

# **NCMA Code of Conduct**

## **1. Introduction**

So that we can work well together, the Ministry Area Council has a set of ground rules for all meetings at Church and Ministry Area level which help to facilitate trust, honesty, and accountability in all we do. We respect each other's calling and seek always to treat each other with love and courtesy. At all times we want to remember that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things (Galatians 5:22-23). It is as we love one another that everyone will know that we are Jesus' disciples (John 13:35). In all that we do, we will observe the following guidelines.

## **2. How we conduct meetings**

### **2.1 General**

- (a) The agenda and any documents that will be tabled at the meeting must be circulated at least 48 hours before the meeting
- (b) If anyone wishes to raise an item in any other business they must give 24 hours' notice
- (c) The Chair retains a discretion to take agenda items in the best order they see fit
- (d) If reasonable adjustments are required to enable a person to participate fully in the meeting, the Chair shall be notified in advance
- (e) All decisions and minutes are available to the whole Ministry Area on request
- (f) Minutes of every Church Committee Meeting shall be forwarded to the MAC in draft form as soon as they are become available

### **2.2 Confidentiality**

- (a) Our committees will often discuss confidential items. It is important that we are clear about what can and cannot be discussed or shared outside of the meetings. In particular:
- (b) All discussions at MAC/ Leadership Team/ Church Committee are confidential
- (c) We take care to respect the agreed channels of communication (see Communication below)

### **2.3 Listening to Each Other**

In our meetings we want every voice to be heard. In particular:

- (a) We don't interrupt each other but will allow people to finish what they have to say before asking a question.
- (b) All questions and contributions are made through the Chair who will ensure all are heard.
- (c) We will listen fully, attentively and politely whilst others are speaking. This may sometimes mean that we need to manage our face and our body language as well as our words.

- (d) We don't mutter or have conversations whilst someone else is speaking.
- (e) We think about whether what we are about to say may cause hurt, offence or pain to others and then find another way of stating our point if necessary.
- (f) If we are not able to attend a meeting and wish to express a view on an agenda item, then we will write to or email the Chairperson who will communicate our points in discussion at the meeting.

## **2.4 When we disagree**

Sometimes we will discuss challenging and emotive issues, at such times it is vital that everyone has a share of voice and that people give and receive care and respect.

- (a) If we disagree with something then we have a responsibility to say so and say why, clearly and respectfully.
- (b) We ask questions and make comments in a constructive manner avoiding insults, sarcasm and criticism for its own sake.
- (c) We don't raise our voices to each other.
- (d) We try to be aware of our own feelings, taking time and space to calm down and seeking pastoral support if we need to.
- (e) We resist the temptation to judge when someone shares a view different from ours.
- (f) We resist the temptation to contradict when someone expresses a viewpoint that we do not share.
- (g) When we disagree we will show respect to others by explaining why we disagree
- (h) We will acknowledge our disagreements, listen with compassion to people's experiences and seek to understand better how they have come to their point of view.
- (i) We will not always agree but where disagree we will do so with respect and courtesy

## **3. Outside meetings**

Serving our church family through membership of a committee extends beyond the meeting room. In particular we must remember that:

- (a) We are here to represent the views of our church family, not just our own.
- (b) Whilst it can be helpful to explore issues in conversation with congregation members ahead of a meeting, we do not use written methods such as letters, emails, or social media to canvas opinion or garner support for a particular point of view.
- (c) When we have come to an agreement as a group or when a motion has been carried, then we will all support the decision that has been made.
- (d) Remember that social media is a powerful tool which can do much good, but also much harm. You should be aware of your responsibility as committee members and should do or say nothing on social media that could tarnish the reputation of Christ's Gospel, the Church in

Wales or cause upset or harm to one of your fellow disciples. All church volunteers are encouraged to read and adhere to the Church in Wales Social Media Guidance.

- (e) We do not point out the shortcomings of other committee members to reinforce the cogency of our argument or to undermine theirs

#### **4. Communication Policy**

- (a) All communication is to be in a reasonable, measured tone. God's love should be manifest in our written and verbal communication.
- (b) Unless it is not reasonably practicable, all correspondence concerning church business is to be by email. This is because email gives us a clear, searchable record of correspondence whereas WhatsApp, text etc does not. It can also be shared more easily. Although this is a strong preference, other methods of communication are permitted. But, use of an alternative method does not guarantee confidentiality in relation to matters of church business. Unless it is marked 'confidential', such a message will still be shared.
- (c) Unless it is urgent, all correspondence is to take place at a reasonable time. In particular, there should be no correspondence, if reasonably practicable, on church business before 9.00am or after 9.00pm (to take account of evening meetings).
- (d) Any correspondence, unless marked as confidential, may be shared with those holding positions of authority in the church or Ministry Area.

#### **5. Vacancy Policy**

An interregnum can be a tricky time. It is important that during such time the church, especially any decisions that would ordinarily be made in consultation with the Vicar and/or Curate are to be made in consultation with the Ministry Area Leader. The Ministry Area Leader retains a discretion to delegate this responsibility to whomsoever they choose in consultation with the Archdeacon. This will be communicated clearly to the church.

#### **6. Complaints**

If you wish to make a complaint or concern under this Code of Conduct, please refer to the Ministry Area Leader or Archdeacon. There is no onus, although it may be preferable, to raise your complaint or concern informally first.

#### **7. Status**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Standing Orders of North Cardiff Ministry Area, and with the Constitution and Policies (including the bullying and harassment policy) of the Church in Wales.

Approved by the NCMA Ministry Area Committee on

Signed:

(Chair)