

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the provisions of Can.537 there is to be a Parish Finance Committee (Committee) in every Parish of the Archdiocese of Melbourne to help the Parish Priest in the administration of the temporal goods of the Parish.¹
- 1.2 This Committee is an advisory body to the Parish Priest, who is the sole administrator of the temporal goods of the Parish (Can. 532).
- 1.3 A Priest appointed parochial administrator when a Parish is vacant or impeded has the same obligations and rights that these Statutes give to Parish Priests unless the Diocesan Bishop prescribes otherwise (Can. 540§1). The Parochial Administrator may not do anything which could prejudice the rights of the Parish Priest or could do harm to parochial property (Can. 540§2). The same applies to a Priest who is appointed moderator when the pastoral care of a Parish is entrusted to several priests jointly.

2. Role

- 2.1 The Committee assists the Parish Priest in his task of administering the Parish finances, maintaining the parish properties, planning for future capital works and raising the necessary funds.
- 2.2 The Committee is not directly involved in the day to day management of the Parish finances.
- 2.3 The Committee is a separate body to the Parish Pastoral Council. It is not a sub-committee and consequently does not report to it. The Parish Priest may however choose to invite the Parish Pastoral Council and the Committee to liaise with each other on particular occasions or in connection with particular issues.
- 2.4 In the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the Archbishop has mandated that a Parish Education Board be established in each Parish where there is a Parish School. A Parish Education Board would normally have a Finance Committee advising it and ultimately the Parish Priest, about the financial management of the Parish School/s. However, since the Parish School is part of the Parish, the Committee will have to consider it when advising the Parish Priest.

¹ In these Statutes a reference to the Parish Priest includes a reference to an Administrator and to a Moderator where a Parish does not have a resident Parish Priest.

3. Membership

3.1 The Committee is to be comprised of:

- a. The assistant Priests of the Parish, should there be any. It should be noted that the Parish Priest is not a member of the Parish Finance Committee as it is an advisory body to him.
- b. At least three members of the faithful chosen for their management, accounting, legal, business or financial expertise by the Parish Priest. The Parish Priest may wish, but is not bound, to consult either the Parish Pastoral Council or individual parishioners before making the choice. As a rule and unless a just reason suggests otherwise to the Parish Priest, these members of the faithful should be parishioners.
- c. The Parish Pastoral Council may suggest an ex officio member of the Committee from its own body. In Parishes where there is no Parish Pastoral Council established, the Parish Priest may choose a parishioner as an ex officio representative of the parishioners.

3.2 The Parish Priest is able to add other members to the Committee, if the needs of the Parish require a larger number with membership capped at no more than nine voting members.

3.3 Members of the Committee appointed under 3.1 b. and c. shall hold office for a term of three years. Members may be reappointed but some change of membership is to take place every three years.

3.4 Members of the Committee are to be honest, known for their integrity and actively committed to the practice of the faith. They are to have a love for the Church and its mission and develop a thorough understanding of the mission, goals, people and other resources of the Parish. It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest to give members of the Committee appropriate formation, background and enrichment so they are able to carry out their responsibilities.

4. Meetings

4.1 The Committee shall be presided over by the Parish Priest.

4.2 The Parish Priest may either chair the meetings personally or may invite the Committee to elect a chairman for the meetings.

- 4.3 Meetings of the Committee must be held at least every three months and may be held more often at the discretion of the Parish Priest. The agenda for each meeting should be prepared by the Parish Priest in consultation with the chairman (should there be one) and the secretary and distributed to the Committee members prior to the meeting.
- 4.4 Meetings are convened by the Parish Priest. A Priest exercising the interim governance of a vacant or impeded Parish prior to the appointment of a Parish Priest or Parochial Administrator may not convene a meeting of the Committee without the express permission of the Archbishop.
- 4.5 A quorum shall consist of two thirds of the membership.
- 4.6 The Parish Priest is to appoint one member to act as secretary who will be responsible for keeping the Minutes of the meetings.
- 4.7 The Parish Priest alone has the right to make public the matters dealt with in Committee meetings.

5. Duties

- 5.1 The Committee is to assist the Parish Priest in the preparation of:
 - a. the annual budget of income and expenditure for the coming year.
 - b. a suitable annual report to the parishioners concerning Parish finances.
 - c. the annual financial report to the Archbishop.
 - d. long term cash flow estimates to provide for future capital works and major maintenance requirements.
- 5.2 The Committee is to assist the Parish Priest in:
 - a. ensuring that all regulatory requirements are complied with.
 - b. identifying and managing areas of risk to the financial viability of the Parish.
 - c. Regularly reviewing (at least annually) all lease hold and license agreements to ensure compliance with their terms by the tenant and the Parish.
- 5.3 The Committee shall regularly review periodic (at least quarterly) financial reports for the Parish – balance sheet, income statements, comparisons to budget as well as prior year results and cash flow analysis.

- 5.4 The Committee should conduct a review of all parish insurances during the last quarter ending 31 December to ensure that adequate cover exists for all identified risks. All insurances are to be placed with Catholic Church Insurance Ltd.
- 5.5 The Parish Priest must discuss with the Committee any expenditure which requires the permission of the Archbishop before he seeks the approval of the Archbishop to the proposed expenditure.
- 5.6 The Committee should conduct an annual review of all Parish properties identifying immediate and long term maintenance needs which the Parish accountant should allow for in the budgeted accounts.
- 5.7 Once every five years the Committee is to engage CAM Building Services or a structural engineer to undertake a review and produce a report on the state of the foundations, walls, ceilings and roofs of all buildings within the Parish erected on land registered in the name of the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Melbourne which report is to be made available to the Executive Director Administration of the Archdiocese.

6 Archbishop Approval

- 6.1 Capital works and major refurbishment on a single project expenditure exceeding \$100,000 for Parish and Primary School projects and \$300,000 for Secondary Colleges must be submitted to the Archbishop for his approval.
- 6.2 All correspondence to the Archbishop or the Diocesan Executive Director Administration's office relating to the work of the Committee must be signed by the Parish Priest.

7 Alienation

The permission of the Archbishop is required before Parish goods whose value exceeds \$25,000 may be validly alienated, that is, transferred to another ownership. Before seeking permission from the Archbishop, the Parish Priest must consult the Committee and relay its opinion with this request to the Archbishop.

8 Role of the Parish Finance Committee with regard to the Parish accountant

- a. The Parish accountant, though not a member of the Committee, should attend Committee meetings.
- b. The Parish Priest should consult the Committee on the appointment or removal of the Parish Accountant.

9 Authority to Operate Parish Bank Accounts

- 9.1 All parish accounts except for the Presbytery accounts are to each have three (3) signatories one of whom is the Parish Priest. Subject to Clauses 9.2 and 9.3 every account must be signed or authorised by a minimum of two signatories.
- 9.2 The Parish Priest is permitted to be the signatory and to operate the presbytery accounts solely.
- 9.3 The Parish Priest is permitted to renew term deposits and to authorise redemptions of term deposits to the Church account solely.
- 9.4 Ordinarily the Parish Priest and one other co-signatory would sign each cheque or authorise each account transaction.
- 9.5 It is recommended the other two signatories be appointed by the Parish Priest after informing the Parish Finance Committee.
- 9.6 The appointment of co-signatories will be for a period ending on the earlier of two years after their appointment or the appointment of a new Parish Priest.
- 9.7 Subject to the Parish Finance Committee being informed co-signatories are eligible for re-appointment on the expiry of each term.

I decree that these Statutes are to be used by the Parish Finance Committee of each Parish of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. These Statutes replace any previously issued Statutes and are to take effect from 1 October 2018.



+ Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

Date: 14 / 09 / 2018

Naktson

Notary

St. Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne