

## **Parish of the Sacred Heart – St Ives**

### **Parish Steering Group**

#### **CONSTITUTION**

##### **Overview**

The Parish Steering Group is accountable to parishioners and exists to:

- represent the views, concerns and suggestions of parishioners in the management of the parish's affairs;
- provide an additional line of two-way communication between the congregations at the parish churches, the parish priest and the diocese;
- facilitate and support open meetings of parishioners;
- advise the parish priest on the running of the parish, particularly in administrative matters.

There will be two Parish Open Meetings per year in the Spring and Autumn (normally in May and Nov) when a formal report of finances and proceedings will be provided. This will also be the forum at which members will be elected.

##### **Membership of the Steering Group**

The membership of the group comprises:

- the Parish Priest;
- parishioners nominated or elected by a parish open meeting on a basis which provides representation of the various parish communities, normally based on there being two representatives from each Mass;
- up to four co-opted members, to include one nominee from the parish finance committee, invited to join for their particular skills and experience, provided that a total of ten members is not exceeded.

The Steering Group will seek to maintain an appropriate balance of representation, skills and experience.

Membership of the committee will be deemed to have lapsed should a member miss two consecutive meetings without apologies.

The responsibilities and conduct of all Group members will be subject to the provisions of Canon Law, Diocesan Codes of Practice and the wishes of the parishioners as expressed through parish open meetings.

##### **Operation of the Steering Group**

- The Steering Group will appoint a Chairman (who need not be a member of the committee) at its first meeting following a change in membership at a Parish open meeting.

- The members will similarly appoint a Secretary (who need not be a member of the committee) who will produce notes of meetings according to normal minuting arrangements.
- Distribution of agendas, papers and notes will normally be by electronic means, with paper copies to those unable to receive or print electronic versions.
- Under the leadership of the Chairman, the Group will monitor and review implementation of past decisions and consider and make recommendations on any matters within its remit raised by the parish priest, other members or parishioners.
- The Steering Group will meet as often as it deems necessary and at least four times a year to conduct its business.
- A quorum for any meetings shall be fifty percent of the Group.
- In the event that a Group member cannot attend a particular meeting, there are no substitution arrangements. However, any Group member may nominate another Group member as a proxy for a single Group meeting, but not for two Group meetings in a row. Such a proxy arrangement shall be subject to the Chairman's approval and such approval will not be unreasonably withheld.
- In the absence of the appointed Chairman or Secretary at the start of a meeting, that meeting will commence its business by appointing a Chairman and/or Secretary for that meeting.
- Where votes are required, each member will have one vote. No casting vote is required as all decisions are recommendations to the parish priest who will make the final decision.
- The Group may appoint such sub-committees as it thinks appropriate with terms of reference and membership specified by the Group.
- Any recommendation from the Group or a sub-committee is subject to approval of the parish priest.

### **Communication**

- A report of a meeting (or number of meetings) will appear in each issue of the parish magazine "The Grapevine" immediately. A member of the Steering Group will be appointed to liaise with the production team of "The Grapevine" to ensure effective communication between the Group and the parish.
- The minutes of the meeting will be made available on the notice boards of both churches within seven days after the meeting and published on the Parish website.

### **Periods of Office**

- All ordinary members will be appointed for a two-year term and they may be re-appointed for a further two-year term. They may not be appointed for a third consecutive term.
- Co-opted members will be appointed on the same terms as ordinary members.
- For the avoidance of doubt, no Group member may hold office for more than a period of four years.

- Members of the Committee whose two-year period of office comes to an end, must resign and can only seek re-election in accordance with the rules of the Constitution.

### **Changing the Constitution**

- This Constitution can be decided and amended by proposals which are supported by at least seventy-five per cent of the Group membership and are endorsed by the parish priest and the Open Meeting following the Group's decision, provided that any changes are consistent with Canon Law and Diocesan directives.
- This Constitution will be reviewed every five years.

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