

Safeguarding Review - Diocese of Chester

22 October 2020

Commissioned by:

The Bishop of Chester, the Dean of Chester and the Diocesan Secretary.

Reviewer : Steve Long

Assisted by : A Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser from another Diocese

Main purpose of the review

To review safeguarding arrangements, structures and resourcing in the Diocese of Chester and make recommendations for improvements.

This work is being conducted as a standalone piece of work, but will take proper account of the following documents:

- The two pertinent SCIE audits
 - Chester Diocese 2016
 - Chester Cathedral 2019
- The two IICSA reports published so far concerning the Church of England
- The Pearl Review

Time scale

By 31 December 2020

Information, data, and confidentiality

Information and data will be shared with the review team by the Bishop of Chester, Diocesan Board of Finance and Chester Cathedral in accordance with the relevant privacy policies of those organizations.

The report produced will be a public document, although confidential redactable appendices might be produced if needed.

In interaction with the Diocese, Cathedral, and DBF the reviewer will be regarded as working directly for the Bishop, Dean, and Diocesan Secretary, and thus can expect full cooperation and be freely included in confidential matters. Dispute in this regard will be dealt with as a matter of highest priority by the commissioners of this review.

Information supplied will be treated by the review team as confidential and only used for the purposes of the review.

If the review team believes confidential information should be disclosed to others, they will discuss this further with the commissioners of the review. This is not intended however to prevent appropriate whistleblowing activity to the National safeguarding team, or Statutory authorities in the event that this proves necessary.

Arrangements agreed

The reviewer has offered to conduct the review on a voluntary basis. We are very grateful to him for this.

References

Appropriate references have been obtained.

Detailed requests

In commissioning the review, we ask the reviewer to consider in the following areas, however the reviewer should not feel that they are constrained by these points and should feel free to raise other areas that they feel need further exploration as the review takes place.

The structures in place in the Diocese.

- The operation of the Diocesan Safeguarding panel and membership

- The role of the safeguarding lead in the Diocese.

- The placement of the Diocesan safeguarding function in Diocesan Structures, to include line management of the DSA, and which if any Diocesan body/committee/structure should hold the budget

- Formal reporting mechanisms to senior diocesan staff including the Diocesan Bishop

- The relationship between Diocesan Bishop, Dean and Chapter and Chester Diocesan Board of Finance. Including the current Memorandum of understanding and any future possible relationships.

Resourcing of Safeguarding

- Consideration of the staffing of the safeguarding functions in the Diocese, including recommendations as to how it could best be strengthened.

- Adequacy of Budgets

Training arrangements

Clergy and parishes

Relationship with parishes including provision of advice, accessibility, cover etc.

Cathedral

Consideration in the light of national practice guidance of the threshold the MoU defines for referral of cases to the DSA.

Consideration of the structure, staffing and capacity in the Cathedral to manage the safeguarding functions and cases that fall below the threshold the MoU defines for referral to the DSA.

Advice about shared working with the diocese at strategic and safeguarding case levels.

Wider Church of England bodies

Relationships with the National Safeguarding Team, other Dioceses, other bodies such as theological colleges, religious institutions etc.

Handover of safeguarding as clergy join or leave the Diocese of Chester, including practice around ordinands and Episcopal Referencing.

Areas outside the review

We are not looking for an audit as this is covered by SCIE

Casework quality control

Detailed assessment of safeguarding arrangements in particular parishes (although any concerns noted should be placed in a confidential appendix for subsequent addressing within the Diocese)