to identify oppressive abuse when it occurs;
- are informed regarding their individual duty to act to protect service users;
- are made aware of measures to safeguard their interests if they act as whistleblowers
- are made aware of their rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

The PCC, through its training, instructs its employees and volunteers that it is their duty to raise legitimate concerns to the PCC about suspected misconduct by colleagues, managers or those with whom it works notably in church and community projects.

The PCC sees its employees and volunteers in the roles of alerters to promote the safeguarding of the rights of others, to log any concerns and report such concerns to appropriate managers. Alerters will not be asked to verify or prove that concerns are true.

The PCC undertakes to protect its employees and volunteers from victimisation when they act as alerters.

Employees and volunteers who are concerned about any malpractice but unsure whether to blow the whistle or to stay silent or are unclear about how to go about blowing the whistle may obtain free expert help from the independent charity Protect (Whistleblowing Advice) Limited

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

The Green House, 244-254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA

phone: 020 3117 2520.

Protect is a registered Charity No.1025557

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Approved by PCC	
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