



St Columba's Parish Pastoral Council

Guidelines

1. Name

St Columba's Parish Pastoral Council

2. Role

The St Columba's Parish Pastoral Council is an advisory council that seeks to:

- Provide support for our Parish Priest to ensure the St Columba's community continues to be a sustainable and vibrant faith community
- Listen and respond to the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of parishioners
- Develop realistic and achievable short and long-term pastoral goals for the Parish community within the framework of diocesan priorities and the vision and mission of the Parish
- Oversee the implementation of these goals
- Encourage and support the continuing good work of existing groups within our parish.
- Provide input to and oversight of the content and delivery of information to parishioners, either at mass, via the news sheet or the Parish Website.

3. Membership

There will be a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 11 members of the St Columba's Parish Pastoral Council.

A chairperson will be nominated from the parish community members.

The make-up of the Council is as follows;

- Chairperson
- St Columba's Parish Priest
- Parish Pastoral Associate (Sacramental Co-Ordinator)
- St Columba's Primary School Principal
- St Columba's Primary School Religious Education Representative
- Parish Pastoral Council Members (between 4 and 6 members)

The Parish Secretary will act as minute secretary for the Council. In the absence of the Parish Secretary for any meeting, a member of the council will act as minute secretary.

The Council is to encourage a diverse membership regarding age, gender and ethnic background.

Any parishioner or member of any other parish or diocesan group may be invited to attend a Pastoral Council meeting, or may request through the chair to attend a meeting to present an agenda item.

4. Terms of Membership

For Parish Members, the term of membership is two years with two one-year options to extend. At the end of four years, members must stand down for at least two years.

Memberships for the following members continues if positions are still held:

- St Columba's Parish Priest
- Parish Pastoral Associate (Sacramental Co-Ordinator)
- St Columba's Primary School Principal
- St Columba's Primary School Religious Education Representative

5. New Members

In September of each year, existing parish council members will be asked to recommend other parish members for possible membership of the Council. Each person recommended will be invited to meet with the current chairperson and attend the October meeting. By the end of October, acceptance of membership for the following year is required.

If the number of accepted invitations exceed the number of vacancies, the matter should be settled via a negotiation with the sitting Council.

6. Selection Processes

Elections, or other selection processes should only be undertaken where a membership agreement cannot be reached by the sitting council. Where an election is called, positions for all members with greater than two but less than four years' service are spilled and those sitting members may choose to be included in the election.

7. Resignations

Members may resign at any time by notifying the chair and requesting a resignation from the council. All requests for resignation are to be tabled at Council meetings. Resignations during a year will result in a vacancy and these may be filled in the same way as new members.

8. Responsibilities of Members

In a spirit of prayerfulness each member of the Parish Pastoral Council will:

- Attend the regular meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Provide input to deliberations of the Council.
- Develop a spirit of enquiry and the ability to listen and understand the issues affecting the lives of parishioners.
- Provide prayerful support and encouragement for other members of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Represent the Parish Pastoral Council when required

9. Office Bearers

The Parish Priest and the Chairperson form the executive of the Pastoral Council. At the discretion of the chair, a deputy chairperson may be elected adding a third member of the executive.

The role of the executive is to:

- Reflect on the effectiveness of each previous Council meeting.
- Organise the agenda for each meeting, incorporating input from all pastoral councillors.
- Arrange distribution of the agenda, minutes and all relevant material at least two days in advance of that meeting.
- Coordinate the business of the Council between meetings.

10. Meetings

There will be a minimum of ten monthly meetings of the Pastoral Council each year.

Each Meeting will commence with an opening prayer with leading of the prayer being rostered amongst members.

11. Sub-Committees

Council sub-committees may be set up under the auspices of the Pastoral Council for specific purposes for a definite duration and will report regularly to the Pastoral Council.

12. Consensus

The consensus approach will be used in the process of contributing towards the making of parish decisions, with each member offering input towards an outcome. Majority voting, lobbying and competition are to be avoided. For each meeting, a majority of members (50%+1) is required for *chorum*.

13. Review of these Terms

These terms of reference must be reviewed every four years, or earlier if the need arises.