# Parish Pastoral Team Foundation Document

## Aims

*The primary mission of the Parish Pastoral Team is to collaborate in planning the spiritual and pastoral needs of the parish. It takes account of the circumstances of the parish, the teaching of the Church, the ‘signs of the times’ and the reflections of the members of the community in light of the Gospel.*

*The Parish Pastoral Team will assist the Parish Priest by:*

* *Discerning the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish community and involving the whole parish in response to these needs;*
* *Supporting parishioners in understanding and living their baptismal call as followers of Christ; and*
* *Providing structures that will bring together the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish with the talents of parishioners and the resources in the parish.*

*The Parish Pastoral Team’s task is to study those matters brought to its attention, reflect on them thoroughly, discern their true nature, review and evaluate them drawing sound conclusions. The Team will then take appropriate action in consultation with the Parish Priest.*

## Outline

1. The Teamshall be called St Michael’s and St Bernadette’s Parish Pastoral Team.
2. The Parish Pastoral Teamis a group of about fifteen (15) people, which strives to be representative of the parish community as a whole.
3. The Parish Pastoral Teamis a consultative group whose function is to work co-responsibly with priest(s) of the parish.

**Roles**

1. The Parish Priest shall be President of the Team.
2. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the members and shall remain in office for a calendar year, with re-election possible for a second term.
3. The Parish Pastoral TeamSecretary will be appointed by the Parish Priest.

**Membership**

1. The term for membership of the Parish Pastoral Teamshall be a maximum of three (3) years. Members can be re-nominated for a second term (a maximum of three [3] years). After a second term the member must have a break of at least one year before being eligible for re nomination.
2. At the penultimate meeting of the year we need to have 10 members who will carry forward to the next year, allowing 5 vacancies to be filled from the Parish nomination process. If we subsequently do not get 5 new members, then the Parish Priest, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may wish/decide to invite past members for re-nomination.
3. A minimum of five (5) members will leave the Teameach calendar year. This will be achieved by members reaching the end of their existing term of office and/or by voluntary resignation and/or by selection by the Parish Priest, Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, according to item 2 above.
4. Normally, members who wish to resign before the end of their current three-year term will only resign at the end of a calendar year (having given notice - before the penultimate meeting of the calendar year - of their intention to resign at the last meeting of the calendar year).If a member resigns other than at the end of a calendar year then the Parish Priest in conjunction with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may co-opt a replacement member from the parish community.
5. If the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson resigns before the end of their term of appointment then a permanent replacement will be elected by the members during the next meeting of the Teamor as  
   soon as possible thereafter. If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson cannot attend a meeting, they   
   will try to rearrange the meeting. If not practical, the Parish Priest will Chair the meeting.
6. Members failing to attend three consecutive meetings where apologies are not given or accepted shall be deemed to have resigned.
7. There will be an annual process to nominate new members. Advance notice of the need to find new members will be published in the parish newsletter and appropriate documentation and nomination forms made available to parishioners.All members of the Parish and worshipping community over 16 years old will be eligible to be nominated. New members will be selected from those nominated, by the Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, according to item 2 above.
8. The Parish Priest in conjunction with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may co-opt additional members from the parish community on to the Parish Pastoral Teambecause of their experience and/or expertise.
9. Any person from outside the membership may be invited with the consent of the Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to attend a meeting of the Parish Pastoral Team.

**Meetings**

1. The normal schedule of meetings shall be agreed annually.  
   The Parish Priest, the Chairperson and Secretary of the Parish Pastoral Teamare responsible for convening meetings, compiling the agenda and ensuring a time of prayerful reflection and ofspiritual enrichment at each meeting. All members may contribute items to the agenda.
2. Under normal circumstances a quorum for a Parish Pastoral Teammeeting shall be eight (8) members.
3. Decisions of the Parish Pastoral Teamon any issue shall be arrived at through discerning the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish through the Holy Spirit and by consensus. [[1]](#footnote-1)
4. The Parish Priest may convene and chair an extraordinary Parish Pastoral Teammeeting as necessary.

**Approval**

1. This Foundation Document was initially approved by the Teamon 14th January 2013; it will be reviewed and appropriately amended on an annual basis. (See review history at the end of this document).

## Defined Responsibilities

These responsibilities shall be read and interpreted within the context of the previous sections.

**Chairperson**

The primary duties of the Chairperson are as follows:

* Chair the Parish Pastoral Teammeetings;
* Assist the Parish Priest in preparing the agenda for Parish Pastoral Teammeetings;
* Support the Secretary in compiling the minutes of Parish Pastoral Teammeetings;
* Ensure that Parish Pastoral Teammeetings are conducted in an orderly manner;
* Ensure that the agenda is adhered to and that all members are encouraged to contribute to discussions;
* Invite one of the members to prepare an opening prayer for each Parish Pastoral Teammeeting; and
* Be co-responsible with the Parish Priest and Vice Chairperson for appointing new members according to item 2 above.

**Vice-Chairperson**

The primary duty of the Vice-Chairperson is to support the Chairperson in their role, and act as Chairperson in their absence.

In normal circumstances, there is the expectation that the person serving as the Vice Chair will succeed the current Chair when this person steps down from the role. This process enables continuity in governance for the Team and a smooth transition of responsibilities at the end of a Chair’s term.

**Members**

The primary duties of Members of the Teamare as follows:

* Actively listen to the needs and concerns of parishioners;
* Attend Teammeetings and contribute fully to discussions and the process of discernment;
* Be proactive in promoting the objectives and work of the Team;
* Participate in the life and worship of the parish;
* Carry out tasks assigned or volunteered and feedback as appropriate;
* Take ownership and responsibility for tasks/actively participating in working parties in between meetings;
* Prepare and lead prayers and take part in spiritual enrichment at Teammeetings;
* Take part in elections of the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson;
* Suggest items for the agenda; and
* Actively look to recruit new Teammembers from parishioners and invite them to stand as a member of the Team.

**Secretary**

The primary duties of the Secretary are as follows:

* On behalf of the Parish Priest and Chairperson, distribute the agenda for Parish Pastoral Teammeetings to all members at least one week prior to the meeting;
* Minute the proceedings of Parish Pastoral Teammeetings and circulate to members, and make available to the parish (at the back of each Church and on the web site), subsequent to their approval;
* Maintain a record of the dates and terms of appointments to the Parish Pastoral Teamand roles thereon;
* To publicise and oversee the nomination process before the last meeting of the Teameach calendar year for new members to join the Teamfrom the following January when appropriate; and
* To run the voting process for the election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at the last meeting of the year (or as necessary). If no Secretary in post at the time then the Parish Priest will appoint someone to run the election (i.e. an ex Secretary or past Teammember)
* The term for office of the Secretary of the Parish Pastoral Teamshall be a maximum of three (3) years. A Secretary can be re-appointed for a second term (a maximum of three [3] years). After a second term the Secretary must have a break of at least one year before being eligible for re-appointment.

**Code of Conduct**

**Relationships**

We will strive to work as a Team. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Team will strive to develop effective working relationships with each other and our Parish community.

**Conduct**

We accept that we have a general duty to foster the best interests of the parish community. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Team will strive to behave with charity and respect at all times.

Team members should express views openly at meetings but with respect and courtesy, accepting the decision of the Chair in inviting contributions from all members. Team members should debate a ‘point’ not a ‘person’.

**Disciplinary Matters**

Any Team member who neglects to observe the Code of Conduct can be asked to step down by the Parish Priest.

**Complaints**

If, at any time, a Team member feels that they wish to air a grievance which has not been resolved informally, they should follow the procedure for complaints detailed below:

* In the first instance, a complaint should be submitted in writing to the Secretary.
* Upon receipt of a complaint, the Secretary will pass this to the Vice Chair without unreasonable delay, who will make a decision on the most appropriate course of action. At this stage, this may be an informal mediation or a document review, if appropriate. After careful consideration, and without unreasonable delay, the Vice Chair will report his/her findings back to the Secretary who will forward on the written response from the Vice Chair.
* If the matter remains unresolved after this initial stage, the matter would be referred to the Chair for further review. After careful consideration and spiritual discernment, the Chair will feed back in writing the results of his/her findings, without unreasonable delay.
* If the matter remains unresolved after this stage, the Parish Priest is the final arbiter. He reserves the right to co-opt appropriate advice as needed and no appeal beyond this point can be enabled.

**Document History**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version Number** | **Date Issued** | **Amendments** | **Next Review Date** |
|  |  |  |  |
| V1 | 14 Jan 2013 |  |  |
| V2 | April 2014 |  |  |
| V3 | April 2015 |  |  |
| V4 | 28 Feb 2019 | Title amended from Council to Team and adjustments made throughout the document. | Feb 2020 |
|  |  | Section 7 maximum terms possible to serve reduce from 3 terms to 2 terms (for Team Member) |  |
| V5 | 28 Apr 2019 | Code of Conduct, Disciplinary and Complaints procedures added | Feb 2020 |
| V6 | 20 May 2019 | Timescales added to Grievance Procedure | Feb 2020 |
| V7 | 09 Feb 2021 | Note added to Vice Chair responsibilities | Feb 2022 |

1. 1 The Chairperson may ask the Parish Pastoral Teamto vote in exceptional circumstances. Co-opted members will have full voting rights. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)