CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CLYDE PRESBYTERY

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Contents

ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1 Policy Statement

1.1 The Presbytery is committed to creating a working environment which is free from harassment and which protects the dignity of all employees. The policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, e.g. business trips and work-related social events.

1.2 All complaints of harassment will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and impartially through an approved procedure.

1.3 All employees of the Presbytery are required to comply with this policy and to assist in the promotion of a good working environment free from any form of harassment.

1.4 The Presbytery recognises that harassment and bullying can cause stress and anxiety and may lead to illness, tension or conflict amongst employees. Incidents of harassment will be regarded seriously and can be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

2 Purpose and Scope

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Assist in developing and encouraging a working environment and culture in which harassment is known to be unacceptable;
- Alert members and employees to what constitutes harassment;
- Demonstrate that harassment is unacceptable and will be dealt with promptly and fairly;
- Raise awareness of the support which is available;
- Establish procedures to be followed if harassment occurs; and
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with speedily and confidentially

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Every member and employee has a responsibility to behave reasonably and in a way that is not offensive to others.

3.2 Senior members of Presbytery and line managers have a responsibility to promote a culture free from unacceptable behaviour and to react to any allegations of harassment sensitively and as quickly as possible.

3.3 The example of positive behaviour is important. A culture where members and employees are consulted and problems discussed should deter bullying and harassment.

4 Definition of Harassment

4.1 Harassment is unwanted behaviour related to a "protected characteristic" namely age, disability, gender assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation which has the purpose or effect of:-

i) violating a person's dignity, or
ii) creating for that person an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

It can take place either in private or public and may not necessarily be face-to-face. It could be, for example, via a telephone conversation, email, collaboration software or correspondence or social media such as Facebook or Twitter. It can include imagery, physical gestures, facial expressions, mimicry, jokes or other physical behaviour. It is unwanted and unsolicited by the recipient and continues after an objection is made, although a single incident may be serious enough to constitute harassment and justify a complaint.

4.2 Harassment ranges from violence and bullying to more subtle behaviour such as ignoring an individual at work. It can be directed at all levels of employees and can be a source of great stress. It covers situations where the harassment is related to the person themselves or where it is directed to others but a particular individual feels harassed because they have one of the protected characteristics listed above. The unwanted behaviour does not have to be specifically aimed at the person who finds that it violates their dignity or creates for them an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

4.3 Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because they perceive that the recipient has a protected characteristic (for example, a perception that they are gay or disabled), when the recipient does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic. Similarly, harassment could take place where an individual is bullied or harassed because of another person with whom the individual is connected or associated.

4.4 Differences in attitude, background or culture can mean that what is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another. Harassment will have occurred if, in all the circumstances, and taking into account the perception of the individual concerned, it is reasonable for the conduct complained of to have the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an offensive or intimidating environment for them.

4.5 In addition to being a disciplinary offence, certain incidents of harassment may also render individuals liable to prosecution in courts of law, under either civil or criminal legislation.

4.6 The Presbytery will not tolerate victimisation of a person for making allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith or supporting someone to make such a complaint. Victimisation is a disciplinary offence.

5 Sexual Harassment

5.1 Sexual harassment is a particular type of harassment when a person does something of a sexual nature (which might be verbal, non-verbal or physical) which has the purpose or effect of:

(i) violating a person's dignity, or

(ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment forthat person.

5.2 This could include unnecessary and unwanted physical contact; unwelcome advances, attentions or propositions; displaying sexually explicit material; sexual comments; persistent demeaning or offensive jokes; sexual innuendo and expletives; unwanted comments about appearance; indecent demands or requests for sexual contact or actual sexual assault.

5.3.1 Behaviour may be considered sexual harassment even if there was no intention to give offence.

6 Third party harassment

6.1 It is unlawful and inappropriate for an employee to be persistently harassed by someone who does not work for the Presbytery, such as a member of a Kirk Session or Congregation, visitors to the Church Office or any other place of work, contractors, agency workers or any other person. If an employee feels that they have been subjected to harassment by any third party they should immediately speak to their line manager, who will be responsible for taking action on every reported complaint. If an incident of harassment recurs and an employee feels that their line manager has not taken adequate steps to deal with the problem the employee should contact the convener or vice convener of the Presbytery Business committee to advise what has happened and discuss how the problem might be addressed.

7 Bullying

7.1 Bullying behaviour may or may not amount to harassment. It is offensive, threatening, abusive, malicious, intimidating or insulting behaviour that may be an abuse or misuse of power, position or knowledge through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the person concerned. It may arise when criticism is destructive not constructive, publicly humiliates rather than privately corrects and therefore results in a person feeling threatened. An assertive management style would in itself not constitute bullying but where assertiveness gives way to aggression it is likely to become destructive rather than constructive. Some examples of bullying are:

Shouting and sarcasm; derogatory or belittling remarks in front of others regarding appearance, work or personal attributes; picking on people and unreasonably criticising their performance; punishing a competent person by inappropriately removing some responsibility or subjecting someone to group pressure; withholding relevant information or giving false information.

7.2 Bullying can be carried out by an individual or group of individuals. It can involve someone in a position of authority bullying someone in a lesser position; however, bullying of people in a more senior position by people in a lesser position and people in an equal position can occur. All are equally unacceptable.

8 Advice and Support

8.1 The Presbytery recognises that a distinguishing characteristic of all forms of harassment is that employees subjected to such behaviour will often be reluctant to make a complaint. This reluctance may arise due to the sensitivity of the issue and the possible anxiety in bringing forward a complaint. In recognition of these concerns, the Presbytery acknowledges the importance of the provision of support.

8.2 In some circumstances, employees may find the necessary support from their Line Manager and/or a work colleague.

8.3 Employees and members may consult any of the Presbytery Pastoral Advisers on a confidential basis who will provide advice and pastoral support as required and whose contact details are on the website.

9 Harassment Procedure

9.1 This procedure is intended to ensure that all members and employees are aware of the process to be followed in circumstances where employees feel that they have been subjected to any form of harassment.

9.2 This procedure will ensure that complaints are addressed effectively without delay and with regard for natural justice for both the complainant and the alleged harasser(s).

9.3 There are various ways in which harassment may be dealt with, from asking for the behaviour to stop, to making a formal complaint through the grievance procedure.

9.4 Any complaint of this nature should be raised as soon as possible following an act of alleged harassment so that the matter can be dealt with promptly and decisively. If a member or employee feels that they are the victim of harassment, they should keep a written record of all relevant incidents, including dates and times, and if appropriate the names of any witnesses to the incident(s).

9.5 During the formal stages of the procedure all employees have a statutory right to be accompanied by either a fellow employee or a full-time official employed by a trade union or certified lay trade union official. Members shall be afforded opportunity to be accompanied by someone of their choice.

9.6 While the complaint is under investigation, consideration will be given to whether it remains appropriate for the employee and alleged harasser to work together and will look at measures to work around this. In the case of serious allegations, the alleged harasser may be suspended while investigation and any disciplinary proceedings are underway.

9.7 Complaints of harassment are treated seriously. It is the responsibility of the Church to protect employees against harassment, whether from within the same employing agency, from someone within another part of the Church of Scotland or from the general public, where this occurs in the workplace or in the course of employment. It should therefore be noted that anyone found to be making mischievous or malicious complaints will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

10 Informal Process

10.1 If a member or employee believes that they have been subjected to unacceptable behaviour they may wish to try to deal with the situation personally by making it clear to the offender that the harassment is unacceptable and must stop immediately. Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion may lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease. In some cases the employee may prefer to write a letter to the person concerned which should be dated and signed and a copy retained.

10.2 Support may be sought from a relevant source (See section 5).

10.3 Whilst many situations can be resolved at an informal level, formal action can be taken under the grievance procedure if the above stages fail to stop the harassment or where the behaviour is of such a serious nature that informal measures would be inappropriate.

11 Formal Process

11.1 There may be situations where it is not easy or practical to tell the alleged harasser that the behaviour is unacceptable and/or that the nature of the harassment requires a formal procedure to be adopted. It is not necessary to have gone through the informal procedure before making a formal complaint.

11.2 A formal complaint should be made to a senior manager or the convener or vice convener of the Presbytery Business committee. Any formal complaint must be made in writing, detailing the basis upon which the alleged bullying or harassment has taken place.

12 Preliminary Investigation

12.1 It will be the responsibility of the designated party, or parties, as detailed in the grievance procedure to investigate timeously the allegation(s) and to come to a conclusion regarding the action to be taken.

12.2 If, after interviewing the complainant, the party or parties referred to in Section 9.1 believe that the allegation should be investigated further, then a full investigation into the conduct of the alleged harasser will be held in accordance with the relevant procedure.

12.3 All parties will be informed in writing of the allegations made against them.

12.4 All investigations will be undertaken with confidentiality to the maximum extent possible and full objectivity for all parties concerned.

13 Decision

13.1 There are three potential outcomes following an investigation. These are:

- The complaint is not upheld
- Evidence and/ or nature of complaint justifies mediation, counselling and/or advice for the harasser

- The complaint is upheld in whole or in part and evidence justifies proceeding to the disciplinary process and, where appropriate, resultant disciplinary action against the harasser

14 Outcome of Investigation

14.1 No Formal Action. In circumstances where it is concluded that the allegation of harassment is unjustified or that the evidence is insufficient or inconclusive, the complainant shall be informed in writing (a) of this conclusion and the reasons for it, and (b) that, as a result, no disciplinary action against the alleged harasser is proposed. If a complaint is not upheld, the Presbytery will support both parties and manager(s) in making arrangements for the continuation or resumption of working and to help repair working relationships through facilitated discussion or mediation.

14.2 Formal Action. If, following a full disciplinary investigation held under the disciplinary procedure, a complaint is held to be valid, a disciplinary hearing will be arranged after which appropriate formal action will be taken, which in serious cases may include dismissal.

15 Counselling

15.1 Employees who are the victims of harassment at work may suffer emotional or psychological reactions to their experiences. It is considered essential therefore that the management response to these situations is sympathetic and supportive.

15.2 Given the potential sensitivity of the issues involved and the stress present when dealing with harassment situations professional counselling will be made available to both the individual and the alleged harasser and can be approached at any stage in the application of this procedure.

15.3 Counselling may help resolve the issue or help support the person accused as well as the complainant. It may be particularly useful where investigation shows no cause for disciplinary action or where doubt is cast on the validity of the complaint.

16 Information and Training

16.1 All employees of the Presbytery will be provided with a copy of this Policy and, to support this, this Policy will be explained to new employees and members as part of their induction training.

17 Monitoring

17.1 The outcomes of cases where complaints of bullying and harassment have been made will be reviewed to identify any points that can be learned from those cases and implement any necessary changes.

17.2 The organisation will periodically monitor how successful it is being in creating a workplace free of bullying and harassment by other means which may include confidential staff surveys. When carrying out any reviews or monitoring, the organisation will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with its data protection policy.

18 Review

18.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Presbytery Business committee to ensure adherence to best practice, and any related legislation.

BRIBERY and PROCUREMENT POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Further to the work and mission of the Church of Scotland and the terms of the Bribery Act 2010 (the "Act"), it is our policy as office bearers of the Presbytery and as charity trustees to conduct all church business entered into in an honest and ethical manner. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our dealings as a Church of Scotland congregation both in Scotland and abroad. We are also committed to implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter bribery and to operate appropriate procurement policies.

1.2 The Presbytery as an entity and its members and employees will uphold both Church law and all relevant civil laws designed to counter bribery and corruption. Guidance from the Ministry of Justice makes it clear that a charity can be a commercial organisation for the purposes of the 'corporate offence' to the extent that it engages in commercial activity. We therefore take all the provisions of the Act very seriously and will nonetheless aim to comply with its terms.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is to:

(a) Outline the responsibilities of the trustees of the Presbytery and its employees in observing and upholding our position on bribery and corruption and the adoption of good procurement procedures; and

(b) provide information and guidance on how to recognise and deal with bribery and corruption issues.

1.4 In this policy, **third party** means any individual or organisation with whom you come into contact and includes actual and potential members, contractors, agents and advisers etc.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels with us including members of the Presbytery, other office bearers, employees (whether permanent, fixed-term or temporary), contractors, volunteers, agents, or any other person associated with us, wherever located (collectively referred to as **members** in this policy).

3. What is bribery?

A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.

Examples:

Offering a bribe

You offer to sell a church building to the Session Clerk's daughter at a reduced price, but only if she agrees to make you a gift in cash or kind or to donate to church funds using gift aid. This would be an offence as you are making the offer which could operate to your or the congregation's financial advantage. It may also be an offence for the potential purchaser to accept your offer.

Receiving a bribe

A roofing contractor offers you expensive tickets for a major sporting event, but makes it clear that in return they expect you to use your influence in the congregation to ensure he is employed whenever roofing services are required.

It is an offence for a contractor to make such an offer. It would be an offence for you to accept the offer as you would be doing so to gain a personal advantage.

Bribing a foreign official

You arrange for the congregation to pay an additional payment to a foreign official to speed up an administrative process.

The offence of bribing a foreign public official has been committed as soon as the offer is made. This is because it is made to gain an advantage for the congregation. Other office bearers in the congregation who agreed to the offer being made may also be found to have committed an offence.

4. Gifts and Hospitality

4.1 This policy does not prohibit the making of token gifts out of Presbytery funds, nor does it prevent the charity trustees of the Presbytery receiving token gifts in the context of their presbytery duties.

4.2 The making of a gift is not prohibited, if the following requirements are met:

(a) it is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in explicit or implicit exchange for favours or benefits;

(b) it complies with Scots law;

(c) it is given in name of the Presbytery, rather than in name of an individual member;

(d) if made out of Presbytery funds (as opposed to following a special collection or from a designated benevolence fund), it does not include cash or a cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers) in excess of a token amount, £30 being the recommended maximum;

(e) it is appropriate in the circumstances, for example, a small gift at Christmas time;

(f) taking into account the reason for the gift, it is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time; and

(g) it is given openly, not secretly.

Gifts should not be offered to, nor indeed accepted from, government officials or representatives, or politicians or political parties, without the prior approval of the Property Committee. However, aside from token gifts, it is unlikely that the use of charitable funds for this purpose could ever be justified and we will always seek advice from the Church's Law Department before making a gift in this situation.

4.3 If a charity trustee, in connection with the work of the Presbytery, receives a gift in cash or kind given to them personally (as opposed to a charitable donation either for general presbytery purposes or for a particular purpose such as a contribution to the congregation's Fabric Fund), before accepting it, he/she should give careful consideration as to whether it is an expression of personal appreciation or whether it could be intended as an inducement to place business with the donor or indeed be a reward for past business. If there is good reason to suspect that something may be expected in return, the gift should be declined. Where a gift is accepted or declined, and, on a common sense view, the gift could be regarded as being material, this should be recorded in the book maintained for this purpose by the Presbytery Treasurer. For the avoidance of doubt, a one-off gift of £25 or less would not be regarded as being material.

4.4 This policy does not affect the giving or receiving of normal and appropriate hospitality. In any case where hospitality is suspected as being a cover for bribery, the authorities will look at such things as the level of hospitality offered, the way in which it was provided and the level of influence the person receiving it had on the decision in question. However, as a general proposition, we regard hospitality or expenditure to be in order provided it is proportionate and reasonable, having regard to the activities and financial means of the congregation.

5. What is not acceptable?

It is not acceptable for a member of Presbytery or an employee, or someone on your behalf, to:

(a) give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope that a financial or business advantage will be received, or to reward a financial or business advantage already given;

(b) give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to "facilitate" or expedite a routine procedure;

(c) accept payment from a third party that you know or suspect is offered with the expectation that it will obtain a business advantage for them;

(d) accept a gift or hospitality from a third party if you know or suspect that it is offered or provided with an expectation that a business advantage will be provided by the Presbytery in return;

(e) threaten or retaliate against another member who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy; or

(f) engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

6. Facilitation Payments and Kickbacks

6.1 Facilitation payments are typically small, unofficial payments made to secure or expedite a routine government action by a government official. Presbytery does not make, and will not accept, facilitation payments or "kickbacks" of any kind even if such payments are routine and expected in a country overseas where we may occasionally have a connection.

6.2 If asked to make a payment on Presbytery's behalf, it is necessary to be mindful of what the payment is for and whether the amount requested is proportionate to the goods or services provided. A receipt which details the reason for the payment should always be requested. Any suspicions, concerns or queries regarding a payment, should be raised with the Presbytery Clerk who in turn, in cases of doubt, will raise them with the Church's Law Department.

6.3 Kickbacks are typically payments made in return for a business favour or advantage. All members must avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, that a facilitation payment or kickback will be made or accepted by us.

7. Donations

We only make charitable donations that are legal and ethical under Church and Scots law. No donation must be offered or made without the prior approval of the Presbytery and, unless to further the work of the Presbytery and its mission and outreach and that of the Church of Scotland generally, should be made from a special collection for that purpose.

8. Procurement

8.1 Small Contracts

For a contract of less than £ 500 Presbytery may place the contract without the necessity to tender, although, depending on circumstances, the Presbytery may decide that securing competitive quotations will be desirable.

8.2 Competitive Tenders

For a contract in excess of £500 it will be normal for not less than two competitive tenders to be received. When approval to let the contract is being sought from the Presbytery through the Property Committee, together with the appropriate documentation, confirmation that funds to cover the costs are available will also be submitted. Where it is decided to accept a tender which is not the lowest obtained, the reason for doing so will be minuted.

8.3 Negotiated Contracts

In exceptional circumstances, a negotiated tender may be acceptable, for instance where the contractor has a long relationship with us and thus has some specialised and detailed knowledge pertinent to the works to be undertaken. In such an instance this course of action must be agreed in advance of any negotiations by the Presbytery or relevant Committee under delegate powers and this, with the reason for so doing, shall be formally recorded in the minutes

9. Conflicts and Declarations of Interests

Members must avoid getting into a situation where their duties to the Presbytery could be said to conflict with their own personal interests. At meetings, if a member knows in advance that an issue in which a member may have an interest is scheduled to be discussed, such an interest should be declared at the start of the meeting. Additionally, any interest at any point should be declared if that appears appropriate. Declaring a material interest has the effect of prohibiting any participation in discussion and voting. If an interest is a material financial one, any interested member should leave the room whilst the item concerned is being discussed. Judgement requires to be exercised in determining a material interest, involving on your part to decide what a material interest, involving consideration of the relationship between the individual interest and all the relevant individual circumstances surrounding the particular matter. The view of the Presbytery Clerk in advance of the meeting may be sought.

10. Your Responsibilities

10.1 All members and employees must ensure that they read, understand and comply with this policy.

10.2 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All members are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.

10.3 It is essential that Presbytery is notified as soon as possible if it is believed or suspected that a conflict with this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future. For example, if someone offers you something to gain a business advantage with the church, or indicates to you that a gift or payment is required to secure their business. Further "red flags" that may indicate bribery or corruption are set out in the Schedule attached.

10.4 Any member who breaches this policy will be held liable to account for their actions. Depending on the gravity of the situation, a member who breaches this policy and is also an employee of the church may face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct if an employee, or removal from office in other cases.

11. Record-Keeping

11.1 Financial records must be kept and appropriate internal controls put in place to evidence the reason for making payments to third parties.

11.2 All hospitality or gifts accepted or declined must be recorded in the book referred to in section 4 (3), which will be subject to review.

11.3 All expense claims relating to hospitality and gifts or expenses incurred to third parties must be submitted for approval by the Presbytery Treasurer and should describe the reason for the expenditure.

11.4 All accounts, invoices, memoranda and other documents and records relating to dealings with third parties, such as clients, suppliers and business contacts, should be prepared and maintained with strict accuracy and completeness by the congregational treasurer. No accounts must be kept "off-book" to facilitate or conceal improper payments

12. How to raise a concern

Raising concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage is encouraged. In the case of uncertainty, seeking the advice of the Presbytery Clerk is recommended.

13. What to do if you are a victim of bribery or corruption

It is important that you inform the Presbytery Clerk as soon as possible if you are offered a bribe by a third party, are asked to make one, suspect that this may happen in the future, or believe that you are a victim of another form of unlawful activity.

14. Protection

14.1 Members who refuse to accept or offer a bribe, or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing, are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. Presbytery will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

14.2 Presbytery is committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of refusing to take part in bribery or corruption, or because of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential bribery or other corruption offence has taken place, or may take place in the future.

15. Who is responsible for the policy?

15.1 The Presbytery has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with legal and ethical obligations, and that all those associated or connected to us comply with it.

15.2 The Presbytery has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation.

16. Monitoring and Review

16.1 The Presbytery will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy and will regularly consider its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible.

16.2 All members are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.

16.3 Members are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the Presbytery Clerk.

16.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Schedule Potential risk scenarios: "red flags"

The following is a list of possible red flags that may arise and which may raise concerns under various anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws. The list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for illustrative purposes only.

If you encounter any of these red flags or other suspicious circumstances, you must report them promptly to Presbytery Clerk.

(a) you become aware that a third party engages in, or has been accused of engaging in, improper business practices;

(b) you learn that a third party has a reputation for paying bribes, or requiring that bribes are paid to them, or has a reputation for having a special relationship with foreign government officials;

(c) a third party insists on receiving a commission or fee payment before committing to sign up to a contract with us;

(d) a third party requests payment in cash and/or refuses to sign a formal commission or fee agreement, or to provide an invoice or receipt for a payment made;

(e) a third party requests that payment is made to a country or geographic location different from where the third party resides or conducts business;

(f) a third party requests an unexpected additional fee or commission to "facilitate" a service;

(g) a third party demands lavish entertainment or gifts before commencing or continuing contractual negotiations or provision of services;

(h) a third party requests that a payment is made to "overlook" potential legal violations;

(i) a third party requests that you provide employment or some other advantage to a friend or relative;

(j) you receive an invoice from a third party that appears to be non-standard or customised;

(k) a third party insists on the use of side letters or refuses to put terms agreed in writing;

(l) you notice that we have been invoiced for a commission or fee payment that appears large given the service stated to have been provided;

(m) a third party requests or requires the use of an agent, intermediary, consultant, distributor or supplier that is not typically used by or known to us;

(n) you are offered an unusually generous gift or offered lavish hospitality by a third party.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Conflicts of interest affect all types and size of organisations. In a charity context, a conflict of interest can inhibit free discussion, and can lead to decisions which are not in the best interests of the charity and which are invalid or open to challenge. Conflicts of interest can also be damaging to a charity's reputation and to the public's confidence and trust in charities in general.

1.2 Charity trustees have a primary duty in terms of section 66 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 to act in the best interests of the charity at all times.

1.3 All those who are members of Clyde Presbytery ("the Presbytery") are the charity trustees of the Presbytery.

1.4 The Presbytery recognises that its trustees can find themselves in a situation that may give rise to conflicts of interest, whether potential or actual, perceived or alleged. Where trustees can identify a conflict and measures can be put in place to prevent the conflict affecting decision-making then the harmful effects of a conflict of interest can be prevented. The proper handling of conflicts of interest is an essential part of good decision-making by trustees.

1.5 The Presbytery has developed this policy to provide guidance to all trustees regarding conflicts of interest in order to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest, perception of bias or misuse of authority, and to ensure and evidence that all decisions by individual trustees on behalf of the Presbytery are taken only in the best interests of the Presbytery at all times.

2. Scope and purpose

2.1 This policy applies to all trustees of the Presbytery and to all bodies, groups and committees meeting under the auspices of the Presbytery. All individuals in the Presbytery who are involved in management of its affairs to a greater or lesser extent but are not members of the Presbytery can be seen as "shadow trustees" and are subject to the same duties as the trustees. Where the word "trustee" is used in this policy it covers both charity trustees and shadow trustees.

2.2 The Presbytery is committed to ensuring that all trustees act in its best interests at all times. This policy aims to provide guidance to those involved in management and decision-making and seeks to ensure that all trustees are seen to be acting in accordance with well recognised rules of good governance.

2.3 It is inevitable that conflicts of interest will arise. This policy aims to ensure that any conflict is identified and managed appropriately.

2.4 It is the responsibility of each individual to recognise situations in which he or she has a conflict of interest, or might reasonably be seen by others to have a conflict, to disclose that conflict to the appropriate person and to take such further steps as may be appropriate as set out in more detail under the procedure below.

2.5 If an individual is uncertain about how this policy might affect his or her activities or has any questions about its application, he or she should contact the Presbytery Clerk or the Law Department for further advice.

3. Conflict of Interest

3.1.1 A conflict of interest is any situation in which a trustee's personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen to, prevent the trustee from making a decision only in the best interests of the Presbytery.

3.1.2 A conflict of interest arises when the interests of a trustee (or a person closely connected to them, whether by family or business) are incompatible or in competition with the interests of the Presbytery. Such situations present a risk that trustees will make a decision based on external influences and that such a decision will not be in the best interests of the Presbytery. The most common types of conflict include: • direct financial interest – where there is, or appears to be, an opportunity for personal financial gain; • indirect financial interest – the financial gain of a close relative or close friend or business associate (the level of financial interest should not be a determining factor in deciding whether a conflict should be disclosed; Presbytery expects disclosure of any financial interest, however small); • non-financial or personal conflicts - a non-financial interest can take many forms and is generally one where there is, or appears to be, an opportunity for personal benefit, advantage or enhancement to prospects for the individual (direct), or similar gains to someone in their immediate family or a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship (indirect); • Conflicts of loyalties – a particular type of conflict of interest in which a trustee's loyalty or duty to another person or organisation could prevent the trustee from making a decision only in the best interests of the Presbytery.

3.1.3 A conflict of loyalty may arise where a trustee is also a charity trustee or member of another body (such as, for example, another Church court or a local community group) if that could (or could be seen to) interfere with their ability to make decisions only in the best interests of the Presbytery. In such circumstances, a trustee must act at all times only in the best interests of the Presbytery in carrying out their trustee role, regardless of how decisions made in that role may impact on the other body.

3.1.4A conflict of interest may arise where a trustee is also an employee of the Presbytery or of another body. Employment by the Presbytery does not confer membership of the Presbytery upon any individual. Presbytery will normally appoint employees to be corresponding members of Presbytery. Except where expressly agreed by the Presbytery, no employee of the Presbytery may be a member of any Committee of the Presbytery.

3.1.5The interests of the Presbytery and such other body will for the most part be consistent, or complementary, but it is inevitable that on occasion a conflict will arise. Whether a conflict of loyalty is of such low risk that the affected trustee can participate in the decision is a judgement for the trustees and will depend on the particular decision and circumstances of the case. It will often be the case that the potential damage that could be caused by any conflict is so minimal that it can be managed without any difficulty. The trustees must take all relevant factors into account and be ready to explain their approach if asked to do so.

4. Recognising and disclosing conflicts of interest

4.1 All trustees are required to recognise and disclose activities that might give rise to conflicts of interest, or the perception of conflicts of interest, at the earliest opportunity. This allows the other trustees to consider the issue of the conflict of interest to ensure that any potential effect on decision-making is eliminated and to demonstrate that their decision was made only in the best interests of the Presbytery. If properly managed, activities can proceed as normal whilst at the same time upholding the trustees' obligations to the Presbytery, meeting regulatory and other external requirements and protecting the integrity and reputation of the Presbytery and the wider Church. By contrast, conflicts which are not managed effectively may jeopardise the Presbytery's public standing and may cause serious damage to the reputation of the Presbytery, of the individuals concerned and the wider Church. It is therefore the Presbytery's policy to ensure that when conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest arise they are acknowledged and disclosed.

4.2 There can be situations in which the appearance of conflict of interest is present even when no conflict actually exists. It is important for all trustees when evaluating a potential conflict of interest to consider how it might be perceived by others. The duty to declare a possible conflict applies to the perception of the situation as much as to the actual existence of a conflict. When deciding whether such an interest is present, trustees should ask themselves whether a reasonable member of the public, with knowledge of all of the relevant facts of the situation, would think that their judgement might be prejudiced or influenced by their private or personal interest. This is an objective test. Trustees must not decide whether they would take a decision without prejudice, but whether they could be seen as doing so.

4.3 There may, exceptionally, be circumstances in which a conflict cannot be satisfactorily managed. In such circumstances the trustees should remove the conflict by not proceeding with a proposed course of action; by proceeding in a different way so that the conflict does not arise; or by not appointing a particular trustee or requiring the resignation of a trustee.

5. Procedure

5.1 It is the duty of every trustee to disclose any conflict of interest or any circumstances that might reasonably give rise to the perception of conflict of interest. The following procedure should be followed to ensure that conflicts of interest are identified at as early a stage as possible and that, once identified, action is taken to ensure that the conflict of interest does not give rise to a situation where decisions are taken by trustees which are, or could be perceived as being, not in the best interests of the Presbytery.

6. Register of interests

6.1 New trustees will be informed before they are appointed that they will be expected to adhere to this conflict of interest policy and a copy of the policy will be provided to them. Any potential conflict of interest should be discussed with the Presbytery Clerk prior to taking up the position.

6.2 On appointment, trustees will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests form (Appendix 1). A Register of Interests will be maintained by the Presbytery Clerk and updated when a material change occurs. Membership of a congregation within the bounds of the Presbytery will not require disclosure in the Register of Interests. The Register of Interests must be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

6.3 A copy of the policy will be provided to all current trustees, who will also be required to complete a Declaration of Interests form.

7. Disclosure

7.1 Any failure to disclose a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is a serious issue. A trustee who fails to disclose a potential, actual or perceived conflict will have failed to comply with their statutory duty.

7.2 There should be a standard agenda item at the beginning of each Presbytery meeting to declare any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

7.3 A trustee should declare any interest which he or she has in an item to be discussed, at the earliest possible opportunity and before any discussion of the item itself. If a trustee is uncertain whether he or she is conflicted he or she should err on the side of openness, declaring the issue and discussing it with the other trustees.

7.4 If a trustee is aware of an undeclared conflict of interest affecting another trustee they should notify the other trustees or the Moderator. All trustees have a collective responsibility to manage conflicts and to act clearly in the Presbytery's best interests.

8. Managing conflicts of interest

8.1 If a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is identified the trustees must act only in the best interests of the Presbytery. This means the trustees must consider the issue of the conflict of interest so that any effect this may have on good decision-making is eliminated.

8.2 In deciding whether a conflict of interest exists trustees must consider the following: • Has the decision been taken in the best interests of the Presbytery? • Does the decision protect the reputation of the Presbytery? • What impression does the decision have on those outside the Presbytery, including the wider Church? • Can the trustees demonstrate that they have made the decision in the best interests of the Presbytery and independently of any competing interests? • Does the presence of a conflicted trustee inhibit free discussion and influence the decision-making process in any way?

8.3 Where the trustees decide that there is a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest the conflicted trustee should not participate in the decision-making process.

8.4 The conflicted trustee should withdraw from the meeting prior to discussion of the item.

8.5 The conflicted trustee should be given the opportunity before withdrawing from the meeting to provide any information necessary to help the remaining trustees make a decision in the best interests of the Presbytery. This process should be followed, for example, in a situation where Presbytery is considering a matter relating to a specific congregation or charge but without wider implications across the Presbytery; Presbyters who are members of the affected congregation/charge should withdraw from the meeting before discussion of and voting on the item. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not apply to discussion of and voting on the Presbytery Mission Plan unless what is being considered is a minor adjustment of the Plan affecting a small number of congregations/charges.

8.6 A conflicted trustee should not take part in any vote on the item which is the subject of the conflict.

9. Recording

9.1 In all instances where a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is disclosed at a trustees' meeting the minutes of the meeting should record the trustees' discussion and the decision taken.

9.2 If there is a discussion, the written record of the decision should include: • the nature of the conflict • which trustees were affected; • whether any conflicts of interest were declared in advance; • an outline of the discussion; • whether anyone withdrew from the discussion; • how the decision was taken in the best interests of the Presbytery.

10. Consequences of breach

10.1 Where conflicts of interest are not identified or properly managed there can be serious consequences for both the affected trustee and the Presbytery. Decisions taken may not be valid and could be challenged, and can damage the reputation of the Presbytery, the wider Church and the trust of the public.

10.2 If the circumstances are sufficiently serious, a failure to disclose a conflict of interest could therefore result in a disciplinary process being engaged.

11. Review

11.1 This Policy will be reviewed by the Presbytery after one year and thereafter every three years.

APPENDIX 1

Register of charity trustees' interests

1. Conflicts Policy

The charity trustees of Clyde Presbytery have implemented a conflicts of interest policy under which they have agreed that a register will be kept of all interests declared by the charity trustees.

2. Maintenance of Register

This register is maintained by the Presbytery Clerk, who must:

(a) record all conflicts, gifts and hospitality declared by the trustees in accordance with the policy; and

(b) circulate amendments or additions to the register (if any) to the trustees at the start of each charity trustee meeting.

3. Reviewing the Register

As agreed in the policy, at least once in every 12-month period, all charity trustees must review the information relating to themselves contained in this register and declare that the information is correct or make a further declaration if necessary.

4. Inspection of Register

This register is available for inspection by any charity trustee and by any member of the Presbytery on request.

REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Date notified | Name of charity trustee | Brief details of interest notified | Brief details of any action taken

EMAIL ETIQUETTE GUIDANCE

Provided by the Church of Scotland

Email, whilst useful in saving time and as a convenient way of communicating with people, lacks the assistance of cues such as body language and tone of voice. Messages may, then, be misinterpreted if not carefully worded. Emailing can also become time consuming and present the Church in an unfavourable light and accordingly these guidelines are offered.

1 Professionalism

The following suggestions are offered:

- It is helpful to determine whether a telephone conversation or face to face meeting is better, easier and more efficient than an email.
- Make emails short, concise and to the point.
- Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations and emoticons.
- Keep in mind that we are all ambassadors for the church and our emails should reflect this by showing correct knowledge and understanding, and demonstrating mutual respect.
- Include a subject heading, and ensure it is correct, relevant and meaningful.
- Where possible, try to avoid more than one subject per message.
- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Endeavour not to write in CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Structure emails to make them easy to read.
- Give your full contact details, and not just an email address (setting this up once in the auto signature will save someone having to look up your details to call you).
- Before sending email, check wording and recipients are correct and that necessary attachments are, indeed, attached!
- Refrain from using sarcasm and exercise caution using humour given this can be perceived in different ways.
- Be aware of the size of the email and don't send large attachments, or use the facilities in OneDrive or Outlook to link to larger files.
- Answer within a reasonable time frame.
- Avoid using complex or decorative fonts, backgrounds and colours as they may appear differently to the recipient.
- Do not forward chain letters.
- Use the 'important' function sparingly to highlight only very urgent emails.

- Only use delivery and read receipts when required (and remember a read receipt generally means the recipient clicked to indicate the email has been opened).
- Consider whether you need to include the email thread when replying to or forwarding.
- In particular be careful that you're not passing on information that was not intended to be shared more widely. This is particularly important when e-mails may be forwarded outside the Church.
- If you receive a letter, a reply ought not to be sent solely by email.
- Hold back from sending an email if you are feeling angry or upset - take some time to calm down, re-read and, if necessary, adjust your email before sending it to ensure that your message is appropriate. Alternatively, speak with the person directly.
- Always consider whether you need to "reply all" or reply only to the sender.

2 Efficiency

The following suggestions are offered:

- Be concise and stick to the point.
- Acknowledge emails to confirm what action will be taken.
- Agree an appropriate timescale with the individual and follow through on this.
- Respond to all points and pre-empt further questions if possible.
- Target your email appropriately so that only those who really need to read or take action receive it.
- Only cc people (and, where possible, use bcc) or 'reply to all' if necessary.
- Utilise the out of office assistant to let people know when you are out of the office.
- File relevant emails to enable easier retrieval, and use the search function too.
- Keep email accounts in order, empty deleted emails and junk mail regularly.
- Colour coding may assist for sorting emails quickly,
- Templates may benefit you for emails sent on a regular basis.

3 Protection from Liability

3.1 Laws relating to written communication apply equally to email messages, including defamation, copyright, obscenity, fraud and discrimination.

3.2 Sending an email may be thought of as somewhat like sending a postcard, where what's written may be read by those other than the addressee. Use email to discuss confidential information only with great care. Where this is done, mark emails Private or Confidential as appropriate.

3.3 The following suggestions are offered:

- Be cautious about information you put in an email and check whether a face-to-face or telephone conversation more appropriate.
- Make no derogatory comments which could be construed as bullying or harassment.
- Always read over emails before sending.
- Make sure the email is addressed to the correct person.
- Make sure attachments are correct.
- Peer checking can be useful for checking information and tone.
- Ensure the information you are providing is correct.
- Use professional language.
- Try not to send emails in a hurry, or in anger.
- Don't extract and use significant portions of text from someone else's message without acknowledgement, though referring verbatim to the content of an earlier email is perfectly acceptable.
- Don't make changes to someone else's message and pass it on without making it clear where you have made the changes.
- Don't pretend you are someone else when sending email.
- Remember that sending an email from a Church of Scotland or Presbytery of Clyde account is similar to sending a letter on headed notepaper, so don't say anything that might discredit or harm the reputation of the Church.
- If sending an email to a large group or using email addresses that are not on the Church of Scotland Global Address List, put all recipients names into the BCC field and address the email to yourself. This will ensure that recipients know there are other people receiving the email. (Note, though, that it is somewhat unethical to use the 'BCC' field when there are others in the 'To' and ‘CC' field as they will be unaware of who else is included in the communication).

POLITICAL LOBBYING POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1 Background

1.1 The Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016 created a Lobbying Register and introduced a requirement to register lobbying activity coming within the definition of "regulated lobbying" with criminal offences relating for failure to provide information.

2 Lobbying Registrar

2.1 The Church of Scotland is registered with the Lobbying Registrar which covers all unincorporated entities of the General Assembly. Congregations and Presbyteries with 10 or more full time employees are advised to be registered with the Lobbying Register (initiated by emailing lobbyingact@churchofscotland.org.uk with legal name and charity number).

3 Exemptions

3.1 The General Assembly's agencies have gained an exemption relating to all face to face communication with MSPs who are not Scottish Government Ministers (or a Law Officer, Special Adviser or Permanent Secretary). However, this exemption does not apply to Presbyteries and congregations though majority of their lobbying is already exempt provided they have fewer than 10 full time employees or the lobbying is to their own constituency or region MSP.

4 What is "regulated lobbying"?

4.1 To be classified as 'lobbying' all these criteria require to be fulfilled:

- The communication needs to be face-to-face, in person or by video conference, with an MSP; a member of the Scottish Government Minister, (including the Scottish Law Officers); Junior Ministers; Special Adviser and Permanent Secretary.
- The communication relates to Scottish Government or Scottish Parliament functions.
- The opportunity must have been used to inform or influence decisions on behalf of the Church (for a Council, Committee, Presbytery, congregation or other part of the Church of Scotland).
- The person lobbying is paid by the Church of Scotland (though this means payment in the widest context and does not mean payment for a particular piece of lobbying).

- None of the 13 exemptions under the Act applies to the situation in question. The full list of exemptions is accessed at

http://www.parliament.scot/LobbyingRegister/5_Key_Steps.pdf

4.2 The likely most applicable exemptions are:

- the communication related to an issue you have raised on your own behalf, i.e. not on behalf of the Church.
- the person communicating is not paid by the Church.
- any response to a request from anyone listed in Step 1 for factual information or views on a topic is exempt.
- the congregation, or Presbytery, has fewer than 10 full time employees (provided the lobbying is for the congregation or Presbytery, and not a third party).
- the communication is with an MSP who represents the constituency or region where the Presbytery or congregation operates (but this does not apply where the MSP in question is a member of the Scottish Government or the communication is on behalf of a third party).

4.3 If all 5 of the Steps are fulfilled and no exemption applies, regulated lobbying has been carried out and this must be recorded on the Lobbying Register.

5 Where lobbying occurs

5.1 There are no exclusions to where or when the lobbying can take place. It is possible for regulated lobbying to take place in an informal situation, e.g. social gathering, and outwith Scotland.

6 Procedure if regulated lobbying has been carried out

6.1 No later than twenty one days after the regulated lobbying has taken place the undernoted information must be provided by email on a Notification of Regulated Lobbying form which can be downloaded at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/law_circulars#Lobbying_Act to lobbyingact@churchofscotland.org.uk and is attached to this advice. The information required is:

- The name and role of the person lobbied.
- The date on which they were lobbied.
- The location at which they were lobbied.

- A description of the meeting, event or other circumstance in which the lobbying occurred.
- Whether it was face to face communication or by video conference.
- The name of the person who did the lobbying and details of which part of the Church they represented.
- Confirmation of whether the lobbying was carried out on the Church's behalf or for someone else.
- The purpose of the lobbying.

6.2 This information will be used by the Church of Scotland to make the required information return under the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016 timeously. This is the information which will appear on the Register. This will be made public and can be accessed online, without a charge.

7 Criminal offence

7.1 It is a criminal offence not to register timeously or to fail to submit a return on any regulated lobbying on the Lobbying Register by the date required. It is also an offence to provide information which is inaccurate or incomplete in a material respect.

The Church of Scotland Notification of regulated lobbying under the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016

You are required to complete this form to enable your act of regulated lobbying to be entered on the Lobbying Register. **THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE PROCESS TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LEGISLATION.**

The completed form should be emailed to lobbyingact@churchofscotland.org.uk within 21 days of the regulated lobbying date intimated below.

Name of person submitting form:
The date of the lobbying activity: **The role of the person lobbied**: **The name of the person lobbied**: **The location at which they were lobbied**: **A description of the meeting, event or other circumstance in which the lobbying occurred**:
Communication type: face to face / video conference* **delete as appropriate*
The name of the person who did the lobbying and details of which part of the Church they represented, e.g. Ecumenical Relations Committee: **Was the lobbying carried out on the Church's behalf**: Yes / No* **delete as appropriate* **If 'no' to question above on whose behalf was the lobbying undertaken?** **The purpose of the lobbying**:

Respectful Dialogue Approach

Approved 03/MAR/2026

All presbyters have the right to be heard, understood and respected, rights which belong also to our staff.

Presbytery does not tolerate physical, verbal or written abuse of our staff who are to be treated with respect.

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Swearing and bad language;
- Any form of physical violence or contact;
- Verbal abuse and verbal insulting of our staff;
- Racial abuse and sexual harassment;
- Using our social media to direct abuse to staff including Facebook and Twitter, and other social media.
- Verbal or written abuse of staff on telephone calls, texts, emails, and messaging services eg, WhatsApp.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1 Presbytery's social media channels

1.1 There are designated administrators who are responsible for setting up and managing the Presbytery's social media channels. Only those so designated by the Presbytery Clerk will have administrative access to such accounts.

1.2 The purpose of Presbytery's social media channels is to inform social media users and promote the work of the Presbytery and content should reflect the Presbytery's values whilst tone should be respectful of others.

1.3 All social media content suggesting a connection with Clyde Presbytery must have a purpose and a benefit for the Clyde Presbytery, its constituent congregations and the Church of Scotland and must accurately reflect the Presbytery's agreed position.

1.4 Posts should be intended to bring value to the audience.

1.5 Care should be taken with the presentation of content, free from spelling, grammatical or typographical errors. The quality of images should be checked.

1.6 Reflecting on contributions prior to posting is advised, and replies to comments should be made in a timely manner, when appropriate.

1.7 If staff other than designated administrators wish to contribute content for social media, the text of proposed contributions should be forwarded to an administrator. Where there is uncertainty as to the content or timing of contributions the Presbytery Clerk should be consulted.

1.8 Content relating to individuals should not be posted without their express permission.

1.9 Information about third party organisations should be clearly labelled as such, so audiences know it has not come directly from the Presbytery.

1.10 If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person of less than eighteen (18) years of age, the written consent of a relevant parent or guardian must be obtained before images are posted, or any child or young person identified on social media.

1.11 Facts should be checked prior to posting. There is no presumption that material is accurate and reasonable steps should be taken where necessary to seek verification.

1.12 Honesty is important. Sources should be ascertained. Mistakes or errors should be rectified promptly.

1.13 Personal opinions should not be offered via the Presbytery's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting' unless specifically approved by the Presbytery Clerk. Where there is doubt about the position of Presbytery or the Church of Scotland on a particular issue, the Presbytery Clerk should be consulted.

1.14 No encouragement should be given at any time to risk personal safety or that of others in order to gather materials.

1.15 No encouragement should be given at any time to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage.

1.16 All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

1.17 Additional social media channels, pages or other materials should not be set up on behalf of Presbytery without permission from the Presbytery Clerk.

1.18 Given the apolitical stance of Presbytery, no view on party politics or political affiliations, through statements or links, should be included in posts. The right to express views on policy is clear and is maintained, including the policies of parties, but comment along party political lines is not permitted.

1.19 Complaints regarding Presbytery's social media channels should be discussed with the Presbytery Clerk, whom failing the Depute Clerk, whom failing the Business Convener before responding.

1.20 Should any member of Presbytery, or staff, become aware of any comments online which have the potential to escalate, whether on the Presbytery's social media channels or elsewhere, should contact the Presbytery Clerk immediately.

2 Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

2.1 This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead highlights areas in which conflicts might arise.

2.2 Presbytery staff and members are expected to behave appropriately and in ways consistent with the Presbytery's values and policies both online and in real life.

2.3 Awareness that information made public could affect public perception of the Presbytery and the Church of Scotland. All contributors must make clear when they are speaking as individuals and that they do not do so on behalf of the Presbytery.

2.4 Staff with a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at the Presbytery should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Presbytery Clerk.

Staff who wish to start blogging and to comment within their blog their association with the Presbytery should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Presbytery Clerk.

2.5 Those in senior management and specialist roles, where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care that personal views published are not mistakenly taken to express the view of the Presbytery or of the Church of Scotland.

2.6 The use of careful judgement is encouraged. Awareness of the association with the Presbytery and ensuring profiles and related content is consistent with the values of the Presbytery and the Church of Scotland is important.

2.7 Where contact is made by the press about a social media post which relates to the Presbytery, contact should be made with the Presbytery Clerk immediately and prior to any response being offered.

2.8 Neither the Presbytery nor the Church of Scotland is a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing the Presbytery, the Presbytery's position of neutrality must be maintained. Those who are politically active in their spare time need to make a clear separation of their personal political identity from the Presbytery or the Church of Scotland, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

2.9 The Presbytery's logos or trademarks must not be used without authorisation. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Presbytery Clerk

2.10 Care should be taken with privacy online and caution exercised when sharing personal information. The widespread and enduring nature of social media contributions requires careful reflection prior to posting. Social media should at all times be used safely.

2.11 Differences of opinion on even the most difficult of subjects should be addressed at all times through respectful dialogue. Opinions should be expressed and debates entered in respectful ways. Passionate discussions and debates are welcome provided the responsibility of respect is observed.

2.12 The sharing of posts that are issued by the Presbytery and the Church of Scotland is encouraged.

3 Further guidelines

3.1 Defamation of character

Defamation of character is a term that is used to describe when a false statement is written or spoken about an individual with the intent of harming their reputation. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring the Presbytery into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

3.2 Copyright law

All members and staff must abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

3.3 Confidentiality

Any communications members and/or staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that the Presbytery is not yet ready to disclose, such as a news story that is embargoed for a particular date. The reports of Standing Committees should not be shared before they have been received by Presbytery.

3.4 Discrimination and harassment

Neither members nor staff should post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Presbytery social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

3.5 *Use of social media in the recruitment process*

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the processes agreed by the Church of Scotland and/or by Presbytery and Committees. Any advertising of vacancies should be carried out as authorised.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of candidate's online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision.

3.6 *Protection and intervention*

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Presbytery Clerk immediately.

3.7 *Under 18s and vulnerable people*

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, members and staff should ensure the online relationship with the Presbytery follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Care should be taken to ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Steps should also be taken to ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and that Presbytery content and other content is appropriate for them. Members and staff are expected to act in accordance with the Church of Scotland's Safeguarding policies.

4 Responsibilities and breach of policy

4.1 Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of the Presbytery is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Presbytery Clerk.

TRUSTEE OBLIGATIONS

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1 General Principles

1.1 All voting members of Presbytery are, by virtue of the post held, or being commissioned by a Kirk Session or accepting an invitation directly from Presbytery, a full member of the Presbytery of Clyde until you cease to be a member of the Presbytery.

1.2 Membership of Presbytery automatically brings with it various duties, not least those of a trustee under both civil and church law. Presbytery has a responsibility to bring these obligations to the attention of members. This policy document outlines them with a summary of trustee duties at the end.

1.3 All trustees (the members of Presbytery) are responsible for the overall supervision and management of the charity's activities. Staff carry out these functions day to day, and so members' primary task is to be involved in scrutinising the work of staff and making policy decisions.

1.4 Decisions are almost always made at Presbytery meetings. These are held four times per year (two in person only, and two hybrid) and attendance in person or online is the main way of participating in Presbytery business. Papers are made available electronically in advance of the meetings. Any member of Presbytery may ask that any matter, be discussed at a meeting. A request emailed to the Clerk more than a day before the Presbytery meeting will permit a matter to be discussed.

1.5 Where members agree to be appointed to a standing committee they have a responsibility to attend these meetings and contribute as they are able. If you are unable to attend a committee meeting, please email your apology to its convener.

1.6 Presbytery also leads services of, for example, ordination and induction. Members will receive an invitation to these.

1.7 The programme of in person and hybrid meetings is agreed before the start of each year; This is subject to change if weather conditions make any changes necessary, in which case email intimation of the change is provided.

2 Discussing and deciding

2.1 Presbytery's rules for membership, discussion and determination of matters are contained in the Standing Orders, available from the Presbytery website. Members are encouraged to read these to be familiar with the way Presbytery works.

3 Support

3.1 Induction meetings are generally held prior to the start of the new Presbytery session. Members are welcome to attend these. Answers to specific questions may be obtained by emailing clyde@churchofscotland.org.uk.

3.2 All members of Presbytery are trustees. The primary duties of trustees are outlined below. Members should ensure that they are fully aware of your duties and responsibilities.

3.3 A charity trustee must:

- Act in the interests of the charity: trustees should put the interests of their charity before their own interests or those of any other person or organisation.
- Operate in a manner consistent with the charity's purposes: trustees should carry out their duties in accordance with the governing document.
- Act with due care and diligence: trustees should take such care of their charity's affairs as is reasonable to expect of someone who is managing the affairs of another person.
- Ensure that the charity complies with the provisions of the 2005 Act and other relevant legislation.

3.4 Additional duties for charity trustees include: Updating your charity's details: trustees must make sure that OSCR holds the latest information about their charity on the Scottish Charity Register. This is carried out by Presbytery staff in the name of Presbytery as a registered charity.

- Reporting to OSCR: complying with the statutory duty to supply certain information to OSCR, including annual monitoring, charity accounting, making changes to the charity. For Presbytery, the officials are primarily responsible for ensuring this is done.
- Fundraising: trustees are responsible for taking control of how their charity raises funds.
- Providing information to the public: trustees must make sure that their charity meets the statutory provisions when referring to their charitable status, e.g. in advertisements, and in their duty to provide information about their charity to the public.
- Financial record keeping and reporting: Charities must keep proper accounting records, prepare a statement of account, including a report on its activities at the end of each financial year, have the statement of account independently examined or audited, send a copy of the accounts, along with the annual return

to OSCR, and retain accounting records for a minimum of six years from the end of the financial year in which they were made. Presbytery staff, along with professional advisers, are primarily responsible for preparing and presenting these documents to Presbytery each year.

4 Further information

OSCR website: http://www.oscr.org.uk/charities/guidance/guidance-and-good-practicefor-charity-trustees

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Approved 03/MAR/2026

1 Purpose and Scope

1.1 The Presbytery is committed to the principles of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect anyone who has a serious concern about any aspect of Presbytery's life or procedures to voice those concerns in good faith and in line with the following procedure without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide a procedure which enables concerns to be raised if there are reasonable grounds for believing there is serious malpractice occurring or likely to occur. It applies to all employees, contractors, consultants, temporary casual and agency workers within the Presbytery and the word "employee" is used in this policy to cover all such individuals. It also applies to members of the Presbytery. Matters of concern should be raised responsibly through the procedures and guidance as detailed in this policy.

2 Definition

2.1 Whistleblowing is when someone knows, or suspects, that there is some wrongdoing involving illegal and/or underhand practices occurring within the Presbytery and alerts the right person within the Presbytery, or the relevant authority, accordingly.

2.2 Employees who engage in whistleblowing are, in certain circumstances, protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

3 General Principles

3.1 This policy is designed to deal with concerns raised in relation to the specific issues which are in the public interest and are detailed below), and which fall outside the scope of other procedures (such as a grievance procedure).

3.2 The policy does not apply to personal grievances concerning an employee's terms and conditions of employment or other aspects of the working relationship, complaints of bullying or harassment, or disciplinary matters. Such complaints will be dealt with under existing procedures on grievance, bullying and harassment and discipline and misconduct.

3.3 The policy deals with specific concerns which are in the public interest in circumstances where an employee or a member of Presbytery has the reasonable belief:

- that a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed, or is likely to be committed (including financial malpractice or acts of bribery);
- that a person has failed, is failing, or is likely to fail to comply with a legal obligation to which they are subject;
- that the health and safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered;
- that the Presbytery is attempting to suppress or conceal any information relating to any of the above.

3.4 If, in the course of investigation, any concern raised in relation to the above matters appears to relate more appropriately to grievance, bullying or harassment, or discipline, those procedures will be invoked. If the matter is of a less serious nature the employee should always talk to his or her line manager in the first instance.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Concerns must be raised without malice and in good faith, and the individual must reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegations contained in it, are substantially true. The disclosure must not be made for purposes of personal gain, and in all the circumstances it must be reasonable to make the disclosure.

4.2 If an employee knows, or suspects, that some wrongdoing is occurring, he or she should raise the matter immediately with their line manager. If the wrongdoing or suspected wrongdoing involves the employee's line manager, or if the concern is raised by a member/adherent, the concern should be referred to the Presbytery Clerk (or to the convener of the Business Committee if the disclosure relates to the Presbytery Clerk in any respect). Anyone who is informed of potential wrongdoing must take immediate action to ensure the situation is investigated and dealt with as quickly as possible.

4.3 Efforts must be made to maintain the anonymity of the individual who has made the allegation of wrongdoing.

5 Procedure and Process

5.1 Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing and whilst individuals are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation they will be required to demonstrate that there are reasonable grounds for their concern. It is suggested that individuals making a disclosure should set out (One) the background and history of the concern (including relevant dates); and (Two) the reason they are particularly concerned about the situation.

5.2 Wherever possible, within ten working days the person to whom the disclosure is made should write to the employee or to the member of Presbytery with the following information:

- an acknowledgment that the concern has been raised;
- an indication of the anticipated method of investigation and resolution if applicable;
- an estimation of how long it will take for the individual to be provided with
- a final response noting that all investigations shall be completed as quickly
- as may be practicable in the circumstances;
- advice as to what, if any, initial enquires have been made and what anticipated further investigations will take place.

5.3 If an investigation is deemed to be required, the Presbytery Clerk (or conveners of either the Staffing or Business committees if appropriate) shall nominate an individual or individuals to consider the concern and take any steps they deem necessary to investigate the matter. This individual or individuals will conduct a full and thorough investigation. The form the investigation takes will be determined by the nature of the concern.

5.4 The findings of the investigation will be shared with the Business committee which will then decide if there is a case to answer and what procedure to follow. This may include taking steps with a competent authority, such as the police, for further investigation. The decision may also be that the matter would be more appropriately handled under existing procedures for grievance, bullying and harassment, or discipline.

5.5 If it is determined that it would not be appropriate to proceed with an investigation or, following an investigation it is determined not to do so, the decision will be explained as fully as possible to the individual who raised the concern, giving the reasons not to take it further. If not satisfied with the decision, it is then open to the individual to make the disclosure to the Principal Clerk who may take action if appropriate. This may include appointing an investigator, taking action under Church legislation and/or referring the matter on to another authority, such as the police or local authority.

5.6 The Church's Law Department shall also be contacted so that guidance can be provided if required. If urgent action is required, this may be taken prior to an investigation being undertaken. The employee or member of Presbytery may be invited to one or more meetings during the investigation depending on the nature of the matter raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. The employee may be accompanied by a work colleague or certified trade union representative during any such meetings; a member of Presbytery may be accompanied by a companion of their choosing.

5.7 Any other employees that are invited to provide statements should abide by the same principles as the employee or the member of Presbytery raising the concern.

5.8 If the concern involves an employee or employees the employee(s) will be told at an early stage of the investigation and of the evidence supporting it, and will be provided with an opportunity to respond during the investigation.

5.9 Employees and members of Presbytery raising concerns under this policy need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed and so they will be kept informed of procedural progress and the outcome of the investigation. It may not always be appropriate to disclose full detail of any action that is taken, but the employee will be informed if action is taken.

6 Alerting outside bodies to a potential wrongdoing

6.1 Employees and members of Presbytery should always, in the first instance, follow this internal procedure about a potential wrongdoing. If they are not satisfied with the response, they are entitled to contact a relevant external body to express the concerns. In doing this they should:

- have a reasonable belief that the allegation is based on correct facts;
- not be making any personal gain from the revelations; and
- make the disclosure to a relevant body. A relevant body is likely to be a regulatory body, and a list of prescribed relevant bodies is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blowing-the-whistle-list-of-prescribedpeople-and-bodies--2

6.2 Disclosures to OSCR should be made via the Church's Law Department. If an employee or a member of Presbytery is dissatisfied with the Presbytery's response under this policy and considers that any matter should be reported to OSCR he or she should contact the Law Department at lawdept@churchofscotland.org.uk in order to take this forward.

7 Contacting the media

The media is not a relevant external body. Employees and members of Presbytery should never contact the media with allegations. Employees should be mindful that they must maintain the confidentiality of the employer so far as possible.

8 Protection against detriment

8.1 Any employee who makes a protected disclosure in terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 will be protected from any detriment in relation to any allegations that are made. If the employee does not follow the procedure set out above, which encompasses the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, the protection against detriment may not apply.

8.2 Disclosing information in an inappropriate way (e.g. contacting the media or contacting a regulatory body without first raising the matter with the employer as set out in this policy) will constitute gross misconduct and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal being taken against the employee.

9 Review

9.1 This policy will be kept under review by the Presbytery. Any questions regarding its operation should be directed to the Presbytery Clerk in the first instance.

Clyde Presbytery

Property Guidelines and Procedures

Approved 03/MAR/2026

Kirk Sessions have a duty of care to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all users of its property. The Presbytery, through the services of its Property Committee, has adopted the following practice and procedures to assist in this process.

This paper identifies the procedures relating to all property matters including purchase, sale, let or disposal of properties and of all other matters with reference to the erection and maintenance of properties in the care of congregations within this Presbytery and its Property Committee, through its Convener, is the first line of contact in these matters. The appointment of a full time Presbytery Building Officer, Mark Shanks who is a Chartered Surveyor, is a great asset and his advice should be sought at every opportunity.

Contact details for the Convener of the Property Committee and that of its members can be found in the Presbytery Handbook.

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Definitions:-

New Builds and Alterations:- New buildings; any alteration of sanctuary, hall or manse; all extensions; works which change the appearance or character of the building; demolition or partial demolition; replacement of windows in different materials; removal of one or more pews; the redecoration of the church or the exterior of a building within the curtilage of the church with a new colour scheme, whatever the cost, all require the prior approval of the Presbytery and that of the General Trustees (GTs).

Repairs:- Making good what is already there; replacing like with like for listed buildings or with modern materials appropriate for the task for other buildings, including the décor, to ensure the appearance of the building, as far as is reasonably practical, remains the same.

Routine Maintenance:- Servicing of boiler plant; testing of electrical installations; fire appliances and alarms; PAT (Portable Appliance Testing), Legionella testing and the like.

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Financial Limits:-

All Alterations irrespective of cost require the prior approval of the Property Committee under powers delegated by Presbytery and also that of the GTs.

In any one calendar year a congregation's Financial Board may carry out repairs with a cumulative value of £20,000 for sanctuaries, sanctuary and hall complexes and with an additional £10,000 for detached halls and a further £5,000 for manses all inclusive of VAT and professional fees without the approval of the Property Committee under the Presbytery's delegated powers. Repairs which exceed these limits require the approval of the Property Committee and in addition, repairs which exceed £50,000 require the additional and subsequent approval of the GTs. Further, repairs to the same element over the previous three years or are planned for the next three years which exceed a cumulative value of £50,000 also require permission from the GTs.

In addition, any repairs or alterations in excess of £100,000 require the approval of the conveners of Presbytery Mission Committee, Mission Plan Implementation Committee and Stewardship and Finance Committee in addition to that of the Property Committee for delegated approval under powers before being forwarded to the General Trustees for their approval.

The approval of the General Trustees takes precedence in all applications forwarded to them for consideration.

It should be noted that any costs associated with routine maintenance as defined earlier are not included within these limits and should be ignored.

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Procedure

When the financial board of a congregation has assessed the need for Presbytery approval either for alterations or repairs, an A1 form entitled 'Application for Approval of Works/Financial assistance' requires to be completed in all respects and is available on request from the Convener or may be downloaded from either the Presbytery or the Church of Scotland websites.

Competitive quotations for works should be sought in all cases but the members of the Property Committee are aware that this is not always possible. However, every effort to demonstrate value for money should be explored.

There are occasions when such repairs fall below the financial limits but the congregation requires financial support either by way of a grant, a loan or release of funds from the Consolidated Fabric Fund, all of which are managed by the GTs. In these circumstances the same 'A1' form requires to be completed in order to apply for such financial help.

Once the 'A1' form is completed it should be sent as an attachment by email to the Property Convener together with quotations for the works and any other documents in support. Thereafter it is circulated to the Property Committee for comments and assuming there is support for the proposal, a draft extract minute of approval is forwarded to the Presbytery Secretary for the production of a formal minute which is copied to the congregation's session clerk for noting. If deemed necessary, the Presbytery's formal extract minute, together with the A1 form and all supporting documents are forwarded to the GTs for action. This process takes approximately seven working days but should approval be required for larger schemes embracing the views of the Conveners of the other committees as defined above, then it will take longer. It should also be noted that submissions forwarded to the GTs for action will take much longer as its Fabric Committee normally meets on the last Tuesday of the month, with the exception of July and December, and items for inclusion in its agenda require to be received a week earlier.

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Property Sales and Purchases.
The purchase or sale of any property on behalf of a congregation must have the approval of its Kirk Session and an extract minute of that decision forwarded to the Presbytery Property Convener in order to seek concurrence of the Presbytery. In all cases it is a requirement that the services of the Church of Scotland (C of S) solicitors are engaged in the advertising, surveying and conveyancing of such properties. Once Presbytery approval is granted under its delegated powers, an extract minute of that decision is forwarded to the GTs for the attention of the Solicitors Department and copied to the Session Clerk. Thereafter, the C of S solicitors will liaise directly with the Kirk Session until the sale is concluded.

The purchase of property other than manses is rare and the following guidance, therefore, is primarily focused on the sale of churches and both the purchase and sale of manses.

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Manse Sales. This procedurally is the more frequent and simple exercise in the sense that once all approvals are granted the matter is left in the hands of the solicitors liaising directly with the Kirk Session in order to accept an offer.

Manse Purchases. Current market conditions dictate that approvals should be arrived at with minimum delay and once a Kirk Session has agreed to seek a new manse, it is essential that a small number of its members are appointed to act on its behalf. This group's initial task is to familiarise itself with the requirements of a manse as determined in the Manse Handbook. Once a suitable property becomes available details must be forwarded as soon as possible to the Presbytery Property Convener in order that representatives of this committee and that of the Ministry Committee have an opportunity to view the property and determine its suitability. If approval is granted and confirmed as such, then the representatives of the Kirk Session are empowered to instruct the C of S solicitors to submit an offer on its behalf.

Church Sales. This is similar to that of manse sales in the sense that once all approvals are granted the matter is left in the hands of the solicitors liaising directly with the Kirk Session in order to accept an offer. The responsibility for maintenance and security of church buildings remains with the Kirk Session until an offer is accepted and it is recommended that regular services should be maintained as long as possible in order to improve security and reduce the risk of vandalism.

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This foregoing outlines the vast majority of routine procedures within the Property Committee but should an extraordinary issue arise Kirk Session office bearers are encouraged to contact the Convener for further advice.