ST MARY STOKE

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COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Parochial Church Council of St Mary Stoke, Ipswich

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is committed to its role, which primarily includes "cooperation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical." But there may be a time when you need to complain. This complaints procedure is for those who are unhappy about matters for which the PCC is responsible that have affected them. Prior to using this formal procedure, the PCC encourages an informal approach to the Vicar or a Churchwarden to see if the matter can be resolved that way.

Before you use this procedure

If your complaint is about the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser in the first instance at Karen.Galloway@cofesuffolk.org. If your complaint is about the Vicar or another minister, please raise the matter with the Vicar; if it remains unresolved you may contact the Archdeacon at archdeacon.rich@cofesuffolk.org (see also "I have a complaint about misconduct by a member of the clergy – what can I do?" at churchofengland.org/media/1937470/makingcomplainta4.pdf). If your complaint concerns your employment by the PCC, please refer to and follow the grievance procedure in your terms and conditions of employment.

Making a Complaint to the PCC

Complaints should be made in writing or by email to the PCC Secretary, whose name and contact details are set out below. The PCC Secretary will ensure that your complaint is:

- treated seriously;
- handled fairly, without bias or discrimination;
- treated confidentially.

You should complain within 3 months of the event you are complaining about. You need to set out:

- your full name and address;
- what you think went wrong and how it has affected you, including enough detail to show why you are aggrieved;
- what (if anything) you think the PCC should do to put it right.

If someone else complains on your behalf, the PCC will need written confirmation from you saying that you agree for that person to act for you.

The PCC Secretary should immediately record receipt of a complaint in a log.

How Your Complaint Will Be Dealt With

The PCC Secretary will write to you or send you an email to confirm receipt of your complaint within 5 days of its receipt, and arrange for it to be considered by the PCC's Complaints Committee. If your complaint refers to particular individuals who are members of the Complaints Committee, it will meet without them being present.

The PCC's Complaints Committee will look fairly into your complaint, including seeking the views of any individuals, whether members of the PCC or otherwise, to which your complaint refers. The Complaints Committee may appoint one or more persons to look into the matter on its behalf, but it will be the Complaints Committee that makes any decisions. The Complaints Committee and any such appointed persons will treat the matter confidentially.

The Complaints Committee may invite you to present your complaint to them. If so, you may attend with a friend or representative if you wish. The meeting should be held as informally as possible. The Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting, introduce the members and emphasise confidentiality. The meeting will be minuted by the Committee.

The PCC Secretary will write to you with the conclusions of the PCC Complaints Committee's review and reasons for that outcome. The PCC Secretary will aim to respond to you in this way as soon as possible, and no longer than 6 weeks after receipt of your complaint. This will be the PCC's final response to your complaint.

If you remain dissatisfied, you may wish to consider contacting the Charity Commission – while Parochial Church Councils are independent bodies, they are charities and, as such, are regulated by the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission can be contacted either via their website (gov.uk/complain-about-charity) or by writing to them at Charity Commission First Contact, PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG.

Contacts

PCC Secretary	Paul Byrne
Address	St Mary Stoke, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 8BX
Email	Paulb@stmarystoke.co.uk

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC.