

August 17, 2025

# TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL, PARISH OF THE HOLY FAMILY, ESHER & THAMES DITTON

## 1. BACKGROUND

Pope Paul VI wrote "It is the function of a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) to investigate everything pertaining to pastoral activities, to weigh them carefully, and to set forth practical conclusions concerning them, so as to promote conformity of the life and actions of the people of God with the Gospel".

The need for a PPC for our Parish is reinforced by the ongoing acute shortage of Priests in our Diocese, meaning our Priest will only have time to concentrate on the duties which only he can undertake.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

To promote the Mission of the Church within the Parish.

To be responsible, together with the Parish Priest, for the management and operation of the Parish.

To communicate regularly with the Parish Community, to ensure the views of Parishioners are understood and represented.

To represent the Parish in discussions with the Diocese, the Moderated Parish and other groups, as appropriate.

## 3. AUTHORITY

The authority to run the Parish shall reside with the Parish Priest, under whose auspices the PPC shall sit. The PPC shall have a consultative role, however the Parish Priest shall be bound to consider the decisions of the PPC attentively, especially where these are unanimous in nature. This principle underscores the collaborative nature of the Parish's governance while respecting the ongoing authority of the Parish Priest.

#### 4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the PPC shall include the Parish Priest plus a minimum of 3 and maximum of 8 Parishioners. The Chair of the PPC shall be nominated by the Parish Priest, but the representatives from Holy Name Church and Our Lady of Lourdes Church shall be elected by the Parishioners attending each Church.

The PPC shall appoint a Secretary who may or may not be a member of the PPC, and a Treasurer, who should be the treasurer of the Finance Committee, who shall be a member of the PPC, to ensure efficient administration and financial management of the Parish. Additional members may be co-opted onto the PPC based on recommendations made by either the Chair or the Parish Priest, to ensure the PPC remains responsive to the Parish's needs and priorities.

Members of the PPC shall serve terms of 3 years maximum, with elections or appointments taking place as part of the Parish Annual General Meeting (AGM), currently scheduled to take place in April of each year. Existing members may stand for re-election to ensure continuity and the retention of experienced individuals on the PPC.

For any meeting of the PPC to be considered quorate, a minimum of 3 members must be present. This shall ensure that discussions and decisions are reflective of a representative cross-section of the Council and uphold the principle of shared governance and accountability contained in the PPC's Terms of Reference.

#### 5. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The PPC shall meet regularly to ensure the effective governance of the Parish and to address emerging issues promptly. Meetings shall be held at a minimum of every second month, with additional meetings being convened as necessary to address urgent matters or significant developments within the Parish. The schedule of meetings shall be communicated at the beginning of each year, to align with key Parish events and priorities and the Parish AGM. This structured approach shall ensure the PPC remains proactive and responsive to the needs of the Parish community.

#### 6. COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is critical to ensuring the Parish remains unified and well-informed. The PPC shall actively engage with the Parish community via platforms including newsletters, public announcements and digital channels, sharing updates on Council decisions, announcing upcoming events and informing Parishioners of matters requiring wider Parish input. Open forum meetings may be organised periodically to encourage dialogue between the PPC and Parishioners, and to permit concerns, suggestions and feedback to be addressed collaboratively. By fostering transparency and inclusivity, the PPC shall aim to build trust between itself and the Parish community.