Principles and Practicalities for Running A larger single parish in Winwick deanery

General Principles

- The main purpose of FFM is to better equip local churches for mission: introducing people to Jesus, deepening discipleship, raising up Christian leaders, and developing more justice initiatives.
- Although some ministries will work best at a larger parish level, a great deal of mission will be most effective locally, where strong, close relationships with people can be formed, and the church's ministry can be responsive to the local context.
- The intention is to give every church as much autonomy and freedom as possible to arrange for mission and ministry to happen in a way that is suitable for the local context and honours the church's tradition, while growing the kingdom of God.

Clergy Leadership

- Every church will have a named clergy person leading them.
- They will be responsible for worship, provide the first point of contact for pastoral concerns, and take a lead on overseeing and organising the missional work of the church, in partnership with the Local Leadership Team.
- They will meet with the Team Rector on a regular basis to report and discuss the ministry and mission of the churches/congregations they lead, and they will provide a short, written report on an agreed regular basis to the LSP PCC.
- The clergy person will be expected to maintain open communication with the PCC and Team Rector on behalf of the church they lead, not least by making the weekly Clergy Leadership Team meetings a priority.

Local Leadership Teams

- Local Leadership Teams will work with their named clergy person to oversee the life of the church, including missional outreach and social justice projects. In particular, they will be responsible for…
    - Organising regular and seasonal worship, on Sundays and midweek according to the local pattern
    - Overseeing existing mission and ministry activities
    - Encouraging and developing new projects and communities which will reach people for Jesus
    - Providing for the pastoral care and discipleship of members of the church
    - Ensuring due attention to safeguarding and health and safety matters
    - Setting an annual budget in co-operation with the wider Finance Team
    - Supporting the occasional offices within the church
    - Drawing attention to any matters of concern to the PCC.

Local Leadership team: Practical matters

- The Local Leadership Team may be of any size, although experience suggests between 6 and 10 is a good size.

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- The clergy lead will always be on the Local Leadership Team and will agree locally who else should be on it.
- Initially, this should be in consultation with the current PCC as part of the transition. Going forwards, the Local Leadership Team will agree arrangements for appointing new members, including a system for regularly drawing new people in and allowing others to step down.
- The Local Leadership Team is not a legal entity, so there are no requirements for membership - except all members of the leadership team must be safely recruited.
- The PCC should be informed of the membership of each Local Leadership Team and any changes during the year.

New worshipping communities and social justice projects.

- New worshipping communities or social justice projects will also require oversight.
- Some projects may be small or simple enough for the regular Local Leadership Team to take responsibility for them, combined with supervisory support from their clergy person.
- Other larger or more complex projects may require their own leadership team, which will also be staffed and run locally.
- The line between projects is by its very nature, a blurred one and each case will need looking at on its own merits. As a project matures those involved will need to work with their supervising clergy, and the team rector to decide if and when the project should develop its own leadership team.
- However, key features of a worshipping community or social justice project that suggest a separate leadership team include:
    - Frequency of meeting: a weekly project is more likely to need a separate oversight team than a monthly one.
    - Named leaders, who are primarily responsible for the day to day running of the ministry, including practical, pastoral, worship and mission
    - Access to funds set aside for the project (whether from external grant, fundraising or allocation from the planting church's own budget).

- Each such Leadership Team will have a named clergy supervisor, who is not required to be part of the team, but will meet regularly with the leaders to provide oversight and pastoral care.
- Where such congregations or projects already exist, then the current supervision relationship will remain in place.
- New projects will have arrangements made for their oversight.

Matters of Conscience in a Larger Single Parish

- In accordance with diocesan policy, the Larger Parish PCC and Team Rector will commit to protect the diversity and theological integrity across the larger parish. They **will not** seek to impose a uniform practice on matters of conscience or theology. This will be clearly and unambiguously written into PCC protocols and Team Rector role descriptions.

- A PCC protocol will include a clear statement of delegation of matters of conscience to the Local Leadership Team of each worshipping community. This means that local practice on matters of conscience, such as women's ministry and marriage after divorce will be agreed by Local Leadership Teams, in partnership with their named priest for each church community.

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- Individual clergy will maintain the right to decide on such matters personally according to their theological conviction.

- In relation to 'Prayers of Love and Faith' and 'Blessings for same sex couples' the matter is more complicated, not least because the provision it is yet to be formally approved by General Synod.

- Pending approval and formal guidance from national church, any provision for same sex blessings in local churches will require an 'opt in' from **both** the PCC (in consultation with the local leadership team in the case of a church within an LSP) and the named clergy person. No clergy person will be compelled to perform same sex blessings and will maintain the authority within their named church to lead and teach according to their theological conviction.

- The Church of England is a place of rich theological and ecclesiological diversity, this will be protected within a larger single parish and may therefore, at times, cause challenges as it would within the wider communion. Support is being provided to Chapter and Clergy Leadership Teams throughout the transition process to facilitate good solutions to such challenges. Supported by the Team Rector, Clergy Leadership Teams will continue to seek ways to ensure that all can flourish in their ministry.

The LSP PCC

Remit

- The larger parish PCC will be the legal entity for the new parish and will operate under current Church Representation Rules. It will therefore deal with all legal and governance matters, including faculties, employment, and other statutory obligations and policies.
- It will ensure appropriate attention to safeguarding across the parish.
- It will supervise the budget and make decisions on expenditure outside of agreed budgets.
- While providing legal oversight and resource, matters of mission and ministry will be the work of Local Leadership Teams.

Membership

- The Team Rector will always sit on the PCC, and will normally chair the meetings. The clergy will elect a further 2 representatives from among their number.
- There will be two 'PCC Churchwardens' who will be elected by the Larger Single Parish in the usual way.
- There will be a further six lay members elected on a three-year rolling term.
- There may be up to two other clergy or lay members co-opted by the PCC.
- PCC members will be responsible for the ministry of the whole larger parish rather than 'representing' the church they attend. The PCC will appoint its own secretary, treasurer, electoral roll officer, safeguarding officer, health and safety officer etc. who need not be members of the PCC.

Elections

- Towards the end of 2026, a shadow PCC will be formed. This will begin the task of working together on a larger strategic canvas.
- It is intended that the shadow PCC members will become the first members of the new PCC, but there is flexibility in this.

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- At the first actual PCC of the new parish each representative will be allocated at random to year 1, 2 or 3 for stepping down, in order to avoid the entire PCC being replaced at once.
- Going forward 4 lay representatives will be elected each year.
- Representatives should serve no more than two terms before making way for a new representative.

Meeting cycle

- The PCC will meet at least 3 times a year, with extraordinary meetings added if needed to transact urgent business.
- In addition, there will be two parish meetings a year, open to any member of any church to attend, where the PCC will bring people up to date and take questions, one of which will be the APCM.

Minutes

- Minutes will be kept by an appointed secretary, and distributed to all churches, for full transparency.

Diversity

- Fit for Mission is absolutely committed to maintaining the breadth of tradition and integrity within the Church of England, and to encourage everybody to play a full part in the life of the church.
- There are no restrictions on who can be part of a Local Leadership Team or Local Wardens Team, and anybody the local church considers suitable may be asked to join, following appropriate safer recruiting practice.
- Anyone who would be eligible to stand as a PCC member currently would be eligible to put themselves forward as for the new single PCC.
- Similarly, we want to encourage young people to take a full part in the life of their church.
- As above there are no restrictions on who can be part of a Local Leadership Team or Wardens Team, so young people whom the local community judge to be of sufficient age and maturity to contribute helpfully to a local leadership team may be asked to join one, again following appropriate Safer Recruiting practice.
- Any young person over the age of 16 may put themselves forward for the PCC.

The Parish Churchwardens

- Current Churchwardens and Navigation Team are considering the final number of churchwardens within the LSP. Previous LSPs have taken slightly different approaches, but it is likely that the following model will be adopted:

- Each church Local Leadership Team will identify a single Churchwarden, to be the senior lay person in that church.
- A further two Churchwardens will be identified who will sit on the PCC and whose role will be primarily one of oversight rather than hands-on work.
- All the Churchwardens together will form the Churchwardens' sub-committee of the larger parish PCC.
- Churchwardens will be elected in the usual way at the annual meeting and candidates will be asked to say beforehand which churchwarden's role they are putting themselves forward for.
- Each member of the Churchwardens' sub-committee will have a visible and active presence within their own church / worshipping community and are there to ensure the smooth running of the local congregation.

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- They may be supported by assistant wardens / sidespersons and their specific tasks will vary from one church to another depending on the local context.
- For some churches it might be that occasional offices will be the main focus or for others, facilitating and arranging the practical matters around the services. For others it might be the hire of the church hall that needs managing. Others may be responsible for the practical details around Sunday services. This will be agreed locally depending on the needs of the church.
- Most churches will need the churchwarden to take on some work around the routine maintenance of looking after the buildings.
- Delivery of certain aspects of their current role will be undertaken by the Support Services team of the larger parish, but churchwardens remain responsible for ensuring regular worship, safety and security of buildings and congregations are properly managed.

Finances

- Each Local Leadership Team will have a finance co-ordinator who will sit on a finance sub-committee of the PCC. Each year they will agree an income and expenditure budget, in partnership with the Finance Team and signed off by the PCC.
- Once the budget is agreed, the Local Leadership Team will have full authority to make financial decisions inside the agreed budget, abiding by the agreed principles for making and reclaiming payments.
- Expenditure outside the agreed budget will need to come to the PCC, either through the scheduled meetings or an extraordinary one if there something needs approving urgently.
- The Local Leadership Team will have access to the financial software via their Finance Lead, providing up to date information on the state of finances at any one time.
- Money given explicitly to a particular church will be credited to that particular church, not put into a general pot. Any 'pooling' of funds, for example insurance contributions, or to fund Support Services or other shared initiatives, will be mutually agreed by local treasurers and LSP PCC.
- The long-term goal is for reserves to be used either for capital expenditure, or missional investment, rather than day to day expenses. The Local Leadership Team will lead on such proposals, in partnership with the PCC.
- A detailed paper laying out the financial principles and procedures of the new Larger Single Parish will be prepared by the Finance team.
- The PCC will be the trustee of all parish property and fund overall, with local church funds and budgets managed by Local Leadership Teams as described.

Safeguarding

- Every local community should have a named person responsible for safeguarding. They will be the first port of call for the congregation to raise safeguarding concerns with, and will liaise with the parish's Safeguarding Officer.
- They may be part of the Local Leadership Team, or there may be other arrangements for reporting regularly on safeguarding. There will be, in addition, a safeguarding subcommittee of the PCC, chaired by the Parish Safeguarding Officer, which every local safeguarding officer will sit on, meeting at intervals through the year, and reporting to the PCC.

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