



Policies of the PCC for the Parish of Louth

November 2016

Policy Review Process

General policies

The PCC has a number of policies covering various aspects of its work and activities that take place within the Parish. The PCC reviews these policies annually; this normally takes place at its first meeting following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. To facilitate this review, an office-holder has been identified to take ownership of each policy and to be responsible for ensuring that any recommendations for updating policies are brought to the attention of the PCC as part of its annual review, or sooner if this is required. The table below lists the policies currently in place:

Policy	Page	Document holder		Date policy agreed	Date of last review	Date review due	Notes	
Policy review process	2	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown	Sept. 2016	New policy	Sept. 2017		
1. Volunteer	3	Community Outreach Manager	Greg Gilbert	July 2012	June 2016	June 2017		
2. Lone worker	4	Community Outreach Manager	Greg Gilbert					
3. Health and Safety	5	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown					
4. Safeguarding	6	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown	June 2014				
5. Food Hygiene	9	Community Outreach Manager	Greg Gilbert	July 2012				
6. Environmental	10	Community Outreach Manager	Greg Gilbert					
7. No smoking	11	Community Outreach Manager	Greg Gilbert					
8. Grievance Procedure	12	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown					
9. Personal Harassment	13	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown					
10. Disciplinary	15	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown					
11. Equality and Diversity	16	Chair of PCC	Nick Brown					
12. Complaints	20	Church Warden(s) sitting on the Standing Committee	John Troughton and/or Dorothy Mansfield					Nov. 2016
13. Finance	21	Treasurer	Mike Crosby			June 2016	June 2017	Additional policies contained in Annual Report.
14. Pay	22	Treasurer	Mike Crosby		Sept. 2016	New policy	Sept. 2017	

After the annual review has been completed a full set of updated policies will be made available for public access on the Parish website (www.teamparishoflouth.org.uk) and from the Secretary of the PCC as well as being displayed on a noticeboard in each church building. Church Wardens are responsible for ensuring that people working each of the Parish Churches are able to access PCC policies, and the Community Outreach Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this is the case for those working in the Trinity Centre.

Other policies

The following policies will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the PCC after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting to ensure that they still comply with the appropriate provisions in Canon Law:

- (i) 'The PCC supports the marriage of those who have previously been married and whose partners are still living, in accordance with the relevant Regulations of the House of Bishops.'
- (ii) 'The PCC policy is to admit baptised children to communion, in accordance with the relevant Regulations.'

Volunteer Policy

Involving Volunteers

- The Team Parish of Louth has volunteers: to increase contact with and build relationships within the local community we serve, provide skills and labour that can be utilised by the Parish
- We aim to offer volunteers new skills and experiences.
- A CRB check is required for all staff where appropriate and may be required for volunteers. A Confidential Declaration must be completed by all staff and volunteers
- All volunteers will be asked to complete a registration form

Recruitment

- The Team Parish of Louth will aim to identify worthwhile and satisfying opportunities for volunteers.
- The Team Parish of Louth will aim to help any volunteer overcome barriers that may prevent them volunteering.
- Opportunities will be open to all regardless of age, gender, race or creed.
- The Team Parish of Louth volunteers are not introduced to replace paid staff.
- All prospective volunteers are interviewed to ensure their skills and interests are best met.

Training

- The Team Parish of Louth will offer an induction session for all volunteers, carried out either by a 'lead' volunteer or a member of staff
- The Team Parish of Louth will offer opportunities for volunteer training where it helps volunteers fulfil their roles effectively. Line Managers or lead volunteers will be responsible for organising this.
- All volunteers will have access to copies of appropriate policies and procedures.
- All volunteers will be briefed about confidentiality.
- All staff will have a staff handbook for reference.

Support

- All volunteers will have a named person as their contact in order to feedback future developmental needs, any problems and progress. A Mentor will be available if appropriate.
- All volunteers are covered by The Team Parish of Louth insurance policy whilst on the premises.
- Volunteers are made aware of health and safety procedures and requirements. As far as possible a safe environment will be provided for all volunteers.
- No information about volunteers will be released by The Team Parish of Louth, without consent from the volunteer, except on Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult issues
- A reference will be supplied to any volunteer seeking volunteer work or employment.
- Volunteers will be made to feel welcome and thanked regularly for their contribution.

Termination

- The Team Parish of Louth will give volunteers two weeks written notice of termination of the volunteering relationship, with an explanation of why.
- If the volunteer wishes to withdraw from volunteering we request that they give as much notice as possible - two weeks notice is the preferred.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Lone Worker Policy

Lone Workers are those who work by themselves. Risks to lone workers are low, but forethought and common sense can reduce these risks even further.

We recommend that the guide lines suggested below are followed but these may need adaptation to fit a particular circumstance. The safeguarding of staff and volunteers is paramount:

- Whilst working, carry a switched on mobile phone at all times and/or a personal alarm
- Wear an identification badge at all times
- If you have any concerns on entering the building, do not enter. Leave immediately, then contact the Police
- If you have any concerns whilst in the building please leave immediately or make yourself safe, then contact the Police or Line Manager
- If concerned about a meeting, then ask someone to be there with you.
- If in the building 'out of hours' then please keep the door locked
- The Parish or District may consider establishing a 'code alert' system.
- Arrange with your Line Manager/Volunteer Co-ordinator on a weekly basis, the hours that you will be in the building. Please notify them if these change.
- If unsure about meeting someone for the first time, arrange the meeting at a time when other people will be around
- Always leave the door open
- If employees have any concerns whilst in the building, they should contact their Line Manager
- If you are asked to carry out a task outside the premises, please notify your Line Manager
- If you are asked to do a task out of the building, please notify your Line Manager on your return

We recommend that each District establishes a protocol on key-holders and church opening times.

Health & Safety Policy

The Team Parish of Louth takes seriously its responsibility for the health and safety of those working in and visiting the Parish buildings. We will adhere to statutory guidelines and ensure the following:

- First Aid kits to be readily available in all buildings.
- All accidents are to be reported to the Church Wardens and recorded in the Accident Book (location of Accident Book to be advised).
- Employers Liability Insurance is renewed annually.
- Food Hygiene regulations are observed and reviewed annually.
- Training is offered in Food Hygiene for those handling food.
- All statutory certificates for equipment are renewed annually.
- All electrical equipment brought into Team Parish of Louth buildings must have a current PAT certificate.

We recommend that each District undertakes a Health and Safety Risk Assessment of their buildings – please see attached HSE form.

A Health and Safety Risk Assessment must be carried out before all events. Risk Assessments should be suitable for the task being assessed and guidance can be found on the HSE and Ecclesiastical Insurance websites.

POLICY STATEMENT ON THE PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. POLICY

The PCC of the Parish of Louth has adopted :-

1.1. *Protecting all God's children edition 4* House of Bishops' 2010 the Child Protection Policy for the Church of England

1.2. *Promoting a safe church* House of Bishops' 2006 the policy for safeguarding adults in the Church of England

A copy of the full relevant policies are obtainable on the Diocese of Lincoln's website or from the Rector (The Rectory, 49 Westgate, Louth, LN11 9YE).

The policy is summarised at appendix 1.

2. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

2.1. Supporting families, parents and carers. It is suggested that vulnerable adult and child protection should be seen within the context of family, parents and carer support. If one supports the family, parents or carer, one supports the vulnerable adult or child or young person. The PCC supports this approach.

2.2. Confidentiality. The House of Bishops' child protection policy contains (at page 33) guidance on Confidentiality see also appendix 1 of *Promoting a safe church*. While respecting the need for confidentiality it is legally possible, appropriate and highly desirable to disclose relevant information to the public authorities for the sake of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC understands both the need for confidentiality and the requirement to disclose information to protect those who are vulnerable.

2.3. Insurance. The House of Bishops' Policy *Protecting all God's children* page 29 gives advice about insurance for those working with children and young people The PCC has reviewed its arrangements in the light of this advice

2.4. Standards in working with children and young people. It is important that the environment in which children and youth groups meet is appropriate and safe. Further advice can be found at page 22 onwards *Protecting all God's children*). The PCC has reviewed its work in the light of this guidance.

2.5. Specific work/contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults and arrangements for checking those involved in this work. On behalf of the PCC the Safeguarding Officer and Rector meet at least annually to review all work undertaken in the Parish and establish those roles that require DBS checks. This assessment will also be required when new roles are created within the Parish. The Safeguarding Officer and Rector will maintain a list of all those holding DBS clearance. In line with confidentiality personal details of those holding DBS clearance as a result of roles they hold within the Parish will not be made available to anyone other than those legally entitled. The Rector and/or Safeguarding Officer will make a declaration to the PCC that a register of those requiring and holding DBS checks is maintained and up-to-date, and the PCC will confirm the roles for which a DBS check is required.

2.6. Support in all these schemes volunteers will be approved, supported and trained in line with the House of Bishops' Policy. The Diocese of Lincoln will make training on child protection available in each deanery. Information on training can be found at the safeguarding section of the Diocese of Lincoln website

2.7. Posters will be displayed which feature ChildLine and Parentline.

2.8. What to do if you are concerned about a particular child or young person. Do not keep this to yourself. Share the concern with someone you can trust who can help you – within the Parish the Rector or Safeguarding Officer provide a first point of contact for any such concerns. The PCC agrees this approach.

2.9. Monitoring arrangements. This policy, strategy, implementation and development will be reviewed annually by the PCC using the monitoring form at Appendix 2.

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Policy Summary

SAMPLE – to be displayed in all TPOL premises



Statement of Safeguarding Principles

The Church of England works in partnership with other Christian Churches and other agencies in delivering safeguarding. In partnership with the Methodist Church, the following statement of principles appears at the head of each safeguarding policy:

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults;
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and all adults
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse

To this end:

- We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation
- We will seek to protect survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Approved by this Parochial Church Council. To be reviewed in three years time (on date)

Name of Parochial Church Council:

Signed:

Name (print): Date:

The Parish Safeguarding Officer is:

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Policy Checklist

Diocese of Lincoln child protection and vulnerable adults checklist:

1. Has the House of Bishops' Policy been adopted and minuted by the PCC/employing organisation?
2. Has the PCC/employing organisation identified those posts which give opportunities for substantial unsupervised contact with children/young people / vulnerable adults on a regular basis?
3. Have those who have substantial unsupervised contact with children/young people/ vulnerable on a regular basis:-
 - Made a declaration/supplied birth certificate?
 - Have a job description?
 - Provided two references?
 - If new applicants, been interviewed?
 - Been checked with the CRB
 - Have they access to the House of Bishops' Policy statement
 - Are all those who have substantial unsupervised contact with children/young people/ vulnerable adults on a regular basis approved, and their approval minuted by the PCC?
 - Have they access to regular supervision?
 - Have they access to training agreed by the PCC, including child protection awareness training/training in child care/youth work/vulnerable adults
4. Is adequate insurance in place?
5. Do all volunteers know who to report matters of concern?
6. Access to independent advice
 - Have children and young people access to independent advice
 - Have you displayed a Childline/Parentline Poster?
7. Optional but good practice:-
 - Have standards been set by the PCC/employing organisation for Children and youth work and vulnerable adults?
 - Do those who have substantial unsupervised contact with children/young people and vulnerable adults on a regular basis receive an annual appraisal?
 - Have you registered your children's and youth workers with the Diocese?
 - Does the PCC receive a regular report on the work of the authorised groups? Does the PCC make regular inspections that the group is operating to the standard set?

Food Hygiene Policy

- Always wash hands before handling food.
- Wash hands after touching raw food/emptying the bin/going to the toilet.
- No smoking in the kitchen or whilst preparing the meals.
- Keep all surfaces, knives and cloths clean. Disinfect surfaces before starting food preparation.
- Ensure that all food is within date.
- Refrigerate all food that needs refrigeration.
- Put frozen food in freezer as necessary.
- Raw and cooked food must be transported in separate containers.
- If any food has been frozen at home, ensure it is properly defrosted before being reheated.
- Use separate surfaces and utensils for raw and cooked food.
- Use coloured boards for food chopping.
- Use hot, clean water to wash up, and change it frequently.
- Wear protective clothing (apron and hat) whilst preparing the food.
- All accidents to be recorded. First Aid kits are available - blue plasters for cuts.
- Fridge temperature at - 5°C or below.
- All fridges must have thermometers
- Do not cook if you are not well.

All those handling food should hold a current Basic Food Hygiene Certificate

A valid Food Hygiene Certificate only lasts three years.

Environmental Policy

We in the Team Parish of Louth take concern at the exploitation of the planet's rapidly diminishing resources. In attempting to contribute in our own way to slowing this depletion, we will endeavour to undertake the following action to minimize our impact on the environment.

- We will reduce the printing of non-essential documents and emails.
- We will endeavour to avoid using disposable cups and food packaging.
- We will ensure, where possible or practical, that printing and photocopying is double sided.
- We will use phone, e-mail or face-to-face discussion for communication wherever possible to reduce paper correspondence.
- We will provide recycling bins in the Parish for careful sorting of recyclable waste from landfill refuse.
- We will encourage recycling through charitable reuse schemes or donations to local voluntary organisations of objects such as furniture, computers, mobile phones and other electrical goods.
- Envelopes, stationery and scrap paper will be re-used where possible.
- Items will be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible and appropriate.
- Paper, cardboard, cans, plastic, glass, textiles, ink & toner cartridges, batteries, electrical equipment and green waste will be recycled in accordance with the District Council's recycling programme.
- We will purchase and sell 'Fair Trade' goods and use local labour if feasible.
- We will encourage those we work with to take up environmental initiatives and promote sustainable usage of resources.
- We will promote cycling, use of public transport and car sharing to local meetings.
- Standard electric light bulbs will be replaced with those that are more energy efficient where possible.
- Lights and equipment will be switched on only when in use and not left on 'standby'.
- Heating will be kept to a comfortable minimum and the thermostat will be regularly checked to ensure it is not set overly high.
- New electrical goods purchased will be 'A' rated where available.
- We will investigate the appropriate use of renewable energy and/or a green energy supplier.
- We will conserve water where possible.
- We endeavour to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity.
- We will take all possible measures not to expose the environment to chemicals that can harm people or nature.
- This policy will be reviewed annually to continue our pledge to environmental protection.

No Smoking Policy

The Team Parish of Louth endeavours to ensure that its building and working environments are safe places, without risks to health. We realise that tobacco smoke is a health hazard, and have adopted a total no smoking policy. The policy aims to:

- Guarantee a healthy working environment to protect the health of employees and users of the buildings
- Allow the air to be free from tobacco smoke
- Comply with the Public Smoking Ban in effect since 1st July 2007.
- Provide support for those addicted to tobacco and those who wishing to stop smoking.

Restrictions on smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere on Team Parish of Louth premises, in the entrances, halls or immediate grounds.

All visitors and staff are requested to follow the no smoking policy.

Any smoker requiring help and support in giving up smoking can ask for help from the local NHS Phoenix Stop Smoking Service - 01522 550681.

Grievance Procedure

It is important that if an individual feels dissatisfied with any matter relating to their work, they should have an immediate means by which such a grievance can be aired and resolved. (Except personal harassment for which there is a separate procedure; see Harassment Policy in Employee Handbook). **Under the Statutory Dispute Resolution Procedures, failure by an employee to put their grievance in writing and to follow these procedures, will prevent them lodging any subsequent claims at an Employment Tribunal.**

Stage 1

Informal discussions can frequently solve most problems and should be considered as a first step. However, if an employee feels this not to be appropriate and wishes their grievance to be formally recorded and investigated, they should proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2

The individual should fully explain the nature and extent of the grievance, in writing, addressed to the manager. The manager will then invite them to attend a meeting. If desired, a fellow employee or trade union representative may be present to explain the circumstances more clearly. The employee will then be notified in writing of the manager's decision.

Stage 3

If the problem has still not been resolved within 10 working days, the employee has the right to bring the matter to the attention of the management committee by submitting full details in writing to the Chairperson. They will then be invited to attend a meeting with the Chairperson (or other Committee Members) who will consider the matter. If desired, a fellow employee or trade union representative may be present to explain the circumstances more clearly and notify promptly. The employee will then be notified in writing of their decision. This is the final stage of the grievance procedure.

Personal Harassment Policy & Procedure

1. Many people in our society are victimised and harassed as a result of their race, religion/belief, creed, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. Whatever form it takes, personal harassment is always serious and is totally unacceptable. We recognise that personal harassment can take place in the workplace as well as outside and that this can seriously affect employee's working lives by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment.
2. We disapprove of all forms of personal harassment and seek to ensure that the workplace is sympathetic to all our employees. We publish these procedures to inform all employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide any employee who feels that they are a victim of personal harassment with a means of raising their complaint. We recognise that we have a duty of care to implement this policy and it is an express term and condition of employment for all employees to comply with it.
3. Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their actions or behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another and examples of harassment include;
 - insensitive jokes or pranks
 - lewd or abusive comments about personal appearance
 - deliberate exclusion from conversations
 - displaying offensive or abusive writing or materials
 - unwelcome personal contact
 - abusive, threatening or insulting words, comments or behaviour

These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at an appropriate level will be taken against any employees committing any form of personal harassment.

4. If you are the victim of minor harassment you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and you should ask them to stop. We recognise that complaints of personal harassment and particularly of sexual harassment can sometimes be of a sensitive and intimate nature in this case it may be more appropriate to hand a written request to the harasser.
5. Where the informal approach fails or if you feel the harassment is more serious you should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the manager or Chairperson as a formal complaint in writing. If possible you should keep evidence, notes or a diary so that the written complaint can include:
 - The name of the harasser
 - The nature of the alleged harassment
 - The dates, times and circumstances of the alleged harassment
 - The names of any witnesses
 - Any action already taken by yourself to stop the alleged harassment
6. On receipt of a formal complaint we will take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an investigation to take place. This may involve temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with full pay until the matter has been resolved.
7. The manager, Chairperson or vice-Chairperson with delegated responsibility, will then carry out a full investigation. All employees and committee members involved in the investigation will be expected to act in complete confidence.
8. When the investigation has been concluded, a written draft report of the findings and the investigators proposed decision will be sent to you and the alleged harasser. If the victim or the alleged harasser is

dissatisfied with any findings in the report, they should raise them within five working days of receipt of the report. The investigator will then consider any points of concern and a final report will be sent to the victim and the alleged harasser.

9. If the report finds that the complaint of personal harassment is well founded, the harasser will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Any employee who receives a formal warning or is dismissed may appeal using the disciplinary appeal procedure.
10. If an employee complains of harassment, they will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if the report concludes that the complaint is untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, subsequent disciplinary action may be taken against them.

Disciplinary Procedure

Scope

This disciplinary procedure applies to all staff and volunteers.

Purpose

The disciplinary procedure is the means by which rules are observed and standards maintained. It provides for a method of dealing with any shortcomings in conduct or performance, and can help an undisciplined or poorly performing employee or volunteer to become effective again. The main purpose of a disciplinary procedure is to encourage an employee or volunteer whose standard of work or conduct is unsatisfactory to improve.

Policy

The Team Parish of Louth operates a disciplinary procedure which allows and encourages its managers to be objective, fair and consistent when dealing with shortcomings performance or conduct. The procedure is reviewed regularly and is based on ACAS recommendations. No disciplinary action (other than suspension - on full pay if an employee) may be taken until the case has been fully investigated. At every stage in the procedure the employee or volunteer will have the opportunity to state his or her case and be represented by a fellow employee or volunteer. An employee or volunteer will have the right of appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

Procedure

Minor faults will be dealt with informally; alternatives to the formal procedure include;

1. Dropping the matter as there is no case to answer.
2. Counselling for the individual concerned.

Oral Warning: Significant failure to comply with contract or agreements may result in the employee or volunteer being given a formal oral warning which will be recorded; the warning will be disregarded (and will be kept only for historical purposes) after 2 months' satisfactory performance.

Written Warning: If the offence is serious, if there is no improvement in standards, or if a further offence occurs, a written warning will be given which will include the reason for the warning and a note that. If there is no improvement after 1 month, a final written warning will be given.

Final Written Warning: If conduct or performance is still unsatisfactory, a final written warning will be given making clear that any reoccurrence of the offence or other serious misconduct within a period of 1 month will result in dismissal.

Dismissal: If there is no satisfactory improvement or if further serious misconduct occurs, the employee or volunteer will be dismissed.

Gross Misconduct: If, after an investigation it is confirmed that an employee or volunteer has committed an offence including (but not limited to) any of the following, the normal consequence will be dismissal.

1. Verbal or physical abuse of others.
2. Any breach of the Policies and Procedures concerning relationships between employees or volunteers and past or present youth participants of a programme.
3. Incapacity for work due to being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
4. Theft or Fraud.
5. Any action which may bring The Team Parish of Louth into disrepute.

Disciplinary Appeal

An employee or volunteer has a statutory right to lodge an appeal in respect of any disciplinary action taken against them. If employee or volunteer wishes to appeal, they must do so in writing within seven days of being notified of any disciplinary action being taken. The individual will then be invited to attend a further hearing and a fellow employee or a trade union representative may again accompany him or her. Where possible the disciplinary appeal procedure will be conducted by a committee member previously unconnected with the disciplinary action taken thus far. This ensures that an independent decision into the severity and appropriateness of the disciplinary action can be made. The employee or volunteer will be notified of the result of the appeal in writing within seven days of the hearing.

Equality and Diversity Policy

We aim to ensure that:

- No one receives less favourable treatment on grounds of race, colour, creed, nationality or ethnic or national origins, or is disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified on non-racial grounds, or victimised for taking action against racial discrimination or harassment, or instructed to put under pressure or discriminate unlawfully.
- The organisation is free of conduct that violates the dignity of waged or unwaged workers or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating working environment.
- Opportunities for volunteering, employment, training and promotion are equally open to candidates from all groups in a diverse society; and
- Selection for voluntary roles, employment, promotion, transfer and training, and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit.
- The policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment and selection to termination of employment as well as former worker's rights.

Recruitment and Promotion

- We will endeavour wherever possible, to ensure that any employee or PCC member making selection, recruitment or promotion decisions will not discriminate, in making these decisions.
- Promotion decisions will be made solely on merit and in accordance with our equal opportunity policy.
- Job descriptions and job advertisements will be consistent and in accordance with our equal opportunity policy.
- We will not advertise or confine our recruitment to media sources or areas that will result in applicants from a particular grouping.
- All applicants will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- All short-listing and interviews should be carried out by more than one person wherever possible.
- We will endeavour to have an equal balance between male and female persons who carry out short listing or interviewing wherever possible.
- We will endeavour to ascertain if any applicant requires special assistance to either complete the application form or to attend an interview.

Racial Equality

The Team Parish of Louth is committed to building an organisation that makes full use of the talents, skills, experience and different cultural perspectives available in a multi-ethnic society, and where people feel they are respected and valued and can achieve their potential regardless of race, colour, creed, nationality, national or ethnic origin.

The organisation will follow the recommendations of the Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE) code of practice in employment to achieve racial equality in all its employment policies, procedures and practices.

We aim to ensure that:

- No one receives less favourable treatment on grounds of race, colour, creed, nationality or ethnic or national origins, or is disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified on non-racial grounds, or victimised for taking action against racial discrimination or harassment, or instructed to put under pressure or discriminate unlawfully.
- The organisation is free of conduct that violates the dignity of waged or unwaged workers or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating working environment.
- Opportunities for volunteering, employment, training and promotion are equally open to candidates from all racial groups; and
- Selection for voluntary roles, employment, promotion, transfer and training, and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit.

- The policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment and selection to termination of employment as well as former worker's rights.

Gender, Marital Status or Caring Responsibility

The organisation believes that a flexible approach to working arrangements brings benefits to our staff and our organisation.

We will not discriminate, treat differently or unfairly any volunteer, employee or contractor based on their gender, marital status or caring responsibility.

This incorporates our obligations under the Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

- We will at all times comply with the law requiring us to consider applications for flexible working from employees with young children. We will consider such requests carefully and objectively and, unless it would clearly cause difficulties for our operational delivery or the employee, we will accommodate reasonable requests. This may mean offering flexible hours, or time off for family or religious needs.
- Eligible employees will be granted time off for parental or adoption leave, or to deal with an emergency involving their child, partner or anyone who relies on them for care.
- We will ensure that we comply at all times with the requirements of the law related to maternity and paternity.
- This will include: paid time off for antenatal care and additional health and safety protection for expectant mothers and their unborn child during pregnancy, whilst a new mother, or as long as she is breastfeeding.
- New mothers will be able to return to their job after a period of maternity leave to be agreed with the organisation but no less than the minimum allowance under legislation.
- We will not dismiss or penalise pregnant employees for any pregnancy-related sickness absence, or for any reasons connected with pregnancy or maternity leave. This applies to all employees no matter how short a time they have been working for us and regardless of how few hours worked.
- Fathers who have been working for us for at least a year will be entitled to take two weeks paid paternity leave when their child is born.

Sexuality

The organisation will at all times comply with our obligations under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003.

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003 outlaws discrimination in employment and training on the grounds of sexual orientation. It covers people whether they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.

Age

The organisation will not discriminate against, treat unfairly or differently or harass any member of staff, volunteer, contractor, service provider or client or candidate for any post or service based on their age.

Where age restrictions on services or employment either as a member of staff or volunteer are a condition of funding agreements or service delivery agreements we will ensure that this is fully publicised and that people are made aware of the restrictions.

Physical or Mental Disability or Mental Health

The organisation is committed to building an organisation that makes full use of the talents, skills and experience available in a diverse workforce where people feel they are respected and valued regardless of their physical or mental ability or mental health.

The organisation will follow the recommendations of the Disability Rights Commission code of practice in employment and occupation to ensure equality in all its employment policies, procedures and practices.

We also recognise our duties in ensuring that our premises, services and training are accessible to disabled people and will work to ensure that we do not prevent people from realising their full potential due to physical or other barriers that we create.

Definition of Disabled:

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In order to ensure that we are best meeting our organisational needs we will:

- Interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.
- Ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.
- Make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.
- Take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.
- Each year, to review the commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees know about progress and future plans.

Religion or Belief

The organisation will at times comply with our obligations under the Employment Equality (Religious or Belief) Regulation 2003.

The Employment Equality (Religious or Belief) Regulation 2003 outlaws discrimination in employment on the grounds of religious or philosophical belief.

Religion or belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. Although this does not include any philosophical or political beliefs unless it is similar to a religious belief we will take into account individual beliefs and views and attempt to accommodate all fairly under the spirit of this policy.

Employees will have the right to observe traditions, festivals, dress codes etc. related to their religious or philosophical beliefs in as far as it does not seriously impinge on their ability to fulfil the duties of their post. We will make every effort to ensure that organisationally we take into account of beliefs and religious requirements in planning our activities and delivery.

Unrelated Criminal Conviction

The organisation is committed to ensuring that any volunteer, member of staff, manager or trustee who is placed in a position of trust working with vulnerable people is not unsuitable for their duties due to previous criminal convictions relating to drugs, violence or abuse.

In order to fulfil this commitment we will use the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of all applicants for positions of trust.

In doing this we will only take into account information related to convictions that are judged by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer to disqualify candidates from working with vulnerable children or elderly people, or may present a risk to the organisation

As an organisation using the DBS to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the organisation complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

Storage and Access

Disclosure Information is never kept on an applicant's personal file and is always kept separately and securely, in a lockable, non-portable storage container with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997. Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure Information has been revealed and we recognise that it is a **criminal offence** to pass information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosed information for longer than six-months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Complaints Policy

Your Right to Complain

The Team Parish of Louth strives to achieve the highest standards in all of its activities. You have the right to complain if you feel the Team Parish of Louth is not meeting those standards and you are not satisfied with any part of the service.

The Team Parish of Louth takes all complaints seriously and through the complaints procedure it aims to:

- Provide an effective way for you to inform us if you are not happy.
- Support your right to complain and disagree.
- Sort out your complaint quickly and effectively.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Team Parish of Louth. However, this policy does not cover complaints from members of staff on matters relating to their employment, which are dealt with under the Team Parish of Louth's Disciplinary or Grievance Procedures.

How Can I Make a Complaint?

- If you have a complaint, speak to the Churchwarden (or, at Trinity Centre, the Community Outreach Manager) in the first instance. The Churchwarden will record the complaints and take appropriate action and let you know the outcome in writing.
- If you are not satisfied, please make the complaint in writing to the Churchwarden.
- If it cannot be resolved the matter will be taken to the Parish Standing Committee, and the Rector/PCC Lay Chair informed. Any outcome will be communicated in writing.

Support in Making a Complaint

Making a complaint may not be easy, and you might feel that you need support during this process. You should be supported to seek the assistance of a person independent of the Team Parish of Louth. This may be a friend or family member. Staff or other volunteers cannot act as advocates when a complaint is being made, as this may involve a conflict of interest.

The Team Parish of Louth will keep your complaint confidential as far as possible, however, we may need to share your complaint with other people who need to know about it in order to resolve it. Your complaint will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

If any of the information included in this document is unclear, or should you have any queries, please speak to the Churchwardens in the first instance.

Finance Policy

Money Handling Procedures:

- All monies paid to the Team Parish of Louth must be recorded
- All monies in and out are recorded.
- Accounts will be examined annually by an external auditor.
- It is advised that no-one counts money alone
- All expenses incurred by staff and volunteers must be reimbursed within four working weeks
- All expenses must be proved by receipt
- Expenses forms to be used for all claims

Paying Wages:

- Employees' contracts will state their wage per hour where appropriate, as well as the frequency and method of payment.
- We recommend that employees will be paid monthly by cheque or direct debit.
- Employees must receive a pay advice slip

Invoices etc:

- Invoices will be sent out to each Hirer at the end of every month, containing the full amount they have left to pay (with any deposits already received having been deducted).
- The Hirer will then have 28 days in which to pay the invoice.
- If an invoice is not paid within this time, they will be sent a reminder the following month, then an additional letter, and finally if payment is still not received, a phone call.

Annual Budget etc:

- Accounts will be presented annually.
- Predicted budgets will be costed annually

Income

- Any plate donations left at funerals for other causes will have 10% or £10 (whichever is the greater) donated to the Church DCC. If there is no named cause, all donations will go to the Church funds.

Pay Policy

Pay policy for staff employed by the Parish of Louth (whether directly or through an individual DCC)

Apprentice rate

Those engaged under apprenticeships will be paid at the relevant hourly rate according to legislation.

Basic work rate

All staff employed will be paid at least the National Living Wage as set by the Low Pay Commission on behalf of the government.

Other staff

Where a role requires additional training or skills the PCC would look to pay a differential to recognise these additional characteristics.

Payments for all staff will be reviewed annually and implemented on 1st April.

Policy for setting fees for third part and discretionary fees for occasional offices

The PCC policy is to increase in line with inflation the fees for occasional services that are paid to third parties, taking the RPI figure for September to calculate this, and rounding up to the nearest pound.