

JOINT PCC: BUSRBRIDGE AND HAMBLEDON: BACKGROUND

THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR MAIN ACTS/MEASURES RELATED TO PCCS: 1919, 1921, 1959, 1969. THERE HAVE BEEN VARIOUS AMENDMENTS. SOME OF THE LATEST HAVE INCLUDED PROVISION FOR A JOINT CHURCH COUNCIL. IT MAY HELP TO HAVE A CONTEXT FOR TODAY...

A potted history:

Prior to 1921 the Rector and Wardens more or less ran a parish with a fair degree of impunity. They would make decisions along with the patron (if local) and key local landowners. In the worst cases the Rector may be in the parish for his stipulated 3 months of the year and appoint a perpetual curate (on a very measly stipend) for the rest of the time. Peperharow even had one Rector removed from Office because he failed to manage to even be there for 3 months of the year.

Between 1921- 1959 the role of PCCs became clearer. Wardens, treasurers and clergy formed the core and lay people were elected to oversee aspects of the work of the church. The term 'Rector's Warden' and 'People's Warden' was dropped. Until this time the people elected a warden and the Rector selected his warden. This moved to all wardens being elected with certain, rare, vetoes retained by the clergy.

The 1969 Act was primarily an amendment of aspects of the 1959 Act which had become dated.

In 2006 further amendments were made. In 2009 amendments were made to specifically reflect the increasingly collegiate nature of ministry which crossed traditional parish boundaries. A key aspect was to ease the formation of joint PCCs. Joint PCCs had been around since 1969.

The largest Canterbury Province Benefice to successfully create a joint PCC is in Winchester (an amalgamation of 12 PCCs into one body). One of the largest to date in the UK is in York Province. This is likely to have had a United Benefice of 14 PCCS, 14 treasurers, 24 church wardens and a minimum of 56 PCC meetings a year for 1 stipendiary vicar. It has recently become a single joint church council.

In 1996 Busbridge and Hambledon became a 'pastoral measure'. This created a new single unit: the United Benefice. Confusingly, Busbridge is a Benefice in its own right and so is Hambledon. The primary unit in the eyes of the Diocese is the United Benefice with 1 stipendiary position as Rector of Busbridge and Hambledon. It is possible that in 1996 there was a lack of explanation or clarity regarding the pastoral measure:

1. It is not reversible. The Diocese withdrew the right of presentation to Hambledon for the patron and a new board was created for a United Benefice.
2. There is still 'a parish of Busbridge' and 'a parish of Hambledon' but neither has the independent authority of the Bishop to have a single stipendiary Rector without the other. The Cure of Souls is that of the United Benefice.
3. There is no promise of any housing in Hambledon. The Rectory had to be sold or at least not called a vicarage/Rectory any longer. There can be only one such place in a United Benefice where there is one stipendiary position. Provision of M Bottom is, at best, a 'gentleman's agreement'. Ray William worked this out and I have seen his pastoral letters to the Archdeacon of the time expression his, in my opinion, accurate assessment of the direction in which things were heading.
4. Hambledon was not seen as viable any longer in the eyes of the Diocese. Hambledon has defied the odds and is still strong and has a key future ahead of it. We have the Lord and a hefty dose of servant hearted grace-filled Christians in to thank for this.

5. Busbridge is not considered as 'large' by the Diocese. This may be a shock to some but the basic unit for 1 stipendiary person is a minimum of 4,000 dwellings. Only when Busbridge and Hambledon are counted together do we approach this figure.
6. The objective of a pastoral measure has always been (even in 1996) to be phase 1 of something more concrete.
7. A pastoral measure reorganisation is not the same as a suspended living. This may not have been made clear to the PCC of Hambledon in 1996. A joint PCC would regularise that which is increasingly inter-related and in so doing remove almost all the possibility of future externally-initiated pastoral reorganisation. It is a single, stronger unit.

A joint PCC is not a single, united PCC:

It is not a single united PCC. It does not remove the PCCs nor their role. A single united PCC can only exist in a single united parish. The only way to have a single parish is for a special Measure by the Bishop, suspension of living and for it to go before parliament to re-draw the parish boundary. A single united PCC has to be taken before all relevant APCMs and a 2/3rd majority vote taken. It is a virtually irreversible process. A single united PCC has one set of accounts, 2 wardens and 1 PCC.

A joint PCC is:

A pastoral scheme whereby the united benefice which the Diocese sees as the primary unit is treated as such locally too. All staff resources are shared through shared licenses. The single Rector remains the Rector.

There are technically two PCCs but they operate as one (based on the powers they decide to write for themselves). Whilst separate financial returns and bank accounts must remain in force, it is expected that there is sharing of finance to support the mutual mission of the joint PCC.

UNITED ECCLESIASTICAL BENEFICE OF BUSBRIDGE AND HAMBLEDON

SCHEME FOR A JOINT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Definitions

Cure of Souls: the charge given to a Rector

Parish: A single ecclesiastical unit which has one Cure of Souls overseeing it.

Parish church councils: (plural) the individual PCCs of the two separate parishes of the United Benefice

Benefice: A Benefice is the primary unit of administration both temporal and spiritual upon which a Diocese bases operations. A Benefice is also a parish. A Benefice may be a single parish or it may be a group of parishes. If a Benefice is more than one parish/Benefice then the Benefice (singular or plural) is no longer termed a Benefice but is always termed 'the united ecclesiastical benefice of x, y and z'. If a parish is a single Benefice the Diocese looks to this as the primary vehicle of operations. If a parish is part of a United Benefice then the Diocese looks to the plural Benefice as the primary vehicle of operations.

Rector: The person with cure of souls. A Rector may be Rector of one parish/Benefice or of a plurality. In the case of a plurality the Rector is not Rector of one parish and then another but Rector of the United Benefice.

Single PCC: is an irreversible Order of Council through the Diocesan Bishop which is set before Parliament and which abolishes former parish boundaries. It abolishes all PCCs within a given area and sets out new Measures for the election of a single PCC. There can only be one Rector, two church wardens, one church bank account and one treasurer. A single PCC is a significant development.

Joint PCC/Joint Parochial Church Council: is an internal pastoral scheme whereby the united benefice of PCCs is treated as a joint body with mutual interests, voting, direction and purpose. All staff resources are shared through shared licenses. The single Rector remains the Rector. The single Rectory remains the Rectory. There are up to four wardens and two treasurers. There are technically two PCCs but they operate as one (based on the powers they decide for themselves so long as such powers do not give authority beyond the 1921 to 1969 Measures; namely this document). Whilst separate financial returns and bank accounts must remain in force it is expected that there is sharing of finance to support the mutual mission of the joint PCC. There must be two APCMs. A joint PCC is referred to in the document as the Parish Church Council (PCC) or Joint PCC.

LLM: Licensed Lay Minister. Formerly known as Reader.

Co-opted PCC members: People brought onto PCC through a vote to appoint them. A co-opted member does not count in total lay-PCC members. Co-opted members take on full voting rights and liabilities of any other member of the PCC.

Measures/Statutes/Orders/Acts: National rules governing the operation of PCCs

Preamble

After a special meeting of the PCC in the United Ecclesiastical Benefice of the Benefice' of Busbridge and Hambledon (the 'Benefice' and hereafter referred to as 'the church') in the County of Surrey in the Diocese of Guildford and in the Deanery of Godalming, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Church Representation Rules (Amendment, 2009, Joint PCC Pastoral), hereby make the following scheme:

1. Joint Parochial Church Council

1.1 There shall be a joint Parochial Church Council (to be known as the "Joint PCC" or "Parish Church Council") for the said Benefice' with the following membership:

1.1.1 as (a) voting member(s); the Rector of the church; all clergy beneficed in or licensed to the Benefice, all Deanery, Diocesan and General Synod members who are on the electoral roll of the Benefice,

1.1.2 as voting members; all PCC members from each of the constituent parishes

1.1.3 as a voting member; one LLM licensed to the church, being in each case elected by the LLMs licensed to the church at a meeting convened by the LLMs and following immediately after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1.1.4 as voting members; Co-opted members decided by the PCC, not exceeding one fifth of the laity or 2 people, whichever is the greater. Members may only be co-opted if they are habitual worshippers of the church and on the electoral roll and have been voted on during a meeting of the Joint PCC

Subsections 1.1.3 to 1.1.4 are open to revision by future Joint PCC decision

1.1.5 There shall be a minimum of two and a maximum of four church wardens under the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009. The church wardens shall be appointed in accordance with the APCM rules in force at the time. A minimum of one warden shall be appointed each from the constituent parishes of the church; subject to reservation of Rector's right of veto in each APCM and parish, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules (2006) in force at that time.

1.2 The Chair of the Benefice Council shall be the Rector of the church or other such PCC member appointed by the Rector in accordance with the Measures in force at the time

1.2.1 At its first meeting after 30th April in every year the Joint PCC shall elect either the associate minister or one of the churchwardens to be its Vice Chair until its first meeting after 30th April in the following year;

1.2.2 During a vacancy or the incapacity of the Rector the chairmanship of the Parish Church Council shall be exercised by the Vice Chair;

1.2.3 If neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair is present at a meeting of the Parish Church Council those members present shall elect one of their number to chair that meeting.

1.3 Members of the Parish Church Council shall remain in office until the election of their successors, subject to Church Representation rules current at that time.

1.4 The following provisions of the Church Representation Rules Appendix 11 shall have effect, substituting 'parishes' for 'parish' where appropriate:

1.4.1 paragraph 1(d), and (e); and

1.4.2 paragraphs 2-3; 4(b) 6-13, and 15 inclusive, save that references to the Chair in paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 shall be construed as applying to the Chair of the church council as provided in Clause 1.2.

1.5 All church council members shall have access to all minutes and financial reports and statements of the church council in relation to all activity of the church across all constituent parishes and Benefice'

2. Functions and Powers of the Joint Parish Church Council

2.1 To establish and hold a single church electoral roll for the purposes of the Synodical Governance Measure 1969 and all subsequent amendments and revisions. This roll shall form the basis of voting in all matters pertaining to the church. It is only possible to vote for a person entered on the electoral roll to vote at one APCM of the church in any given year.

2.2 The Parish Church Council will comprise the members of the Parish Church Councils with all powers pertaining to the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1921 Act, Parish Church Council of the Parish Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956, The Synodical Government Measure 1969 including the formation of subcommittees of joint church council members. The church council will act as the Parish Church Councils subject to 2.3 and 2.4. All existing sub committees and groups of each prior existing church council will hold reciprocal rights of interest and involvement across the United Benefice unless otherwise stated. In accordance with existing Measures; the Joint PCC has the power to create sub-committees and groups according to its requirements.

2.2.1 Members of all Parish Church Councils in the United Ecclesiastical Benefice' of Busbridge and Hambledon (the church) will be full members voting members of the Joint Parish Church Council. All members hold equal voting rights on all matters, subject to 2.3.

2.3 The Parish Church Council may from time to time, when it so decides by combined majority voting, constitute as two Parish Church Councils under the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution 2009: Joint parochial church councils. In such times and occasions there shall be appointed a PCC secretary for the duration of each Parish Church Council meeting who will normally, but not necessarily, be the church council secretary and the deputy secretary. The chair shall be the Rector, subject to:

2.3.1 Where the Parish Church Councils are meeting in duality the Associate minister or church warden shall act as chair as appointed at the first meeting of the Joint Parish Church Council of the year after the APCM.

2.4 The APCM of each constituent parish will inform those present at the APCM of the activity of the 'other' church including, but not exclusively; the Rectors' report, fabric and financial activity of church.

2.5 There shall be one church council secretary and one deputy secretary.

2.6 There shall be two APCM secretaries.

2.7 There shall be two electoral roll officers maintaining the joint electoral roll.

2.8 The Parish Church Council shall jointly share the ministry of the church in accordance with the Powers already in force under the 1996 Pastoral Benefice Scheme (United Benefice of Busbridge and Hambledon). All staff and endeavours shall be shared. All licenses shall be to the Benefice, save to the Rights of the Lord Bishop of Guildford and successors.

2.9 All powers and functions set here, save those reserved to the Lord Bishop and expressly forbidden in Acts and Measures in force at the time of revision; are open to revision by the Parish Church Council.

3 Limit of functions and powers of the (joint) church council

The following functions shall not be delegated:

- 3.1 functions of an interested party under the Pastoral Measure 1983 Part I;
- 3.2 functions of a Parochial Church Council under Section 3 of the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993;
- 3.3 functions concerned with the holding of real property and other matters for which separate legal personality is required.

The following functions shall continue:

- 3.3.1 there will be an APCM for each constituent parish of the United Benefice. The church wardens of the Joint Parish Church Council will be in attendance at both APCMs.
- 3.3.2 there will be separate financial statements and accounts. The treasurers of the Joint Parish Church Council will be in attendance at both APCMs.
- 3.3.3 there will be two treasurers, one for each constituent parish.
- 3.3.4 the cure of souls shall remain with the Rector with freehold.
- 3.3.5 the Parish Church Council shall meet at least four times in the year according to its obligations.

4. Operation, review and dissolution

- 4.1 This scheme shall come into operation on after a 2/3rd majority vote at each PCC.
- 4.2 This scheme will be reviewed after five years or if there is substantive change to the parish boundaries or number of constituent parishes in the and not later than 2018.
- 4.3 Any constituent parish of the United Benefice may secede from this scheme by a resolution passed to that effect by at least two-thirds of the persons present and voting at a Special Parochial Church Meeting of any of the said parishes. In the event that any parish does secede from this scheme, this scheme shall continue in operation in respect of any Parish which has not seceded.
- 4.4 This scheme shall cease to have effect on the parishes ceasing to be within the area of the United Ecclesiastical Benefice of Busbridge and Hambledon or in the Deanery of Godalming.

Approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

held on at

Chair:

Secretary: