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# A BETRAYAL OF TRUST

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The independent report into the handling of allegations that have come to the attention of the Church of England concerning the late Hubert Victor Whitsey, former Bishop of Chester.

**His Honour David Pearl, Lead Reviewer**

**Kate Wood, Review Adviser**

**Hannah Sinclair, Project Manager**



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# A BETRAYAL OF TRUST

## **Preface**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019, I agreed to be the Lead Reviewer for the Learning Lessons Case Review into the handling of allegations that have come to the attention of the Church of England concerning the late Hubert Victor Whitsey, former Bishop of Chester. I was delighted that Kate Wood agreed to participate in the Review as the Adviser, and that Hannah Sinclair was appointed as our Project Manager. Brief biographies for the three of us appear at [Appendix 1](#) to this Report.

This is an independent Review and we are grateful to everyone who has contributed. The list of people we have interviewed is at [Appendix 3](#) and the list of documentary records that we have considered is at [Appendix 4](#).

The Terms of Reference ([Appendix 2](#)) make clear that this Review should focus on the historic allegations relating to Hubert Victor Whitsey. We do not, therefore, in this Review, deal with any events that occur subsequent to the apology letters that were sent out to victims by the Archbishop of York dated 28<sup>th</sup> July 2018, except for a few matters of relevance. Issues subsequent to that date will form the subject of another review with different terms of reference.

We provide both an executive summary, and a detailed chronological timeline in accordance with paragraph 7.6 of the Terms of Reference, immediately following this introduction.

Work on the Review could not commence until issues relating to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)<sup>1</sup> had been resolved. These were not finally concluded until the late autumn of 2019, and accordingly the time scale for the conclusion of this Review has understandably slipped. Privacy notices were developed for this Review, and we understand that the National Safeguarding Team of the Church of England will be able to use similar privacy notices in the future if they are required.

The lockdown that accompanied the spread of Coronavirus (Covid 19) has also affected the time table, and we are grateful to the many consultees, (victims, staff, clergy and others) who agreed to have meetings with the Review Team either by telephone conference calls or by video conference links.

The Review Team is fully aware that a meeting by a video conference link or a telephone conference call cannot replace entirely a face to face meeting. In addition, it is the case that the timing of meetings with people who gave evidence to the Review Team was such that there were occasions when we received information from a person about an earlier interviewee, and it was not possible in the time frame of this Review to talk again with the earlier interviewee. For these reasons, we decided, when seeking the replies to the representation letters, that we should enable people to respond to possible adverse comments and to provide further written observations, including submitting further documentary evidence that they wished to send to us. We have taken all of these replies fully into account when finalising our Report<sup>2</sup>. In this way, we hope that we have been fair to everyone we have spoken to or mentioned in the Report.

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<sup>1</sup> (EU) 2016/679

<sup>2</sup> We have gone beyond the recommendations made in the review commissioned by the Treasury Committee [A Review of Maxwellisation](#) prepared by Blackstone Chambers (November 2016).

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We have anonymised the names of victims, two of the clerics to assist in retaining the victims' anonymity, and also two people who requested that their names not be mentioned in the Report but rather that we refer to them by their job descriptions. We have respected their wishes.

We have placed at the forefront of our work the objective as set out in the Terms of Reference, paragraph 2, that the *“the Reviewer will identify both good practice and failings in the Church of England’s handling of the allegations relating to Hubert Victor Whitsey, including its safeguarding practice, in order that the Church of England can take steps to enhance and improve its response to allegations of abuse and, thereby, ensure a safer environment for all.”*

We hope that the [recommendations](#) (as requested under paragraph 3.3(3) of the Terms of Reference) will play some part in alleviating the harm that we have concluded many people undoubtedly suffered at the hands of Hubert Victor Whitsey. We trust that appropriate support will be arranged for the victims on the publication of this Report.

**His Honour David Pearl**

**Lead Reviewer**

**10<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

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## Chronological Timeline

<b><u>1910 - 1949</u></b>	
21 <sup>st</sup> November 1916	Hubert Victor Whitsey (HVW) is born in Blackburn.  HVW attends Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and a local technical college.
1939 – 1945	HVW serves in the Second World War.
1945 - 1949	HVW studies philosophy, politics and economics at St Edmund Hall, Oxford.  HVW then attends Westcott House, Cambridge to prepare for his ordination at Blackburn.
<b><u>1949 - 1959</u></b>	
18 <sup>th</sup> December 1949	HVW ordained as a Deacon.  HVW becomes the Curate at St Laurence's Church, Chorley in the Diocese of Blackburn.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1950	HVW ordained as a Priest.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1951	HVW serves as Perpetual Curate in Farington St Paul, Diocese of Blackburn.
31 <sup>st</sup> December 1954	HVW leaves his role as Perpetual Curate in Farington St Paul, Diocese of Blackburn.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1955	HVW serves as Vicar at Halliwell, St Paul, Diocese of Manchester.
31 <sup>st</sup> December 1959	HVW leaves his role as Vicar at Halliwell, St Paul, Diocese of Manchester.
<b><u>1960 - 1969</u></b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1960	HVW serves as Curate in Charge at Langley St Aidan, Diocese of Manchester.
19 <sup>th</sup> October 1964	HVW leaves his role as Curate in Charge at Langley St Aidan, Diocese of Manchester.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1963	HVW begins serving as Honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral.
19 <sup>th</sup> October 1964	HVW begins serving as Vicar at Langley All Saints and Martyrs, Diocese of Manchester.



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1965	M7 is sexually abused <sup>3</sup> by HVW on a trip with the Church Brigade.
1966	M9 is sexually abused by HVW during the summer.
1966	F7 is sexually abused by HVW.
1966	M11 is sexually abused on four occasions by HVW.
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1968	<p>HVW leaves his roles as Honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral and Vicar at Langley All Saints and Martyrs, Diocese of Manchester respectively.</p> <p>HVW begins to serve as Vicar of Downham St Leonard, Diocese of Blackburn.</p>
<b><u>1970 - 1979</u></b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> November 1971	<p>HVW leaves his role as Vicar of Downham St Leonard, Diocese of Blackburn.</p> <p>HVW is consecrated as Bishop of Hertford (Suffragan Bishop), Diocese of St Albans.</p>
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 1974	<p>HVW leaves his role as Bishop of Hertford in the Diocese of St Albans.</p> <p>HVW consecrated as Bishop of Chester (Diocesan Bishop, Diocese of Chester).</p>
1975	M1 is sexually abused by HVW on multiple occasions over roughly a three-year period.
1975	M1 told us and the police that he disclosed abuse to his teacher (no apparent formal connection to the Church of England).
1978/1979	M1 told us and the police that he disclosed abuse to a personal friend (no formal connection to the Church of England).
1978	HVW sexually abuses both F1 and F2 on multiple occasions over a period of roughly two years.
1979	Siblings F6 and M4 are told by their mother that they are to meet with HVW at Bishop's House, Chester. F6 and M4 are seen separately by HVW and both are sexually abused.

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<sup>3</sup> We are using the term sexual abuse in relation to the allegations discussed throughout the report without regard to the legal definitions.

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<b><u>1980 - 1989</u></b>	
1980	M3 meets with HVW to discuss possible ordination training and is sexually assaulted by HVW.
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1981	M2 attends Bishop's House to meet with HVW regarding ordination. During the meeting HVW asks M2 about his sexual orientation. Towards the end of the meeting, HVW sexually abuses M2.
24 <sup>th</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> March 1981	M2 discloses the sexual abuse by HVW to Revd John Staley, Warden of a religious community in the north of England and Revd Sue Rose, Chaplain at the same religious community.
27 <sup>th</sup> March 1981	M2 receives a letter from HVW regarding the meeting of 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1981.
17 <sup>th</sup> April 1981	M2 discloses the abuse to Revd Frank Haslam, former Vicar at Macclesfield who advises M2 to speak with Bishop Gordon Strutt, Bishop of Stockport. Revd Frank Haslam subsequently contacts Bishop Gordon Strutt.
8 <sup>th</sup> April 1981	Bishop Gordon Strutt (Bishop of Stockport) writes to M2 asking to meet with him <i>"today or tomorrow"</i> .
9 <sup>th</sup> April 1981	M2 meets with Bishop Gordon Strutt and discloses the abuse by HVW. This conversation is recorded but a copy of this tape has not been found and M2 never received a copy.
14 <sup>th</sup> April 1981	M2 receives another letter from HVW referencing their previous meeting and offering to meet with M2 again. M2 did not meet with HVW again.
Spring/early summer 1981	M2 visits Bishop Peter Price (who at the time was Revd) in Addiscombe, Croydon. There is a conversation between M2 and Bishop Price about why M2 has decided at that stage not to seek ordination. M2's evidence to the Review Team is that he disclosed the abuse by HVW to Bishop Peter Price but asked him not to act on the information. In his evidence to the Review Team, Bishop Price told the team that he has no recollection that M2 made any disclosure of this kind.
Late 1981	<p>HVW attends the home of F4. During the course of this visit he sexually abuses F4 and her daughter, F5 (which F4 witnesses). HVW also makes efforts to meet F4's son alone.</p> <p>F4 informs her husband of the incidents. F4's husband goes to Bishop's House to complain. On his arrival there is no one there other than Canon Bill Vanstone, the Bishop's Chaplain. F4 states that there was a conversation between her husband and Canon Vanstone, who told her husband that Whitsey was unwell and was leaving his post as Bishop and was going to a <i>"special home"</i>.</p>

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31 <sup>st</sup> December 1981	<p>HVW retires as Bishop of Chester moves to the Diocese of Blackburn where he is granted Permission to Officiate (PTO).</p> <p>Bishop Ronald Brown (the then Bishop of Birkenhead) becomes responsible for the Diocese of Chester during the interim period between HVW retiring and Michael Baughen's consecration.</p>
1982	<p>F3, F1 and F2 are invited to visit HVW at his retirement home in Blackburn. HVW attempts to sexually abuse F1 as she walks up a set of stairs. During the course of the afternoon, HVW sexually abuses F3. HVW sexually abuses F1 in front of F3. The family leave HVW's home. F1 and F2 disclose their abuse to F3.</p> <p>Upon their return to the Chester area, F3 discloses the abuse by HVW to the Bishop's Secretary who tells her not to worry about it as HVW was retired.</p>
29 <sup>th</sup> June 1982	Michael Baughen is consecrated as Bishop of Chester.
February 1983	<p>M2 goes forward for ordination but is turned down. M2 then discloses the abuse by HVW to Revd Stanley Baxter. Revd Baxter refers M2 to the then Bishop of Knaresborough, John Dennis. M2 speaks with Bishop John Dennis who M2 says knew he was in a difficult place at the time.</p> <p>M2 believes that Bishop John Dennis tells Bishop David Young (the then Bishop of Ripon) about the abuse by HVW during this period.</p>
March 1983	M2 corresponds with Bishop Michael Baughen and Canon Stewart Lawton regarding his failure to obtain ordination. M2 is offered a date to meet with the Bishop.
21 <sup>st</sup> April 1983	M2 meets with Bishop Michael Baughen to discuss his failure to obtain ordination. M2's evidence to the Review Team is that he disclosed the abuse by HVW during the meeting. In his evidence to the Review Team, Bishop Michael Baughen denies that M2 made a disclosure of sexual abuse to him.
4 <sup>th</sup> October 1983	M2 writes to Bishop Michael Baughen (Bishop of Chester) regarding his failure to obtain ordination.
10 <sup>th</sup> October 1983	Bishop Michael Baughen responds to M2 stating that <i>"the ACCM in '83 was quite clearly making its judgment on the person they found before them at that time"</i> .
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1987	HVW's Permission to Officiate (PTO) ceases.
25 <sup>th</sup> December 1987	HVW dies and is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

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<b><u>1990 - 1999</u></b>	
1992	M3 meets with Canon Peter Lee and discloses the abuse by HVW. Canon Peter Lee asks M3 if he wants to take this further and report it, but M3 says he does not want to at that time.
1996	Bishop Michael Baughen retires as Bishop of Chester.
13 <sup>th</sup> November 1996	Bishop Peter Forster is consecrated as Bishop of Chester.
<b><u>2000 - 2009</u></b>	
2000/2001	M3 discloses the abuse by HVW to Revd Paddy Benson who organizes for M3 to meet with Bishop David Urquhart, the Bishop of Birkenhead at that time. During this meeting (at which Revd Paddy Benson was also present) M3 discloses the abuse by HVW to Bishop David Urquhart.
2001/2002	M2 meets with Bishop Peter Forster and has a conversation regarding HVW.
<b><u>2010 - 2018</u></b>	
2012	M1 mentions HVW during a social event at which Bishop Glyn Webster (who at that time was a Canon) is present.
March 2014	M1 discloses to Cleric X that he was abused by a Bishop when he was a teenager. M1 discloses that he told a northern Bishop about the abuse and was told <i>"not to make a fuss"</i> .
31 <sup>st</sup> March 2014	Cleric X emails an Archdeacon regarding the disclosure by M1. The Archdeacon forwards this email to the then London DSA, Sheryl Kent for follow up.
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	Cleric X and Sheryl Kent communicate via email regarding how to support M1 to come forward to the Diocese. Cleric X confirms that M1's abuse was by a former deceased Bishop of Chester and the Bishop of Beverley <i>"asked for silence"</i> . Sheryl Kent's details are given to M1 via Cleric X.
24 <sup>th</sup> April 2015	F6 and M4 attend the interment of their mother's ashes. Whilst in the chapel, F6 and M4 disclose to each other that they were abused by HVW. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall is present and overhears part of this conversation.
January 2016	M2 discloses the abuse by HVW to Revd David Mock. Revd David Mock advises that M2 speaks to the Chester DSA.
8 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	The Chester DSA receives a telephone call from Revd David Mock who states he had received a disclosure about HVW. The Chester DSA then receives a phone call from M2 himself.
11 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	M2 meets with the Chester DSA and gives an account of the abuse and subsequent events including the disclosure to Bishop Peter Forster.

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	The Chester DSA emails Bishop Peter Forster and makes him aware that she received a disclosure from M2 regarding HVW.
12 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	<p>The Chester DSA emails the National Safeguarding Adviser, Graham Tilby, seeking information on how to obtain clergy files relating to HVW.</p> <p>The Chester DSA emails M2 to tell him that she had asked for the file records and advises him that she would come back to him when she had these records.</p>
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2016	The Chester DSA meets the National Senior Casework Manager, Jane Dodds, at a training conference and discusses the HVW case. Jane Dodds states that she would convene a core group meeting to take the M2 disclosure forward.
25 <sup>th</sup> January – 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	Sheryl Kent communicates with Cleric X stating that she was not contacted by M1 to take the disclosure further. Sheryl Kent states that she passed the disclosure to the “ <i>National Church</i> ” as it involved a Bishop. Cleric X contacts M1 about the disclosure who states he is thinking of coming forward. Sheryl Kent informs Cleric X via email that she is leaving the Diocese and copies in Annette Gordon (her successor) to take the matter forward.
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2016	The Chester DSA does not receive an email from Jane Dodds regarding the case and so emails Graham Tilby stating she had requested that M2 provide a brief chronology of who he disclosed the abuse to which the Chester DSA would pass on to Jane Dodds. The Chester DSA asks Graham Tilby to pass her email onto Jane Dodds.
1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016	Email exchange between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds about meeting to discuss the way forward with the case.
16 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	The Chester DSA emails M2 advising him that she is waiting for a date from Jane Dodds for them to meet and discuss the case.
17 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	Email exchange between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds setting a date of 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2016 for the meeting.
24 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	The Chester DSA emails Jane Dodds advising her that she (the Chester DSA) had been trying to move the case forward since 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2016.
March 2016	M1 and Annette Gordon correspond over the course of March, April and May to organize a date to meet and talk about M1’s disclosure.
22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2016	M2 emails the Chester DSA asking for an update. The Chester DSA responds stating that they were struggling to locate records relating to HVW.
9 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	The Chester DSA emails Jane Dodds requesting that Jane Dodds liaise directly with M2 as he had not received any updates on the case. Jane

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	Dodds replies to say that a core group should meet prior to her making contact with M2.
22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2016	M1 and Annette Gordon meet. M1 gives an account of his abuse. Annette Gordon agrees to refer the case to Chester Diocese as this was where the abuse occurred. Annette Gordon organizes an authorized listener for M1.
27 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	Annette Gordon contacts M1 to confirm that she has referred the case to the DSA in Chester who would like to contact M1. M1 agrees to his details being shared with the Chester DSA.
1 <sup>st</sup> July 2016	The Chester DSA and M1 communicate over the course of a few days via email to organize a meeting.
3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2016	Whilst on a parish visit abroad, M1 discloses to a cleric [A] that he was abused by a Bishop in Chester and that a few years ago he disclosed the abuse to Bishop Glyn Webster who had told him to move on. M1 reported that the disclosure was being dealt with by the NST and Chester Diocese.
5 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	Cleric A contacts the then DSA in York Diocese, David Finan, for advice. Cleric A reports that a disclosure had been made by a victim to a senior cleric and asked whether she had to give the senior cleric's name. Cleric A does not reveal M1's identity but does give Bishop Glyn Webster's name as the person that M1 disclosed to.
11 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	Bishop Peter Forster informs Archbishop John Sentamu (via a letter) about emerging details of two allegations of sexual abuse by Whitsey (M1 and M2).
13 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	Archbishop John Sentamu responds to Bishop Peter Forster stating that that he had passed the information on to Jane Dodds, and that it was his view and the view of the Bishop of Chester that the Archbishop of the Province and the National Safeguarding Team should take the lead in cases of this nature rather than the successor Diocesan Bishop.
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	The Chester DSA meets with M1 who gives an account of his abuse and confirms that this was by HVW. The Chester DSA gives M1 the contact details for the Diocesan counselling service. M1 states that he would formally report the matter to the police.
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	The Chester DSA emails Bishop Peter Forster recounting her meeting with M1 on 14 <sup>th</sup> July.
16 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	The Chester DSA informs M1 that as the case involves a Bishop, it would be led by the NST.
25 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	The first national core group meeting in respect of allegations against HVW is held, chaired by Jane Dodds. Disclosures by M1 and M2 are discussed.

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	The Chester DSA emails Bishop Peter Forster recounting details of the core group meeting and informing him that she would let him know when M1 had been to the police.
26 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	Bishop Peter Forster emails Jane Dodds in reference to his having made enquiries with senior clergy about HVW.
27 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	<p>The Chester DSA contacts Cheshire Police to report what she has been told by both M1 and M2. The Chester DSA arranges for M1 to be interviewed by the police.</p> <p>Cheshire Police commence their investigation – Operation Coverage – under the Chester Local Policing Unit, Criminal Investigation Department.</p>
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	Jane Dodds responds to Bishop Peter Forster stating that the Bishop should not make contact with anyone else in relation to the case. The Bishop replies that he would prefer to meet with the police himself.
1 <sup>st</sup> August 2016	Jane Dodds advises Bishop Peter Forster to pass any information he has to the Chester DSA, the police or herself as the core group chair.
18 <sup>th</sup> August 2016	David Finan contacts Canon Daphne Green at Bishopthorpe Palace to make her aware of the information from Cleric A.
10 <sup>th</sup> August 2016	M1 visits Cheshire Police with the Chester DSA.
19 <sup>th</sup> August 2016	Canon Daphne Green responds to David Finan to confirm that she believes that his information is in reference to the case of HVW for which an initial core group has been held. Canon Daphne Green advises that David Finan pass this information to the NST.
26 <sup>th</sup> August 2016	Bishop Peter Forster meets M3 at Bishop's House in Chester. Canon Peter Lee is also present.
31 <sup>st</sup> August 2016	M1 gives a detailed interview to the Cheshire Constabulary about his abuse by HVW. The Chester DSA attends with M1 and waits outside the interview room.
1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016	M3 is interviewed by Cheshire Constabulary (accompanied by Canon Peter Lee).
5 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	David Finan writes to Bishop Glyn Webster advising him that a victim has alleged that he had spoken with Bishop Glyn Webster and that he had been advised by him not to report it.
7 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	Bishop Glyn Webster contacts David Finan by telephone to state that he did not receive a disclosure and would not advise someone not to report their abuse.

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17 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	M2 is interviewed by Cheshire Constabulary.
Early October 2016	The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser (PSA) told us that she commences her role.
2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2016	Canon Roger Clarke meets with F3 and she discloses that her daughter F1 had been sexually abused by HVW over a two-year period.
3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2016	<p>Canon Roger Clarke contacts the Chester DSA by email to say that he had been approached by one of his parishioners (F3) who told him that her daughter (F1) had been sexually abused by Whitsey when she was a child, over a two year period.</p> <p>This email also states that F3 told Canon Roger Clarke she believed HVW had exposed himself to the children of the then Cathedral Head Verger outside their family home. Canon Bill Vanstone purportedly persuaded the father not to go to the police over this matter.</p>
6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	Email exchange between the Chester DSA and Canon Roger Clarke. The Chester DSA states that she will be informing the police of these allegations. The Chester DSA informs the police of F1 and her allegations on 6 <sup>th</sup> October. Canon Roger Clarke responds (8 <sup>th</sup> October) to say that F1 is prepared to speak with the police.
18 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	The Chester DSA receives an email from Canon Roger Clarke stating that F1's younger sister (F2) was also allegedly sexually abused by HVW. Canon Roger Clarke states that F1 would be present at the meeting with F3.
19 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	The Chester DSA meets with F3 who informs her of HVW's abuse of both F1 and F2. During this meeting F1 is present and gives an account her of her abuse to the Chester DSA.
20 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	The Chester DSA informs the police (DC Justin Jones) of the disclosure relating to F1 and F2.
7 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Cheshire Constabulary interview F3.
10 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	<p>The Chester DSA contacts M1 by telephone to ask whether what Cleric A had reported was true. M1 stated that he had mentioned Bishop Glyn Webster as someone he had spoken to in the past about being a victim of abuse. He said that this conversation took place in a social context, and that he was advised by Bishop Glyn Webster in general terms to try and move on from this. M1 told the Chester DSA that there was no suggestion that Bishop Glyn Webster had been given any detail, and no suggestion that he had been advised by the Bishop not to report it.</p> <p>The second national core group meeting is held, chaired by the Northern PSA. Disclosures by M3, F1 and F2 are discussed as is the disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster by M1.</p>



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11 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	David Finan contacts the Northern PSA stating that Cleric A has contacted him. David Finan reports Cleric A's anger over being named as the source of information to M1.
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	Cheshire Constabulary interview F1.
29 <sup>th</sup> November 2016	David Finan emails Bishop Glyn Webster and provides him with information on a support group for people who are falsely accused.
Late 2016/early 2017	Bishop David Urquhart receives a letter from Bishop Peter Forster about allegations emerging in relation to HVW.
12 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	The third national core group meeting is held, chaired by the Northern PSA.
17 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	<p>The Northern PSA meets with Bishop Glyn Webster to discuss the matter of the disclosure to him reported by Cleric A.</p> <p>The Northern PSA subsequently provides Bishop Glyn Webster with a chronology of the situation.</p>
March 2017	Cheshire Constabulary passes the investigation to the Non-recent Sexual Abuse Team led by DC McGuinness.
April 2017	Cheshire Constabulary interview F2.
28 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	Cheshire Constabulary interview Bishop David Urquhart about the disclosure he received from M3.
18 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	<p>Canon Roger Clarke emails the Chester DSA stating that F3 had alleged HVW sexually abused her. Canon Roger Clarke states that F2 had reminded F3 of this incident.</p> <p>The Chester DSA informs DC McGuinness of the allegation of sexual abuse by HVW against F3. DC McGuinness responds the next day to say this matter is in hand.</p>
19 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	The Chester DSA updates Bishop Peter Forster on the allegation made by F3.
Early summer 2017	Cheshire Constabulary visit Bishop Michael Baughen.
June 2017	Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall attends a Chester DSAP meeting where the Chester DSA talks about the case regarding HVW. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall reports to the Chester DSA what she overheard at the interment of ashes where F6 and M4 discussed their abuse by HVW. The Chester DSA then contacts DC McGuinness to inform him of this.
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	The fourth national core group meeting is held, chaired by the Northern PSA. Allegations made by F3, F4, F5, F6 and M4 are discussed at the meeting (identities of F6 and M4 are not given).

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11 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Sharon Hassall, DSA Blackburn, briefs Archdeacon Mark Ireland that pastoral support may have to be put in place for members of the Whitsey family.
3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2017	Sharon Hassall briefs the Bishop of Blackburn on the Whitsey case and explains to him that Mrs Whitsey and her eldest son live in the Diocese and pastoral support needs to be identified.
8 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	The fifth national core group meeting is held, chaired by the Northern PSA.
11 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	Sharon Hassall contacts the wife of Whitsey's eldest son and speaks with her. Sharon Hassall also contacts Whitsey's daughter. Sharon Hassall and her Assistant visit Whitsey's daughter and her partner.
16 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	The police visit the Whitsey family to tell them of the investigation and allegations.  Sharon Hassall and her Assistant also visit the Whitsey family.
Early September 2017	F6 is interviewed by Cheshire Constabulary.
11 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	The Chester DSA and her line manager (Debbie Dalby) attend meetings with the NST during a DSA conference in York.
Late September 2017	F6 contacts Chester Diocese to speak with the DSA. F6 is informed that the Chester DSA is off sick and that the DSA has an Assistant but he was not there. F6 leaves her contact details with the Diocese to receive a call back but does not hear anything further. F6 makes another call to the Diocese but receives no response.
17 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	<i>Operation Coverage Summary Report</i> is published by Cheshire Constabulary.
October 2017	Bishop Peter Forster issues an <i>ad clerum</i> to Chester Diocese about the HVW case and police report.
28 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	F7 contacts Greater Manchester Police to report her abuse by HVW.
7 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	The sixth national core group meeting is held, chaired by Moira Murray. The Northern PSA was in attendance. Cheshire Police give some information regarding new allegations from M5, F7, M6 and M7.
10 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	F7 is interviewed by Cheshire Constabulary regarding her abuse by HVW.
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Canon Roger Clarke emails Bishop Peter Forster about another possible victim.
28 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	The Chester DSA emails Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby stating her concern that victims have not received apology letters from the Church five months on. The Chester DSA receives a response from the

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	Bishop of Lambeth, Tim Thornton stating that apologies could and should be given.
April 2018	Prior to the seventh national core group meeting, Martyn Burrell (acting Northern PSA) emails DC McGuinness seeking to collate the details of the relevant victims for the apology letters.
25 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	The seventh national core group meeting is held, chaired by Moira Murray. Apology letters are discussed with an action for a draft letter to be written by week commencing 30 <sup>th</sup> April and the letters to be sent by week commencing 7 <sup>th</sup> May. New allegations made by M9 and M10 are mentioned.
16 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	Martyn Burrell sends the draft apology letter prepared by Moira Murray to the Legal Department of the Church of England for consideration.
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	The Legal Department returns the draft apology letter to Martyn Burrell with comments.
19 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	An amended draft of the apology letter is sent to the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu.
27 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	The apology letter is approved by the Archbishop of York subject to a minor correction.
28 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	Bishop Peter Forster raises a query via the Chester DSA as to who the signatory of the apology letters should be.
28 <sup>th</sup> June – 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Martyn Burrell seeks consent from the relevant victims via Cheshire Constabulary, Greater Manchester Police and Lancashire Police to send apology letters.
July 2018	Cleric A produces a report which she sends to the Archbishop of York's office which concerns a number of safeguarding incidents, one of which is the disclosure by M1 to herself and the subsequent handling of this disclosure.
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Cheshire Constabulary and Greater Manchester Police confirm consent of victims to Martyn Burrell regarding the apology letters.
25 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Lancashire Police confirm consent of victims to Martyn Burrell regarding the apology letters.
27 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Apology letters are formatted and cross checked. Advance advice is given to the relevant Dioceses and lead Bishop for Safeguarding that the apology letters would be sent on 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2018.
30 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Professor Sue Proctor (York DSAP Chair) receives Cleric A's report.
31 July 2018	Apology letters sent to M1, M2, M3, F1, F2, F3, F7, M7, M8 and the widow of M4.

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13 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	Professor Sue Proctor sends her response to Cleric A's report to Canon Daphne Green at the Archbishop of York's office.
20 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	F1 meets with Bishop Peter Forster.
28 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	M3 meets with Bishop Peter Hancock, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.
3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2018	M2 meets with Bishop Peter Hancock, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.
8 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	F7 meets with Bishop Peter Hancock, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.
12 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	F6 meets with Bishop Peter Hancock, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding.
15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Civil proceedings statement given by M11 alleging abuse by HVW.

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## Executive Summary

1. This Report focuses on the non-recent allegations relating to the late Bishop Hubert Victor Whitsey, former Bishop of Chester.
2. In accordance with Paragraph 7.4 of the Terms of Reference, we have not made formal findings of fact in relation to these non-recent allegations, but we are asked to give a view, based on our professional judgement, as to what version of events seems most likely, on the balance of probabilities. We are aware of course that Bishop Whitsey is not able to defend himself.
3. We have looked at all of the contemporaneous evidence that has been made available to us, and we have had the opportunity of considering the report prepared by the Cheshire Constabulary (*Operation Coverage Summary Report*) which concluded that *“based upon the accounts provided, Operation Coverage has determined that should [Whitsey] have been alive today, then the police would have spoken to him in relation to 10 of the witness allegations.”* We understand that any such interview would have been under caution.
4. When considering the allegations during the course of our investigation, we have borne in mind the approach taken by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) in May 2019<sup>4</sup> namely, *“Although the character of any accused person may be relevant, it is not of any more relevance for an individual who is also held in high esteem.”*
5. We have reached the conclusion applying the appropriate standard of proof of the balance of probabilities, and based on our professional judgement, that Whitsey sexually abused a large number of children and young persons (both male and female from an early age up until late teens) and vulnerable adults during a period from 1966 until after he had retired (which was December 1981). We have identified some 18 victims. We are conscious that there may be more victims who have not come forward.
6. He groomed his victims, and often their families, to enable his abuse. He used his position in the Church to abuse both prospective ordinands, and children and young persons many of whom were particularly vulnerable as they were experiencing personal family difficulties.
7. We have looked closely at whether disclosures were made by any of the victims to members of the Church both during Whitsey’s lifetime and after his death, and what if anything was done about these disclosures. Applying the appropriate standard of proof; namely a balance of probabilities, we have concluded that some of the victims did disclose the abuse on them to senior members of the Church, and that opportunities were missed by church leaders in

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<sup>4</sup>Paragraph 446 of [\*The Anglican Church Case Studies: 1 The Diocese of Chichester & 2. The response to allegations against Peter Ball Investigation Report\*](#)

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the late 1970s and early 1980s to deal with these matters whilst Whitsey was still alive. In relation to possible disclosures by one of the victims in the spring/early summer 1981 and again in April 1983, we make no finding of fact as to whether there was or was not a disclosure by this victim of sexual abuse by Whitsey. However, we are clear in our minds that today, in similar circumstances, a cleric, applying appropriate safeguarding guidelines would be duty bound to involve his or her Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser in taking the matter further.

8. The Review concentrates on the work done by the relevant Dioceses, and by the National Safeguarding Team of the Church of England during the period 2014 – 2018, and in this context we have considered whether any victim made further disclosures immediately prior to this period and if so to whom, and what if anything was done about it. We reach a conclusion on the appropriate standard of proof, and having examined all of the evidence, and speaking to all of the people involved, that there was indeed a further disclosure in 2012, and that opportunities were lost by the Church to deal with this disclosure.
9. The Review looks closely at the work of the National Safeguarding Team, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers of the Dioceses involved, and makes recommendations regarding case management processes, the role and responsibilities of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers, the provision of victim support, the timing and content of apology letters, and consideration of amendments to national policy and practice guidance.
10. We make a number of detailed recommendations relating to the way in which the NST and the DSAs operate, for example that the Church develop a handover protocol for changes to key safeguarding staff, that core groups keep to practice guidance timetables, that changes of key roles and responsibilities be noted in the minutes, and that further work should be implemented in order to consider introducing a central case management system for safeguarding cases managed by the NST.
11. So far as apology letters are concerned, we recommend that the practice guidance be looked at to see whether it can be possible in all appropriate cases to send out letters even prior to completion of ongoing claims.
12. In particular, we recommend that whenever apology letters do become necessary, they are written in a way that reflects the particular and individual set of facts appertaining to that particular victim.
13. We note that there is no reference in any of the policy and practice guidance documents that we have seen to cases where the alleged perpetrator is deceased. It is our view that this omission should be addressed by the Church as a matter of priority, not least as the victims, their families, and the alleged perpetrator's family may still be alive. A failure to take action only adds to their distress.
14. We are particularly concerned about the involvement of the then Bishop of Chester during the period 2016-2018 when he took it upon himself to make enquiries that should have

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been more properly the role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. This occurred notwithstanding that the Bishop had been asked by members of the NST to leave safeguarding enquiries to the DSA. We recommend that in the event of differences of approach of the kind we have identified between the DSA and the Bishop on safeguarding matters, the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop may ultimately have to intervene. The Church needs to develop an agreed 'escalation strategy.'

15. We have identified good practice; for example (a) the support provided by the relevant DSA with the members of the Whitsey family, including his widow when she was alive, and (b) the involvement of the police in the meetings of the NST core groups.
16. In connection with the latter point, we recommend that an Information Sharing Agreement be developed by the Church and the National College of Policing to set out the importance of sharing information between the police and the Church to assist both the police investigation and the Church's management of the case.
17. In conclusion, we hope that this Report will be of value to the Church in the work it is at present engaged on in embedding safeguarding as a key component of its ministry, and in providing a victim centred approach to all of its practice guidance.
18. We hope also that the Report will provide some comfort for the many victims and their families who have had to live for many years with the ongoing trauma of what happened to them at the hands of Whitsey so long ago.

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## **Chapter 1: Background**

### **1. Biography of Whitsey**

1. We commence this Report<sup>5</sup> by providing a brief biography of Hubert Victor Whitsey<sup>6</sup>.
2. He was born on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1916 in Blackburn. He was educated at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Blackburn and, after war service (in the Royal Artillery, rising to the rank of lieutenant-colonel), at St Edmund Hall, Oxford University. After Oxford, he attended Wescott House, Cambridge for theological studies. He was ordained as a Deacon on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1949 and appointed a Curate in Chorley (St Laurence) in the Diocese of Blackburn. He was ordained as a Priest on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1950, and was appointed as a Perpetual Curate in Farington St Paul, in the Diocese of Blackburn a year later on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1951.
3. He remained in that post for four years, and on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1955, he was appointed to the position of a Vicar at Halliwell (St Paul) in the Diocese of Manchester. Five years later, on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960, he became the Curate in Charge at Langley St Aidan, again in the Diocese of Manchester, and he remained in this post until 19<sup>th</sup> October 1964. He was also an Honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral appointed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1963 and remained in this post until 1<sup>st</sup> January 1968.
4. On leaving Langley St Aidan he was appointed as Vicar of Langley All Saints and Martyrs, and then on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1968 he left Manchester Diocese and returned to Blackburn to become the Vicar of Downham St Leonard. His obituary in the Daily Telegraph stated that he suffered a breakdown in his health in 1968, and that was why he moved to the rural parish of Downham, *"where he spent the next three years recuperating."*
5. He was then consecrated as a Bishop on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1971. His first Bishopric was as Suffragan Bishop of Hertford within the Diocese of St Albans (1971 -1974). On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1974 he was appointed as Bishop of Chester, and he remained as Bishop until his resignation on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1981.
6. The Diocese of Chester is one of the larger Dioceses in the country, both in terms of area and the number of parishes (about 270).<sup>7</sup> The Diocese of Manchester, where Whitsey officiated from 1955 to 1968 is to its north, as is Blackburn, where he officiated from 1950 to the end of 1954, and then again from 1968 to November 1971.

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<sup>5</sup> We refer to this document as the Report throughout for ease. We refer to the processes conducted to form this Report as the Review.

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of the Report we refer to Bishop Hubert Victor Whitsey with his surname only throughout.

<sup>7</sup> [\*The Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\), Diocese of Chester independent safeguarding audit of May 2016\*](#), published in March 2017.



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## **2. Events Leading up to Whitsey's Resignation**

7. Prior to his resignation as Bishop of Chester, it seems that Whitsey was signed off sick by his doctors. He was unable to attend General Synod in November 1980 because of illness, as is evidenced by a letter written by the Archbishop of York, Stuart Blanch, to Whitsey on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1980. In his reply, dated 24<sup>th</sup> November 1980, Whitsey states that the main reason *"why I was put off work was that I was having some lapses of memory which were not serious in themselves, but certainly did not accord with my usual faculties in that direction."*
8. Apparently, doctors decided that there was nothing physically wrong with him, but according to Bishop Gordon Strutt, the Bishop of Stockport, in a letter to the Archbishop dated 28<sup>th</sup> November 1980, Whitsey had had memory lapses which had been intermittent for more than six months.
9. A subsequent letter from Bishop Strutt to the Archbishop dated 29<sup>th</sup> December 1980 is very blunt: *"Despite the verdict of 'nothing physically wrong' with Victor, all is not well. There are still instances of memory lapse; some are easy to cope with, others embarrassing".*
10. We have seen also a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> June 1981 from Bishop Strutt to the Archbishop of York which states that Whitsey's doctors *"have sent (sic) him off until the end of August"*.
11. There is clear evidence in the papers we have seen of personal and professional tension between Whitsey and Bishop Strutt. Whitsey wrote to Bishop Strutt on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1981 as follows: *"You wrote to me in December concerning the fixed dates for Staff Meetings in 1981, stating that because of personal and professional commitments you could not attend some four of them...I realise that in addition to your Suffragan See of Stockport you are a 'person' in the Church at large...In contemplating the future staffing of the Diocese...I have decided that the most convenient and initial step would be for you to retire from the Suffragan See of Stockport on your seventieth birthday in January 1982..."*. Whitsey sent copies of this letter to both the Archbishop of York and the Archbishop of Canterbury.
12. Bishop Strutt wrote to the Archbishop of York on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1981 informing him that he had received the letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 1981 from Whitsey and quoting its contents. He informed the Archbishop that he is *"replying to him to thank him for his letter, to tell him that I am not subject to the Retirement Measure and have no intention of retiring at the beginning of 1982."*
13. The Archbishop replied to Bishop Strutt on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1981 in this way: *"The only thing I can say at the moment is that I do hope that some satisfactory agreement can be achieved without any further damage to relationships or to the Church as a whole."*
14. The Archbishop received another letter from Whitsey dated 28<sup>th</sup> January 1981 appending a copy of Bishop Strutt's reply to him which was dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 1981. Whitsey says *"You know or suspect*

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*the underlying story...I leave it to your imagination as to what my actions will be."*

15. Interestingly, there is a letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1981 from Whitsey to the Archbishop of York, with a copy to the Archbishop of Canterbury where Whitsey informs the Archbishop that *"the Bishop of Stockport (Strutt) has been particularly disloyal to me during my tenure of this Office."* In this letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1981, Whitsey says that *"Unless I have your assurance that the two Suffragan Bishops will be equally treated in all matters affecting the vacancy, I shall not sign my Deed of Resignation."*
16. Thus, it is clearly the case that discussions were taking place at the highest level in the spring and summer of 1981 for Whitsey to resign, and also that there was a significant professional and personal dispute between Whitsey and Strutt, including, as we have outlined, letters between the men where Whitsey would seem to be inviting Bishop Strutt to retire at the beginning of 1982. Both these issues are relevant to whether complaints had been made about Whitsey's behaviour, and to whom, prior to his resignation. We refer to this at [paragraph 367](#).
17. On his retirement, he moved to a residence within the Blackburn Diocese.
18. He was granted Permission to Officiate (PTO) in the Diocese of Blackburn on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 1982 and this remained to him we think until 1<sup>st</sup> January 1987<sup>8</sup>. We assume that the PTO was granted to him by the then Bishop of Blackburn although the letter we have seen addressed to Whitsey giving him formal permission to officiate is unsigned.
19. He died on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1987. Hubert Victor Whitsey was married and he and his wife have two sons and a daughter. His wife lived in the Clitheroe area within the Blackburn diocese. She died in early 2019.

## **3. The Diocese of Chester at that Time: The Evidence of Bishop Michael Baughen**

20. Whitsey was succeeded as Bishop of Chester by Bishop Michael Baughen, who was inaugurated as Bishop on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1982. The then Bishop of Birkenhead, Bishop Ronald Brown, was responsible for the Diocese of Chester during the six months or so between Whitsey's resignation and Bishop Michael Baughen's inauguration. Bishop Ronald Brown died in the summer of 2019.
21. We are grateful to Bishop Michael Baughen for agreeing to talk to the Review Team by telephone conference on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
22. The Review Team asked Bishop Michael Baughen whether he picked up any information about the reason why Whitsey had retired early. He told us that he recalled that he was under the impression that Whitsey did not like being a Bishop and was fed up with things. He had met Whitsey only once, years after Whitsey's retirement, when he went to visit him. He told the Review Team that he thought that Whitsey felt that he never ought to have been a Bishop.

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<sup>8</sup> The NST chronology states this and notes that this information is taken from Crockfords.

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23. Bishop Michael Baughen told the Review Team also that he had no idea at all of any “*sexual abuse or misconduct*”, but he did tell the Review Team that there “*were sexual things going on*”. We asked him to expand on this.
24. He told us also that the gardener lived next door in a house provided by the Church. He said that if you went around to the gardener’s house, there would be several men there and the gardener would appear in a dressing gown. He told us that he found out that there were people banging on the door at night and that there was, in his words, a “*sex nest*”, next to the Bishop’s House.
25. He believed that the Bishop’s Secretary had been involved in those activities. He retired fairly soon after Bishop Michael Baughen was inaugurated, and he died shortly afterwards.
26. He told the Review Team also that Whitsey had left him with many clergy in the Diocese who were, in his words, “*problematic*”.
27. DC Matt McGuinness, the Officer in Charge of Operation Coverage (see below [Chapter 2](#)), visited Bishop Michael Baughen during the spring/early summer of 2017 in connection with the police investigation and his visit was reported to the NST core group meeting number four of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Initially, Bishop Michael Baughen told us he had no recollection of the visit, but after our conversation with him, he checked his diary for that year, and confirmed by an email to the Review Team that he had been visited by the police. The email says: “*I seem to remember it was a gracious and open visit and, as I said this morning, I must have shared the sort of sexual atmosphere details in staff [sic] that I shared this morning.*”
28. And it is in this context that we examine the allegations which have been made by many people about Whitsey’s behaviour towards them. We state at the outset that these allegations, even at that time, constituted behaviour, if proved, that amounted to criminal conduct. As DC McGuinness told the NST core group meeting number four of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 they would have amounted to ‘Indecent Assaults’ under the laws at the time of the offences, and which if committed today would be classed as ‘Sexual Assault.’

## **Chapter 2: The Police Investigation**

### **1. Operation Coverage**

29. In July 2016, Cheshire Constabulary commenced a police investigation (Operation Coverage) following a report from the Chester Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer<sup>9</sup> (the Chester DSA) to them. This communication related to serious sexual abuse disclosures that had been made against Victor Hubert Whitsey by two males (we shall be referring to them as M1 and M2). The investigation was initially allocated to the Chester Local Policing Unit, Criminal Investigation

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<sup>9</sup> We note that the Chester DSA has a different designation from the standard term of Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) however for simplicity we will refer to her as the DSA.

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Department, but due to the growth of the enquiry, in March 2017, the investigation was passed to the Non-recent Sexual Abuse Team led by DC McGuinness.

30. The Cheshire Constabulary applied the policy as set out in two documents: *Operation Hydrant Senior Investigating Officer Advice* (2016) and *Operation Hydrant – Counsel’s Advice* (2016).<sup>10</sup> Cheshire Constabulary took into account the third policy document *Operation Hydrant – Advice for Investigating Deceased Persons ‘Publications of Findings’* (2017) relating to investigations into allegations made posthumously, prior to publishing the *Operation Coverage Summary Report*.<sup>11</sup> This enables the police to decide that if the deceased person were alive, would he or she have been spoken to under caution in order to provide a response?
31. The police conducted interviews and read documents over a period of some 15 months. They published their findings in October 2017. Paragraph 5.1.3 of the *Operation Coverage Summary Report* states: “...*Operation Coverage has determined that should [Hubert Whitsey] have been alive today, then the Police would have spoken to him in relation to 10 of the witness allegations. This is based upon the details they have provided within their accounts of the abuse they have alleged. The 3 other witnesses have provided only limited information to the Police regarding the abuse they have alleged as such (sic) it has been determined that we would have had insufficient information to speak [to him] in regard to these specific cases.*”
32. In our video conference meeting with DC McGuinness and DI Reid on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020, DI Reid told the Review Team that in their investigations, the police to some extent went above and beyond the proportionality requirements, but that there were limitations on what they could do.
33. We are grateful to those who gave evidence to the police as well as to the Cheshire Constabulary for allowing us access to copies of their witness statements and transcripts of interviews given to the police (the list of documents that we have seen is at [Appendix 4](#)). We have been unable to see all of the witness statements and transcripts. We must emphasise, however, that we have formed our own conclusions to everything we have read and heard during the course of our Review.
34. We do have a number of observations to make about the relationship between the police and the Church of England later in this Report at [Chapter 16, Section 7](#).

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<sup>10</sup> [The National Police Chiefs’ Council](#) describes Operation Hydrant as “a coordination hub established in June 2014 to deliver the national policing response, oversight, and coordination of non-recent child sexual abuse investigations concerning persons of public prominence, or in relation to those offences which took place within institutional settings.”

<sup>11</sup> Not available online.

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## **Chapter 3: Terms of Reference of this Review**

### **1. The Standard of Proof**

35. The Terms of Reference of this Review are set out in [Appendix 2](#). It is clear from paragraph 7.4 that we have not been asked to make formal findings of fact in relation to any of the allegations of abuse. However, we are asked to give a view as to what version of events “*seems most likely on the balance of probabilities*”. We take this to be an indication that we are invited to give a view, first, on the allegations of abuse; secondly, on whether there were disclosures and to whom; and thirdly, what if anything happened subsequent to the disclosures.
36. We note the recommendation in the [Independent Review: Bishop George Bell](#) report by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC<sup>12</sup>, published on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2017 where he said “*The civil standard requires that the complainant must satisfy the core group that, on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is made out: in other words, that it is more likely than not that the alleged perpetrator behaved in the way the complainant alleges.*”
37. In the [Response to the Carlile Review](#), the National Safeguarding Steering Group<sup>13</sup> (February 2018) stated that the Church agrees that the “*relevant decision-making body*” should be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the allegations are made out.
38. Neither NST core groups nor Diocesan core groups, however, are “[a]*relevant decision-making body*”. The role of an NST core group (and of the Diocesan counterparts) is primarily about safeguarding and the assessment and management of risk (as described correctly in the [NSSG Response to Lord Carlile’s Review](#)). Core groups have no part to play in civil claims, which are matters that are managed in most cases by an insurance company separate from the Church, and in the case of an uninsured risk (as in the case of a posthumous allegation against a diocesan bishop) by a “*relevant decision-making body*” separate from the core group.
39. For this Review, we have not had recourse to seeing any of the files relating to civil claims, and we have not called for them.<sup>14</sup> We make no observations about any of the civil claims, other than to agree with the [NSSG’s Response to the Carlile Review](#) that core groups, whether led by the NST or a Diocese, should take no decisions in relation to civil claims.
40. We note that although civil claims are mentioned from time to time in the NST Whitsey core group<sup>15</sup> meetings and the subsequent minutes, no findings are made by the NST core group in relation to these civil claims. We agree with the NSSG that core groups should not make findings of fact.

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<sup>12</sup> Also known as the Carlile Review.

<sup>13</sup> NSSG

<sup>14</sup> However, a solicitor for two victims has provided us with their witness statements for their civil claims.

<sup>15</sup> Referred to in the rest of this Report as ‘the NST core group’ or simply as ‘the core group’.

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41. We shall be dealing with the NST and its Whitsey core group in detail at [Chapter 15, Section 5](#) and [Chapter 16, Section 3](#) and making recommendations which we hope will be of use for the future running of core groups by the NST.
42. In accordance with our Terms of Reference for this Report, however, we shall state what “*seems most likely on a balance of probabilities.*”
43. We shall accordingly set out all of the allegations in detail. We deal with the allegations in the order that they were reported and discussed at the first NST core group meeting. The timeline, however, provides a chronology of key events in a slightly different way, from the first allegation of abuse to the latest disclosure of the abuse.
44. The Terms of Reference were amended to reflect the fact that some allegations predate 1974. Accordingly, we have included in our Review allegations that date back to the summer of 1966, when Hubert Whitsey was Vicar of Langley All Saints and Martyrs.
45. We focus on the two related but distinct questions as set out in the scope of the Review (paragraph 3) namely, (1) what did the Church of England know about the alleged abuse perpetrated by Hubert Victor Whitsey and (2) what was the Church of England’s response to those allegations.
46. When considering the allegations, we bear in mind the approach taken by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) in May 2019 which said at paragraph 446 of its [Investigation Report: The Anglican Church Case Studies](#): “*Although the character of any accused person may be relevant, it is not of any more relevance for an individual who is also held in ‘high esteem’*”. The IICSA report said this in the context of its consideration of the [Carlile Review regarding Bishop Bell](#) which had recommended a different approach. We adopt the approach of the IICSA.

### **Chapter 4: Terminology**

47. We consider first the question of terminology. Bishop Alan Wilson and Canon Rosie Harper in their book *To Heal and Not to Hurt* (2019) refer to terminology in this area as a “*linguistic minefield*” to work out how to refer to people who have been damaged (or we may add have alleged to have been damaged) by abuse. We agree.
48. [The IICSA Interim Report](#) in April 2018 addressed the issue of terminology in this way: “*The Inquiry recognises that some people who have been sexually abused identify as victims, and others as survivors of sexual abuse. For this reason, it uses the phrase ‘victim and survivor’ when referring to someone who the context of the Inquiry’s public hearings indicates that they have been sexually abused. However, the term ‘complainant’ is used in referring to a victim or survivor where the fact of the abuse has not been formally established.*”

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49. Wilson and Harper choose the term ‘survivor’, suggesting that ‘complainant’ minimises the position of people who have been assaulted in ways that never came to court, including (as here) where an alleged perpetrator has died before justice was achieved for the victims in court.
50. In 2016, Sir Richard Henriques’ [Report into the Metropolitan Police Services’ handling of non-recent sex allegations \(Operation Midland\)](#) recommended that in investigations, ‘complainant’ should be used rather than ‘victim’ and that the *“the use of the word ‘victim’ at the commencement of an investigation is simply inaccurate and should cease.”*<sup>16</sup>
51. The [Carlile Review regarding Bishop Bell](#) made similar recommendations. Lord Carlile recommended that *“it should be made clear to complainants that their complaints are not considered to be proved until findings of fact have been made [by the core group].”*
52. In its [Response to the Carlile Review](#), the NSSG (February 2018) stated that the Church agrees that it should indeed be made clear to complainants that their allegations are not considered to be made out until the *“relevant decision-making body”* has reached a decision on the balance of probabilities.
53. The NSSG acknowledged also the recommendations of Sir Richard Henriques with regard to the use of the term ‘complainant’. The Steering Group, however, referred to the [‘Responding 2017 Guidance’](#)<sup>17</sup> which, it said, uses the terms *“‘victims/survivor[s]’ or where appropriate ‘alleged victim or survivor’ and ‘respondent’ (for the person subject to an allegation)”* as *“neutral terms”*.
54. We have decided that the appropriate terminology to use when considering the person who is making a particular allegation is ‘complainant’ or ‘alleged victim/survivor’ in the first instance. All we are purporting to do in this context is to identify a person who has made various allegations. If we are to conclude, after a detailed consideration of the evidence available to us, that the abuse seems more likely than not to have occurred on the balance of probabilities (in accordance with paragraph 7.4 of the Terms of Reference) we shall refer to the individual as a victim throughout.
55. We note also that IICSA in its [Case Study 2: The Response to allegations against Peter Ball](#) published in May 2019 uses the term ‘complainants’ in the first instance.
56. We do not consider that the use of the term ‘respondent’ to describe the person subject to an allegation is particularly appropriate, primarily because that word is used in a very different context in legal terminology. It is more appropriate, in our view, simply to state that a particular person is subject to certain allegations and, until findings are made, he should be referred to as the ‘alleged perpetrator’ ([see paragraph 617](#)).

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<sup>16</sup> Paragraph 1.12.

<sup>17</sup> The full title of this document is *Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers, 2017*.

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## **PART A: The Victims**

57. We shall consider the various complainants in the order that they came to the attention of the National Safeguarding Team. This enables us to provide a narrative account, which we hope is more readily accessible to readers of this Report. We shall then consider general issues such as apology letters, the roles and responsibilities of Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSAs), the National Safeguarding Team, and other Church safeguarding bodies, separately. We make recommendations during the course of this Report, and put them together in a numerical order at the conclusion of our Report in [Part C, Chapter 19](#).

## **Chapter 5: M1**

### **1. The 2014 Disclosure**

58. The first victim that we consider is M1. He is the first victim discussed by the NST core group at its meeting on 25th July 2016, even though M2 was known by the DSA in Chester and by Jane Dodds<sup>18</sup> (Senior Casework Manager) at the NST as early as January 2016 to have alleged to have been abused by Whitsey.
59. We are grateful to Cleric X for talking to the Review Team by video conference on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020. He was a Vicar in the south of England whilst M1 was living there. He said M1 moved to the north of England before 2014, although he was not absolutely sure when that was.
60. Cleric X said that he had a telephone conversation with M1 in early March 2014, and as a result of that conversation, he first contacted by email dated 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 an Archdeacon, and subsequently the then DSA in London (Sheryl Kent<sup>19</sup>) about conversations he had had with his acquaintance, not mentioning him by name.

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<sup>18</sup> During the course of this Review, we made attempts to contact Jane Dodds but were unable to reach her whilst drafting the Report. However, during the representation process, we established contact with Jane Dodds and her response to the representation letter is included at [paragraph 240](#).

<sup>19</sup> Throughout the course of the Review, the Review Team attempted to make contact with Sheryl Kent in order to meet with her to discuss her role in the Whitsey case and latterly, offer her the opportunity to make a written representation. Her previous employer, the Diocese of London, did not hold up to date contact details for Sheryl Kent and efforts to contact her at an old address were unfortunately not successful.



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61. The email to the Archdeacon states: *"I was told last week by someone of an assault on them when they were 14 by a man who went on to become a Bishop.<sup>20</sup> I wonder if there is a mechanism for dealing with this – I will ask the victim whether he wants now to take this further – when he told one of the northern Bishops about this last year he was told not to make a fuss! If there is a serious intent to look into such allegations, and a safe way for him to make his statement then he might be willing to do so. Being told to be quiet has rather made him reluctant to step forward – the offer of a safe place might help."* The Archdeacon immediately forwarded this email to Sheryl Kent.
62. Cleric X emailed Sheryl Kent on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 *"The man in question went on to become the Bishop of Chester and the Bishop who asked for silence was Beverley"*. We shall be dealing with the disclosure aspect later at [Section 7](#) of this Chapter.
63. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, Cleric X spoke with M1, and gave him Sheryl Kent's number and reassured him that she would listen to him and she would advise and help him.
64. We acknowledge of course that M1 may not have been ready at this time to discuss the abuse he had suffered with anyone with safeguarding responsibilities in the Church. Safeguarding must of course be victim led. Nevertheless, he may well have been agreeable to talk to the DSA in 2014 and if she had been more proactive in encouraging M1 to talk to her, the investigation of Whitsey's abuse potentially could have happened some two years earlier. This, perhaps, was a missed opportunity.
65. **We recommend that all effort should be made by the DSA to ensure that there is support in place for someone who is exploring whether to disclose non-recent abuse, and there should be follow up enquiries with a potential complainant to encourage them to talk with the DSA (Recommendation 1).**
66. **We recommend that if a DSA is made aware that there has been a possible disclosure to a Church officer, whatever his or her rank, of abuse, there be immediate steps taken to make enquiries about this.<sup>21</sup> This must be at national level if the circumstances warrant it, such as an alleged disclosure to a serving Bishop (Recommendation 2).**
67. As it turned out, M1 did not make contact with Sheryl Kent. We know this because, some 20 months later, on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016, Sheryl Kent wrote to Cleric X as follows: *"I'm sure you will recall the email exchange below from a year ago. I was never contacted by the survivor so haven't been able to take this case further **but have passed the information on to National Church as Bishops were/are involved**"* (our bold). However we have not found any document either in the Diocese of London safeguarding case files or the NST safeguarding case files indicating that Sheryl Kent passed on the information she received in 2014 to the *"National Church"*.

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<sup>20</sup> He was of course already a Bishop at this time.

<sup>21</sup> As in the document [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(2017\)](#), Section 2.1, Page 26, *Initial DSA Response*.

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68. Cleric X replied to Sheryl Kent on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 in the following email: *"He doesn't want to cause trouble, but I did suggest to him that if the former bishop of Chester had done this to him then there are likely to be others he abused and it would be very helpful for the Church to know"*.
69. Cleric X told the Review Team that he tried to persuade M1 that he would be properly looked after, if he were to contact the DSA.
70. It is our opinion that Cleric X did all he could do at that time to bring his conversation with M1 to the attention of the DSA, and his assurance to M1 that he would be fully supported if he were to contact the DSA is an example of good practice.
71. We have had an opportunity of speaking with both Cleric X and M1, and we have of course seen the emails that we have referred to. We are satisfied that M1 told Cleric X about the abuse, and about the 'disclosure' to a Bishop, in his conversation with Cleric X in March 2014 and then again in January 2016.
72. It is our view also that Cleric X discussed the abuse with M1 on one further occasion when Cleric X visited M1 which, so M1 told us, was in September 2016. Cleric X said that he had a general conversation with M1 about how M1 had been abused sexually by Whitsey, and how he had disclosed this on a social occasion to the Bishop of Beverley who told him not to make a fuss.
73. Returning to January 2016, however, it must have been extremely difficult for M1 to decide to speak with the DSA (now Annette Gordon), and he clearly needed to work out exactly how he felt about contacting the Safeguarding Adviser.
74. He did make arrangements for the meeting, and he met with the new DSA for London (Annette Gordon) on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 disclosing *"childhood experiences that occurred within Chester Diocese at the time Whitsey was in office"*.<sup>22</sup>
75. Annette Gordon's safeguarding case file record produced after that meeting makes clear that the meeting was a difficult one for M1. He gave Annette Gordon information relating to abuse over a four to five year period by Whitsey from the age of 14 until he was 19.
76. We are grateful to Annette Gordon for agreeing to talk with the Review Team by way of video conference on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. Annette Gordon started her role as DSA around 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016, with a handover with Sheryl Kent of about a couple of days. She told the Review Team that when she came into the role, there was little in the way of a case management system, files being kept both online and on paper. One of her first tasks was to move everything on to an online system. She told the Review Team that there was a lot going on at the time when she joined the Diocese and it was a bit hectic.

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<sup>22</sup> We are grateful to Annette Gordon for sending the Review Team a copy of an email (dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016) as part of her response to the representation letter, in explanation of why the meeting was held at her office.

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77. She was in contact with Cleric X about another issue and he mentioned the Whitsey matter to her. She gave Cleric X her contact details for M1 to get in touch with her.
78. She told the Review Team that at this time, that is when she was in contact with Cleric X, she was not aware that M1 had made a disclosure about being abused, to the 'Bishop of Beverley'. She told the Review Team also that when she did meet with M1, he did not mention that he had made a disclosure a little while ago to the 'Bishop of Beverley.' Whilst we understand that this is Annette Gordon's recollection, Annette Gordon was copied into the email chain with Cleric X on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016, Sheryl Kent's last day in post. This email chain included the email dated 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 that mentions the references to the disclosure being made to the Bishop of Beverley. In addition, Annette Gordon confirmed her knowledge of the email chain at the first NST core group meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Paragraph 2.1.2 of the minutes state that Annette Gordon informed the meeting that when she joined the London Diocese, she read recent email correspondence between her predecessor Sheryl Kent and Cleric X that alerted her to email correspondence dating back to March 2014, between the then DSA and a priest within the Diocese where the priest stated that he was "*a personal friend of a victim of sexual abuse within the Church of England.*" However, there does not appear to have been a Diocesan safeguarding case file created by Sheryl Kent.
79. M1 agreed that Annette Gordon should contact her counterpart in Chester, as this was a Chester matter. She told the Review Team, although she was not sure, that it was probable that M1 agreed to her contacting the DSA in Chester, by way of a telephone call.
80. Accordingly, Annette Gordon contacted the Chester DSA, and Annette Gordon then emailed M1 on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to tell him that she done so. Annette Gordon told him that the Chester DSA would like to contact him.
81. Annette Gordon told the Review Team that she thought there were conversations between herself and the Chester DSA about support for M1 and where that should come from. In particular there was discussion about an authorised listener, and it was agreed that this would be arranged by the Chester DSA.
82. Annette Gordon told the Review Team that she did not refer the matter to the NST (this was done by the DSA in Chester), and her attendance at the first NST core group was on the basis of the initial contact with M1 before handing the case over to the Chester DSA.
83. There was an action from the first NST core group for Annette Gordon to communicate with Cleric X. She did not recall having done this.

### **2. The Chester DSA's Early Involvement**

84. On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016, a supportive email was sent to M1 by the Chester DSA, in which she offered to travel to M1's home to take matters forward with him. He replied on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 thanking her for the contact and saying that he was happy to meet.

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85. The DSA for Chester must have informed the Bishop of Chester, Bishop Peter Forster, about M1 because Bishop Peter Forster wrote to the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016 alerting him to emerging details of two allegations of sexual abuse by Whitsey. The first paragraph of this letter refers to M2 and we shall have occasion to refer to this passage later in the Report.
86. The Chester DSA met with M1 on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The Chester DSA sent an email to Bishop Peter Forster, with a copy to M1, on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016 recounting the meeting she had had with M1 on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016. She told Bishop Peter Forster that contact details for the Diocesan counselling service were provided to M1 and that he would be following this up. The Chester DSA also said that M1 would be formally reporting the matter to the police.
87. The Chester DSA emailed M1 on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to inform him that as the allegation involved a Bishop (Whitsey), the case would be led by the National Safeguarding Team. The Archbishop of York in a letter to Bishop Peter Forster dated 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016 stated that he had passed on to Jane Dodds, the then Senior Casework Manager (NST), that it was his view and the view of the Bishop of Chester that the Archbishop of the Province and the National Safeguarding Team should take the lead in cases of this nature rather than the successor Diocesan Bishop. We agree with this view, which was in compliance with the practice guidance at the time and is firmly set down in the most recent safeguarding policy and practice guidance documents ([see later paragraph 520](#)).
88. We have read through the email correspondence between M1 and the Chester DSA and we are satisfied that M1 was kept fully informed at this time of the work of the National Safeguarding Team.
89. The Chester DSA developed a good supportive relationship with M1, but it is our view that to some extent this went beyond the role of the DSA. In these early stages, it may have been more appropriate for the Chester DSA to have been signposting and arranging additional professional support for him to supplement the support she was able to offer. The Chester DSA told us in her interview with us that she felt she was under instruction from the NST core group to offer support to the victims.
90. In her reply to the representation letter, the Chester DSA confirmed that she was instructed by the core group to offer pastoral support to victims. She said: *"at the start of each core group I was required to provide a briefing update on where the case was at and I was asked to inform the group what pastoral support I was giving to the victims. I raised the issue of the victims increasing in numbers and that the demands of this requirement were unrealistic and exhausting and the extent to which the victims were relying on me was at times overwhelming. However, the core group chairs still delegated this task to me."*
91. It is certainly the case that the minutes of the core group are unclear on this point. By way of illustration, an action point of core group meeting number two of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 states: *"Continued support to be offered to the victims and their families as appropriate (Chester DSA to lead on this)."* An action point of core group meeting number three of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 states *"Chester DSA: To continue to support [M1] and any other victim should they wish to be in contact."*

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*To continue to make offers of pastoral support when appropriate.”*

92. As we discuss further in [paragraph 592](#), we believe that the issue of who should support victims was not adequately addressed by the NST core group. For example, at core group meeting four, the minutes state *“ideally, the DSA wouldn’t be supporting the victims, who would have alternative pastoral support. However, where a victim doesn’t wish for an alternative person and wishes to keep in touch with the DSA, there appears to be little alternative.”* There are contradictory messages in the minutes and action points about whether the Chester DSA should directly support victims or arrange for support for the victims.
93. The quality of the support offered by the Chester DSA is not in doubt and indeed M1 told us that he valued the support given to him by the Chester DSA. In her reply to the representation letter, the Chester DSA stated that she *“tried to signpost M1 to independent external support resources including counselling from the start. He told me he did not want to take this up, preferring to remain with the support I was giving. He did later commence independent counselling which he sourced himself on my advice.”*
94. However, the practice guidance<sup>23</sup> available at the time advises on the issue of support at Chapter 6. It states at paragraph 6.6 *“No-one directly involved in the management of the case... should be directly supporting the alleged victim or survivor, since their roles or their status would not be perceived as independent.”* At paragraph 6.7 the practice guidance refers to the support for victims and survivors during a police investigation being the primary responsibility of the police. The role of the Church is to complement this support. The current practice guidance<sup>24</sup> makes clear at section 1.2 that *“The DSA is NOT a support person to the victim/survivor, nor are they a link person for the respondent.”* We shall return to consider the issue of support offered to victims at [Chapter 15, Section 3](#).

## **3. The First NST Core Group Meeting - 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

95. An NST Whitsey core group meeting was arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at Church House, London. We shall deal later in [Chapter 15, Section 5](#) with general issues arising out of NST core group meetings. It is a matter of some concern that the NST core group did not meet for some 11 days after the Chester DSA had met with M1 and a whole month from the time Annette Gordon had contacted her colleague in Chester. Policy dictates a shorter time period (no more than 48 hours after the allegation becomes known to the DSA), and although in the case of an alleged perpetrator who is deceased, there is a different form of assessment and management of risk than a case where the alleged perpetrator is alive, there are still vital considerations, in particular, regarding the pastoral care of potential victims, their families and the family of the alleged perpetrator. One would have expected a core group to have met within a much shorter time frame. The practice guidance in force at the time refers to 48 hours (the question of the timeframe for meetings is addressed in

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<sup>23</sup> [Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Situations Relating to Church Officers, 2015](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers, 2017](#)

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detail at [paragraph 613](#)).

96. As we shall see at [paragraphs 227-232](#), the Chester DSA had been continuously chasing by emails and phone calls for an NST core group to be held in relation to another allegation made against Whitsey. That one wasn't held, was a grave error of judgement on the part of the Senior Casework Manager at the time at the NST. This issue is covered in [Chapter 6: M2](#).
97. Four people were present at this first core group: Jane Dodds (the NST Senior Casework Manager in the Chair), Annette Gordon (the DSA of the Diocese of London), Chris Lees (the DSA of St Albans) and Moira Murray (the interim Senior Case Worker at the NST). Three people phoned in: the Chester DSA, George Colville (the Diocesan Secretary at Chester) and Kaley Vaughton (the DSA of Blackburn).
98. The minutes of this meeting state that Jane Dodds invited Annette Gordon to share the information she had gathered in regard to a disclosure from a survivor. We have stated already that at this stage it would have been more appropriate to refer to 'disclosures from a complainant.'
99. We have already indicated that M1 met with Annette Gordon on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016. Annette Gordon told the core group that during the meeting with him, M1 disclosed that he had been abused by Whitsey when he was 14. The abuse continued for a number of years, including during his vacations from university. It would seem that these disclosures were general in their terms, and Annette Gordon told the meeting that the disclosures did not include dates or times.
100. The Chester DSA told the meeting that she made contact with M1 subsequent to the matter being handed over to her. The Chester DSA met M1 in Chester, although the minutes do not indicate when that meeting took place. We assume the meeting referred to is the meeting we have already indicated as having taken place on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016.
101. The minutes of the core group for 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016 set out details of the allegations by M1 as reported to the core group by the Chester DSA. We refer to the details of these allegations in the witness statement M1 subsequently made to the police at [paragraphs 108-111](#).
102. The core group then turned its attention to a discussion regarding a second complainant (M2) about whom the Chester DSA had received a disclosure in January 2016. We shall consider M2 later in the next chapter, **but we note here that we find it quite unacceptable that the core group, through no fault of the DSA, had not met to consider issues raised by M2 prior to July 2016.**
103. The Chester DSA sent an email to Bishop Peter Forster on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016 recounting details of the core group meeting, informing him that she would let him know when M1 had been to the police.

## **4. M1's Interview with the Police**

104. The Chester DSA contacted the police in Chester on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to report on what she had been told by both M1 and M2. She arranged for M1 to be interviewed by the police, and we are grateful

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to M1 for giving us permission to enable us to have access to any relevant material held by Cheshire Constabulary. M1 went with the Chester DSA to visit the police for the first time on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and went again to the police on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 to provide a detailed interview. On the latter occasion, the Chester DSA waited outside the interview room.

105. We have read both the statement M1 prepared for the police interview and a redacted copy of the minute taken of that interview on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016.
106. In a letter to M1 dated 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017, the Assistant Chief Constable informed M1 that with regard to M1's complaint, should Whitsey have been alive, Whitsey would have been interviewed by police under caution, in relation to his complaints of sexual abuse.
107. As we have indicated, it is not part of our Terms of Reference to make formal findings in relation to the specific complaints. However, we are asked to provide a view as to what "*seems most likely, on a balance of probabilities*." It is necessary therefore to set out, albeit in summary form, the evidence that M1 gave to the police of the allegations of the abuse he suffered at the hands of Whitsey.
108. M1 was appointed to a position in the Chester Diocese in 1975 when he was 14 years of age. In his report to the police, M1 states that he encountered Whitsey at a confirmation service at which they were both present. M1 said that Whitsey was "*very tactile*" towards him. His report indicates that Whitsey or his Personal Secretary made regular telephone calls to his house, and that Whitsey invited him to go to the Bishop's House in Chester.
109. He went to the Bishop's House in 1975, when he was still 14 years of age, and he was taken either to his private chapel or to one of the reception rooms. He said that Whitsey tried to get his (M1's) trousers off. M1 told the police in the interview in August 2016 that Whitsey was forceful in trying to masturbate him, whilst he (Whitsey) was masturbating himself. M1 said that Whitsey told him: "*You've got to be strong for me.*"
110. He told the police that similar incidents took place at the Bishop's House every two to three months up until 1978 when he was 18 and after he had gone on to university. He told the police, also, that there had been between 12-15 incidents, and that they all included sexual content; namely masturbation, and oral contact with their private parts.
111. He was invited again to the Bishop's House when he was at university in his second year. On this occasion, M1 rebuffed any further attempt of sexual contact. M1 told the police that on that final occasion, Whitsey wrote him a cheque for £250 or £350 from what Whitsey referred to as his Discretionary Fund. M1 said that Whitsey told him that this money was to buy books, but M1 thought at the time that it was "*hush money*".

### **5. Our View of these Allegations**

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112. We have the benefit of M1's witness statement that he gave to the police and a record of his interview with them ([see paragraph 104 above](#)), and of the disclosure he gave to the Chester DSA and reported to the core group ([see paragraph 101 above](#)). We have also had an opportunity of speaking with M1 by video conference on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
113. It is our firm view, on the basis of what we have read and been told, that M1's description of these abusive encounters with Whitsey are accurate. The test on which we have to satisfy ourselves is the balance of probabilities. We state that we are satisfied as to the truth of these allegations on the basis of that test.

### **6. Disclosures to Two People**

114. M1 told the police in the interview dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 that he informed one of his teachers back in 1975 about what had happened, and the response by his teacher was *"Oh we all know what goes on there."* This teacher, however, does not seem to have had any formal connection with the Church and M1 told the police that he does not wish to provide the police with the name of the teacher. We have been unable to find out anything more about this conversation with the teacher, but it is unfortunate that a possible opportunity to expose the Bishop's abuse was missed.
115. M1 told the police also that he discussed what had happened with a personal friend in 1978/9 (this person is described by M1 in his statement as a *"friend and mentor"*), and he especially spoke to this person about the money given to him by Whitsey. We know from our contact with this person that he has no connection with the Church of England.
116. The Review Team has been in contact with this person by email. He told the Review Team that he simply has not *"the slightest recollection of the conversation."* This was of course 40 years ago now, and we can fully understand that memories would blur.
117. M1 told us that he did have this conversation with this person, and the conversation involved discussing whether the money he had been given was hush money, or to fund the purchase of books. M1 told us that he had spoken with this person last year, and he told him that he had a vague recollection of the conversation. In his reply to the representation letter, this person stated that he can only reiterate that even if a conversation took place, he does not remember where or when or what his reaction was.
118. Given that the Review Team has not interviewed this person, we are unable to make a finding on this matter.

### **7. Alleged Disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster, Bishop of Beverley**

119. It will be recalled that Cleric X emailed Sheryl Kent (the then DSA in London) on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 about the disclosure by M1 to him of the abuse inflicted on him (M1) ([see paragraphs 61-62](#)) by explaining that the victim had been referring to the Bishop of Chester (Whitsey) and that the person he (M1) spoke to was the Bishop of Beverley: *"The man in question went on to become the*



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*Bishop of Chester and the Bishop who asked for silence was Beverley”.*

120. Cleric X in his interview with us told us that his recollection of what M1 had told him in March 2014 was that M1 *“may have had a glass of wine beforehand”*, and that M1 was told not to say anything else about the matter. Cleric X said that he thought that M1 was made to feel that he should not make any trouble.
121. We have to reach a view on whether M1 spoke with the Bishop of Beverley (Glyn Webster) around 2012 or earlier and whether Bishop Glyn Webster said to him words to the effect of: *As Whitsey is dead, best to leave well alone*. Bishop Glyn Webster became Bishop of Beverley in January 2013.

## **7.1. M1’s Interview with the Police**

122. In his interview with the police on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016, M1 was asked if he had told anybody within the Church. His reply was follows: *“About three years ago I mentioned that I was considering coming forward and this was, this was sort of, this particular member of the clergy had come round for dinner and I just mentioned to him that I thought I was going to come forward and he advised me that since the person who had committed all this was dead, that I would probably, it was probably best not to or leave, leave well alone.”*
123. He was asked if he would give a name, and he said: *“Do I have to?”* He was told that he did not have to. M1 told the police that he would rather not implicate him in *“all of this”*.
124. He told the police, also, that he had spoken with a Cathedral Dean since he had last seen the police and the Dean had been extremely supportive.
125. He had first seen the police on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016 (with the Chester DSA in attendance) so the meetings with the Dean would have occurred between 10<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016. M1 told us in our interview with him that the Dean had been very supportive and that they had had a couple of meetings. M1 also told us that the Dean gave him *“hope in the Church.”*
126. We do need to address head on what if anything was disclosed by M1 to Bishop Glyn Webster, Bishop of Beverley about his allegations against Whitsey.

## **7.2. Minutes of the Core Group**

127. It is difficult to glean from the minutes of the core group exactly what had occurred, but we note that the core group appears to have been satisfied that there was no evidence that Bishop Glyn Webster had advised M1 not to report the abuse, and any suggestion to the contrary was a misunderstanding *“which came about through a process of Chinese whispers”*.
128. The minutes of the various core groups make no reference at all to the email by Cleric X to the London DSA (Sheryl Kent) of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 referring specifically to the disclosure to the Bishop of

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Beverley, an oversight that we find disturbing.

129. The core group seems to have been concerned about what it thought were conversations which may or may not have occurred during the summer of 2016 and which may have been overheard by an incumbent in that Diocese.

### **7.3. The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser's Correspondence and Meeting with Bishop Glyn Webster**

130. The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser (PSA), met with Bishop Glyn Webster on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017 (the update to the minutes says 2016 but this must be a typing error) and later she provided Bishop Glyn Webster with a chronology of what the NST thought had happened which led to the misunderstanding *"for his piece of mind"*. A file note of the meeting dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017 states that *"the Northern PSA recently sent him a chronology to assist him, but he has found this not helpful"*.
131. The update to the minutes states that *"any learning would be explored following the case conclusion."*
132. Thus this matter is firmly within our Terms of Reference. We have read the Northern PSA's letter to Bishop Glyn Webster dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017. It thanks Bishop Glyn Webster for meeting with her on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and includes a chronology. We set out first of all the chronology that the NST thought was the case, and which was repeated to Bishop Glyn Webster. She states that in August/September 2016, the NST had been informed that there was a suggestion that he (Bishop Glyn Webster) had advised a victim not to report abuse on an occasion when the victim had made a disclosure to him. She states that this information had been provided by the York DSA (David Finan) and that this information had been provided to him (the DSA) by a third party who knew the victim. She writes further that when the victim was approached by the Chester DSA, he confirmed that such information was not true. He described a very different conversation which took place with Bishop Glyn Webster some years ago which, said the Northern PSA's email to Bishop Glyn Webster, *"raised no concerns whatsoever about your responses to hearing safeguarding disclosures."* The Northern PSA states that M1 denied that he had ever suggested in any way to any person that Bishop Glyn Webster had advised him not to report the abuse.
133. The chronology sent to Bishop Glyn Webster by the Northern PSA refers to a telephone call from a member of the clergy on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016 to the then DSA in York (David Finan). The Northern PSA's chronology states that this cleric (Cleric A) told the DSA (York) that she had overheard a person on or around 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 telling people that *"he had told Bishop Glyn about the abuse several days earlier and Bishop Glyn advised him not to report it."* The chronology goes on to state that the York DSA wrote to Bishop Glyn Webster on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 providing details and in particular advising him that a victim had alleged that he had spoken with Bishop Glyn Webster and that he had been advised by him not to report it. Bishop Glyn Webster phoned the DSA two days later on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 stating that he provided no such advice, and would never do so. In the reply to the representation letter, lawyers acting on behalf of Bishop Glyn Webster have said that

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this has consistently remained Bishop Glyn Webster's evidence.

134. David Finan emailed the Northern PSA and Moira Murray, the Senior Casework Manager at the NST, on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016 seeking answers to certain questions, in particular about whether there had been any complaint raised about the actions or behaviour in relation to Bishop Glyn Webster "*(what was said) etc*" from the Diocese of York. We note that the David Finan states that he had raised this matter previously with Jane Dodds but did not get a clear response.

### **7.4. The Chester DSA's Telephone Call to M1 - 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

135. The Chester DSA then contacted M1 on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 by telephone, and M1 confirmed to her that what had been suggested by the York DSA was not correct. What he had said to Cleric A was that he had mentioned Bishop Glyn Webster as someone he had spoken to in the past about being a victim of abuse. He said that this conversation took place in a social context, and that he was advised by Bishop Glyn Webster in general terms to try and move on from this. M1 told the Chester DSA that there was no suggestion that Bishop Glyn Webster had been given any detail, and no suggestion that he had been advised by the Bishop not to report it.
136. We note that this conversation between the Chester DSA and M1 must have been communicated to the core group that met on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in York. The minute states: "*M1 clarified the conversation with GW had happened 4 years ago [at a social event in a named foreign country], that it had been only a brief discussion between friends and included no detail. (i.e. he had not told him in his official capacity as Bishop), and that GW had suggested as a friend he should leave the issue alone in the sense he should try and move on. M1 was keen to stress GW did not tell him not to go to the police.*"
137. The NST would seem to have formed the view that Cleric A and M1 had a conversation in the summer of 2016. M1 told the Chester DSA during their telephone conversation on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 that he recalled what he believed was a private confidential conversation he had held with Cleric A "*several months ago*". The Northern PSA says in her letter of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017 to Bishop Glyn Webster that a conversation took place between M1 and Cleric A sometime in June 2016.

### **7.5. The Evidence Given to the Review**

138. Some of the confusion has been removed for the reviewers by our conversations with M1, Cleric A, Bishop Glyn Webster, David Finan and Cleric X. We have also spoken about this aspect of our investigation to the police (DC McGuinness and DI Reid), to the Chester DSA and the Northern PSA. We take the view that there are lessons to be learnt about how this matter was dealt with by the NST at this time.
139. We spoke with Cleric A by video conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020.

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140. She told us that she had conducted a parish visit abroad at the end of June and beginning of July 2016, and M1 had been on this visit. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016, whilst still abroad, M1 told her that he wanted to tell her something, which had now been reported to the NST, namely about how he had been abused. He told her that he had been at a social event about four years earlier and a senior cleric at that party told him to “*forget it and just move on.*”
141. She told us that on her return to the UK, she rang the DSA at York (David Finan) on the following day (5<sup>th</sup> July 2016) for advice, because she was unsure what she had to disclose from the conversation. She told the Review Team that she did not give M1’s name, because she was content that it had been disclosed to the NST. Cleric A told us that she did give the DSA the senior cleric’s name.
142. She told the Review Team that she prepared contemporaneous notes about the incident and how it was handled by David Finan, and the NST at the time. She used the notes to prepare a report which she sent to the Archbishop of York’s office dated July 2018. We have seen a copy of this report. We reproduce sections of this report in full: “*On 3 July 2016, a church member [she calls him A], disclosed that he had been sexually abused by a Bishop when A was a teenager. Safeguarding protocols dictate that I have a duty to disclose so I asked if the matter had been reported. A said it had – to the NST and that investigations were ongoing. I believed that I had nothing to report. However, during the same conversation, A also disclosed that at a [social event] some years earlier, he had told those present what had happened, that abuse had taken place. A told me that a [senior] cleric at the [social event] had said that A was to do nothing, keep quiet about it all and continue to live his life (or words to that effect). I rang the York DSA to ask for advice. I did not disclose A’s name as I believed that the relevant authorities were dealing with the matter. I asked if I had a duty to pass on the named [senior] cleric’s name. The DSA explained that when police investigate, they try to find out who knew about the abuse to assist in pulling together the whole picture. The DSA told me that for this reason, I had nothing to report and there was no need to take the matter further. Shortly afterwards...a member of staff from Bishopthorpe Palace rang me. She began by offering support...She asked about the telephone call with the DSA which surprised me as I understood from the DSA that no further action would be taken. She asked if I could tell her A’s name. ...I explained that I didn’t have A’s permission to give his name so I declined. On 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016, A emailed me to meet urgently. A was distraught after being told that I had disclosed both his name and the name of the [senior] cleric who was at the [social event]. I visited A and explained that I had not given his name but I believed that I had a duty to disclose the name of the [senior] cleric who was at the [social event] and in doing so, kept A anonymous as requested because the case for A was being investigated.*”
143. We are satisfied that Cleric A’s evidence to us, backed up as it is, so she says by her notes, is an accurate description of what happened in relation to M1 speaking with her on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016 whilst abroad, and her phone call to David Finan on her return to UK on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The chronology given by the Northern PSA to Bishop Glyn Webster, therefore, is not an accurate chronology.
144. As to whether Cleric A gave David Finan M1’s name as the complainant, there is some conflict of evidence. Cleric A says that she did not provide David Finan with his name; the Northern PSA, in the interview with her by video conference on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, told us that David Finan told her

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that she did provide his name. This cannot be correct, because in an email to the Northern PSA by David Finan dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016, he says very clearly “...[Cleric A] *had not given me the name of the person making the complaint.*” In his evidence to the reviewers on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, David Finan told us that Cleric A did not mention M1 by name. We are satisfied that she did not communicate the name of the complainant.

145. We are satisfied however that she did provide him with the name of Bishop Glyn Webster. She told us that she mentioned his name, and David Finan confirmed this to us. He told us that Cleric A had been told by the complainant that he (M1) had spoken with Bishop Glyn Webster at an informal social event, and that Bishop Glyn Webster’s response was not to say anything and not to take it any further.
146. The email to the Northern PSA from David Finan of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016 says “*[Cleric A] is now telling me that she did not name Bishop Glyn to me...*” David Finan in his email disputes this. Cleric A told us that she did mention Bishop Glyn Webster to David Finan. We do not know why David Finan came to a conclusion that Cleric A refuted having given the name of Bishop Glyn Webster to him in the telephone conversation.
147. We have reached the conclusion on a balance of probabilities that Cleric A was accurate in her evidence to us in that she phoned David Finan to seek advice about the matter on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Thus the email from David Finan to Canon Daphne Green, the Chaplain to the Archbishop dated 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016 which states “*I have been made aware of the following information today...*” is simply not accurate. David Finan admitted to us that he was working under pressure at the time and that there may have been a delay in his email communication. Canon Daphne Green replied to David Finan the following day, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2016 where she refers to M1’s allegation “*and the DSA [in London] referred the case to Chester once she discovered the alleged abuse had occurred there.*” Canon Daphne Green advises David Finan to speak with the NST regarding the concerns which Cleric A raised “*as they would wish to co-ordinate the actions that are taken regarding this case.*” In his reply to the representation letter, David Finan acknowledged that his responses at this time were not as he would have wanted them to have been, and he referred to personal circumstances which may well have affected his work at that time.

### **7.6. Cleric A’s Report**

148. Cleric A’s report, which we have referred to at [paragraph 142](#) above, makes eight observations, all of which she repeated to us in our interview with her.
149. First, she reiterates that she did not disclose A’s name, yet her name and incorrect details of a conversation were given to A by the PSA or a DSA from another Diocese. Secondly, she was not aware of any policy that stated that sources were to be revealed. Thirdly, she could not be described as a source because she did not give A’s name. Fourthly, she states that it was inappropriate for the DSA to advise her that there was nothing to pass on, and that no further action would be taken. Fifthly, it was inappropriate that the Bishop’s name as the alleged abuser

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should have been disclosed to her in an email.

150. She then, sixthly states that there were errors in reporting. She says that she does not understand how the PSA and/or another DSA attached her name to the case, given that the DSA in York denied giving her name. Her final two points deal with the minutes of the NST Whitsey core group meetings.
151. In summary, Cleric A writes that *“reporting and recording should be accurate. Where it is deemed appropriate, written summaries of conversations should be agreed with the parties involved before anything and anyone is disclosed as a source of information. Clergy and others should be made aware of changes in policy so that they are not isolated and undermined in their pastoral care in parishes. Minutes and the work of the safeguarding team should be scrutinised externally”*.
152. Cleric A’s document was sent to the Chair of the Safeguarding Strategy Group of the Diocese of York (Professor Sue Proctor), and she sent in comments by an undated memorandum.
153. We spoke with Professor Proctor on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020, and she told us that she received Cleric A’s report on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018 and she sent her response to Canon Daphne Green, at the Archbishop of York’s Office on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018. We shall refer to her response and her evidence to us in [Chapter 14, Section 4](#).
154. We conclude that Cleric A was perfectly correct in reporting what she had heard to the York DSA, without referring to the complainant by name, and he was correct in reporting this to the NST. We note that the Whitsey core group minutes, in our view correctly, states that Cleric A had acted appropriately in sharing this information with the York DSA.

### **7.7. Two Other Worrying Aspects**

155. There are two other worrying aspects to this issue. First, the Archbishop of York, when being updated on this matter by the Northern PSA prior to her meeting with Bishop Glyn Webster on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017, is told that when M1 was spoken to about Bishop Glyn Webster, he *“explained a very different conversation which raises no concerns about Bishop Glyn’s responses to hearing a disclosure.”* The minutes of the core group for the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016, however, state *“It remains appropriate that GW is given general advice as to what protocols now apply in any situation where a disclosure might be made ...”* We have seen no evidence that that general advice was ever provided. In her reply to the representation letter, the Northern PSA stated that she did give consideration to the action and reflected that it was unnecessary to meet with Bishop Glyn Webster again, given his anxious presentation and she did not wish to return to the conversation. She acknowledged that she should have raised the matter with the core group given the change of decision which she had made, and there should have been a clear record of the ‘change of action’. There are lessons to be learnt from this failure to follow up on this action point.
156. Then, secondly, we have no doubt but that Bishop Peter Forster of Chester had spoken with Bishop Glyn Webster about the case. Indeed, the Northern PSA informed the Archbishop of York in her

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memo to him of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 that this had happened. It is referred to in the minutes of the core group dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

157. According to the information given to the core group meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 by DC Matt McGuinness, Bishop Peter Forster had a conversation with Bishop Glyn Webster in which some information relating to the case of Whitsey had been shared, including M1's name.
158. In the telephone interview with the Review Team on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, Bishop Glyn Webster agreed that Bishop Peter Forster had spoken to him about Whitsey, and that this had been prior to a staff meeting in Chester which he had attended in early 2017. He told us that he remembered telling Bishop Peter Forster that he had had a letter from the DSA in York about the matter, and Bishop Peter Forster told him "*it would all be OK*". He said that they did not go into any details.
159. As we have said, the Review Team spoke with Bishop Glyn Webster by telephone on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and we are grateful to him for agreeing to talk with us. He told us that he had never been to the named foreign country, and therefore the alleged conversation with M1 at a social event in the named foreign country was simply not correct. The minute of the core group, where M1 apparently is reported as telling the Chester DSA that the disclosure took place at a social event in a named foreign country, may have been a correct summary of what was said at the meeting, but as we have indicated it is factually incorrect. The 'disclosure' took place at M1's house in 2012, and he told Cleric A about it all in the named foreign country when he was participating in a parish visit in July 2016.

### **7.8. Bishop Glyn Webster's Evidence to us**

160. Bishop Glyn Webster told the Review Team that he met M1 for the first time when he attended a Sunday morning service around 2010/11, when he introduced himself. M1 had been told by a colleague of Bishop Glyn Webster to make himself known to the Bishop.
161. Bishop Glyn Webster met M1 again when he came to church with his elderly mother. He said that M1 became friendly with someone else within the Church, and they were once both invited to a social event by M1. He said that this social event, around 2011/12, was the only time he had socialised with M1. M1 told us that the social event was sometime in the summer of 2012. Bishop Glyn Webster told us that when they arrived, M1 and his partner had already had a few drinks. He left at 9.45pm that evening, because he had an early train the following morning to London. Interestingly, M1 told us also that Bishop Glyn Webster left fairly early because he had a meeting in London the following day.
162. Bishop Glyn Webster said that there was no conversation about Whitsey and no disclosures of any abuse at all. In contrast, M1 told us that he did start talking about Whitsey and how Whitsey had abused him, and he was told by someone that it was not appropriate to talk about this. He did not confirm to us that this was Bishop Glyn Webster who said this to him, and he told us that he was not even certain whether Bishop Glyn Webster had overheard what had been said.

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163. We have formed the view that the social event must have taken place in the summer of 2012. M1 had moved to the north of England earlier that year and Bishop Glyn Webster became Bishop of Beverley in January 2013. Bishop Glyn Webster told the Review Team that he was not yet a Bishop at the time of the social event.
164. Interestingly, Cleric X told us that he remembers M1 telling him about the social event, and he recalled two things about this conversation with M1. First, that M1 may have made the disclosure in *“not the most appropriate of places”*, and that he *“may well have had a glass of wine beforehand”* (see above [paragraph 120](#)). However, Cleric X told us that he recalled M1 telling him that Bishop Glyn Webster told him to not to say anything else about the matter and was made to feel that he would not be believed and should not make trouble.
165. In the reply to the representation letter written by lawyers on behalf of Bishop Glyn Webster, it is stated that *“M1 had a good deal of wine over the two hours before dinner was served at 9pm. Bishop Glyn Webster was much more moderate in his alcohol intake, not least because he had to rise very early the following morning to catch the 06:30 train.”* The Review Team accept that alcohol was drunk at the social event that evening.
166. Bishop Glyn Webster told us that he had bumped into M1 from time to time, but he did not socialise with him. He did not feel any social chemistry with him.
167. He confirmed that there was no conversation between M1 and himself in 2016, and indeed there had been no further contact with M1, from the time he had been consecrated as Bishop of Beverley in 2013. He might have seen him in passing, but that was about all.

### **7.9. Our Conclusions**

168. We have a situation where Bishop Glyn Webster denies totally that a conversation about Whitsey took place at this social event. M1 told us that he had raised the issue, but was told to stop talking about it but it may not have been Bishop Glyn Webster who said this to him.
169. We have evidence, both documentary (the 2014 emails and the transcript of M1’s interview with the police) and from our interview with Cleric X, that M1 has said that the disclosure was made at the social event and it was Bishop Glyn Webster who told him to forget about it. Although he does not mention Bishop Glyn Webster by name, he told the police in his interview that he made the disclosure and was told by a senior cleric to forget it. DC McGuinness told us that when he subsequently visited M1, he was told directly by M1 that it was Bishop Glyn Webster who had told him to forget about Whitsey’s abuse and move on. And he told Cleric A when they were abroad in July 2016 about the social event and the disclosure and Bishop Glyn Webster’s reaction. Thus in three separate accounts we have evidence that M1 states that he made a disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster.
170. He did not mention the disclosure to the DSA (Annette Gordon) in London, and when speaking with the Chester DSA, he downplayed any disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster, although what he said to



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the Chester DSA during the telephone conversation on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 is unclear as there is no written record, other than the core group minutes of the same day which contains information which, so we have seen, is clearly not what actually happened.

171. It has been difficult for us to reach a firm conclusion about whether there was or was not a disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster.
172. What we have concluded, on a balance of probabilities, and solely on the evidence that we have read and heard is as follows: Bishop Glyn Webster attended a social event with M1 around 2012. It is probable that the name of Whitsey may well have been mentioned.
173. Do we have an evidential base upon which we can find on a balance of probabilities that M1 told Bishop Glyn Webster that he had been abused, and that Bishop Glyn Webster told him in effect to move on and forget about it? Bishop Glyn Webster totally denies that this conversation took place.
174. Against this, we have the email evidence of M1's conversation with Cleric X in 2014, supported as it is by Cleric X's evidence to us; we have heard Cleric A give evidence to us of her conversations with M1 in a named foreign country on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016; and we have seen the transcript of the police interview and the evidence of DC McGuinness of his meeting with M1. It was DC McGuinness' understanding that the disclosure was made to Bishop Glyn Webster.
175. It is our conclusion that M1 is now at pains to shield Bishop Glyn Webster from any suggestion that he was told to "*forget about it*" when he was told about the abuse. We can understand his reluctance, and fully appreciate that M1 does not want any 'trouble' being attached now to Bishop Glyn Webster. That, however, is not a matter for us. On the evidence we have seen; and having spoken with all of the people involved, we are satisfied on a balance of probabilities that there was a conversation about Whitsey at this informal social event, that M1 said he had been abused by Whitsey, and that Bishop Glyn Webster told him, in effect, to move on.
176. In the reply to the representation letter, lawyers acting on behalf of Bishop Glyn Webster stated as follows: "*The other possibility is that M1 has realised that his recollection of the 2012/2013 [social event] is hazy and that he cannot be at all certain of what he originally asserted in informal contexts to Cleric X and to Cleric A. Now that he realises something may turn on the accuracy of his account of the conversation at the [social event], he has become more honest in his admission that he cannot really remember it very well. His police interview in August 2016 was a serious and formal matter, but it was VW, not GW, who was the focus of the police enquiry, and M1's focus in the police interview is unlikely to have been on the accuracy of his recall of this [social event] conversation.*"
177. The Review Team has given very careful consideration to the submission made by the lawyers acting on behalf of Bishop Glyn Webster, but our conclusion, on the balance of probabilities and using our professional judgement, remains as set out in [paragraph 175](#) above.
178. We wish to state, also, that it is our opinion that Cleric A was correct in contacting the DSA in York to seek his advice, and we are satisfied that at this time she did not tell the DSA of the name of the

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complainant, but she did tell him the name of the person he had disclosed to. The practice guidance now makes clear that a cleric must make no promises that cannot be kept, particularly in relation to confidentiality<sup>25</sup> and we note that Cleric A made no promises to M1, other than not to mention his name.

179. **We recommend that the practice guidance is looked at carefully to ensure that there is no ambiguity, so that Church officers are in no doubt but that disclosures must be reported to the DSA, even in cases where the complainant is asking for it not to be shared. This must be made very clear to a complainant at the beginning of any disclosure in whatever setting including social situations (Recommendation 3).**
180. The minutes of the core group, which may have accurately summarised what was reported at the meeting, are simply incorrect as a matter of fact, and this misunderstanding of the factual basis throws into serious doubt the way this matter was handled.
181. In particular, there are lessons to be learned about the role of the DSA, the way the NST handled the issue, what became of the report written by Cleric A, and support if any offered to M1, to Cleric A and indeed to the Bishop of Beverley. We have no doubt but that all three feel aggrieved and totally let down by how this matter has been handled by the NST and the Church authorities.

### **7.10. Other Concerns**

182. We are particularly concerned about the way David Finan handled the matter. The email to Canon Daphne Green from David Finan dated 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016 informing her that Cleric A had spoken to him on that day to seek advice was totally economical with the truth. Cleric A had phoned David Finan on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 about the issue. The email to the Northern PSA from David Finan dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016 contains incorrect information both regarding dates, and whether Cleric A had or had not disclosed the name of the victim and the name of Bishop Glyn Webster.
183. There is one other area of concern, however, in relation to this unfortunate matter that we wish to refer. David Finan seems to have sent Bishop Glyn Webster by email dated 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 material from an organisation (False Allegations against Carers and Teachers FACT) that was concerned with responding to malicious rumours and false accusations. David Finan told us that he kept brochures from this organisation which he would from time to time send to clergy. He sent one to Bishop Glyn Webster. He told us that the *“culture was one of supporting colleagues within the church”*. We must say that we find it alarming that a DSA should send out a brochure from an organisation involved in false accusations, to a person who has been named as someone to whom a disclosure was made.

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<sup>25</sup> [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(2017\)](#), Section 2.2, Page 30 *“Make no promises that cannot be kept, particularly in relation to confidentiality, but listen carefully to what is being sought in this regard.”*

# A BETRAYAL OF TRUST

## **Chapter 6: M2**

### **1. M2's Interview with the Police**

184. We are grateful to M2, who is a Reader in the Church of England, for giving his consent for the Cheshire Constabulary to release to us a copy of his signed witness statement, and a copy of the typed transcript of his video recorded interview. We are also grateful to him for seeing us on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and answering in detail our questions to him.
185. The allegations made by M2 came to the attention of the Cheshire Constabulary in this way. The Chester DSA contacted the Cheshire Constabulary on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to inform them about the allegations of non-recent sexual abuse perpetrated by Whitsey on M2, at the same time as she told them about the allegations made by M1.
186. M2 was interviewed by the police (DC Jones) on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016. M2 told the police that he had spoken to the Chester DSA in January or February 2016 about the alleged abuse. We shall consider later how the Chester DSA and the NST responded to these allegations, and whether there are any lessons to be learnt about the work of the safeguarding teams of the Church of England during the six to seven month period January 2016 to July 2016.
187. M2 told the police that in 1978, he was recommended for training for ordination, and he went to join a religious community in the north of England. After six months there, the community asked him to stay on for another year. He was about 29 at that time. However, he decided to postpone further time at the community, and took on temporary employment prior to, he expected, undergoing ordination training as from September 1981.
188. He was asked to attend a review for this training in February or March 1981, and, after phoning the Bishop's house to ask for a meeting, he went to see Bishop Whitsey in his office in the Bishop's House in Chester on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1981. M2 told the police that he had a discussion with the Bishop around whether he (M2) felt ordination was right. M2 told the police also that Whitsey asked him about his sexual orientation. M2 told him that he was ambivalent about his sexuality.
189. We have no doubt but that Whitsey asked this question to M2. Interestingly, in our interview with the current Bishop's Chaplain (Canon Roger Clarke) on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020, who had himself been ordained by Whitsey, he told us that in his pre-ordination meetings with Whitsey he was asked about his sexual orientation. He told us that it was general knowledge amongst ordinands that Whitsey would ask this question. Canon Roger Clarke told the Review Team that Whitsey had "*a thing about homosexuality*" and he recalled a gathering at a cathedral in 1979 when Whitsey "*had a tirade about homosexuals.*"
190. M2 went on to say to the police as follows: "*At the close of that meeting, it was in his study, I was just alone with him, he stopped by the door and he embraced me, er hands wandered over my clothing, I think above the waist and I think over the outside of my clothing, and he stuck his tongue*

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*down my throat.*" After ten seconds or so, M2 pushed him off.

191. Sometime after the meeting with Whitsey, M2 received a letter from Whitsey dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 1981. The letter states: *"You may be assured of two things. Firstly, if and when you make such a decision [with regard to Ordination] you will certainly be strengthening your own resolve and character. Secondly, whatever the decision is, you will continue to receive any support and help that is possible."*
192. There is another letter from Whitsey to M2 dated 14<sup>th</sup> April 1981 which indicates that M2 *"may have been confused about his attempt to strengthen M2's resolve."* Whitsey offers to see M2 again and the letter says that M2 should have *"no apprehension"*. M2 did not go to see Whitsey again. Indeed, M2 told the Review Team when he met us that when he received the letter from Whitsey inviting him to see him again he decided, in his words, *"no way"*.
193. Applying the appropriate standard of proof, we are satisfied that M2's description to the police, and indeed in summary form to the Review Team, of what happened is accurate.

### **2. Early Disclosures by M2**

194. M2 told the police that he then went back to the religious community in the north of England. We have seen a document written by M2 setting out the sequence of events subsequent to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1981. He said that he disclosed what had happened to him both to Revd John Staley, Warden of the community, and Revd Sue Rose, the Chaplain at the community sometime between 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March 1981.
195. M2 told the police that Revd Sue Rose said that he should speak to Revd Frank Haslam, the former Vicar in Macclesfield who had recommended him for training, and who was the father of one of his friends. Revd Frank Haslam was by then the Chester Diocesan Resources Director. M2 spoke with Revd Frank Haslam at his (M2's) flat on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1981<sup>26</sup>. Revd Frank Haslam advised him to speak with the Bishop of Stockport, Bishop Gordon Strutt. Revd Frank Haslam subsequently contacted Bishop Gordon Strutt.
196. We have seen a letter dated the 8<sup>th</sup> April 1981 from the Bishop of Stockport to M2 which states *"It is very important that we should meet. Can you manage today or tomorrow"*. The handwritten note suggests to us that the Bishop considered a meeting to be very important indeed; hence the short notice.
197. M2 said in his police statement that he told Bishop Strutt about the incident with Whitsey in a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1981<sup>27</sup> and Bishop Strutt recorded the conversation on a cassette tape recorder. We asked M2 about this interview and the recording, and he told us that he knew that the meeting was being recorded because Bishop Strutt told him that it was. Indeed, M2 told us in

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<sup>26</sup> This information was provided to us by M2 after our meeting with him.

<sup>27</sup> This date was provided to us by M2 after our meeting with him.

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an email dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that he actually saw the device. It is of course unfortunate that nobody, including the police, has been able to trace the tape recording which M2 says Bishop Strutt made of the meeting with him. We note that M2 was never provided with a copy of this tape and was never updated on whether any action was taken by Bishop Strutt. It is our view that it is more likely than not that a tape was made of the conversation. It is our view that M2's recollection is credible.

198. M2 told us that he also spoke with Bishop Peter Price (he was at the time Revd)<sup>28</sup>, who had been the Chaplain at the religious community M2 had attended until late 1980 and who had moved to a parish in Addiscombe, Croydon. He showed us an extract from his diary for the year 1981, and pointed to an entry on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1981. This reads *"On the way back, talked with Peter about Victor incident."* M2 told us that he had stayed with Bishop Peter Price for a few days and the conversation took place in the car coming back from a meeting. He told us that he was not asking Bishop Peter Price to do anything with this information, but that he wanted to let him know why he had delayed his going forward for ordination after his time at the religious community. We spoke with Bishop Peter Price by video on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020, and he told us that he had looked at his 'Book of Common Place' which he kept at that time. There was an entry for 9<sup>th</sup> April 1981, where he noted that M2 had told him that he had given up his intention of entering the ministry. He had no entry for 15<sup>th</sup> June 1981. We are satisfied that M2 did visit Bishop Peter Price in Addiscombe, although we do not believe it could have been on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1981, because that was the date he met Bishop Strutt (see before [paragraph 197](#)). It is very likely that there was a conversation between them about why he had decided not to seek ordination, but we have no evidence to show that M2 told Bishop Peter Price that this was because of abuse he had suffered at the hands of Whitsey. Bishop Peter Price had no recollection, and there was nothing in his 'Book of Common Place' to suggest that Whitsey had been mentioned. Using our professional judgement, we have concluded that both M2 and Bishop Peter Price are credible witnesses. However, given the passage of time, the uncertainty over the dates, and the lack of clear documentary evidence, we make no finding as to whether M2 did, or did not, disclose to Bishop Peter Price the abuse that he had suffered.
199. M2 told us that he went forward for ordination at the ACCM<sup>29</sup> in February 1983<sup>30</sup> but he was turned down. M2 told us also that he then disclosed the abuse he had suffered at the hands of Whitsey to Revd Stanley Baxter, whom he had known when Revd Baxter was Vicar at St Chad's, Headingley. It seems that Revd Baxter referred M2 on to the Bishop of Knaresborough, John Dennis. M2 spoke with Bishop John Dennis, and M2 told us that he believed that the Bishop knew that he (M2) was in a difficult place at that time. M2 told us also that he believes that Bishop John Dennis spoke with Bishop David Young, who was the Bishop of Ripon at that time about M2's disclosure. Bishop David Young licensed M2 as a Reader in the Ripon diocese, and although Bishop David Young did not say anything explicit to M2, M2 told us that he is of the view that because of the way the licensing was dealt with, this led him to believe that Bishop David Young knew about the reported abuse on M2 by Whitsey.

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<sup>28</sup> Later to become the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

<sup>29</sup> Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry.

<sup>30</sup> This date was provided to us by M2 after our meeting with him.

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## **3. Meeting with Bishop Michael Baughen**

200. M2 corresponded with the newly installed Bishop of Chester, Bishop Michael Baughen and Canon Stewart Lawton (Diocesan Director of Ministry) in March 1983 after being turned down for ordination. He was subsequently offered a date to meet with the Bishop and the two met on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1983.<sup>31</sup> M2 told us that he discussed his failure to obtain ordination with Bishop Michael Baughen and told him about the abuse. He said that the Bishop offered him counselling, which he did not take up at that time.
201. The Review Team had a telephone conference with Bishop Michael Baughen on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The Review Team asked him whether he had any recollection of meeting with M2. Understandably because of the lapse of time, Bishop Michael Baughen had no recollection of the meeting.
202. He noted that when he saw people after they had been turned down for ordination, they would believe that there may be many reasons as to why they had not been accepted. But he said that he did not make those decisions. He reiterated that he was not aware of anything regarding abuse by Whitsey on a prospective ordinand.
203. M2 wrote once again to Bishop Michael Baughen in October 1983, regarding his failure to obtain ordination.<sup>32</sup> We have seen a letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> October 1983 from Bishop Michael Baughen to M2 which reads as follows: *“Thank you for your letter of 4<sup>th</sup> October. I am sorry not to have taken up the specific point about whether the events which precipitated your withdrawal in 1981 affected the decision of the ’83 ACCM. The answer is no. I have looked through the papers and the ACCM in ’83 was quite clearly making its judgment on the person they found before them at that time.”*

## **4. Our View on Whether there was Disclosure to Bishop Michael Baughen**

204. We have seen the letter written by Bishop Michael Baughen of 10<sup>th</sup> October 1983 and spoken to both M2 and Bishop Michael Baughen. We do not know what the word ‘events’ refers to in the letter.
205. M2 is clear in his evidence to us that he did make a disclosure to the Bishop. Bishop Michael Baughen is adamant, both in his evidence to us, and in his reply to the representation letter that no disclosure was made to him of any sexual abuse perpetrated by Whitsey on M2. Given the passage of time, and the lack of any further evidence other than the letter of 10<sup>th</sup> October 1983, we have decided that no finding of fact can be made as to whether there was or was not a disclosure at this time.
206. The relationship between M2 and Whitsey would have been a relationship between a man with immense ‘power’ and ‘a junior’ aspirant to ordination. Today, we would expect that any hint of

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<sup>31</sup> M2 provided us with copies of these letters.

<sup>32</sup> We have not seen M2’s letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 1983 to Bishop Michael Baughen but believe that M2 did write to the Bishop based on the Bishop’s response.

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abuse would be immediately referred to the DSA.

207. M2 did not make any more disclosures between 1983 and 2001/2, and he told us that he did not tell anyone who held an official position in the Church during this period of time.

### **5. Alleged Disclosure to Bishop Peter Forster in 2001/2**

208. There is some lack of clarity as to whether M2 discussed his complaint about Whitsey with Bishop Peter Forster, when he became the Bishop of Chester. M2 told the police that Bishop Peter Forster had been his parents-in-law's Vicar before he moved to Chester *"so I felt there was a way of trusting him."* He told the police that he discussed it with him *"some years ago."*
209. Bishop Peter Forster told the Review Team<sup>33</sup> in his interview on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 that *"I do have a memory of someone saying, when they were leaving this room I think, that when I left the room, Whitsey put his arm around me or behaved strangely. At the time I just didn't register. This could have been in 2002"*. He gave a similar answer in his evidence to IICSA.<sup>34</sup>
210. He told us that he could not remember the detail and he thought that it was peripheral to the purpose of the meeting. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated *"My only very hazy memory is that at the end of what I assume was this meeting, as he was leaving, M2 made a passing remark about odd behaviour by VW on a previous visit. I do not recall the details, and I don't recall anything said which would indicate sexual assault."*
211. M2 told us that he took the afternoon off work to visit Bishop Peter Forster. He explained that his sister had been very ill with a brain tumour and part of the reason for his visit to the Bishop was to provide him with an update on his sister's illness. He told us also that he wanted to rebuild his relationship with the Bishopric of Chester because he felt bad about the way things had worked out with Bishop Michael Baughen.
212. He met Bishop Peter Forster in his office, and no one else was present.

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<sup>33</sup> The Review team are aware of ongoing CDM proceedings regarding Bishop Peter Forster. His Honour David Pearl wrote to the President of Tribunals and Chair of the Clergy Discipline Commission, Lady Justice Sarah Asplin, on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019 stating that the Review Team would like to speak with Bishop Peter Forster, and seeking her advice as to whether the Review Team could meet with Bishop Peter Forster whilst the CDM complaint is ongoing. The Lead Reviewer told Lady Justice Asplin that the Review Team were keen to meet with the Bishop before his retirement at the end of September 2019, as we understood that it would be much more difficult to speak with him after his retirement. She replied to state that it was entirely a matter for the Bishop and his advisers to determine whether he was willing to meet with the Review Team. The Lead Reviewer wrote to Bishop Peter Forster asking for a meeting and stating that the President of Tribunals had not indicated that a meeting would be prejudicial to the CDM process. A number of dates were offered. Unfortunately, Bishop Forster was not available on any of those dates, but he did offer one date in September 2019. The Lead Reviewer was out of the country at that time, thus the meeting was between the Bishop and the Review Adviser, Kate Wood, with Hannah Sinclair taking notes. The Review Team did not have access to any of the case files at this time, and in consequence the scope of the interview was limited.

<sup>34</sup> [IICSA transcript, Page 51](#)

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## **6. Conclusion on the Disclosures**

213. Looking at these disclosures in 1981, 1983, and 2001/2, we are asked by the Terms of Reference to state whether on a balance of probabilities these disclosures occurred in the way M2 has described to the Chester DSA, to the police, and to us.
214. The circumstances surrounding Whitsey's departure from Chester, in our opinion, make it more likely than not that M2 did disclose Whitsey's behaviour to Bishop Strutt, and that Bishop Strutt then took action by way of writing, albeit in general terms, to the Archbishop of York about Whitsey.
215. The extract from M2's diary provides circumstantial evidence that he had a conversation with Bishop Peter Price, but we are unable to make a finding on a balance of probabilities that he did disclose to Bishop Peter Price the abuse that he had suffered at the hands of Whitsey. So far as to whether he made a disclosure to Bishop Michael Baughen, we find ourselves in a similar position. The letter from Bishop Michael Baughen of 10<sup>th</sup> October 1983 is too ambiguous for us to reach a conclusion on a balance of probabilities that he made a disclosure.
216. We accept as credible, however, the evidence given to us by M2 that he spoke with Revd Baxter and Bishop John Dennis. M2 had a very clear memory of speaking with these clerics, and we were impressed with his evidence on these matters.
217. So far as the conversation with Bishop Peter Forster in 2001/2 is concerned, we are satisfied on a balance of probabilities that M2 did speak with the Bishop. M2 has a very clear recollection of talking to the Bishop about his (M2's) sister and also about the events surrounding Whitsey. Although Bishop Peter Forster's recollection of this meeting is hazy, he does recall a meeting with M2 and Whitsey being mentioned, and the odd behaviour of Whitsey being referred to.
218. We of course accept the fact that this conversation happened many years ago, and that there is no written record. It would have been appropriate for the Bishop to have explored the matter further with M2. At the very least, it is our view that Bishop Peter Forster should have made it clear to M2 that he would have had his support should M2 have chosen to report the allegation to the police. Bishop Peter Forster acknowledged to us in his meeting with us that he was aware at that time that Whitsey was known as a person who demonstrated, in his words, "*odd behaviour*".
219. Thus, applying the appropriate standard of a balance of probabilities, we are satisfied that M2 did make the disclosures about Whitsey's behaviour to all of the people that he mentions<sup>35</sup> other than Bishop Peter Price and Bishop Michael Baughen, where on the evidence we have seen, we make no findings as to whether he did or did not make the disclosures of abuse. Given the passage of time, we cannot be specific as to exactly what was said by M2 when he met with Bishop Peter Forster. It was likely to have been a somewhat vague and general comment, but nonetheless, using our

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<sup>35</sup> Revd John Staley, Revd Sue Rose, Revd Frank Haslam, Bishop Gordon Strutt, Revd Stanley Baxter and Bishop John Dennis.



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professional judgment, we are satisfied, applying a balance of probabilities, that he did make a disclosure to the Bishop about how Whitsey had behaved towards him in a sexualised and inappropriate way.

### **7. The Period 2016-2018**

220. M2 did not discuss the incident with anyone else until early 2016 when he spoke to Revd David Mock, the Vicar of All Saints, Macclesfield, who said to him that he (M2) needed to talk to the Chester DSA.
221. M2 told us that the report of the Peter Ball case brought everything he had suffered at the hands of Whitsey back to him. He wondered whether victims had been passed from one to the other. He told us that he telephoned the IICSA hotline, but he was told that he was not a child at the time, and therefore they were not able to take matters further.
222. It seems that the Chester DSA received a telephone call from Revd Mock on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The Chester DSA recorded that Revd Mock told her that he had received a disclosure from a reader about Whitsey. The Chester DSA then received a telephone call from M2 himself, and the Chester DSA met M2 on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
223. The Chester DSA noted that she made M2 aware of the Diocesan counselling service. She noted that M2 told her that he had made the abuse on him by Whitsey known to Bishop Peter Forster in 2002 and that he had been offered counselling by him at that time.
224. The Chester DSA informed Bishop Peter Forster by email on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 that she had received the disclosure from M2.
225. The Chester DSA emailed M2 the following day, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016, to tell him that she had asked for the file records and advising him that she would come back to him when she had these records. On the same day, she sent an email to Graham Tilby, the National Safeguarding Adviser<sup>36</sup>, seeking information from him on how to obtain the files. We asked Graham Tilby about this email, and he told us that he would have passed it on to Jane Dodds, the NST Senior Casework Manager, to deal with.
226. We understand that there was a basic case management filing system in place at the NST dating back a few years prior to Jane Dodds' appointment. Unfortunately, it would appear that this case was either not documented from January 2016 (when the Chester DSA made Jane Dodds aware of it) or that this part of the case recording has been lost. We note that as far as we have seen, Jane Dodds' first case recording is dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016.
227. The Chester DSA attended a training event on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2016. She records this in an email to Bishop Peter Forster later that day. An extract from this email is as follows: *"During the training*

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<sup>36</sup> Graham Tilby took over as National Safeguarding Adviser in February 2015.

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*today the issue of allegations against a bishop was raised by the [Interim Training and Development Adviser]... She clarified that the national office needed to be informed in such situations (which I did at the time we became aware of the VW matter). The national case worker<sup>37</sup> was present today so I asked her about the situation. She said she would email me tonight and confirm she will obtain the file and will be in touch to convene a core group meeting with relevant people in the diocese. Until we have the core group meeting, we ought not to do anything."*

228. The Chester DSA did not receive a reply from Jane Dodds. Consequently, she emailed Graham Tilby, on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 informing him that she had requested that M2 provide a brief chronology of whom he had spoken with and when, which she would pass on to Jane Dodds. The Chester DSA asked Graham Tilby to pass this email onto Jane Dodds.
229. M2 emailed the Chester DSA on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 attaching the chronology and this was forwarded by the Chester DSA to Jane Dodds on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.
230. There was also a further email exchange between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 agreeing that they would meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 to discuss the way forward.
231. We have seen no evidence that this meeting took place. There is certainly no reference to the meeting in any of the files we have looked at. There is an email from the Chester DSA to M2 dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016 advising him that she is awaiting a date from Jane Dodds when she would be able to meet with her. There is an exchange of emails on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016 between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds setting the date for the meeting for 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
232. There are then a series of emails dated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 from the Chester DSA to Jane Dodds advising her that she (the Chester DSA) had been trying to move the case forward since 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016, and referring to the meeting between them which had been arranged for 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
233. As with the meeting which had been arranged for 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, we have found no evidence that the meeting between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds which had been agreed to take place on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 was ever held.
234. Attempts were made to obtain Whitsey's files, unsuccessfully. On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016, M2 sent an email to the Chester DSA requesting an update. The Chester DSA replied to say that they were struggling to locate records relating to Whitsey. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the Chester DSA emailed Jane Dodds requesting that Jane Dodds liaise directly with M2, because he had not received any feedback. It is clear that the Chester DSA was becoming increasingly frustrated at the inaction and poor response of the NST and having to deal with the anxiety of M2 with the length of time this was taking. Jane Dodds replied to say that a core group should meet prior to her having contact with M2.

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<sup>37</sup> Jane Dodds.

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235. As we have seen, the NST were informed about M2's disclosures on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2016. Bishop Peter Forster was asked by IICSA when he gave evidence to the Inquiry whether he could *"help us to understand why there was any delay (sic) between the disclosure in January and the formation of the core group in June 2016?"* Bishop Peter Forster replied to say that he had no idea, but that he would have expected a preliminary core group to be formed, and the police to be informed also.<sup>38</sup>
236. We have already expressed our concern about the failure to convene the core group for a period in excess of six months and refer to our recommendation at [paragraph 614](#) in relation to this point.
237. The delay was clearly of major concern to M2. He told us that he thought things would be moving but they weren't. We have every sympathy for M2, who, after making the disclosure at the beginning of 2016, had to wait for some eight months prior to his interview with the police. He had already formed a view of a major cover up by the Church due to the many previous disclosures he had made with no action having been taken, and the delay must have strengthened this view.
238. The failure to hold a core group meeting cannot be laid at the hands of the DSA in Chester. She was constant in her attempts to bring these matters before the NST core group. There were a series of emails to Jane Dodds from the Chester DSA.
239. The email of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016 is only one of over a dozen emails where the Chester DSA writes to Jane Dodds stating that she is keen to ensure that *"we are responding to [the above matter] promptly"*. She adds *"We are asked to treat historical cases as if they are current, and I know M2 is keen that we pursue the matter appropriately given his concern at how his historical complaint was handled. Are you able to give me some dates please when I could meet with you?...appreciating that this has to be led from national office rather than the diocese..."*
240. Sadly, and regardless of any resource issue (namely, only one person dealing with complex case work), we are drawn to the inevitable conclusion that the leadership at that time at the NST failed to follow the practice guidance<sup>39</sup> to hold a core group meeting with respect to the allegations brought by M2 within as short a delay as possible. We shall return to recommendations when we look at the working of the NST core group, but must conclude, albeit regrettably, that M2 was sadly let down by the National Safeguarding Team during this seven-month period in 2016 in addition to having been let down by the Church for many years previously. In her reply to the representation letter, Jane Dodds stated that she cannot recall the case, given that it was over four years ago. She acknowledged, however, on reading the relevant paragraphs in the draft report, that there were clear shortcomings in her practice in responding to the DSA in Chester with regard to the case.

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<sup>38</sup> [IICSA transcript, Page 48](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Situations Relating to Church Officers \(2015\)](#), Paragraph 7.9, Page 16 *"The Core Group should be convened by the DSA of the diocese in which the alleged abuse has taken place for a diocesan case, or the NSA [National Safeguarding Adviser] for an NCI case [National Church Institutions], and aim to meet within 48 hours of becoming aware of the serious safeguarding situation."*

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241. The Archbishop of York was written to on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016 by Bishop Peter Forster to alert him to the emerging details of the two allegations of sexual abuse.

## **Chapter 7: M3**

### **1. Second Core Group - 10th November 2016**

242. The core group met again on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 when, amongst other matters, it considered a third complainant, M3. The membership of this, the second meeting, was different from the first meeting. The newly appointed Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser was in the Chair (having assumed responsibility for this matter as from 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016), and the Chester DSA attended together with Sharon Hassall (the DSA for Blackburn Diocese, who had taken up her post in October 2016), and two Directors of Communications, one from the Diocese of Chester and the other from Church House, London. There had been no Director of Communications present at the first core group. We are of the view that it is advisable that a representative of communications be present at all core group meetings.<sup>40</sup>
243. The Northern PSA told the Review Team in an interview with us on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019 that she commenced her PSA role in early October 2016, which was a new role for the NST. Jane Dodds had left the NST by then. The Northern PSA told us that her role was a co-ordinating one. At a subsequent meeting with the Northern PSA by video conference on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, she told us that she did not have a hand-over from Jane Dodds, and her introduction to the Whitsey investigation was through a meeting with Canon Daphne Green, the Chaplain to the Archbishop of York, and with Moira Murray. Moira Murray told us at a meeting with her on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that she took over as the Senior Casework Manager on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> September 2016, having been doing case work on an interim basis at the NST since July 2016.
244. We accept that there will be occasions when the personnel of the core groups will change as a result of staff alterations, and that well-structured minutes can provide core group participants with sufficient information.
245. Moira Murray's recollection of the first core group meeting dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016, as stated in her reply to the representation letter, was that she was an observer at that meeting, Jane Dodds being still in post. Although the minutes of that meeting state that "*the next meeting would be chaired by Moira Murray*", the second core group did not take place until 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The Northern PSA chaired that meeting as she had taken on the role of Provincial Safeguarding Adviser by that time. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira Murray stated "*on her appointment, the case was allocated to the Northern PSA and we had discussed the case. Given that it was part of her*

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<sup>40</sup> This is stated in both the [Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Situations Relating to Church Officers \(2015\)](#) at Paragraph 7.16 and the [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(2017\)](#) at Section 3.1, Page 39

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*duties and responsibility to chair core groups of this nature in the Northern Province, I considered it appropriate for the Northern PSA to chair the second core group meeting.”*

246. We accept that the change of chair was appropriate, although we do believe it would have been helpful to all core group members if the change of responsibility from Jane Dodds to Moira Murray and then to the Northern PSA had been minuted.
247. **We recommend that when case management passes to another member of staff in national cases, wherever possible, both the old and new casework managers should attend the next core group meeting to aid in a smooth transition (Recommendation 4).**

### **2. How Did M3 Come to the Attention of the Church?**

248. We address now the question of how M3 came to the attention of the Church authorities. The Northern PSA told us in her evidence, about a clear difference of approach between Bishop Peter Forster and Jane Dodds, as also between the Bishop and his DSA and that this was one of her challenges early on. We have to say that it could not have been easy for the Chester DSA managing her work at this time. We shall have more to say about this issue at [Chapter 15, Section 1](#).
249. [The Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\) Report](#), based on work conducted in the Chester Diocese on 10-12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 (but not published until March 2017), as part of a series of reports commissioned to undertake an audit of the safeguarding arrangements of each Diocese of the Church of England, made the observation that their audit noticed that the advice of the DSA was not being consistently followed. It said that decisions were sometimes made contrary to the Chester DSA's professional advice.
250. It is the view of the Review Team that this tension between the Bishop and the DSA in the spring and early summer of 2016 was difficult for the DSA.
251. The practice guidance document [Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations relating to Church Officers](#) had been published in June 2015 and should have been followed in the spring and summer of 2016. Appendix 2 (page 31) of the document states that a Diocesan Bishop must “*remain distant from the ‘process’ in case of needs [sic] for intervention in the event of disciplinary action of licensed or accredited ministers, claims made against the parish or the Diocese, or pastoral breakdown.*” Paragraph 7.20 (page 17) states that the “*Diocesan Bishop must not be a member of [a core group] himself or herself, in order not to compromise potential decisions about disciplinary matters.*” The Bishop should be kept informed of the process by his or her DSA and representative in the core group and advised on decisions which he or she needs to take.
252. The current practice guidance, [Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(2017\)](#) repeats the 2015 practice guidance on the point of the Diocesan Bishop being distant from the process.

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253. **We recommend that in the current *Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017* document, it should be made clear that a Diocesan Bishop “being distant from the process” includes no direct involvement in the management of a safeguarding case (Recommendation 5).**
254. Although this document says nothing about allegations against deceased officers of the Church of England, it is perfectly plain in our view that the document envisages a separation of the role of the Bishop from the work of the core group and the DSA. We shall say more about the practice guidance documents, and particularly practice guidance on allegations against deceased Church officers later in [Chapter 14, paragraph 523](#).
255. In simple terms, Bishop Peter Forster set about conducting enquiries on his own, without any recourse to the NST, his DSA, or the police. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated *“at the very worst, it may be said against me that I made a few informal enquiries which with hindsight was unwise.”*
256. Bishop Peter Forster sent an email to Jane Dodds dated 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016 telling her that he had spoken with two senior clergy who were *“here at the time”* plus *“one or two other retired clergy whose discretion and judgment I trust.”*
257. He says in this email *“One priest has also, in confidence, told me that he heard, also in confidence, from a potential complainant around 1990, of an incident 10 or more years earlier, which should be investigated. However, the priest concerned has suggested that the ‘seal of the confessional’ should apply, and I have asked my Registrar to provide legal advice on this, from senior legal sources. I await this.”*
258. Jane Dodds made it very plain to the Bishop in her reply by email dated 29<sup>th</sup> July 2016: *“Please do not make any contact with anyone in relation to the case – the Chester DSA has been tasked with passing information on to the Police, and updating the core group.”* However, the Bishop replied to Jane Dodds on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2016 *“Because of certain sensitivities, I would prefer to meet the Police myself...”*
259. Jane Dodds replied on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016 stating that she *“was grateful for the work you have done in identifying contacts in this case”* but making it clear that he should pass any information he has to the Chester DSA, the police, or to herself (as core group chair).
260. It is our opinion that Bishop Peter Forster in conducting his own enquiries during the summer of 2016 was operating contrary to the Church of England practice guidance that had been available for well over a year. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated: *“When I met with DC Jones, the investigating officer, in January 2017, I specifically asked him whether my actions in the summer of 2016 had caused any difficulty for his investigation, as I was aware of the criticism from Jane Dodds and the DSA. He assured me that this had not been a problem for his investigation. Later, when the investigating officer had changed to DC McGuinness, the police perception seems to have changed, although I have never received any communication from the police in this regard, and DC McGuinness never voiced any concerns to me...The truth of the matter*

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*is that as a result of my actions, M3 was encouraged and empowered to make a full disclosure, and to pursue a civil claim.”*

261. The Bishop’s own enquiries created problems for the DSA, and the NST core group. The Bishop is not a safeguarding professional and he should not have been conducting preliminary enquiries. Notwithstanding Bishop Peter Forster’s reply, the Review Team remain of the view that the Bishop should not have conducted these enquiries with retired clergymen and with M3. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated: *“I have acknowledged that I should not have contacted the clergy in the summer of 2016, but I believe my actions were well intentioned.”*
262. In particular, it would seem that Bishop Peter Forster contacted persons within the Church whom he felt would provide insight into any knowledge of past complaints concerning Whitsey. This was in contravention of the practice guidance and safe working practice.
263. Canon Roger Clarke, the Bishop’s Chaplain, gave evidence to us on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020, and he told us that Bishop Peter Forster spoke to him about Whitsey and asked him if there were any retired clergy to whom he could speak about Whitsey. He told us that he gave the Bishop the name of Canon Peter Lee. He knew Canon Peter Lee and knew that he had been in the Diocese for many years. However, Canon Roger Clarke told us that he was not involved in Canon Peter Lee speaking with the Bishop, and he told us also that the Bishop did not ask him to make any follow up enquiries.

### **3. Bishop Peter Forster’s Meeting with M3**

264. Thus, Bishop Peter Forster had been advised by Jane Dodds that it was not appropriate to meet anyone in relation to Whitsey; but he nonetheless continued, and on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2016, Bishop Peter Forster met M3 together with a retired vicar (Canon Peter Lee) at the Bishop’s House in Chester. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated as follows: *“The meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> August arose because I was told by Peter Lee that M3 had expressed an unwillingness for his identity or complaint to be disclosed to the police or safeguarding officer until he had first met with me, and had disclosed to me. I felt that I needed to respect his views in the matter, as he had been the confidant and pastoral support for M3 over several decades, and would be presumed to continue in this role. The meeting had been arranged prior to any advice being given by Jane Dodds (I think the 3 week delay was due to holiday absences), and I felt it could be potentially damaging for me as Bishop to break my word and refuse to meet a victim when I had previously agreed to do so. My only purpose in meeting with him, apart from the pastoral act of hearing what he had to say, and assuring him of the support he would receive, was to encourage him to go to the police via the DSA. On the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> August I sent a detailed account of our meeting to the DSA, and asked her to take things forward, and late that evening I received from the Chester DSA an email in which she thanked me for what I had done and said that she would take things forward, and keep me fully updated. The email did not criticise my conduct”.*
265. However, the professional judgement of the Review Team is that the Bishop should have engaged with the DSA prior to any meeting with M3 in order to obtain her professional advice on the best

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way forward.

266. We have seen the minutes of the core group of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and it is important to set these out in full: *“On 26/8/16, the Chester DSA received an email from PF advising her that he had met (without her knowledge) with M3 (who was born in 1963) and Peter Lee (retired vicar), who had told him that in around 1980, M3 had met with Whitsey to discuss possible ordination training, and had been sexually assaulted. As a result, M3 ceased to pursue ministry. M3 advised that in around 2001 he had a breakdown, resulting in the end of his marriage, and sought counselling. During this period, he met Paddy Benson (vicar at Barnston) who took M3 to meet with David Urquhart (then Suffragan Bishop of Birkenhead, now Bishop of Birmingham) and M3 says that he made a full disclosure. PF claims DU did not pass this information on to him as Diocesan Bishop and therefore had no knowledge of it. At the time of the disclosure, M3 had not initially wanted to report the incident to the police, but has now been interviewed by them. It is unclear what led to M3 coming forward now in 2016; the core group felt this may have been due to PF’s enquiries/discussions. The Police have now interviewed M3. The Chester DSA has been largely uninvolved in this process although she has spoken with him prior to contacting the police to arrange an interview for him. ...the Northern PSA expressed concern that PF met with M3 without the knowledge or presence of the Chester DSA, and that such investigations are taking place outside of the core group and National Guidance. PF has been advised appropriately by the Chester DSA, JD, and Graham Tilby of appropriate protocols and this guidance has been reiterated by the Archbishop of York.”*
267. We are particularly concerned that the meeting with M3 took place at the Bishop’s House, the very place where he alleges the abuse took place. There is an NST safeguarding case file record dated some nine months later, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017, where DC Matt McGuinness, the Police Officer primarily responsible for the police investigation, Operation Coverage, reports that M3 told him he was distressed by having to go to the Bishop’s House to meet Bishop Peter Forster, and that he (DC McGuinness) felt that Bishop Peter Forster had had no recognition of or insight into the impact of that on M3. DC McGuinness told the Chester DSA that M3 had told him that the meeting with Bishop Peter Forster was *“traumatic.”*

### **4. Evidence of Bishop Peter Forster to IICSA**

268. We consider first the evidence Bishop Peter Forster gave to IICSA because this came first in point of time. In the IICSA hearing<sup>41</sup>, he was asked questions about his enquiries during the summer of 2016, and he agreed that he spoke amongst others with Canon Peter Lee, who told him that in 1990, a parishioner had disclosed that he had been abused sexually by Whitsey, but that no action had been taken because the parishioner did not want any further action at that time.
269. Bishop Peter Forster told IICSA that he did not know where the abuse had taken place, and the purpose of the meeting with M3 was merely to facilitate, and that he immediately sent an email to the DSA asking her to then arrange for M3 to be put in touch with the police.

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<sup>41</sup> [\*IICSA Transcript \(page 61 onwards\)\*](#)



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## **5. Interview of Bishop Peter Forster with the Review Team**

270. In his interview with the Review Team on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019, Bishop Peter Forster was frank about his enquiries in the summer of 2016. He said *"I had received the two disclosures...and I simply thought there has to be something going on in this Diocese I knew nothing about. So I simply phoned half a dozen people who were around at the time and said did you, was there something going on that I knew nothing about... So it was fairly informal, trying to get some scope and also trying to flush out if there were other complainants...so a single exercise in 2016 which via one retired priest Peter Lee, produced M3. Now of course with the benefit of hindsight I shouldn't have done anything of that."*
271. We shall be looking in detail at the policy and practice guidance which were in place at that time, and which have been subsequently revised, later in this Report ([at Chapter 14](#)).
272. The lack of communication between Bishop Peter Forster and the DSA seems to have continued. For instance, the police requested to meet with Bishop Peter Forster and did so on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017, yet the Chester DSA was unaware of this meeting. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated that he *"did not feel it necessary (or appropriate) to inform the Chester DSA of the meeting in advance, or to invite her to join it, as the meeting had been requested by the police for me alone to attend, and I had no idea what the meeting would cover."* It is the view of the Review Team that it would have been good practice for the Bishop to have informed the DSA that he had been asked by the police to meet with them.
273. There is an update to the core group meeting number three written by the Northern PSA (dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017) which states as follows: *"the Northern PSA and Bishop Peter were not in agreement around practise and so the differences of opinion have been shared with Graham Tilby, National Safeguarding Adviser. These issues will be explored as learning following investigation outcome."* This reference would seem to refer to the note of a telephone conversation that the Northern PSA had with Bishop Peter Forster at this time. The Review Team has seen the note made by the Northern PSA about her contact with Bishop Peter Forster (dated 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017) which reads as follows: *"Telephone call to Bishop Peter as agreed at core group. The aim of the call was to touch base, establish a line of communication, reinforce the importance of the case being managed through the core group and information being confidential given the occasions when Bishop Peter has met with police and victims without the knowledge of the DSA or wider core group ...Bishop Peter stated that he makes no apologies for the fact he made enquiries... My view is that Bishop Peter's tone sounded very defensive and hostile to any discussion with me..."*

## **6. Our Conclusions**

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274. M3 met with the police (DC Justin Jones) on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016. Canon Peter Lee accompanied M3. In his witness statement to IICSA, ([see later paragraph 279](#)) Canon Peter Lee states that whilst M3 was being interviewed by the police, he was in an adjacent room with a video link to the interview. Canon Peter Lee confirms in this witness statement that the information that M3 gave to the police on that occasion replicated that given to Bishop Peter Forster and which appears in the witness statement given by M3 to IICSA.
275. We are grateful to M3 and to IICSA for granting us access to the witness statement M3 gave to IICSA. In this statement, M3 gives details of the sexual abuse he suffered when he went to see Whitsey in the Bishop's House to ask him to support his (M3's) theological vocation and mentor him through his university studies. It is not necessary for us to repeat all of this evidence in this Report. However we do quote directly from M3's IICSA witness statement; paragraph 30 "*Whitsey then put his (Whitsey's) hand inside my trousers, and touched my penis through my underwear*" and paragraph 35 "*as these events were going on, Whitsey said to me "I have the power to give you everything you want, and the power to take it away"*".
276. M3 also provides IICSA with some general comments about safeguarding issues and his views on how the Church could make improvements in relation to safeguarding.
277. M3 has spoken with the Bishop then responsible for safeguarding (Bishop Peter Hancock) on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and we have seen the documentation relating to this meeting. We have no doubt, but that M3 has suffered long term significant harm as a result of the abuse inflicted on him by Whitsey.
278. We conclude, applying the appropriate standard of proof, namely the balance of probabilities, that M3 was sexually abused by Whitsey around 1980.

### **7. M3's Contact with Canon Peter Lee in the Early 1990s**

279. Canon Peter Lee gave evidence to IICSA by way of a witness statement, and he has given approval for the Review Team to see this evidence as part of our investigation. We are grateful to him and to IICSA for giving us their approval.
280. He states in his witness statement that M3 was a schoolboy when he first met him, and he got to know him by virtue of him being the son of a family of regular worshippers in his church.
281. To the best of his recollection, when M3 expressed his interest in the possibility of ordination, he explained that it was best for him to contact the Diocesan Director of Ordination in the first instance. He states also that it presumably was as a result of his contact with the Diocesan Director that an interview was arranged for him with the Bishop of Chester, Victor Whitsey.
282. In 1992, Canon Peter Lee moved parishes and he lost touch with M3 and his family after the move.

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283. In his statement, he says that it was when he was Rector of his new parish that he bumped into M3 by chance one day, they agreed to meet at the church, and that that was the first time that he was made aware of what had happened when M3 had met Whitsey at Bishop's House. He states: *"He described in general terms how he had been sexually abused by Whitsey who had even said that it was in his power to help or prevent M3's wishes to be ordained implying he should just let it happen."*
284. M3, in his witness statement to IICSA states that he happened to bump into Canon Lee, and he asked Canon Lee if he could meet with him and he went to see him one evening. He said in his statement that *"Peter had been a great friend to me and a superb mentor and I felt that I had just abandoned him when I left the Church. I felt he deserved an explanation."*
285. Canon Peter Lee states in his statement that he asked M3 whether he wanted him to take this up and to report it, but that M3 responded that he did not want anyone to know about it and asked him not to take it any further.
286. Canon Peter Lee continues: *"I regarded my pastoral responsibility to M3 to require that I should respect his integrity and keep the information confidential. M3 had already suffered so much because of what a Bishop had done to him and I thought this would be compounded if a vicar now betrayed his confidence resulting in personal and family turmoil"*.
287. Apparently, Canon Peter Lee did tell a retired Archdeacon of Chester that he had been made aware that Whitsey had abused someone (he did not disclose M3's name). The retired Archdeacon advised Canon Peter Lee that as Whitsey had died by then, he should not take the matter any further.
288. We conclude that M3 confided with Canon Peter Lee sometime in 1992.

### **8. M3's Alleged Disclosure to Bishop David Urquhart, then Bishop of Stockport in 2002**

289. There is of course the issue as to whether he disclosed this allegation to the then Bishop of Birkenhead, David Urquhart, who is now the Bishop of Birmingham. We met with the Bishop of Birmingham on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
290. Bishop David Urquhart told us that he had not met Whitsey and knew about him only because a retired priest (Canon Davies) had referred to him as *"a character"* and a *"force of nature"*. Canon Davies, had said that Whitsey had ordained him.
291. Bishop David Urquhart told us that he remembered a meeting around 2001 at Bishop's Lodge, Birkenhead with Revd Paddy Benson, then Area Dean of the Wirral, and M3. He was at that time the Bishop of Birkenhead. From his memory he thought that in addition to M3 and Revd Benson, M3's wife came as well. He told us that he remembered that the conversation was difficult and that M3 was very anxious. He confirmed that the conversation was about the behaviour of a

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former Bishop. He stated that M3 had not been explicit, but was very unhappy about the situation.

292. Bishop David Urquhart told us also he had no pre-warning about the nature of the meeting, but that he operated an *“open access”* policy on pastoral matters if trusted colleagues asked for a meeting. All he could remember was that Revd Benson had told him that *“these people”* needed to come to talk to him and he recalled that Revd Benson said it was about a former Bishop.
293. Bishop David Urquhart told us that his response to the conversation was to ask that the complaint be put in writing and further help be sought from the Vicar, Revd Benson. Bishop David Urquhart told us that he trusted Revd Benson. Bishop David Urquhart told us that he felt that M3 was on a journey and that this was why he encouraged him to put something in writing in order to get it on record.
294. Bishop David Urquhart told us also that as far as he was aware there was no further contact or correspondence with M3, and Revd Benson did not come back to him.
295. We asked him whether this concerned him at the time, and Bishop David Urquhart replied that it did not, and that pastoral care would fall back on the vicar, and that the vicar would address it with the Bishop if further issues arose.
296. Bishop David Urquhart told us that he would double check with his diaries to see whether any appointment had been noted down in his diaries. Unfortunately, he has been unable to find any documentation of the meeting.
297. We asked Bishop David Urquhart what he would have done if M3 had put down his disclosure in writing. He told us that he would have taken the letter to the Diocesan Bishop and asked him to take matters further to a Bishop’s staff meeting. He would have wanted to ensure that there was *“justice for both sides, a proper process, and that the survivor would have received the support he needed.”* There was of course at that time no Safeguarding Officer nor, apparently, even a Human Resources Department. Pastoral care was led by the Archdeacons and Area Deans and this would cascade down through the parishes.
298. Nonetheless, it is our opinion that this was a missed opportunity. The Bishop should have ensured that M3 received ongoing support from Revd Benson and, in addition, M3 should have been reassured that he would have had the backing of the Bishop should he have decided to go to the police. We also think that asking M3 to put down the details of the abuse in writing was not the most appropriate of responses, and certainly not a helpful reaction to these serious allegations.
299. DC McGuinness told the core group that Bishop David Urquhart had no recollection of the meeting with M3 and Revd Benson, *“other than remembering talking to a couple with regard to a complaint, but does not remember any of the particulars.”*
300. The Review Team has been in contact with Revd Benson and he kindly replied by letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020. He recalls seeing M3 and going with him to see the Bishop of Birkenhead. He says however that the Bishop that he went to see with M3 and his wife was Bishop Michael Langrish, a

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predecessor to Bishop David Urquhart. However, he acknowledges that there was another serious safeguarding matter that Bishop Michael Langrish dealt with, and *“it is conceivable that I am conflating the two events”*. Given the recollection of both M3 and Bishop David Urquhart, it is indeed probable that Revd Benson has conflated the two events.

301. We conclude on the basis of the evidence that we have seen that Revd Benson accompanied M3 to see Bishop David Urquhart in 2001/2 and M3 made a disclosure of abuse by Whitsey to the Bishop.

### **9. Contact Between Bishop Peter Forster and Bishop David Urquhart**

302. The core group meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 discussed the issue of contact between the two Bishops. It is minuted that Bishop Peter Forster contacted Bishop David Urquhart to tell him about the case, notwithstanding that both the Northern PSA and the Chester DSA had requested him not to share information about the case. Bishop Peter Forster in the reply to the representation letter stated that *“I did not seek out David Urquhart, but had a very brief conversation with him when we met in the course of a national event. I simply alerted him that an investigation was underway into complaints against VW...I certainly did not share significant information with David Urquhart.”* We must at this stage express the considerable concern we have that Bishop Peter Forster had an informal conversation with Bishop David Urquhart during the police investigation about the Whitsey case.
303. We asked Bishop David Urquhart at our meeting with him about his contact with Bishop Peter Forster in relation to the disclosures about Whitsey. He told us that he had not discussed the disclosure with Bishop Peter Forster at the time, but that he had had discussions with him more recently.
304. After the allegations about Whitsey had become public, Bishop David Urquhart had met Bishop Peter Forster and had a discussion about the matter hoping that it could be handled in a transparent manner. He said that this conversation happened after he had been interviewed in Birmingham by the police who had visited Bishop’s Croft, Birmingham on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017, but that he had received a letter from Bishop Peter prior to his meeting with the police saying that allegations were emerging in relation to Whitsey and that he may be contacted by the police in relation to this.
305. Thus, he received a letter from Bishop Peter Forster in 2016/early 2017 about the allegations, he was then spoken to by the police, and he then had a conversation with Bishop Peter Forster subsequent to his meeting with the police.

### **10. Bishop Peter Forster’s Contact with Canon Peter Lee**

306. We have already observed at [paragraphs 262-263](#) that in the summer of 2016, Bishop Peter Forster contacted Canon Peter Lee, amongst other clergy who had been in the Diocese during the time

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Whitsey had been the Bishop. Canon Peter Lee states in his statement that allegations had been made of sexual misconduct against Whitsey, and that the matter was under police investigation. Canon Peter Lee states that Bishop Peter Forster asked if he was aware of any such allegations. He says that he replied that he was but was not at liberty to disclose details without the consent of the person who had made the allegations of abuse. He then agreed to try to contact the person to ask if he would consent to releasing the details.

307. Apparently, Canon Peter Lee was able to make contact with M3 via LinkedIn, found a telephone number for his place of work, and contacted him to explain what was happening.
308. M3 agreed to speak with Bishop Peter Forster and Canon Peter Lee agreed to go with him to the meeting. Canon Peter Lee then contacted Bishop Peter Forster and the meeting took place, as we have seen, in August 2016 in the Bishop's House. Canon Peter Lee acknowledges in his statement that with the benefit of hindsight it would have been better if the meeting had taken place elsewhere.
309. We note that neither Bishop Peter Forster nor Canon Peter Lee sought advice from the DSA when organising to meet with M3 and appear not to have considered the effect this meeting would have on M3 or any immediate support he may have needed at that time.
310. After this meeting, Canon Peter Lee was contacted by the police, and he offered to go with M3 to the police station for an interview with the police.
311. It is important to state that in his witness statement to IICSA, M3 states that he cannot fault the actions of the Cheshire Police. He says that the officers who dealt with his case were absolutely amazing, that they exhibited an incredibly victim centred approach and were always approachable and understanding. This is in stark contrast to the way he was interviewed by Bishop Peter Forster, in the room where he had been abused.
312. We have referred to M3's interview with Bishop Peter Forster at [paragraph 264](#).

### **Chapter 8: F1, F2, F3, F4 & F5**

#### **1. Conversation Between Canon Roger Clarke and F3**

313. On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, the Bishop of Chester's Chaplain (Canon Roger Clarke) contacted the Chester DSA by email. He told her that he had been approached by one of his parishioners (F3) on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2016 who told him that her daughter F1 had been sexually abused by Whitsey when she was a child, over a two year period (1980-1982)<sup>42</sup>. F3 had close links in the Diocese at the time of

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<sup>42</sup> We note that Cheshire police believe the abuse started in 1978. Revd Roger Clarke reported the abuse as starting from 1980 to 1982. It is our opinion that the likely time period was 1978 to 1980.

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the abuse. She told the Bishop's Chaplain that she had witnessed some of these incidents.

314. The Review Team had a telephone conference with Canon Roger Clarke on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020. He has been the Bishop's Chaplain since 2015, and been in the Chester Diocese for 37 years.
315. He told the Review Team that on the first Sunday in October 2016, he met F3 by chance, and because of the difficulties of getting home because of a marathon that day, she invited him back to her house for tea. They had a conversation about Bishop's House Chester. He told the Review Team that he may have said that "*Whitsey was a bit of an odd bod*" but he told us that he did not ask any leading questions. He told us that in the midst of this conversation she told him about how Whitsey had abused her daughters. He said that it came out in a "*pastoral conversation*". He said that he was shocked, but not surprised, and the following day he contacted the Chester DSA, having obtained F3's permission to do so. He was very clear in his evidence to us that he had not been asked to make any enquiries and he did not ask any questions directly to F3.
316. F1 had a telephone conference with the Review Team on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and she told us that her mother (F3) had informed her that Canon Roger Clarke had been to visit her (F3) to ask about Whitsey, and she told him about the abuse by Whitsey on her daughter (F1).
317. We have seen an email dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016 from the Chester DSA to the police. In this email the Chester DSA states that F3 had told her (the DSA) that on the day of the Chester marathon, Canon Roger Clarke had visited F3 and asked if she had any information about Whitsey.
318. We have also seen an email dated 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016 which the Chester DSA sent to Bishop Peter Forster which states "*It was only because she [F3] was approached by Roger Clarke in the first place that she disclosed the information. She kept it to herself for 30 years.*"
319. It is our opinion that it is more probable than not based on F1's evidence to us together with the two emails, that F3 was indeed approached by Canon Roger Clarke seeking information about Whitsey.
320. In our interview with DC McGuinness and DI Reid on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, DC McGuinness told us that he felt it unlikely that the disclosure Canon Clarke received was given to him unprompted, with no specific questions before hand.
321. We are inclined to the view that Canon Roger Clarke's version of the meeting with F3 may not necessarily represent the entire sequence of events, given that he had been asked by Bishop Peter Forster of possible names of clergy that he (Bishop Peter Forster) could contact to ask about Whitsey. In any event, it is not necessary for our Report to arrive at a firm conclusion on this particular matter. However the abuse came to the knowledge of the Church, it was known to the Church (Canon Clarke) on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2016.
322. Canon Roger Clarke emailed the Chester DSA promptly the following day, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, informing her of the disclosure.

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323. The Chester DSA emailed Bishop Peter Forster on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 advising him that any knowledge by the Church of crimes against children should be passed on to the police, and that 'past' cases should be treated as though they were current. She emailed Canon Roger Clarke on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016 that she was going to inform the police of these allegations, and she received a reply from Canon Roger Clarke on 8<sup>th</sup> October stating that F1 was prepared to speak with the police.
324. The Chester DSA told the police of this alleged victim on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The Chester DSA sent an email to F3 on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016 asking her if she could visit F3 in order to *"listen to your experiences and advise you on the current situation."*
325. The Chester DSA then received an email from Canon Clarke, in anticipation of the Chester DSA's meeting with F3 advising her that F1's younger sister (F2) was also allegedly sexually abused by Whitsey. He told her that F3 had only recently been told this and is distraught. He said also that F1 would be present at the meeting with F3. He noted that F2 would not be present.
326. The Chester DSA met F3 on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and F3 told the Chester DSA that when she shared the information about her daughter's abuse with her other daughter F2, F2 disclosed to her that she had also been abused by Whitsey when she was around six years old.
327. F3 emailed the Chester DSA the following day, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016, thanking the DSA *"from the bottom of my heart"* for the visit. The Chester DSA replied immediately that she would now contact DC Justin Jones and ask him to make contact with her to arrange to meet, and to tell him that at their request, both F3 and F1 would like the Chester DSA to be present at the interviews to provide support for them.
328. The Chester DSA told the police (DC Justin Jones) promptly of the disclosures by email dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

### **2. The Interview with F1 by the Review Team - 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

329. F1 gave the following information to us during the course of the telephone conference with the Review Team on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020. When F1 was young, her family experienced difficult personal circumstances.
330. Her mother was told that she could bring her children along with her during the school holidays.
331. F1 told us that she was abused daily when she accompanied her mother, and that she did not tell her mother because she was protecting her. She said: *"if I had told my mother, she would have gone off like a rocket..."* For her at that time, the Bishop of Chester was the closest thing to God. She said that she was a tiny little girl, and he was a big man. She was just powerless.
332. At that time, she was learning to play the piano, and she would take her school work and then be sent off to practice the piano in a separate room. Whitsey would come into the room, knowing that



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she was alone, and ask her *"Do you like me stroking you?"*

333. She told us that Whitsey was very calculating, and that he would come to speak to her in the corridor after he had abused her, and say *"Haven't you grown"*. He then gave her, and her sister, small change to buy sweets. She thinks that this was *"hush money."*
334. She remembered also that Mrs Whitsey used to take her out, and she wondered whether Mrs Whitsey knew what was happening and tried to get her out of her husband's clutches. She would sometimes take both daughters out of the building, and sometimes just F1.
335. She said that she was aware at that time that her younger sister, F2, was being abused also, but they did not talk about it.
336. We asked her about the visit to the Whitsey house in Blackburn after the Bishop had retired. She said that they were invited for lunch at the Whitsey house. She remembered having what she referred to as a *"teenage tantrum"* because she did not want to go. However, they did drive over as a family. She was dressed in her Sunday best. The living room was upstairs, and she remembers going up the stairs in the following order: Mrs Whitsey, her mum, her sister, herself and Whitsey bringing up the rear. She said that he was trying at that time to get his hands up her skirt. During the afternoon, she said that Whitsey tried to get her away from the rest of the family.
337. She then said that at some point in the afternoon, she was sitting on a stool and Whitsey came behind her and pressed his erect penis into her back and rubbed himself against her. She told us that her mother witnessed this, and immediately managed to bring the afternoon to an end, and depart from the house.
338. During the drive home, her mother asked if anything like that had happened before, and F1 told us that she broke down and told her mother everything. Her sister told her mother that it had happened to her as well.
339. F1 said that her mother regrets to this day that she did not go to the police then. She told us that her mother never made contact with the Whitseys again, and that letters sent to her mother by Mrs Whitsey were ripped up.
340. She did tell us that, sometime in the last two years, her mother told her that she had confided with the Bishop's Secretary. Apparently, his response was *"do not worry about it"*, as he (Whitsey) had now gone. The Bishop's Secretary died, according to information given to us by Bishop Michael Baughen, shortly after he was inaugurated into office, but it is apparent to us that the Bishop's Secretary was cognisant of Whitsey's behaviour.
341. We asked F1 whether they had ever talked about the abuse as a family, and she explained that the incidents were buried, although she never forgot about it.

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## **3. Evidence F1 gave to the Police**

342. We have seen a redacted copy of the report prepared by the police subsequent to the interviews with F3 (on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016), F1 (on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016), and F2 (late April 2017). In summary, the report states that F3 said that she was struggling as the family was going through a difficult period. During school holidays, her two daughters (F1 and F2) accompanied her. F3 told the police that the Bishop encouraged F1 to practice playing the piano as this was something F1 was learning. Apparently, the grand piano was situated in a private room used by the Bishop. F3 said that F1 *“initially was pleased and practised on the piano however her attitude changed to the point she declined to play”*, and F3 accepted that she became angry towards her daughter as she felt that her daughter was turning down the Bishop’s generous offer.
343. F1 told the police that from the ages of 10 to 12 years she recalled a large number of occasions where she felt uncomfortable in the presence of the Bishop. The Bishop used to enter the room when she was playing the piano, and this was when the abuse occurred. She said: *“The abuse consisted of the Bishop grabbing her from behind and holding on to her”*, that *“he would touch her body”* and *“stroke her skin.”* She stated that on occasions *“the Bishop would place his hands within her underwear.”* She recalled on occasions struggling to get away from him but that he would chase after her. She recalled that at times the Bishop would have an erection under his clothing.
344. The police report also refers to the family visiting the Bishop and his wife after his retirement, with details identical to those at [paragraph 336](#).
345. F3 recalled the visit to the Bishop’s retirement home and said that she observed F1 sitting on a tall stool, with the Bishop standing behind her with a visible erect penis under his trousers. She watched the Bishop repeatedly push up against her daughter (F1) with his erect penis. She was in a state of shock, she had nobody she could tell, and felt nobody would believe her.
346. After leaving the Whitsey home, the family travelled back by car and F3 recalls a conversation concerning the Bishop, and F3 told the police that she recalls F1 saying *“Mummy, it’s been going on for so long.”*

## **4. Our Conclusions Regarding F1 and F2**

347. We have no doubt but that Whitsey abused F1 and F2 in the way that F1 described to us, which is wholly consistent with the evidence she gave to the police, and which is set out in the paperwork we have seen from the NST safeguarding case files.
348. F3 corresponded with the Chester DSA by email and on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016 she asked if there was any progress, and stated that she felt *“in limbo”*. She wondered whether they *“should have left the matter buried.”* In fact, as we have seen, DC Jones met with F3 on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The Chester DSA accompanied F3 to that meeting.

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349. F1 attended the police station on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016, and the Chester DSA was informed of this by email from F3. It would seem that pastoral support was being given at this time by Canon Roger Clarke, the Bishop's Chaplain, to F3. F3 said in an email to the Chester DSA on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016 that she wanted the matter to become public *"so that people can see what a monster Whitsey was."*
350. The core group met for a third time on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017, with the Northern PSA again in the Chair. The Chester DSA attended (and took the minutes) together with Sharon Hassall, (the DSA of Blackburn), George Colville (the Diocesan Secretary of the Diocese of Chester) and David Marshall (the Director of Communications, Diocese of Chester). We note that the Chester DSA was the minute taker. We consider that this is not a good practice, and note that the practice guidance makes clear that *"A Chair and Note Taker for the core group should be appointed."*<sup>43</sup> We deal with issues relating to minutes of the core group and make recommendations in relation to this at [Chapter 16, Section 3](#).
351. A welcome additional person present on this occasion was DC Justin Jones of the Cheshire Police, who had interviewed M1, M2, M3, F3, and F1.
352. **We recommend that an invitation be given to the police to attend all relevant core group meetings, in order to share information and to advise on matters which could affect a police investigation (Recommendation 6).**
353. In our telephone interview with F1 we asked her what she thought about how the Church handled the information they were given by F3. She told us that Canon Roger Clarke wrote an email to her offering sympathy. She told us that she was grateful for this email, but that he had never contacted her since.
354. F1 told us that Bishop Peter Forster refused *"point blank"* (in her words) to see her until the police investigation was concluded and the civil claims were finalised. She told us that she asked on numerous times via the Chester DSA to speak with the Bishop. It would seem that the police had no objection at this time to the Bishop meeting with her.
355. She said that when she did eventually get to see him, which was on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018, she was entirely crushed, that he appeared completely uninterested, and showed no compassion. She said that he was rude and she felt very uncomfortable, and she wished she had never gone to see him. She said that every time she spoke, he would sigh, and there was *"lots of pontificating."*
356. In contrast to what we were told by F1, the Chester DSA had a different recollection of the meeting. In her reply to the representation letter she stated: *"I was clear with F[1] that I was attending the meeting as DSA for the Bishop. F[1] was invited to bring someone with her for support, e.g. her husband. However, she declined and considered she wished to go by herself"*

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<sup>43</sup> Paragraph 3.1 of [Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017](#). We note that the old guidance (*Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations relating to Church Officers 2015*) also stated the same at paragraph 7.18.

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*because she knew I would be there. I recognise this presented a dilemma for me, but it was a product of the core group instructions having been tasked as pastoral support provider for the victims. My email to George Colville on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018, to whom I reported for case work states: 'Hi George, Just letting you know I am sitting in on a meeting between +BP [Bishop Peter Forster] and one of the VW victims at Bishops House today. +BP [Bishop Peter Forster] has asked me to be there as his safeguarding adviser. F[1] has asked me to be there as her support, as agreed by core group. I shall probably sit there and say very little!''.*

357. The Chester DSA sent an email to Bishop Peter Forster on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018, following F1's meeting with the Bishop which states : *"Dear Bishop Peter, I thought you were lovely with F[1] this morning – calm, professional and sincere. I spoke with her briefly in the car park afterwards and she said she was pleased she had met with you and visited Bishops House."* In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster also refers to this email from the Chester DSA.
358. There is clearly a difference of recollection of this meeting between F1 and the Bishop with the Chester DSA in attendance. F1 was very precise in her recollection, and Bishop Peter Forster and the Chester DSA as set out in her email have different memories and perceptions of the meeting. Given this difference, we make no findings on the matter.
359. F1 had nothing but praise for the Chester DSA. She said that the Chester DSA had offered her counselling with local counsellors who would be suitable, she kept her up to date and forewarned her if information about Whitsey was coming out via the press. She said that the Chester DSA had been invaluable to her and she cannot thank her enough.
360. There is also one other matter of concern. F1 told us in our interview with her that the Bishop's wife was coming into the property when she (F1) was leaving after her meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018. She stated that his wife stood on the drive with F1 and cried, telling F1 how sorry she was about the abuse that F1 had suffered. F1 told us that she was taken aback at how the Bishop's wife even knew her name and why she was there. F1 had never met the Bishop's wife before. This was an apparent breach of confidentiality by the Bishop in sharing such sensitive information with his wife.
361. It is our view, that whilst Mrs Forster was obviously well intentioned, and we level no criticism at her, our concern is that she should not have been given the information that the Bishop gave her about their visitor that day, given its confidential nature. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated that he *"judged it right to alert my wife to the possibility that a probably (and understandably) emotionally distressed person would be brought by me and the DSA into her (his wife's) home"*. There are clearly lessons to be learned about this approach, and we would query whether the Bishop acted appropriately in this instance by sharing details of the case with his wife, in that he breached confidentiality in disclosing the reasons why F1 may have been distressed.

### **5. F3**

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362. The Chester DSA received an email from Canon Roger Clarke on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017 stating that F3 had now made an allegation of an approach made to her by Whitsey. Canon Roger Clarke told the Chester DSA that F2 (her younger daughter) had reminded her of an incident which occurred during the family visit to the Whitsey house after his retirement, referred to by F2 as *“lunging at her.”* Canon Clarke said that F2 had mentioned this incident in her interview with the police.
363. The Chester DSA replied to Canon Clarke that she was obliged to pass this information on to the police, and requested that he inform F3 of this. She passed this information on to DC McGuinness on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017. She received a reply from DC McGuinness the following day thanking her and telling her that the matter was in hand. She updated Bishop Peter Forster on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017.
364. F1 confirmed to the Review Team, in an email subsequent to our conversation with her, that her mother had told her that she had indeed been lunged at by Whitsey during the family visit to the Whitsey house, and that he had grabbed her breasts. Her email says: *“Just spoken to Mum. He indeed did grab my Mum’s breast and she can confirm it was on the occasion that we visited after he retired to the Blackburn area.”*

### **6. F4 and F5**

365. The Northern PSA noted in the core group meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 *“that there may be other victims who have not yet come forward. There is a suggestion by a victim’s mother that she is aware of further victims.”* This refers back to the email from Canon Roger Clarke to the Chester DSA of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2016 when he told the Chester DSA that at his meeting with F3 she told him that she believed that Whitsey once exposed himself to the son and the daughter (F5) of the then Cathedral Head Verger, outside their family home and that Canon Bill Vanstone had persuaded the father not to go to the police. It is mentioned in the core group minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 that F1 mentioned in her interview with the police that *“she had heard that Whitsey indecently exposed himself to the verger’s children.”*
366. This family is mentioned again in the core group meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017, when DC McGuinness is in attendance. He is minuted as reporting that the former Verger is now deceased, and that he had spoken with his widow (F4), who had an awareness of the complaint that was made at the time, and felt that her husband was ‘gunning’ for Whitsey as a result, but that the situation was smoothed over by Canon Bill Vanstone.
367. DC McGuinness told the Review Team that he had spoken with F4, and she said that she had been sexually abused by Whitsey, and she had seen Whitsey sexually abuse her daughter (F5), and made efforts to meet her son. She told DC McGuinness (who reported to us in our interview with him and DI Reid on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020) that she had told her husband (who is no longer alive) and he went to Bishop’s House to complain. On his arrival there was no one there other than Canon Bill Vanstone, the Bishop’s Chaplain. She told DC McGuinness that there was a conversation between her husband and Canon Vanstone, who told her husband that Whitsey was unwell and was leaving his post as Bishop and was going to a *“special home”*.

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368. She told DC McGuinness that she and her daughter (F5) had come to terms with what had happened, that they had dealt with it and had processed it. Her son was living abroad and her daughter elsewhere in England. They wanted nothing more to do with the Church. The daughter was aware of the police investigation and their contact details were passed to her via F4 if she wanted to make contact. She never did make contact.
369. It is of course possible that there could have been two incidents at this time; one where Whitsey indecently exposed himself, and the other more serious incident relating to indecent assault on F4 and F5 and an attempted assault on her son.

### **7. Our Conclusions**

370. It is our opinion, that there was deliberate grooming by Whitsey of both F1 and F2. F3 had gone through a difficult period which she was still dealing with at that time and she was extremely vulnerable. F3 witnessed some of this abuse in connection with F1, but was unable to say anything at the time, thinking perhaps that nobody would believe her, and that there was no person to whom she could take her complaints to.
371. We agree with the Chester DSA in an email to the Northern PSA on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017 in the context of possible apology letters, that F3 believed that the only way that she could protect her daughters at that time was to prevent any further opportunities for Whitsey to have access to her daughters, which is what she did. After F1 told her mother what was happening, it was never spoken about again until her mother raised it with her in 2016 after Canon Roger Clarke's visit.
372. Applying the appropriate standard of proof, we are satisfied that Whitsey abused both F1 and F2. We think it likely that Whitsey made a lunge at F3 when she was visiting the Whitsey home. We do not have any evidence in relation to the children of the Verger in order for us to make an assessment. This is not to say that Whitsey did not behave in the manner which is alleged, given that there is ample evidence that he behaved in a totally inappropriate and indeed illegal way to many vulnerable children and young adults; but simply that we do not have sufficient evidence to make any finding.
373. The Chester DSA told us in our conversation with her that she knew very little about the F4 and F5 allegations, and she told us that F4 wanted to have nothing to do with the Church.
374. Clearly, however, Canon Vanstone seems to have decided to ensure that the allegations in relation to the Verger's family were not taken any further. The allegations should have been investigated at the time, and Canon Vanstone behaved in a manner which was entirely unacceptable even by the standards at that time. He was covering up for Whitsey, and an opportunity to prevent any further abuse was missed.
375. We are unable to take matters regarding this aspect of the case any further.

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## **Chapter 9: F6 & M4**

### **1. The Core Group - 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

376. The core group did not meet between 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017, a gap of some months, the meetings apparently being postponed to await work being done by the police.
377. We accept that there was no need for risk management as Whitsey was deceased. However, the core group had the responsibility to ensure that the Church was responding well to victims, that it was liaising appropriately with the statutory agencies, and that it was managing communications.
378. The Northern PSA did send an email to the key core group participants by way of an update and this is to be commended.<sup>44</sup> The update enabled the participants to be informed of developments.
379. The timing between meetings of core groups will depend on the circumstances in each case. Our preferred approach is that there be meetings (if only by telephone link and/or audio-visual connections) at regular intervals, and if there is a gap of more than two months that there be a written update from the chair to key participants
380. The core group meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 was attended by the Northern PSA (the Chair), the Chester DSA, Sharon Hassall, (the DSA of Blackburn) Rachel Harden, (the Deputy Director of Communications), and David Marshall, (the Director of Communications of the Diocese of Chester). The York Diocese DBS Administrator took the minutes, and DC Matt McGuinness was present as a guest, which as we have indicated already is extremely good practice and to be welcomed.

### **2. Information from Canon Chegwin Hall**

381. The Whitsey case was briefly referred to at a Chester Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP)<sup>45</sup> meeting in June 2017. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall is a member of the DSAP for the Diocese of Chester and as a result of the reference to the Whitsey case, she recollected a conversation regarding Whitsey which she had overheard some years before at a funeral. She reported this to the Chester DSA after the meeting and stated that this had not raised any concerns for her at the time, but she could now see the potential significance of this information. She apparently recalled overhearing one of the children of the deceased saying to the other *"remember when he used to hug me and held on too long. It made me feel very uncomfortable."*
382. DC McGuinness told the core group meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 that he had recently received information from Canon Chegwin Hall, via the Chester DSA, about the family of F6 and M4. He said that Canon Chegwin Hall had overheard a conversation between two members of the family at a funeral some years ago. He said that there was a concern suggesting non-recent sexual abuse by

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<sup>44</sup> The update does not have a date in the body of the document. However, the file name gives a date of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and a note in the NST case file on this date states an update was sent to the core group.

<sup>45</sup> Known previously in Chester Diocese as the Safeguarding Commission.

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Whitsey against a named young male and a young female, whose father had been a vicar. The parents had separated and the children lived with the mother.

383. We know a little more about this matter, because F6 gave evidence to IICSA on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019<sup>46</sup> and she also spoke with the Review Team in a video conference meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

### **3. F6's Evidence to IICSA**

384. We consider first her evidence to IICSA as this was first in point of time. We are grateful to both IICSA and F6 for giving us permission to see her witness statement. We have also read her evidence that she gave at the IICSA hearing. She told IICSA that she was proud of being a vicar's daughter, and it was really a key to her life, and religion and the Church were important to her at that time, namely the spring of 1979 when she was 14 years of age.
385. Her father left the family home around 1979, and she and her brother (M4) were taken to see Whitsey in Chester. She told IICSA that she was very distressed when her father left the family home, and she assumed that the Bishop wanted to see them to ensure that they were OK. She said that she remembers somebody, she thinks a woman, saying that the Bishop wanted to see her and her brother separately. She thought this odd, but she went in first to see him.
386. In her evidence to IICSA, she said she remembered Whitsey kind of enveloping her in a hug and saying "*You need comforting.*" He then sat down in one of the chairs and said "*Would I go and sit on his knee.*" She told IICSA that he then had an erection, and he felt her through her clothes, and then he pushed her away and "*that was that*". She assumed later that he had ejaculated, but she didn't know it at the time and she may have been wrong about that. She then went out, and her brother went in to see Whitsey.
387. She did not talk about what happened either to her brother or to anyone else at that time or indeed during the remainder of her childhood.
388. F6 gave a witness statement to the police in early September 2017.
389. She was asked by IICSA's Counsel whether she had tried to initiate contact with the Chester DSA. She replied that she had tried in late September 2017. She said that she phoned a number (not a Chester one) and asked to speak to the Safeguarding Officer. She then said: "*The person who answered the phone said that the safeguarding officer was off sick and would not be back for some time and said that the safeguarding officer had an assistant but the assistant was not there.*" She told IICSA that she left her contact details, but she never heard anything again.
390. F6 told us in our interview with her that she telephoned on two separate occasions, and that this had been in October or November 2017 ([see Section 7](#)).

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<sup>46</sup> [IICSA Transcript \(page 1 onwards\)](#)



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- 391. When Bishop Peter Forster was asked about this at the IICSA, he said that from the timings, it must have been when the DSA was off sick, and that he was very sorry that nobody had got back to her.
- 392. F6 was asked by Counsel for IICSA also whether she had received a personal apology from the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester at the conclusion of Operation Coverage or at any other time, and her reply was “Never.” We shall be dealing with the issue of apologies later in this Report.
- 393. We were very pleased to learn that F6 met with Bishop Peter Hancock and his Safeguarding Adviser on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### **4. F6’s Video Conference with the Review Team on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

- 394. In her video conference with the Review Team, F6 told us that after her father left the family in 1979, her mother moved from the vicarage with the children to stay with her own mother in Chester. She said that they “*hid there to get away from the press.*” She remembered that her mother said to her and her brother (M4) that the Bishop was worried about them, and that he would like to see them and check on whether they were OK.
- 395. She said that she dressed up for the occasion, and had her hair done nicely. She thought it odd at the time that they were told to go in to see the Bishop separately. She thought that her mother was not waiting for her in the sitting room, and probably her mother went back to her own mother’s house which was close by, central in Chester.
- 396. She was shocked about what happened to her, but she did not mention it at the time to her brother or to her mother. She said that their lives were in turmoil at that time; her father had moved out, they knew that they were going to lose the house, and indeed they had perhaps just six weeks left before they would have to leave.
- 397. She thought it was a bit odd to be told to sit on his knee, but she told us that she was terrified that if she told somebody (and she didn’t know who she could tell) her father would be in more trouble than he was already.
- 398. She told us that she did not think that he asked to see them again.

### **5. Our Conclusion**

- 399. Applying the appropriate standard of proof, we are satisfied that both siblings were abused by Whitsey during the meeting he had with them after their father had left the home, for the following reasons. The abuse is entirely consistent with the manner in which other victims had been abused; youngsters requiring support due to experiencing personal family difficulties; or youngsters considering a career in the Church being invited to the Bishop’s House, and then being

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taken advantage of by being sexually abused.

- 400. The victims that we have considered so far have an age range from infants to adults, of both sexes. The abuse occurred at Bishop's House and in his retirement home.
- 401. The sexual abuse can be identified for the most part as being touching genitals under clothing, but did include sexual activity with a male. He targeted vulnerable adults, single mothers, and children, and we are satisfied on the appropriate standard that there is clear evidence of grooming.

### **6. Overheard Conversation at the Interment of their Mother's Ashes - April 2015**

- 402. F6 told us that she had a conversation with her brother on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at the interment of her mother's ashes at the church where her father had been curate during the 1960s. They were looking at the Book of Remembrance and other articles in the Lady Chapel of St George's Church, Stockport, and she said that Whitsey had signed a particular page of that book. She said her brother looked at that page and said *"That bastard abused me."* And she said to him *"Me too."* She said that Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall was *"kind of floating around"*.
- 403. She told the Review Team also that she did not realise that Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall, who had officiated at the ceremony, had overheard any of the conversation. Her brother's son, and her elder daughter were with them as well, but they were some 20/30 yards away.
- 404. We know that Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall overheard parts of their conversation. She gave a witness statement to IICSA which is quoted in the publicly available report for 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 as follows: *"But one of the siblings said to the other that they used to go and see him and he gave them an extra-long hug and then the other sibling said that he used to do that to them."* She says in her statement that she just thought it odd, rather than having any safeguarding concerns. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall did not mention this conversation to anyone until June 2017 when she informed the Chester DSA, subsequent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel meeting when the Whitsey inquiry was briefly mentioned.
- 405. We are grateful to Canon Chegwin Hall for coming to speak with us on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020. She told us that she is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel [DSAP], as a representative from the Bishop's Council. She told us that the DSAP receives information from the DSA about individual cases. She said that the first time she had heard about the allegations about Whitsey in writing was an email from the Chester DSA's Assistant on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017, but that she had been told about it before then, probably around June 2017 when either the Chester DSA or George Coleville had mentioned the matter at a DSAP meeting. After she heard about Whitsey at that meeting, she mentioned to the Chester DSA the conversation which she had heard some years before involving F6 and her brother, M4.
- 406. The Chester DSA told the Review Team at the meeting with us that after the DSAP meeting when the name of Whitsey was mentioned, Canon Chegwin Hall spoke to her and told her about the conversation that she overheard, one of the children telling the other that *"Whitsey had given her*

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*a hug*” and asking whether it had any relevance.

407. The Chester DSA then contacted DC McGuinness to inform him.
408. Canon Chegwin Hall told us a little about the interment of the ashes of the mother of F6 and M4 on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2015 and of the conversation she overheard between them ([see paragraph 404](#)).
409. She told us that she could not find anything in any of the books in the church with Whitsey’s name on it, and she repeated to us what she had said in her witness statement to IICSA that she has no recollection of the son and daughter of the deceased saying anything other than the comment about an extra long hug.
410. It is not necessary for us to make any finding about what was said in the church on that day. Canon Chegwin Hall told us that she is hard of hearing and she told us that she certainly was using one hearing aid at the time. The church is a large church, and Canon Chegwin Hall said there was tidying up to do, and the children of the deceased may have said things about Whitsey that F6 says they said, but she did not hear them. In any case, it should be recognised that F6 believes that her comments and that of her brother, were all overheard and this has caused her distress, even if, as Canon Chegwin Hall states, she did not in fact overhear the whole conversation.
411. It may well be that there is no Book of Remembrance with Whitsey’s name on, so that the conversation by the children may not have been prompted by seeing his name in that book, but by some other recollection, or seeing his name in some other book. F6 told us that the book was thick and chunky, and flicking through the pages, the signature of Whitsey could have been on any page. She said also, however, that *“[the signature] might not even have been in that book. It might have been something else around and about in the Lady Chapel that had his signature on.”*
412. There is a difference in the evidence given to us between Canon Chegwin Hall and F6 as to where, if at all, the Whitsey signature appears. We have not been able to resolve this divergence of the evidence, but we do find it credible, and make a finding, that the siblings had a conversation between themselves about Whitsey, even though we are unable to reach a view as to what prompted the conversation.
413. We do have sympathy for Canon Chegwin Hall. It would seem that she received no help in the preparation of her witness statement for IICSA, her name was not redacted, and her recollection of what she had overheard was never put by IICSA’s Counsel to F6 in her evidence.
414. We have no doubt that Canon Chegwin Hall acted correctly when she immediately contacted the Chester DSA, which was the correct thing to do, as soon as the allegations involving Whitsey were brought to her attention at the DSAP meeting.

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## **7. Telephone Contact by F6 with the Diocese**

415. In her interview with us, F6 told us about her attempts to contact the Church which she also spoke about at the IICSA hearing ([see paragraph 389](#)).<sup>47</sup> She said that she telephoned more than once asking for the Safeguarding Team. The first time she was answered by someone who said that the Safeguarding Officer was off sick, and nobody returned her call. She said that she left her name and telephone number but did not hear anything. After phoning a second time and getting no response, she told us that she decided not to bother again.
416. The Chester DSA told us that these calls were a mystery, but that she was unable to help us as to whether calls were or were not made because she was off sick at the time. But she did say that the phone calls would have been recorded at reception if nothing else and that it is possible that a call was made and the caller did not say anything about requesting a call back.
417. We have no reason to doubt that these phone calls were made and were not acted upon. F6 was therefore seriously let down by the response from the Church. It is not clear why the calls were not put through to an available staff member. We have been told that the Chester DSA's Personal Assistant was working three days a week at that time and if he was not available, the Director of Human Resources would receive calls regarding safeguarding.
418. It is unfortunate that F6 was not provided with direct contact details for the safeguarding team by the police as this may have led to a better response. The police as we understand it were unaware that F6 had problems contacting the Chester DSA.
419. **We recommend that in the absence of the DSA (or members of the safeguarding team) clear guidance is given to front line staff as to whom safeguarding calls can be transferred to (Recommendation 7).**
420. **We recommend that all diocesan staff (and particularly front-line staff) receive basic training on how to deal with phone calls relating to safeguarding matters, acknowledging how important it is to respond to these calls in a sensitive and appropriate manner (Recommendation 8).**

## **8. Lack of Apology Letter**

421. There is one other matter that we would wish to draw attention to at this time. We are most surprised that F6 did not receive any apology from the Archbishop of York. We note that her deceased brother's partner received a letter of apology, the police having provided the Church with her address. We shall of course be considering the apology letters in detail later in this Report, but find it totally unacceptable that an apology letter is sent to M4's partner and nothing is sent to F6. We acknowledge the difficulties with this process at [paragraph 484](#).

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<sup>47</sup> F6 told us that her attempted contact with the Church was in October or November 2017. She told IICSA however that her contact was in September. We understand that the Chester DSA returned from sick leave on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017. It is more likely therefore that the telephone calls were in made September.

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422. We are gratified that Bishop Peter Hancock was able to see her after she gave her evidence to IICSA, and we would hope that some of the real hurt that she has suffered has been ameliorated.
423. She has summarised her feelings in a chapter that she has written for a book *Letters to a Broken Church*<sup>48</sup> which was quoted in her IICSA witness statement as follows: *“That was the beginning of the end of my relationship with the Church of England. As I write this, I look back and see that a confused girl, who was already hurting, who was looking for comfort and love, and who instead found abuse, a sexual initiation based on power and exploitation, and a stripping away of her identity. I didn’t tell anyone at all for many, many years. Before he died, a few years ago, my brother and I – almost accidentally – shared the fact that we had both been abused that day. For my brother this abuse had majorly coloured his adult life. He followed Whitsey’s career carefully and breathed a sigh of relief when Whitsey died....For me, the white male hegemony of the Church had let me down, used its power to destroy me and had undermined the integrity of my identity as a young woman, a person of faith, a servant of god, and the church...”*<sup>49</sup>
424. An apology letter, in our view, may have helped, and certainly the meeting with Bishop Peter Hancock, so she told us, was positive, and she appreciated that he had gone to see her.

### **Chapter 10: F7**

#### **1. Interview by the Police**

425. F7 contacted the Greater Manchester Police on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017, following the publication of the *Operation Coverage Summary Report* in October 2017.
426. She was then interviewed by DC McGuinness of the Cheshire Constabulary on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017, and we have seen the account of this meeting which was produced by DC McGuinness following the meeting. We are grateful to F7 for giving her consent for the Cheshire Constabulary to release this account of her meeting. She explained that whilst listening to the radio, she heard news of the allegations against Whitsey and the police investigation. She recalled that Whitsey had been her former Vicar, and that she had been sexually abused by Whitsey back in 1966.
427. At that time she was being brought up by her father, her mother having died when she was 12 years of age in 1962. In 1966 she received a message at school to return home immediately. When she got home, she was met by her father who told her that they were going to see the Vicar at the vicarage. She did not know why this meeting was to take place, although she told the police in her statement that it was as though she had been summoned to see him.
428. Her father stayed in a room outside the Vicar’s office, and she entered the office alone to speak with Whitsey. Apparently, Whitsey explained how he had “*received contact (sic)*” from an army chaplain following a conversation the chaplain had had with a soldier with whom it was alleged she

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<sup>48</sup> July 2019, edited by Janet Fife and Gilo.

<sup>49</sup> Paragraph 50 of F6’s IICSA witness statement.

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was in a relationship with. Whitsey asked her if she was “*pregnant*”; to which she replied “*No*”, and that all she knew of the soldier was that she had once kissed him at a friend’s house. It was impossible for her to be pregnant.

429. F7 then states that Whitsey stepped closer towards her, and extended his arms, and placed both of his hands on her breasts and cupped them. She said that this lasted a significant and uncomfortable time. She recalled Whitsey’s words as being: “*You may have the body of a woman but you have the mind of a child*”. She then left the room to meet her father who was waiting outside the room. They left the vicarage and she did not mention to her father what had happened, although she believes she disclosed some details of what had happened to a school friend.

### **2. Meeting with Bishop Peter Hancock**

430. F7 contacted Emily Denne (the Safeguarding Support Officer to the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding) on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018, having received the letter of apology from the Archbishop of York with the offer to meet with Bishop Peter Hancock. A meeting took place on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018. We appreciate that this date is outside the time frame for this Report; however, the conversation with Bishop Peter Hancock illustrates the hurt felt by F7. She said that after her mother died, her father began taking her to church regularly, and that she feels very hurt that her father felt so positively about Whitsey and never realised who he was in reality. Her description to Bishop Peter Hancock of what happened in Whitsey’s study is identical to what she told the police.
431. We are satisfied applying the appropriate standard that Whitsey sexually abused F7 in 1966 in the manner she described both to the police, and indeed to Bishop Hancock.

## **Chapter 11: Other Complainants**

### **1. Sixth Core Group Meeting - 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

432. The sixth core group dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017 refers to the police forces Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Lancashire, identifying five other complainants about which we have been unable to discover very much information. Both DI Reid and DC McGuinness were present at that meeting and they reported these matters, although with limited information.
433. The first additional case referred to in the minutes of the sixth core group of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017 refers to a choir boy who alleged that he was abused by Whitsey when he was in the choir in Chester Cathedral. He explained that the abuse took place on multiple occasions between 1979-81. We refer to him as M5.

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434. The second additional complainant mentioned by the police at this meeting is a male who alleged sexual abuse by Whitsey when he was a child. This is alleged to have taken place after Whitsey had retired. This person lives abroad, and we know nothing more about this person or the allegation. The police indicated to the core group, and it is minuted, that this person told the police in the email communication they had with him, that Whitsey's behaviour towards young males at the time was common knowledge, and he had a local reputation to be steered clear of. We refer to him as M6.
435. The third additional complainant is minuted as follows: "*...a boy who travelled on a trip with the Church Brigade, and alleges sexual abuse by Whitsey in 1965 when Whitsey was the parish priest.*" We refer to him as M7.
436. The fourth complainant noted in the minutes is F7 who we have referred to at [Chapter 10](#).
437. The fifth additional complainant is noted as a male who alleges abuse as "*a teenage boy during HVW's time at Downham following retirement.*" We do not have any further information about this person, but we believe that this complainant could be M8 who received an apology letter ([see paragraph 481](#)).

### **2. M9**

438. We are grateful to M9, via his solicitors, for giving us permission to read his witness statement. His witness statement sets out the sexual abuse that took place in the summer holidays of 1966, and how he was too scared to tell anybody. He has carried the knowledge of what happened to him as a 13 year old for many, many years.
439. M9's statement refers to when he was a choir boy in a parish when Whitsey was the Vicar. He states that he arrived at the vicarage and was pulled inside by Whitsey who put his arm around his shoulders. He then states that Whitsey exposed himself and forced M9 to masturbate him.
440. He saw the TV news about the police investigation into Whitsey on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017. He had always assumed that he was the only victim of Whitsey and thought that therefore he would never have been believed if he had complained about him.
441. As far as we are aware, no letter of apology has ever been sent to M9.

### **3. Seventh Core Group Meeting - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

442. As stated at [paragraph 438](#) above, we have seen M9's witness statement and therefore have more details regarding M9 than we do for other possible victims mentioned at other core group meetings.

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443. The seventh core group meeting (chaired by Moira Murray, the Senior Casework Manager in the Chair) of 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 referred to the claim made by M9 via his solicitors. The minutes go on to state M9's abuse by Whitsey as recounted at [paragraph 439](#) above and note that M9 came forward due to the press coverage around the case.
444. The seventh core group refers also to another claim being made by M10, who was not previously known to the core group. The core group minutes do not disclose any further information about M10 and we know nothing further about this complainant.

### **4. M11 and Other Possible Incidents**

445. We have also seen a witness statement dated 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 prepared by M11 setting out four incidents of sexual abuse on him in 1966 by Whitsey, when M11 was a teenager. These incidents are all similar in nature to the others that we have described, although the details suggest to us that it is a different individual.
446. There is also another probable incident referred to by the Chester DSA in an email to Sharon Hassall, the DSA at Blackburn dated 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017. It says: *"DC McGuinness told F1 he had evidence of Whitsey's behaviour in writing. DC McGuinness is alleged to [sic] come across a note written by Whitsey in his own handwriting which logs some sort of interaction with a girl and Whitsey has written words to the effect of she had run away from him in tears and Whitsey was dismissing it as typical girl type behaviour. F1 told me DC McGuinness told her that he believed that was Whitsey covering his back in case the girl made a complaint to someone about what he might have done to her."* In our interview with the police, they confirmed to us that they had seen the handwritten note as referred to in the email<sup>50</sup>.
447. When we spoke with Sharon Hassall, on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, she told us that during work on the Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2), there was a communication from a Vicar saying he had had a meeting with Whitsey when he was interested in ordination, and he was made to feel very uncomfortable, and was stared at, which unsettled him a great deal. This person has provided us with the following information: *"This is not a case of abuse, but a strange incident that happened to me when I was discerning my vocation in the Diocese of Chester. ...It would be round about the year 1980/81 and I was called to be interviewed by the then bishop of Chester, Whitsey. On entering his study, I was invited to sit in a high-backed chair, and he drew up another high-backed chair directly in front of me, took both my hands in his hands and held them for the entire interview. Nothing untoward happened, but I did feel quite uneasy during the meeting; the meeting has lodged itself in my memory as an unpleasant one."*
448. This of course is consistent with the evidence given to us by many others about how Whitsey behaved with prospective ordinands.

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<sup>50</sup> We have been unable to see this document due to the Covid-19 lockdown.



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### **5. Canon Roger Clarke's Email to Bishop Peter Forster - 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

449. There is another possible victim that Canon Roger Clarke mentioned to Bishop Peter Forster in an email dated 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017.<sup>51</sup> This email, so we understand, was never disclosed to the Chester DSA or to the NST. It reads as follows: *"It looks as if there might be another person who says they were assaulted by VW. In the course of a Prison visit yesterday I was told by a person I was visiting (who is aware of the recent publicity) that he had been told by a mutual friend some years ago that VW had assaulted him in the course of an interview about ordination. This person would have been late teens at the time. I have no reason to doubt the veracity of my informant. The person who says they were assaulted is a priest, known to both of us. I have known him over 30 years. He has never said anything to me about this – however I have not been in contact with him since the VW matter went public. My initial response is not to act on this information – it is at least second hand. Would I be right in acting in this way do you think? I certainly don't think it right to approach this person directly – if they volunteer this information to me that's another matter of course"*.
450. The Bishop replied on the same day by email *"My immediate response would be to do nothing, although you might discretely approach the priest concerned. Let's talk about it when I'm back in the office..."* It seems that they had a conversation about this on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017, as there is an email from the Bishop to Canon Roger Clarke stating *"Let's clear the decks."* We are unsure what this comment refers to.
451. What is so worrying about this exchange is the fact that the DSA was not involved in any of this email correspondence, and indeed she knew absolutely nothing about it. It is perhaps the most serious example that we have seen of where the Bishop and on this occasion his Chaplain have taken it on themselves to deal with safeguarding matters. This was bad practice and in disregard of the practice guidance<sup>52</sup>. The matter may well require further investigation by the Church bearing in mind our view that there was an apparent failure to have due regard. In his reply to the representation letter, Canon Roger Clarke stated that the disclosure was made by a third party and he was aware that the reported victim was in a difficult pastoral and personal situation. Nonetheless, Canon Roger Clarke, in retrospect, acknowledged that the advice from the Bishop (his line-manager) was wrong and that he should have contacted the DSA himself. He regretted that he made an error of judgement on this occasion. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated *"Bishops cannot act on every rumour and suggestion that they may come across"*

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<sup>51</sup> This email came to our attention for the first time when we requested sight of the files of the Bishop of Chester. We received these files after our interviews with Bishop Peter Forster and Canon Roger Clarke, and accordingly we have not been able to ask them about this correspondence. They did not refer this correspondence to us during our interviews with them.

<sup>52</sup> Page 25 of the [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017\*](#) states that *"following a receipt of a safeguarding concern or allegation by anyone (1) as soon as is practicably possible and in any case within 24 hours of receiving a safeguarding concern or allegation of abuse against a church officer, refer the matter to the DSA". The guidance is for use by "bishops, deans and their senior staff" and falls under "due regard". This means that "the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so (cogent for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing). Failure by clergy to comply with the duty imposed by the 2016 measure may result in disciplinary action."*

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*about third hand – or more remote insinuations. Perhaps with hindsight, I should have requested my chaplain to discuss the matter with the DSA...”.*

452. **We recommend that all members of the clergy be reminded that if any suggestion of abuse comes to the attention of a member of the clergy, the primary duty on that member of the clergy is to report the matter immediately to the DSA. That duty is set out clearly in all practice guidance and in all training programmes (Recommendation 9).**

### **6. Conclusion**

453. **We have reached the conclusion applying the appropriate standard of proof that Whitsey sexually abused a large number of children and vulnerable adults during a period from 1966 until after he had retired in 1981. We have identified some 18 victims, and there may have been more who have not come forward. Much of his behaviour constituted grooming, and he used his position in the Church to abuse prospective ordinands, and children experiencing personal family difficulties.**
454. **We are of the view also that opportunities were missed by senior members of the Church in the late 1970s and early 1980s to deal with these matters whilst Whitsey was still alive. Subsequent to his death, opportunities were lost at the very least to try to provide support to the victims when the abuse was reported to clerical leaders in 1992 and again in 2002.**

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## **PART B: General Observations**

455. In Part B of the Report, we consider in particular the work of the National Safeguarding Team and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers of the Dioceses involved, and make recommendations regarding case management processes, the role of the DSAs, the provision of victim support, and the timing and content of apology letters. We concentrate on examining the work of the Church during period from 2014-2018 to help provide lessons which can be learnt for the future. We commence this part by considering the granting of Permission to Officiate.

### **Chapter 12: Permission to Officiate**

456. We do not use today's standards to evaluate actions that could have been taken in the late 1970s and 1980s.
457. However, at the very least we query how senior Church authorities, presumably the Bishop of Blackburn, decided to grant Whitsey the Permission to Officiate, notwithstanding the correspondence involving Bishop Strutt to the Archbishop of York to which we have referred to in [Chapter 1, Section 2](#).
458. We agree with recommendation 11 of the Gibb Report [An Abuse of Faith \(The Independent Peter Ball Review\)](#) which recommended that the Church should (a) establish clear and consistent national guidance for granting and reviewing PTO in the case of clerics who have been the subject of substantial safeguarding concerns; (b) introduce arrangements for a national register of clergy with PTO; (c) ensure that relevant safeguarding arrangements are applied consistently to retired clergy who are exercising ministry through a PTO; and (d) audit those arrangements to enable a regular report to the House of Bishops.
459. We agree also with paragraph 7.9.9 of the Gibb Report that the Church's *"requirements for priests with PTO should be stronger and more uniform. For safeguarding purposes the same considerations should apply to both retired and active clergy, although the detail of the processes and requirements should be tailored to their different circumstances."*
460. We note that in the [NSSG's Response to the Gibb recommendations](#) dated February 2018, it is mentioned that the Church has revised the PTO guidance and that there is a final version *"due to be ready in June 2018, and that the Church is working with dioceses to improve ways of maintaining a list of these (sic) holding a licence, including PTO"*.
461. The House of Bishops Delegation Committee approved the [Policy on Granting Permission to Officiate](#) in July 2018. This document makes clear that Bishops must follow the House of Bishops' [Safer Recruitment Guidance](#)<sup>53</sup> when granting PTO. In particular, if the cleric is remaining in the

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<sup>53</sup> The latest version of this guidance was published in July 2016 and states at paragraph 1.8 that it is to be fully revised every 3 years, but we have not seen a recent version.

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Diocese, the blue file<sup>54</sup> and DSA are consulted, and a Clergy Current Status Letter (CCSL) is obtained if the cleric is coming from another Diocese.

- 462. Clergy with PTO must complete appropriate safeguarding training, which must be refreshed every three years. Bishops should ensure (para 2.8) that PTO is issued for a fixed term, and a review is carried out before renewal, which must be subject to obtaining enhanced criminal record checks.
- 463. Bishop David Urquhart confirmed to us when he spoke with us that the Bishop is able to suspend a PTO if there is any concern. No doubt, a proper investigation would then take place in the event of a suspension of PTO.
- 464. We note that Whitsey continued to abuse after his retirement but whilst he had PTO. We would hope that PTO guidance has now been revised sufficiently to ensure that PTO would not be granted or extended to persons against whom there was any suspicion.
- 465. **We recommend, that the Church should continue to explore ways in which PTO should be granted and/or extended, only when the Bishop is satisfied that there is no suspicion whatsoever of the recipient's behaviour. PTO should not be an expectation (Recommendation 10).**
- 466. It may well be that when PTO is granted, this information is shared with the NST so that they have a national register, which can be checked against subsequent concerns.
- 467. We have no further recommendations to make regarding PTO.

## **Chapter 13: Apology Letters**

### **1. Delay**

- 468. There was a significant delay in sending out letters of apology. This resulted in much impatience from the victims, and this was acknowledged in the seventh core group dated 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018, chaired by Moira Murray.
- 469. We note that the Chester DSA wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 making clear her concern that *"the victims in Whitsey's case have received no formal apology from the Church five months on"*. She states in this letter that the victims were informed that an apology would be sent in October 2017, following agreement at the September core group that Archbishop Sentamu would be asked to write to them personally, and that the Archbishop had agreed to this. She continues: *"Letters have never been sent despite me having followed this up many times"*.

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<sup>54</sup> Clergy personnel files are referred to as 'blue files' in the Church of England. Clergy personnel files were established in 1984.

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470. The Bishop of Lambeth (Bishop Tim Thornton) replied to the Chester DSA on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 in these terms: *"It does seem to me that an apology is something that could and should be given and hope that this can now happen."*
471. There would appear to have been some disagreement back in the summer and autumn of 2017 as to who should sign the letters. Bishop Peter Forster was of the view that the letters should be signed jointly by himself and the Archbishop of York. The Archbishop indicated that the letters should come from him alone with an offer to meet him and/or the Lead Bishop on Safeguarding, Bishop Hancock. The core group's approach to this issue was that the Archbishop of York's view was final, and in consequence the letters would be sent from him.
472. We have to say that we agree with this decision. Bishop Peter Forster had of course already apologised in the public statement after the publication of the police investigation by way of the joint statement of apology by himself and the Archbishop of York.
473. There was considerable publicity in both the Church Times and the local press around 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 regarding the police investigation and the public apology by both Bishop Peter Forster and the Archbishop was also widely publicised.
474. We have already indicated a number of areas where Bishop Peter Forster's intervention had been potentially counter-productive; accordingly we agree with the approach taken that the letters of apology to individuals should be signed by the Archbishop alone.
475. Bishop Peter Forster had sent out an *ad clerum* in October 2017 to the clergy in the Diocese to share with their parishioners, after the publication of the police report. The final substantive paragraph reads: *"I need hardly say that I have been appalled and shocked, at these allegations. I knew nothing of them until the recent investigation..."* We have already indicated ([see before paragraph 217](#)) that it is our view of the matter that Bishop Peter Forster had a conversation with one victim, M2, around 2001/2, about Whitsey's behaviour towards him (M2). Therefore, it is not correct for him to have said in his *ad clerum* that he had not known about the allegations. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated that what he wrote in his *ad clerum* letter records his honest belief at that time and remains his honest belief today.
476. Martyn Burrell, acting at that time as the Provincial Safeguarding Adviser, was responsible for organising the apology letters. He saw the Review Team on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and provided a summary timeline of key actions surrounding the apology letters.
477. Subsequent to the core group meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018, Martyn Burrell sent an email to DC McGuinness seeking to collate details of the relevant victims. He then sent an email on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 enclosing a draft letter prepared by Moira Murray to the Legal Department of the Church of England for its consideration. Comments were returned by the Legal Department on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and the amended draft letter was sent to the Archbishop of York on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The draft letter was approved by the Archbishop, subject to a minor correction, on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

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478. It would seem that on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018, a query was raised by the Bishop of Chester, via the Chester DSA, relating to revisiting who the signatory to the letter should be.
479. There was then a further delay whilst Martyn Burrell obtained consent from relevant victims to enable letters to be sent as well as checking address details. There was also a query as to whether the letters should be staggered or sent out on the same day. It was agreed to send them out all together. Consents were confirmed by Cheshire Police on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018, by Greater Manchester Police on the same day, and by Lancashire Police on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018. The letters were formatted and cross checked on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018, and advance advice was sent to the relevant Dioceses and the lead Bishop that letters were to be sent on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018.

### **2. Those who Received Letters**

480. The letters, dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018 were indeed sent out on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 to the following: M1, M2, M3, F1, F2, F3 and F7.
481. There is also a letter to M8 (previously not mentioned in any of the documentation we have seen except possibly in the minutes of core group meeting six); the partner of the victim M4 who had sadly died; and M7.
482. M9 does not seem to have had a letter, and neither has F6.
483. When we told F6 during our video conference on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that the partner of M4 had received an apology letter, she told us that she did not know this, and she was pleasantly surprised, and pleased, that M4's partner had received the letter. She felt, in her words, that the Church had redeemed itself slightly.
484. We are concerned about the process of identifying who should receive letters of apology as this was not clear to us from the documentation.
485. **We recommend that apology letters be signed by the appropriate Archbishop in a case where the perpetrator is a Bishop, and victims be given the opportunity to meet with the lead Bishop for Safeguarding (Recommendation 11).**

### **3. Content of Letters**

486. The letters are all identical. We do think that the letters could have been more specific, relating to the individual circumstances of each victim. A different and more sensitive letter could have been addressed, for example, to F3, paying particular attention to the abuse that her daughters had suffered, the knowledge of which had caused her serious distress. In fact, all three letters were identical, and we see no justification for that at all.

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487. The Chester DSA, in her evidence to us, said that she had told Martyn Burrell, Moira Murray and Graham Tilby that it was her view that a generic letter was not the appropriate way forward, and that the letters should be much more specific. We have also seen an email to the Northern PSA from the Chester DSA dated 8th December 2017, which sets out in some detail the particular issues relating to six of the victims that could have been incorporated into personal letters of apology. Graham Tilby, in our meeting with him on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020, also commented that it was his view that the letters should have been more personal to the particular victim.
488. Martyn Burrell, who was responsible for sending out the letters of apology, shared with us the feedback from colleagues following the apology letters being sent. Some colleagues said that the letters would have been seen as no more than a paper exercise, and impersonal. The counter view from others was that the letters were an invitation to have further dialogue as well as an apology, and that therefore individualised communication could continue from that point.
489. He also expressed the view that some of his colleagues were of the opinion that sending individual letters could have left the Church open to being accused of treating some victims differently.
490. Whilst we are aware of these opinions, we have to say that a victim-centred approach is more appropriate for apologies, and we believe that the Chester DSA's clear recommendation on this question should have been given more weight.
491. We note that the core group reported at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2017 (meeting number five) that *"specific apologies cannot be made without full information from the Police about what HVW's exact offences were; the Police cannot disclose this information due to HVW being deceased (as he has been unable to defend himself)." We have to say that this approach is not one that we find sufficiently sensitive to the pastoral responsibility of the Church. And in any event, subsequent to the release of the police report, the NST had detailed information about many of the victims. It was not beyond the legal expertise of those advising the Archbishop to have provided wording for letters of apology that acknowledged the particular factual situation of that victim. We are of course aware of the need not to prejudge or compromise civil claims. This also however can be achieved by appropriate wording.*
492. We are also of the view that the delay from October 2017 to August 2018 was totally unacceptable.
493. Graham Tilby told us in our meeting with him on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 that he was frustrated by the delay in sending out the letters of apology, the Chester DSA, in her evidence to us, reiterated her view that the delay in the sending of the apology letters was totally unacceptable, and we have to say that we agree with her on this matter.
494. We note that General Synod on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020 voted unanimously to endorse the Church's response to the five recommendations from IICSA in relation to the *Investigation Report: The*

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*Anglican Church Case Studies*<sup>55</sup> and in particular in relation to apologies, it urged its National Safeguarding Steering Group to work towards a more fully survivor-centred approach to safeguarding, including arrangements for redress for survivors. In particular, it welcomed the statement in para 4.1 of the response that the NSSG “remains committed to ensuring that words of apology are followed by concrete actions”.

495. **We recommend that, in future, whenever apologies become necessary, they are written in a way that reflects the particular and individual set of facts appertaining to that particular victim (Recommendation 12).**

## **Chapter 14: The Policy and Practice Guidance Documents on Safeguarding**

### **1. An Abuse of Faith: The Independent Peter Ball Review (the Gibb Review)**

496. In considering the policy and practice guidance documents we are reminded that the Terms of Reference (para 3.3(3)) asks us to consider, taking account of [An Abuse of Faith: The Independent Peter Ball Review \(the Gibb Review\)](#) (June 2017) what additional lessons can be learnt which are relevant and which might improve practice in the Church of England.
497. In addition to the Gibb Report, we have considered also the [Independent Review: Bishop George Bell](#) report by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC (December 2017), the [Investigation Report of IICSA: The Anglican Church Case Studies](#) (May 2019), and the recommendations made by Her Honour Judge Cahill in her report entitled *Inquiry into the Church of England’s Response to child abuse allegations against Robert Waddington*<sup>56</sup> (October, 2014).
498. We have had regard to the Church’s response to these recommendations, in setting out our recommendations in this Review. The National Safeguarding Steering Group responded to the Gibb Review in this way: “Safeguarding leadership has been strengthened and clarified in the new ‘[Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance](#)’ published in October 2017. The [terms of reference of the NSSG](#) provides for the strategic oversight of national safeguarding activity”.
499. The NSSG also has as one of its terms of reference “Advising on the development of and scrutinising draft safeguarding policy, legislation and practice guidance prior to final approval by the House of Bishops.”
500. The October 2017 publication, [Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance](#) was of course not in place during most of the period under our Review, and it is

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<sup>55</sup> [The Anglican Church Case Studies: 1. Diocese of Chichester & 2. The response to the allegations against Peter Ball Investigation Report](#)

<sup>56</sup> Not available online.



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important, therefore, to consider the documents that were in place.

### **2. Key Documents in Place in Regard to Managing Safeguarding Allegations**

501. There were no child/vulnerable adults' safeguarding documents published by the Church of England during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In December 1993, the House of Bishops produced an interim paper whose primary purpose was to *"address the question as to whether the Church should devise formal guidelines in relation to child sexual abuse"*. Formal guidelines were considered necessary in light of the Home Office's paper *Safe from Harm*<sup>57</sup> (1993).
502. In July 1995, the House of Bishops issued its first policy document on safeguarding, *Policy on Child Abuse*.<sup>58</sup>
503. The 1995 document said very little, and was expressed in general terms, such as, at paragraph 5: *"Allegations of abuse will be taken seriously"*, and at paragraph 6: *"The Church of England will collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own."*
504. At the Diocesan level, responsibility for implementing recommendations was clearly set out as a matter for the Diocesan Bishops, and each Bishop was expected to appoint a representative to advise on matters relating to child protection.
505. A second edition of the 1995 document was produced by the House of Bishops in January 1999, with the title *Policy on Child Protection (the 1999 Safeguarding Policy)*<sup>59</sup>, and in February 2004, the House of Bishops produced a third edition, with a new title *Protecting all God's Children (the 2004 Safeguarding Policy)*<sup>60</sup>.
506. Unlike previous versions, the 2004 document was given enhanced status, and all Dioceses and Parishes were required to accept it as their key policy.
507. The Archbishop's Council published a policy document in November 2006 entitled [\*Promoting a Safe Church: Policy for safeguarding adults in the Church of England\*](#), although that document concentrated on safeguarding adults. Interestingly, though, the foreword to the 2006 policy document signed by the two Archbishops states that *"Quite properly we have put in a lot of effort over the past few years developing policies and procedures for the safeguarding of children and, while constant improvement is always necessary, we can be modestly proud of what has been achieved."*
508. The fourth edition of the safeguarding policy was published in October 2010, [\*Protecting All God's Children: The Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England \(Fourth edition, 2010\)\*](#). This

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<sup>57</sup> Not available online.

<sup>58</sup> Not available online.

<sup>59</sup> Not available online.

<sup>60</sup> Not available online.

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edition took account of the Children Act 2004 and the government document, [\*Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2010\)\*](#).

509. In 2011, the Church produced detailed policy and guidance to help focus on the needs of those who had suffered from and survived abuse, [\*Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused\*](#). Amongst other guidance, this document introduced the requirement for those who have been abused to have access to an ‘authorised listener’, distinct from the role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
510. In 2015, the House of Bishops approved six safeguarding policy and practice guidance documents for use by Dioceses and Parishes. These included, [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church officers\*](#), [\*Practice Guidance: Risk Assessments for Individuals who may Pose Risk to Children or Adults\*](#) and [\*Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church\*](#)<sup>61</sup>.
511. These various documents were not in place during the abuse by Whitsey in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, but they were Church policy at the time of many of the disclosures that we have looked at in this Report: in particular the disclosures by M1 in 2014 (to his Vicar who contacted the DSA in London), and earlier, the disclosure by M2 in 2002 (to Bishop Peter Forster), and the disclosure by M3 in 2001/2 (to Bishop David Urquhart).
512. There was at that time no printed practice guidance relating to how to deal with allegations where the alleged perpetrator was no longer alive, but we do believe that even during that period, failure to deal with these allegations was bad practice, inevitably adding greatly to the suffering experienced by the complainants and their families. And failure to respond to such allegations ran contrary to the government’s policy [\*Working Together to Safeguard Children\*](#) which, in its 2010 edition, affirms that churches have an important role to play in safeguarding children and supporting families.
513. In March 2017, the new safeguarding document entitled [\*Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults\*](#) was published. The policy statement is supported by detailed practice guidance and reference documents.
514. We have looked closely at the document [\*Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance\*](#) published in October 2017 by the House of Bishops. This practice guidance document updates and replaces the ‘Responsibilities of Church Organisations’ section in [\*Protecting all God’s Children\*](#) which was published in 2010. Bishop Peter Hancock, in the preface to the document, states that the document aims to clarify key safeguarding roles and responsibilities for church office holders and bodies within, what he describes correctly as “*this complex structure*”, to support a consistent approach to safeguarding across the whole Church.

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<sup>61</sup> The first two practice guidance documents are now contained in the document [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to assessing and managing safeguarding concerns of allegations against church officers \(2017\)\*](#). The [\*Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance\*](#) remains as a stand-alone document.

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515. The document is supported by eight appendices which provide good practice reference material and templates. The document sets out the national roles and responsibilities of the Archbishops, the House of Bishops, the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop, the Archbishops' Council, Church Commissioners, General Synod, the National Safeguarding Steering Group (established in 2016), the National Safeguarding Team (established for the first time in 2015), and the National Safeguarding Panel (an advisory body established in 2014). Appendix 4 contains a model job description for the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and paragraph 1.8 sets out the role of the National Safeguarding Team. We shall return to these provisions at [Chapter 15](#) and [Chapter 16](#).
516. All of these groups demonstrate a change in culture and an awareness of the importance of safeguarding, as Archbishop Welby summarised in his evidence to IICSA: *"The increased activity to safeguarding has come out of a deep sense of conviction that there needed to be repentance for our past failures, and a consistency and quality of practice of safeguarding at all levels."*<sup>62</sup>
517. The [Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance 2017](#) document makes clear that *"the Diocesan Bishop is ultimately responsible for ensuring good safeguarding arrangements and practice in line with the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and guidance"*.<sup>63</sup> The document also states that *"the bishop may delegate this task pursuant to section 13 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 ...to a suffragan bishop and/or assistant bishop"* and may ask someone to carry out these tasks on his behalf, for example an archdeacon. He must, amongst other responsibilities, ensure adequate resourcing. He must ensure that the Diocese has a Diocese Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) with clear terms of reference. There is a model 'terms of reference' in Appendix 3.
518. We note that there is no reference in any of the policy and practice guidance documents that we have seen to historic abuse where the alleged perpetrator is deceased.
519. **We recommend that all relevant practice guidance documents be amended to reflect that safeguarding does not cease on the death of an alleged perpetrator (Recommendation 13).**
520. The House of Bishops issued further practice guidance in November 2017 in their document [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing concerns or allegations against church officers](#) updating the 2015 practice guidance document referred to in [paragraph 510](#) above.
521. A recent document that we have seen post dates our Terms of Reference. It is [Practice Guidance: Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults](#). It is dated November 2018 and must be used when there are concerns about the welfare and safeguarding of children, young people and/or adults that do not relate to Church officers.

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<sup>62</sup> [At Paragraph 518](#)

<sup>63</sup> At Section 2, Paragraph 2.1.

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## **3. Posthumous Allegations**

522. We are particularly encouraged by reading the most recent [Practice Guidance: Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults](#) published by the House of Bishops dated November 2018. We note particularly that the document sets out very clear time scales for reporting disclosures to the DSA who must check whether a referral to children's social care and/or police is necessary. The responsibility is very much placed in his or her hands.
523. There is a section in this practice guidance document on non-recent abuse. It makes clear that such cases should be responded to in the same way as in any other safeguarding concern or allegation. However, this section does not deal with allegations where the alleged perpetrator is deceased. We note that in the [Independent Review: Bishop George Bell](#) report, Lord Carlile recommended "early production of the promised addendum to deal with posthumous allegations"<sup>64</sup>. The [National Safeguarding Steering Group's Response](#) to Lord Carlile's recommendations in February 2018 and in reference to the addendum stated that "*the Church will seek to produce this addendum as soon as is reasonable, taking account of other priorities for safeguarding policy development.*"<sup>65</sup>
524. The practice guidance correctly draws attention to the fact that allegations of child abuse are sometimes made by adults many years after the abuse has occurred. It points out that there are many reasons for this; including the fear of reprisals, the degree of control exercised by the abuser, and the shame or fear that the complainant may not be believed. These reasons are valid in relation to many of the victims in the Whitsey abuse.
525. We note that managing such an allegation will have significant differences to managing a case where the alleged perpetrator is alive, for example the extent of the police investigation will be proportionate to the person not being able to face criminal justice and the investigation will therefore be more limited than if the person were alive. This may well lead to the need for a more detailed church investigation.
526. We have already made an overall recommendation at [paragraph 519](#) to deal with the issue of posthumous allegations.

## **4. Comments by Professor Sue Proctor on Cleric A's Report – August 2018**

527. It will be recalled, in [Chapter 5, Section 7.6](#), that we referred to the document prepared by Cleric A in July 2018 and submitted to the Archbishop of York that included comments on the disclosures by M1. This report was entitled *Safeguarding processes – errors, consequences and learning*. The document was submitted to Professor Sue Proctor, for comment, in her capacity as the Chair of the Strategic Safeguarding Group of the Diocese of York. She became Chair of this group in September 2015. She submitted a response to the document to Canon Daphne Green at the Archbishop's

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<sup>64</sup> At paragraph 34

<sup>65</sup> [Page 6, paragraph 15](#)

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Office on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018, and we were able to speak with Professor Proctor by telephone conference on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020. We have seen a letter written by the Archbishop of York to Professor Proctor dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 telling her that he is grateful for her advice, and assuming that Cleric A is content, her paper will be forwarded to the DSA, the Diocesan Secretary, the Chair of the York Diocesan Safeguarding Working Group and to the PSA for the Northern Province for their views.

528. She made three observations in her comments on Cleric A's report, which are relevant in the context of the disclosure by M1, and we asked questions on each of these.
529. The first observation is as follows: *"In any disclosure of safeguarding concerns, accurate and contemporaneous notes should be taken of the details disclosed. Ideally, written summaries should be agreed with the parties involved to confirm factual accuracy."*
530. In discussions with us, Professor Proctor said that what struck her about Cleric A's document was that it contained recollections and memories of conversations and telephone calls almost two years old. She wondered whether anyone had made any contemporaneous notes.
531. Cleric A had told us that she had made a contemporaneous note of her conversation with David Finan, the DSA, about what M1 had told her, and she was adamant that she had not mentioned M1's name to him, although she had told him (David Finan) that M1 had told her that he had made the disclosure to Bishop Glyn Webster. We do not doubt that Cleric A did make a contemporaneous note, but we have not seen these notes.
532. We agree with Professor Proctor that accurate recording must be at the heart of disclosure information, and this is vital in the preparation of statements. Only in this way could there have been, for example, a clear understanding at the time on whether Cleric A did tell David Finan or did not tell David Finan of the name of the complainant.
533. **We recommend that the practice guidance documents make absolutely clear that discussions between clergy and the DSAs relating to disclosures and allegations are made the subject of a contemporaneous note and are agreed by both parties to the conversation (possibly by email) (Recommendation 14).**
534. Her second observation is: *"When there are policy changes, whether at national or diocesan level, there should be a clear and well-understood communication/update process in place to advise clergy and parish safeguarding advisers of any pertinent changes"*. Professor Proctor developed this point in our conversation with her. She said that, *"one of the challenges that has emerged in the past two years has been the amount of national guidance given to Dioceses to implement."* She acknowledged that often clergy do not read the latest safeguarding policy and practice guidance documents until they have to, and that there is a need for communication to be vastly improved. It may well be that the structural changes that are likely to be introduced in the near future in the NST with Regional Safeguarding Officials may help to develop communication strategies (see later [paragraph 658](#)).

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535. Her third observation, linked to the first, is that “*policy on the handling of disclosures needs to be clear and explicit in its guidance*”. Again, we agree with this observation. In particular, in relation to the disclosures by M1, there was a sad lack of discipline in recording the details. We were told by the Northern PSA that the Chester DSA phoned M1 prior to the meeting of the core group in York on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016, in her presence, to obtain information from M1 about the ‘disclosure’ to Bishop Glyn Webster. This telephone conversation was then communicated to the core group, and either contains information misheard or misunderstood by the Chester DSA, or was miscommunicated by M1. For example, the minute states that the conversation between M1 and Bishop Glyn Webster had taken place in a social event in a named foreign country some years ago. We know that Bishop Glyn Webster has never been to the named foreign country. The named foreign country link is the conversation M1 had with Cleric A when they were on a visit to the named foreign country in July 2016. This was when M1 told Cleric A about his conversation with Bishop Glyn Webster.
536. Similarly, Cleric A has consistently said, and she repeated this in her evidence to us, that she did not disclose the name of M1 to David Finan, the DSA. Safeguarding policy and practice guidance needs to make absolutely clear that discussions between complainants and clergy, and DSA and clergy involving disclosures be documented and agreed by everyone who is a party to the discussion.

### **Chapter 15: The Role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser**

#### **1. Disagreements Between the Bishop and the DSA**

537. Before we can consider the difficult relationship which existed between the DSA in Chester and Bishop Peter Forster, it is necessary to pay regard to the role of the Bishop in safeguarding matters. Footnote 11 to [\*Protecting All God’s Children \(4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010\)\*](#) states that “*The diocesan bishop will be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate people in the diocese take responsibility for the various safeguarding children tasks*”. This was the guidance in place under section 4 ‘*Responsibilities of church organisations*’ at the time when the Whitsey case began. The section in this practice guidance document was expanded upon and replaced by the document [\*Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance in October 2017\*](#). This document states that a vital role that the Bishop has, is to ensure that (a) suitably qualified Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser/s is/are appointed following consultation with the NST, and ensure that the DSA/s are provided with the appropriate financial, organisational and management support and that they meet with the Bishop regularly.<sup>66</sup> There is additional guidance set out in Appendix 1 to this document.
538. There were times during 2016-2018 (notably his enquiries with the clergy, his meeting with M3, and his email exchange with Canon Clarke) when Bishop Peter Forster took upon himself work

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<sup>66</sup> Paragraph 2.1, page 10 of [\*Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice guidance \(2017\)\*](#).

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which should have been more properly the role of the DSA, or he should at least have involved the DSA. And this occurred notwithstanding the Bishop having been asked by members of the NST to leave safeguarding enquiries to the DSA.

539. **We recommend that the *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies 2017* practice guidance document be looked at in the light of potential disagreements between a Bishop and his/her DSA. We recommend also that when conflicts and tensions arise, there should be an agreed escalation strategy in place which may lead to the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop ultimately having to intervene in those circumstances with support from one of the two Archbishops if necessary (Recommendation 15).**
540. We are aware that the Archbishop of York corresponded with Bishop Peter Forster, and the Archbishop of York reiterated, amongst other matters, that *“the NST have been coordinating this case and I understand the core group will meet again this month”* (letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016).
541. Indeed, a Secretary on behalf of the Archbishop’s office, replied on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 to an enquiry from the Northern PSA, dated 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017: *“The Archbishop’s letters were intended to steer the Bishop towards the idea the Archbishop and the NST and core group were taking the lead and that the Archbishop would forward his correspondence to them.”*
542. We do not think, however, that the letter from the Archbishop dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 was sufficiently robust. And the earlier letter from the Archbishop to Bishop Peter Forster dated 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016 gives an impression that Bishop Peter Forster’s enquiries were welcomed. The Archbishop wrote: *“The information you have been able to build up following enquiries made of clergy who were in the Diocese during the episcopate of Bishop Whitsey may prove very useful to the National Safeguarding Team and the core group and I have taken the liberty of sending them a copy of your letter.”*
543. We hope that our recommendation at [paragraph 539](#) would ensure that the tension which occurred between the Bishop and the DSA and the NST does not occur again.
544. Graham Tilby stated that the relationship between the Bishop and the DSA had become a very difficult scenario.
545. This relationship was commented upon by His Honour Tim Mort, the Chair of the Chester Safeguarding Advisory Panel in his evidence to us on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020. In his note to us, prior to the meeting, His Honour Tim Mort said *“the work [of the DSA] was intense and at times she found herself in confrontation with Bishop Peter as to the limit of her role.”*
546. We agree with His Honour Tim Mort that the tension between the Bishop and the Chester DSA was primarily due to the way they viewed their respective roles. His Honour Tim Mort had a meeting with the Bishop prior to his appointment in July 2015, and he says in his note *“I do recall that [the Bishop] was at pains to make clear that if a vicar or church officer was alleged to have behaved inappropriately then he would be concerned to know that the allegation had substance before he*



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*could act. He would be acutely aware of the difficulties attached to being a priest and the risk that he or she could be unfairly accused of wrongdoing and the stigma that could bring. The vicar would have to leave his rectory, what do you say to his family and to the Parish?"* We are of the view that this demonstrates a clergy centred approach rather than a victim centred approach. In his reply the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster said that it is possible to be both victim centred and clergy centred, and he believed that he was both.

547. Graham Tilby, Moira Murray and the Northern PSA all told us that the dynamic between the Bishop and the DSA was very difficult at this time.
548. The conflict and tension between the Chester DSA and Bishop Peter Forster created a serious distraction in the safeguarding work of the Church and this is why we feel it necessary to explore this issue in some depth.
549. We are grateful to the Chester DSA for answering our questions on her working relationship between the Bishop (and indeed his immediate senior leadership team) and herself. Many of the difficulties were cultural, and she told us that she felt isolated in her work, but that she was being controlled. Everything was being managed by Bishop Peter Forster to the extent that neither he nor his Chaplain referred a possible safeguarding concern to the Chester DSA as noted in the email exchange dated 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 ([see before paragraphs 449-451](#)).
550. The tension between the Chester DSA and Bishop Peter Forster was particularly troubling in the summer of 2017 when of course the police operation was nearing its conclusion.
551. The Chester DSA told us of a meeting she had had with Bishop Peter Forster in August 2017. She met with Bishop Peter Forster to provide him with an update on cases. The Chester DSA sent an email to Debbie Dalby (her HR line manager) of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2017 which sets out some of the discussion that took place at the meeting the previous day between the Bishop and the Chester DSA. She wrote as follows: *"I felt intimidated and effectively unable to do my job. I came away feeling that [Bishop Peter] does not understand safeguarding or the national policies and how they work and guide practice. It was all about how he sees it and what he is going to do. Each time I have to communicate with him is a struggle. I can understand questions being asked but when I clarify policy and procedure I feel I am treated with contempt. All I am trying to do is my job... but it is becoming increasingly impossible.... I came away from the meeting yesterday feeling I had been intimidated..."*
552. We have seen an email from the Chester DSA to Debbie Dalby dated 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 informing her that she has just spoken with George Colville (the Diocesan Secretary, and one of her line managers primarily responsible for her role as DSA). The email says *"George has just spoken with me to say that he is struggling to know what to do because in reality if I am to ask for him to be with me then a grievance should be raised...I have told George I do not want to take out any grievance and increase the profile of this..."*
553. The emails that we have seen in the NST safeguarding case file demonstrate very clearly indeed the tensions between the DSA and the Bishop, and the fact that this was known to the senior team at



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the NST. For example, on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017, the Northern PSA wrote to Graham Tilby and Moira Murray as follows: *“...[the Chester DSA] is meeting with [Bishop Peter] this afternoon. My concerns relate to how I can support Chester with the complexities with the [Whitsey] case given the fact that advice provided by the DSA to the Bishop is simply not accepted or taken. ...it appears the case is being handled partly by the core group and partly outside the core group with DSAs and myself not having knowledge of what is known by who and what conversations are taking place...[Bishop Peter] is attempting to speak with police directly and I am again concerned about information sharing with other clergy”*. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster stated that he did not know the basis for the suggestion that he was attempting to meet directly with the police. The Review Team agrees with him on this point that he did not make arrangements to meet with the police, and the meeting in January 2017 was at the request of the police.

554. The NST therefore became involved. The Chester DSA told us the following: *“I had been working by myself in isolation: 7 days a week. I was physically exhausted and mentally exhausted with Bishop Peter. I was frightened of anything I said or did. I sent Graham Tilby and Moira Murray an email, to say that this is really bad and I am really struggling and need help”*. In his reply to the representation letter, Bishop Peter Forster acknowledged that he was aware that the Chester DSA was very distressed, but he disputed that he was the cause of this. He stated also that *“the Whitsey enquiry generated a very emotive atmosphere in various directions.”*
555. There was a three-day DSA/NST Conference in York from 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017<sup>67</sup>, and the Chester DSA, as well as Moira Murray, Graham Tilby, and the Northern PSA attended. The Chester DSA was asked to attend to provide an opportunity for the NST to meet with her to discuss the issues she was facing.
556. We believe, although we are not certain, that the Chester DSA had more than one meeting during the conference with NST members. Graham Tilby’s recollection was that Moira Murray attended an initial meeting to speak with the Chester DSA with the Northern PSA present, and that he attended a second meeting with the Chester DSA together with Moira Murray. Moira Murray’s recollection was that she attended one meeting and that this was at the request of Graham Tilby<sup>68</sup>. The Chester DSA told the Review Team in her representation letter that she asked Debbie Dalby to attend the second meeting *“as she felt vulnerable after meetings that had taken place on day one”*.
557. There is a major disagreement as to what was said at these meetings. The Chester DSA said that Moira Murray said to her at the meeting *“You can take out a CDM against Bishop Peter, and we shall support you. Go off for six months sick”*. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira Murray totally refuted what the Chester DSA told us about her stating that the Chester DSA should take sick leave and asking her to start a CDM procedure against her Bishop. She referred to an earlier meeting with the Chester DSA in February 2017 in London when she (Moira Murray) had attended at the request of Graham Tilby. Moira Murray stated that during the course of that February meeting, the Chester DSA explained that she felt bullied by Bishop Peter Forster and that her position as the DSA was becoming untenable. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira

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<sup>67</sup> [Summit Report 2017](#)

<sup>68</sup> We believe that Moira Murray is referring to the second meeting at which Graham Tilby was present.

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Murray stated that *“Graham Tilby asked her (the Chester DSA) to put in writing to him her concerns, and he would decide how to take the matters forward”*. She stated also that the Chester DSA had never acceded to that request.

558. Moira Murray stated in her reply that *“by the time of the Summit (the conference) in September 2017 the situation had become extremely difficult in the Diocese of Chester.”* She recalled that she happened to meet the Chester DSA during the conference and *“she [the Chester DSA] was so distressed that I said that if she wanted to meet with Graham [Tilby] again, I would pass the message on. I said I could be present as before.”*
559. We know that the meetings took place between the Chester DSA and the NST ([see paragraph 556](#)), although as no minutes were taken, we cannot be absolutely certain who was present on each occasion. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira Murray is quite clear that she did not state that the Chester DSA should take six months off. What she stated to the Review Team is as follows: *“Out of concern for her welfare and mental health, both Graham Tilby and I suggested that it might be a good idea if she went to see her GP and ask for some time off. The Chester DSA replied that she couldn’t take anytime off as she would be sacked.”* Moira Murray stated that she remembered that she (Moira Murray) responded as follows: *“As an employee you are entitled to six months sick leave.”*
560. Moira Murray explained in her reply to the representation letter why she would never have suggested that the Chester DSA should start CDM proceedings against the Bishop. She stated: *“I did not say that the Chester DSA should take out a CDM against Bishop Peter and we will support you. If a CDM was to be brought against a bishop it is possible for a DSA to do so, however such action would put a DSA in an extremely difficult position, given that they are appointed by their Diocesan Bishop. The intention in this case, was that if a CDM was brought it would be brought by the NST”*.
561. The Chester DSA told us that she had no intention of taking six months sick leave for the convenience of the NST<sup>69</sup>, and she felt that she was being treated as a pawn in a chess game, and she believed that Moira Murray and Graham Tilby had an agenda bigger than her concerns. In his reply to the representation letter, Graham Tilby stated that it was certainly not his intention to treat her as a *“pawn in a chess game.”* He stated that the discussion was about how best to support the Chester DSA in these difficult circumstances given her level of distress and the impact this was having on her mental wellbeing. He stated that the *“primary intention of the meeting was to support the Chester DSA, and also attempt to agree a course of action that she would be content with and which would enable us to collectively resolve the safeguarding issues/concerns that she was raising.”* He acknowledged, however, that there was reference in the meeting to her taking time off for her wellbeing, and how best the NST could ascertain sufficient evidence of the Bishop’s interference in Diocesan safeguarding casework.
562. Moira Murray, in her evidence to us, referred to the meetings with the Chester DSA in September 2017. She told us that they spoke about the difficulties that the Chester DSA was experiencing with

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<sup>69</sup> We believe that the Chester DSA took less than a month off work.

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the Bishop. She said that the picture that was presented by the Chester DSA was that the Bishop was bullying and would shout at her. She told us that the Chester DSA said that she was at “*breaking point*”. Moira Murray’s recollection of the meeting was that they wished to offer the Chester DSA support and suggested to her that she should see her GP so that she could take some time off.

563. It is our view that there was a lack of a strategy at this time identifying the purpose of the meetings and this led to the misunderstanding as between the Chester DSA and the NST. The meetings were informal and there were no agreed action points.
564. Debbie Dalby, the Chester DSA’s line manager on matters other than safeguarding casework, spoke with the Review Team on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020. She attended the September 2017 meetings to provide support for the Chester DSA, because the Chester DSA had told Debbie Dalby that she felt uncomfortable. She told us that she recalled that the meetings were informal, that no note appeared to have been taken, and she had a sense that they were talking about organisational structural issues.
565. She told the Review Team that she formed the impression that the Chester DSA was being asked by the NST in effect to ‘whistle blow’, so as to enable matters to be taken by the NST to a higher level. She felt that the Chester DSA was being pressured and that she would receive the NST support if she put down her concerns in writing. She said that in the afternoon meeting, CDM was mentioned, and the Chester DSA was told to start that process, and then to go off sick for six months.
566. It will be recalled that Moira Murray and Graham Tilby had a very different perception of the meetings, and both stated that they were concerned about how best to support the Chester DSA. We believe that it was in this context that Graham Tilby arranged for the Chester DSA to have a meeting with the DSA for Chichester, Colin Perkins, who had been speaking at the conference. We should note however that the Chester DSA, in her reply to the representation letter, stated that Moira Murray had told her that Colin Perkins had taken out a CDM against his Bishop and he could give her support and insight into his experience.
567. Graham Tilby in his reply to the representation letter on this point stated that he does not recall there being any suggestion of a CDM being initiated by the Chester DSA, although he agreed that there was some discussion as to whether this was a whistle blowing situation. He said that the emphasis would have been on the NST gathering sufficient evidence in order that this could be addressed nationally and the burden being taken off the Chester DSA.
568. Given that there was a clear difference of recollection of the meetings as between the Chester DSA on the one hand and Graham Tilby in particular on the other hand, and the purpose of the meeting with Colin Perkins, the Review Team thought it would be helpful to meet with Colin Perkins, which we did by a video conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020. We are grateful to him for meeting with us.
569. Colin Perkins told us that he had been involved in giving a presentation on ‘crisis handling’ at the York conference. He told us, that Graham Tilby came up to him afterwards to facilitate him

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meeting with the Chester DSA as a peer support meeting, and he said 'Yes of course'. He said that Moira Murray was at the meeting, and possibly the Northern PSA as well. He did not recall whether Debbie Dalby was there. It was an informal chat in the lunch hall at a side table.

570. He said that when he sat down with the Chester DSA, he could not believe what he heard, and realised from what she told him that she had experienced appalling treatment at the hands of the Diocesan Bishop. He ended up coming out of the meeting thinking "*why had a CDM not been taken against the Bishop*". To his knowledge, he was adamant that no one said to the Chester DSA that she should take out a CDM against the Bishop. He said that he suggested to Moira Murray that the NST should take the pressure off the Chester DSA, and that the NST needed to fight this particular fight. He said that he felt that the Chester DSA was shell shocked, that she looked like someone who had come to the end of her ability to cope, and that she looked like someone who had been bullied.
571. He told the Review Team that he recalled going to Graham Tilby after his meeting with the Chester DSA to tell him that the NST had to do something about it. He told us, in graphic terms, that he would have gone "*completely ballistic if the Chester DSA had been put under any pressure to commence a CDM.*"
572. We found Colin Perkins to be a credible witness, and we have formed a view that the Chester DSA was not being asked to commence a CDM at that meeting. However, no notes were taken of any of these meetings, and whilst it was the Chester DSA and Debbie Dalby's perception that the Chester DSA was asked to initiate a CDM, no evidence suggests that she was asked to do so.
573. Debbie Dalby told us that she could see where the NST "*was coming from*" and that the NST genuinely thought they were being caring, but that a lot was being asked of the Chester DSA.
574. It would be going beyond the Terms of Reference of this Learning Lessons Review to make any findings regarding the relationship between the Chester DSA and the Bishop and his senior team. However, we have reflected on lessons which can be learnt, regarding the relationship between the Bishop and his or her DSA.
575. There is no doubt but that, for whatever reason, the relationship was under immense strain.
576. It is our view that recommendation 15 at [paragraph 539](#) will address such issues should they arise in the future.
577. As noted above (at [paragraph 553](#)), the Northern PSA emailed Graham Tilby on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017 referring to the concerns she had about the Bishop's involvement, and the conflict and tension between the Bishop and the DSA. Graham Tilby in response to this email suggested that they may have to "*formally escalate this to the lead safeguarding bishop requesting his direct intervention*". Graham Tilby told the Review Team in his reply to the representation letter that he did raise his concerns with the lead Bishop, Bishop Peter Hancock, and that the Northern PSA would have discussed it with the Archbishop of York. Sadly, little seems to have happened by way of escalation.

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578. We note however that in addition to the meetings with the NST and with Colin Perkins, Graham Tilby and Moira Murray it was arranged for the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, Bishop Peter Hancock to meet with the Chester DSA to enable him to hear the issues involving Bishop Peter Forster's handling of the Whitsey case.
579. It is possible that the Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel may be able also to play a part in resolving any difficulties between the Bishop and the DSA, but it is our view that disagreements such as those identified in this Report could really only have been dealt with by national intervention from a person of sufficient standing such as the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop. And it is also clear that the DSAP should not be a part of the case management process.
580. The penultimate bullet point of the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop's role states: *"Be informed of, and when required, involved in the resolution of safeguarding matters which might arise through diocesan safeguarding audits or investigations of complaints."*
581. **We recommend that consideration be given to strengthening the wording of the role description of the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop's role in the Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies 2017 practice guidance document to include "and where necessary, to make decisions on the resolution of the management of safeguarding cases" (Recommendation 16).**
582. The Chester DSA suggested to us that safeguarding should become a department in its own right, and not be subject to the line management of either the Secretariat or Human Resources, as it is at present, certainly in the Chester Diocese. She suggested to the Review Team that the DSAs should be renamed Safeguarding Directors and they should be part of the Senior Leadership Team.
583. **We recommend that consideration be given to DSAs becoming a part of the Diocesan Senior Leadership Team (Recommendation 17).**

### **2. Functions of the DSA: Investigation**

584. The functions of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser are set out in the [Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016](#) which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 (made by the House of Bishops under Canon C 30). They were not therefore in force during 2016 when many of the disclosures were made. Paragraph 4(1) read as follows: *"A DSA has responsibility for ensuring that the following action is taken within the diocese (whether by him or her or by a person acting on his or her behalf) – (a) where an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse is made against a bishop or other church officer in the diocese or against any other person, advising on whether the allegation should be referred to the police for investigation."*
585. An important amendment was made to these regulations which came into force on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017.
586. The first function was amended to read as follows: *"Where an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse is made against a bishop or other church officer in the diocese or against*

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*any other person, advising on whether the allegation should be referred to the police for investigation; and if the adviser thinks it should be so referred, making the referral*" (our underlining).

587. We note that there remains some tension in these regulations between "*advising on whether there should be a referral*" and the additional words introduced by the amendment: "*making the referral*".
588. **We recommend that it should be made clear in the DSA Regulations that the DSA should be the responsible person who makes the referral, notwithstanding a contrary view expressed for example by the Bishop. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations may require amendment accordingly (Recommendation 18).**

### **3. Functions of the DSA: "Giving Advice, Information and Support to those who have suffered abuse"**

589. The "*Main Duties and Responsibilities*" for a DSA are established by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016 and are set out in Appendix 4 of [\*Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance \(October 2017\)\*](#). They include at item 5 "*giving advice, information and support to those who have suffered abuse.*" The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016, para 4(1)(c) specifies that this should be done "*in a timely fashion*".
590. The DSA in Chester, provided considerable support to many of the victims of Whitsey's abuse, in particular to M1 and F1. Our concern, however, is that there may be a blurring of the role between investigation on the one hand, and pastoral care on the other hand. This, in some circumstances, could lead to further pressure being placed on victims and their families. There is a difference between ensuring the victim is offered support from a support person, whether it be pastoral or professional; and directly supporting the victim. This is recognised in the practice guidance document [\*Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(October 2017\)\*](#) where it is stated, in our view correctly, "*No-one directly involved in the management of the case...should be directly supporting the victim, since their roles or their status may be compromised.*"
591. In addition, it may place a considerable burden on the DSA, and we have seen examples within the period 2016-2018 where the Chester DSA was placed in an intolerable position trying to provide support to some of the victims of Whitsey whilst at the same time being engaged in investigations related to this case and a very large work load of other cases.
592. We note that the core group number three states "*Chester DSA continue to support M1 and any other victim should they wish to be in contact.*" It is our view that the core group did not fully address the question of who was supporting victims and the appropriateness of the DSA to do this. We acknowledge that the policy and practice guidance is somewhat disjointed on this issue with conflicting advice as to who should be offering support.

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593. **We recommend that the issue of who should provide victim support be addressed with the intention of providing a clear victim strategy and that appropriate professional support be facilitated (Recommendation 19).**

594. We believe, also, that the DSAP should have a slightly wider role to play in cases of this kind in the future. His Honour Tim Mort told the Review Team that if they had known, as a Panel, that the Chester DSA had been so involved with some of the victims, then they as a Panel could have provided the Chester DSA with more support.

### **4. Support for Family Members of the Whitsey Family**

595. The DSA for the Blackburn Diocese (Sharon Hassall) was primarily responsible for ensuring that the family of Whitsey had the benefit of pastoral support. The decision was taken, in consultation with the police, that the Whitsey family would not be seen prior to the police going to see them. The police saw the children of Whitsey on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017 ([see paragraph 603](#)).

596. The Review Team heard from Sharon Hassall by video conference on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020. She became the DSA at Blackburn in October 2016. She told us that the handover between the previous DSA and herself was no more than a few days. This was woefully inadequate. We have identified inadequate handovers in relation to the DSAs in London, and the handover from Jane Dodds to Moira Murray at the NST. This is an area that the Church could improve on by developing a case transfer protocol.

597. **We recommend that the Church develop a handover protocol for safeguarding staff in Dioceses and the NST (Recommendation 20).**

598. She told us that she first heard about the Whitsey allegations in November 2016, from the Northern PSA. She attended the second core group on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016; her predecessor, Kayley Vaughton having phoned in to the first core group meeting.

599. Sharon Hassall, spoke with Archdeacon Mark Ireland to brief him on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017 that pastoral support may have to be put in place for members of the Whitsey family, and on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017, she briefed the Bishop of Blackburn on the Whitsey case, and explained to him that Mrs Whitsey and her eldest son lived in the Diocese and pastoral support needed to be identified.

600. Sharon Hassall phoned the eldest son on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017, and his wife answered. The Blackburn Diocesan safeguarding case file states that the eldest son's wife said that they wanted the whole family to be there when the news was broken to Mrs Whitsey, who was both frail and elderly.

601. The DSA also phoned Whitsey's daughter on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Whitsey's daughter told the DSA that she was very upset and worried about her mother being told about the investigation.

602. The DSA, together with her Assistant DSA visited Whitsey's daughter and her partner that afternoon on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Whitsey's daughter said that she wanted to be there when the



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police spoke to their mother.

603. The youngest son lives outside of the UK and he emailed Sharon Hassall on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017. She phoned him the following day, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017 and went to the Whitsey house together with her Assistant. DC McGuinness was already there, and this was the first time that Mrs Whitsey was told about the police investigation. The eldest son, his wife and the youngest son were there, but Whitsey's daughter was not there.
604. Sharon Hassall emailed the Northern PSA and copied in the Chester DSA about her visit that evening. It says: *"[the eldest son] did give an indication of suspicion around his father. When Mrs W was asking why people had just come forward now and said there was no indication ever of wrongdoing previously, [the eldest son] challenged her and said we did know, do you not remember you and dad had to go to a meeting at Chester and dad was told to stay home and you were told to keep an eye on him."* The email indicates also that the eldest son had passed on this information to the police, which must have been when the police visited on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017. In our interview with the police, they confirmed that this was what the son had said.
605. We asked Sharon Hassall about this when she spoke to us on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020, and she told us that Mrs Whitsey denied this, and the family went very quiet. She said that there was a *"gasps from the family"*.
606. The Northern PSA, in her email to Graham Tilby of 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017 said this about the Whitsey family: *"Whitsey family are now aware from the Police...Police have pretty much said we can share what we want but my view is that we would only share what we put in to the public arena in the statement i.e. nature of abuse, multiple victims, perhaps the fact that we as a core group have accepted this has happened"*. Graham Tilby replied that he agreed with her.
607. Sharon Hassall had continuing contact with the Whitsey family (including Whitsey's niece) during August, September and October prior to the release of the *Operation Coverage Summary Report*.
608. Interestingly, Sharon Hassall said that her Assistant, with police experience prior to taking on her role as Assistant DSA, felt that the family knew that something untoward had gone on in the past but that they had not spoken about it as a family, and the fact that it had been uncovered was the shock for them rather than finding out that he had abused people in the way it had been alleged. Their concerns were to protect their mother, and to ascertain how and when the police report would be published.
609. The youngest son is very much the voice of the family. He was, quite naturally, concerned about the impact on his mother, and has indicated it is very difficult in a situation like this where the alleged perpetrator is deceased and therefore there is no way that he can answer the allegations.
610. We have not seen any member of the Whitsey family although we extended an invitation to meet with them. The youngest son emailed the team on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020 to say that the allegations against his father were deeply upsetting and shocking, and as a result of them, their mother was never able to overcome the deep hurt and horror that such allegations were made against her



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husband. He did say that he could not criticise the way the police or the various Church bodies have dealt with the allegations. He ends his email *"I do not look to excuse in anyway what has been alleged (I don't exactly know what has been alleged) but whatever it is I recognise as do my brother and sister that however harmed victims need support and closure. I hope they have received this and have offered our own thoughts and prayers."*

611. We wish to note that the way in which Sharon Hassall and her Assistant ensured that there was support for the Whitsey family was exemplary and constitutes good practice. When this Report is published, there may well be further press interest, and we trust that the DSA Blackburn will engage with family members to ensure that they obtain any professional and/or pastoral support that they require.

### **5. Core Groups**

612. Paragraph 3.1 of the [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(October 2017\)\*](#) document states that for every allegation against a Church officer, the DSA should convene a core group, in consultation with the Bishop, within 48 hours of becoming aware of the safeguarding concern or allegation. If it is logistically impossible to meet face to face, a virtual meeting should be set up electronically. The 48 hour time scale is not new and it appears in [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers \(June 2015\)\*](#) at paragraph 7.9.
613. We have seen examples in the Report where unfortunately the NST core group was not called anywhere near the period of 48 hours after becoming aware of the safeguarding concern or allegation. We understand that arranging national core groups can be particularly logistically challenging and with this in mind suggest that in order to meet within the timescales, video conferencing could be more widely considered. It may well be that when policy is written on managing posthumous cases there is more flexibility on timings for core groups in recognition of the likelihood of a less urgent need to manage risk. This is also discussed at [paragraph 95](#).
614. **We recommend that both the NST core groups, and where appropriate the diocesan core groups, keep to practice guidance time scales (48 hours), whilst acknowledging that it is important to ensure that key personnel are available to attend the meeting and that these meetings could be by video link (Recommendation 21).**
615. We note that in the [\*Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers 2015\*](#) document, there was a template core group agenda, but this was not transferred to the current practice guidance. We question why this was removed as it would seem to be a useful guide, ensuring that relevant areas for discussion are always included. We asked Moira Murray about the template and she agreed that it was a useful document and was not aware why it was not included in the current guidance.
616. **We recommend that when the current *Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017* document is**

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**updated, consideration should be given to including a template core group agenda (Recommendation 22).**

617. We have recommended that diocesan core groups and NST core groups should be careful about terminology and use the term ‘*complainant*’ until such time that a decision making body (different from the core group) is satisfied on a balance of probabilities that abuse has occurred, when the term ‘*victim*’ would be more appropriate. The word ‘*respondent*’ appears in this document which carries with it a particular legal definition, especially in family law matters.
618. **We recommend that the guidance is updated to use a more neutral word such as ‘*alleged perpetrator*’ rather than respondent (Recommendation 23).**

## **Chapter 16: National Safeguarding Team and the Provincial Safeguarding Adviser**

### **1. Operation of the NST - 2016-2018**

619. We have drawn attention in this Report to a number of concerns about the operation of the National Safeguarding Team during the period from January 2016 to August 2018. In this chapter we bring these concerns together and make a number of recommendations.
620. We are particularly concerned that the NST at that time was considerably under-resourced although there had been an improvement on previous levels. It had been dealing with a number of high profile matters, with very limited resources. The budget for the NST in 2016 was £557,500.<sup>70</sup>
621. We are encouraged that the situation has now improved beyond recognition. Indeed, by April 2018, the NST comprised 7.5 core staff based in Church House, two full-time support staff involved in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), one Safeguarding Support Officer for the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, two Provincial Safeguarding Advisers and one Safeguarding Support Officer. The National Safeguarding Team has increased from two in February 2015 to 13 in 2018. We note the 2020 expenditure for the NST is £3.189 million.<sup>71</sup>
622. We are particularly concerned also about the failure of the NST for some almost eight months to call a core group (which interestingly Moira Murray told us should perhaps be called by a different name, such as safeguarding management group to adequately reflect its terms of reference) to consider the allegations of abuse regarding M2, notwithstanding the considerable efforts of the Chester DSA to do her utmost to seek a core group meeting from the NST. It was only when a second allegation was brought to the attention of the Chester Diocese, namely that of M1, that a

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<sup>70</sup> [Paragraph 2, page 4, Archbishops’ Council 2016 Budget](#). This report states that the NST budget had increased more than twelvefold from 2014 when the budget was £44,500.

<sup>71</sup> [Paragraph 56, page 21, Archbishops’ Council 2020 Budget](#)

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core group was called, and even then there was further delay.

623. Not only was the NST under resourced, but it would also seem that key staff were working long hours under enormous stress, with little in the way of line management. Moira Murray, who started work for the NST on an interim basis at the beginning of July 2016, told the Review Team that the pressure made her ill.
624. We have identified the unsatisfactory examination by the NST regarding the issue as to whether M1 disclosed to Bishop Glyn Webster the abuse perpetrated against him. The minutes of the NST core group may be accurate as to what was said at the meeting, but they do not reflect the factual position. All three people most closely involved, namely M1, Bishop Glyn Webster, and Cleric A were all left most upset by how all of this was handled. The unresolved questions were allowed simply to fester.
625. The appointment of two Provincial Safeguarding Advisers, one for the north and one for south, in the summer of 2016, helped; but the Whitsey case was becoming more and more complex during 2017 and 2018, with a range of issues linked together.
626. The job profile of the Provincial Safeguarding Adviser states as follows: *“This role is focused on serving the Archbishop and their staff directly on safeguarding casework which reaches their offices as part of the National Safeguarding Team. ...Specifically, this post will have a central role in assisting the Archbishop’s Office and the NST with managing cases that are deemed to require involvement at a provincial or national level and ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place.”*
627. The job summary includes taking on strategic oversight and day-to-day professional assessment and management of cases that relate to Bishops and other high profile people, including professional triage and assessment of risk, co-ordination of response and case management (where appropriate), referring to Diocesan Safeguarding Caseworkers and Advisers as appropriate.
628. One of the main duties is to work closely with the National Safeguarding Casework Manager. It is specifically stated in the job description that the PSA will be expected to chair core groups across the National Safeguarding Team.
629. The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser told us that she commenced her role in the first week of October 2016 ([see paragraph 243](#)). She was appointed on a two days a week contract for the NST. She told us during our video conference meeting with her on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 that she did not have a hand over with Jane Dodds, and they never met to discuss any of the outstanding cases. Her introduction to her case load therefore was by a meeting with the Chaplain to the Archbishop of York (Canon Daphne Green) and with Moira Murray, who had also just commenced her work with the NST on a full time basis as National Senior Casework Manager and who became the Northern PSA’s line manager. The Northern PSA said to us that she saw a few emails between Jane Dodds and the DSAs in London and Chester, and was aware of the Bishop of Chester’s involvement in the case. She recognised that there was a gap in the NST safeguarding case file recording relating to the Whitsey allegations. She told us that her understanding of the case was drawn from reading

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the minutes of the first core group, and discussions with Graham Tilby (the National Safeguarding Adviser), the Chaplain to the Archbishop of York (Canon Daphne Green) and the Chief of Staff at Bishopthorpe Palace.

630. She told us that she saw her role as providing a link between the NST and Bishopthorpe Palace, and to have co-ordinating oversight of the developing case on behalf of the NST. In effect she was the co-ordinator as well as case manager. She said that she saw herself as having overall management responsibility, and if the Chester DSA had formed a different view from her, then they would discuss it and come to a clear way forward; in other words the Northern PSA saw herself as the case manager and she saw the Chester DSA as the case worker.
631. Moira Murray was the National Safeguarding Casework Manager, accountable to the National Safeguarding Adviser. The job summary specifically states that the Casework Manager will be responsible for chairing and/or attending core groups in respect of high profile and complex cases, and to ensure effective co-ordination and management of risk and support to victims/survivors and those accused. The job description includes also line management of the PSAs. Moira Murray certainly had the authority to assume control and in particular to take over the chairing of the core groups. She told the Review Team that she felt that the issue was becoming more and more complex, that she was concerned about the difficulties with the Bishop of Chester and the Chester DSA's relationship with him, to the extent that the Chester DSA was at breaking point. She also felt that the police were not sharing information with the Church, and there was a *"one way flow of information"*. The Northern PSA was going to go on maternity leave in 2018. Adding all of this together, she decided to take over the chairing of the core group meetings.
632. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira Murray stated *"I decided to take over responsibility for the case in November 2017 as I was concerned having had conversations with the Northern PSA, the Chester DSA and other members of the core group that Cheshire Police were not working collaboratively with the Church of England, as reflected in the minutes of the core group meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017"*. This minute refers to the Terms of Reference for the Review, and states *"It was noted that the Police have not been as open as they could have been thus far; so very wide Terms of Reference may be needed for the Review....There is concern that the Church have been more open with the Police, than the Police have been in return..."* We deal with the question of cooperation with the police at [paragraph 660](#), and hope these concerns can be addressed by the adoption of our recommendations numbers 6 and 30. Moira Murray makes clear in her reply to the representation letter that she believed that the Northern PSA had handled the case well, and there was no criticism of her when she took over responsibility for leading the core group.
633. We have to say that the change of core group chair does not appear to have been appropriately minuted, and we have seen no document that sets out the reasons for the change from the NST.
634. **We recommend that if there is to be a change of any key role or key responsibility within the core group, that this change should be appropriately communicated to key participants. The change should be noted in the minutes of a core group meeting and documented in the safeguarding case file (Recommendation 24).**

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635. There was a good working relationship between the Chester DSA and the Northern PSA. The Chester DSA told us that this good collaborative relationship did not extend to her relationship with Moira Murray. The Chester DSA told us that Moira Murray wanted everything to go through her. The Chester DSA acknowledged that this should be the case, but the Chester DSA told us that Moira Murray did not respond to her in a timely fashion. Moira Murray stated in her meeting with us on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that she wanted to change the management style and that the NST should be taking a direct control of the case. This would explain why Moira Murray told the Chester DSA that everything needed to go through her. In her reply to the representation letter, Moira Murray stated that there were frequent emails and telephone calls between her and the Chester DSA, and that she replied to the Chester DSA's lengthy email correspondence as quickly as her considerable work load allowed.
636. The Chester DSA told the Review Team that she found it exhausting supporting very needy people. It may be that she went much further than her brief in this regard. The action point for her in core group meeting four (7<sup>th</sup> July 2017) was *"continue to be the first point of contact for any victim who wishes for contact with the church and arrange suitable pastoral provision."* As we have seen, the Chester DSA went beyond this, with very limited support.
637. The NST had to deal with (a) the complex relationship between the Bishop of Chester and the DSA at Chester; (b) the question of what would be in the apology letters; (c) who was to sign the apologies and to whom would they go and when; (d) contact with and arranging pastoral and/or professional support for the victims; (e) working with the police; (f) the issues relating to the alleged disclosure by M1 to Bishop Glyn Webster and (g) pastoral support for the Whitsey family.

### **2. The Views of the Northern PSA**

638. The Northern PSA was frank with the Review Team by telling us that she did not feel that she was being supported, that she did not obtain *"ring fenced time"* and did not receive any formal supervision. In part, of course, this was because her line manager, Moira Murray, was also new in post and was based in London whereas the Northern PSA was based in York. She told us that often meetings with Moira Murray were cancelled, and the majority of the time with Moira Murray was when she (the Northern PSA) *"picked up the phone to speak with her."* This should be taken in the context of Moira Murray having a heavy case load and a demanding role. Moira Murray, in her reply to the representation letter, stated that the Northern PSA did receive ring-fenced time and there were arrangements made for supervision consisting of meetings when the Northern PSA came to London for monthly NST meetings and at other times by telephone calls which frequently lasted for several hours. She stated *"It should be noted that the Northern PSA was a PSA and that she had a more senior role than a DSA, she was expected to therefore have a higher ability and competence."* We are of the view that a close and cooperative working relationship between the PSAs and the National Team is essential, and if there is not, there is a danger that peripheral tension could undermine the central task of safeguarding.
639. All of this could hardly have helped in the work that was required around the Whitsey case. Key personnel were under enormous pressure, and little in the way of support was being provided by

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senior leaders.

640. We asked the Northern PSA about the relationship between the Church and the police, and we shall consider this area at [paragraph 660](#) in the Report. But she did feel, notwithstanding difficulties at the beginning, that at the end of the investigation the police and the Church did work together, although it took a long time to get there. She felt that initially there was distrust by the police, and the NST were being placed in the same category as Bishop Peter Forster, but eventually there was a truly collaborative relationship. Attendance at the core group meetings (as from core group number three dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017) was, in her words, *“a game changer.”*
641. Members (both past and present) of the NST stated that they were concerned about the fact that the Chester DSA was devoting much of her time to supporting victims, and that her role should have been more concerned with the case work management of the case. For instance, at our meeting with the Northern PSA, she said that her perception of the role of the Chester DSA was very different from pastoral support for victims, and she told us that she believed that the Chester DSA understood this. We agree with this concern and have said more about this when discussing the role of the DSA at [paragraph 589](#) in Chapter 15 above. It is unfortunate that we have found no record of the NST discussing this issue directly with the Chester DSA and developing a different strategy for ongoing victim support. We believe the recommendation at [paragraph 593](#) will address this issue.

## **3. Minutes of the Core Group**

642. We are also concerned that the minutes of the core groups at times lacked professionalism. The minute taker often changes from one meeting to the next and it is apparent to the Review Team that the minutes often do not reflect the detail of either the discussion or sometimes the action points arising from the meeting.
643. As noted at [paragraph 350](#), a minute taker was not present at the third core group meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 which led to the Chester DSA taking the minutes. The [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017](#) document states that *“a note taker for the core group should be appointed”*<sup>72</sup> and it is our view that it is not appropriate nor achievable for an active core group member to contribute to the discussion and take notes of the meeting simultaneously.
644. Occasionally the core group minutes contain factual inaccuracies. As an example, the minutes of the fourth core group on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 state that the police spoke with Bishop Michael Baughen who *“advised that he was aware of a number of issues that he ‘inherited’ regarding abuse”*. In their interviews with the Review Team, both Bishop Michael Baughen and the police noted that this was incorrect. The Bishop confirmed (as at [paragraph 26](#)) that he had inherited many clergy in the Diocese who proved to be problematic. The police also confirmed that this statement was

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<sup>72</sup> At Section 3.1, Page 40 and at paragraph 7.18 of the [Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers 2015](#) document.

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incorrect, however one of the Officers did note that he probably did not pick up on the seriousness of the inaccurate comment at the time.

645. We acknowledge that core group meetings can be complex and involve detailed discussions. It is therefore important that the minutes are a complete and accurate reflection of the discussion and action points.
646. **We recommend that administrators who are appointed as core group minute takers receive specific training in relation to taking core group minutes (Recommendation 25).**
647. **We recommend that action points are always drawn up and circulated in a timely fashion, and that the chair of the core group takes it upon himself/herself to ensure that the actions are dealt with within the time set out by the core group (Recommendation 26).**

### **4. NST Safeguarding Case Files**

648. We have found no evidence of an NST safeguarding case file regarding the Whitsey allegations between January and June 2016.<sup>73</sup>
649. We understand that there was contact between the Chester DSA and Jane Dodds and Graham Tilby at the NST but there is only evidence of this in the Chester Diocesan safeguarding case files to which we have referred at [paragraph 226](#) in Chapter 6.
650. It would be helpful for there to be a central case management system in cases being managed by the NST. The system should be accessible to all DSAs involved in a case as well as NST members and PSAs. This would allow for one central file which would contain all relevant communications and safeguarding actions from Dioceses and the NST. This would remove duplicated files and would also allow for good safe practice in recording all relevant information in one place, reducing the risk of miscommunication and actions being lost and not responded to. It would also save valuable time in minimising double recording.
651. **We recommend that further work should be implemented in order to consider introducing a central case management system for safeguarding cases managed by the NST (Recommendation 27).**

### **5. Diocesan Safeguarding Case Files**

652. We were grateful to be provided with the numerous safeguarding case files from the Chester Diocese. We note that the Chester DSA's record keeping was detailed and meticulous. However, we found the particular method and structure of collating the information across a number of files led to significant difficulties in reading them and locating specific documentation. There was

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<sup>73</sup> We are aware that Jane Dodds deposited her notebooks in Church House upon leaving her employment. However, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, we have been unable to access these.



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frequent duplication and cross over between files with no composite file for reference. This led on occasion to chronologies of events and communications being in different sections of one file and across two or three other files. Having one composite file would alleviate these problems and we are not clear as to why this wasn't used. In addition, it would be helpful for the DSA to have an online case management system.

### **6. Membership of the Core Groups**

653. There is a question of whether an independent person, with a safeguarding background, should be appointed to sit as an external member or independent chair as appropriate at core group meetings. This is a proposal that some of the victims have suggested to us, for example F6. It would provide an independent viewpoint to all decision making, and of course would ensure that accusations that the Church is *"keeping allegations within the church community"* could no longer be made. The NST, and the Church, could no longer be accused of *"marking its own homework."*
654. For example, F1 told us that she still believed that *"there is still some protection of people in high places, and that the Church needs to be externally accountable"*.
655. Cleric A, in her report that she sent to the Archbishop of York's office made a very similar point. She said *"minutes and the work of the safeguarding team should be scrutinised externally."* We have indicated that the minutes of the NST core group meetings that considered the disclosures by M1 was based on information that we have identified as incorrect ([see paragraph 159](#)). Independent scrutiny at an early stage of the core group discussions may possibly have prevented some of the avoidable additional distress experienced by M1, Cleric A and Bishop Glyn Webster.
656. If such a proposal is adopted, it would not be necessary to have independent persons present at all core groups, many of which are, in the Northern PSA's words, *"low level"*. But in the complex cases, such as the Whitsey case, an independent person with a safeguarding background, could be of considerable help.
657. **We recommend that the Church consider adopting the proposal that an independent person be in attendance at relevant core group meetings either as chair or member (Recommendation 28).**
658. We have been shown draft documents relating to a proposed regional model, and we welcome the work of the NST to develop a model of greater regional collaboration between Dioceses to enable increased central oversight, support and governance of local safeguarding. In particular, we welcome the suggestion that a Regional Safeguarding Leader employed by the NST would provide *"reflective"* professional supervision to DSAs. We particularly welcome the suggestion that such a structure and leadership of this kind would add authority and expertise, providing a separation of line management and casework supervision, as practised within health and social care generally. With such a structure in place, it should be possible to prevent in future, delays in core group meetings, misunderstandings as to who is leading the inquiries, and how to respond to possible recent disclosures.



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659. **We recommend that the Church of England develop a clear action plan to increase the resources of the NST, especially in terms of personnel (Recommendation 29).**

### **7. Relationship with the Police**

660. DC McGuinness and DI Reid met with the Review Team by video conference on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020. We can understand the frustrations of the police during their investigations from the summer of 2016 to the production of their *Operation Coverage Summary Report* in October 2017. They were unable to see any clergy file pertaining to Whitsey, despite the best efforts of the Chester DSA and others who had carried out various searches of church archives. We have also not seen a clergy file relating to Whitsey and it may be that there were no clergy files in existence at the time. The clergy personnel file system<sup>74</sup> was established in 1984 after his retirement in December 1981. The only file available seen by us and the police is a retirement file which contains material not relevant to the issues we have considered.
661. DC McGuinness told us (in answers to questions put to him by the Review Team on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 by email) that *“it is more likely than not that I did state to M3 that I personally believed the church had covered up complaints relating to Whitsey.”* He made it clear however that this statement only ever referred to the events of the late 1970s and early 1980s and did not extend beyond the immediate months after Whitsey retired.
662. We have examined the documents provided to us by the Archbishop of York’s office dealing with requests by the police for files and documents, and have concluded, subject to one proviso, that the Church did all it could prior to the publication of the *Operation Coverage Summary Report* in October 2017 to provide the police with the documents that it had in its possession and asked for by the police.
663. The one proviso is as follows. On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017, the Chester DSA emailed the Archbishop of York’s office, on behalf of DC McGuinness, asking that the Archbishop’s office *“obtain any correspondence and documentation that was received or sent by the then Archbishop of York (ABY Blanch) during the years 1974 and 1982 which relates to Chester.”* Canon Daphne Green, on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 replied to DC McGuinness to say that *“this poses substantial difficulties as correspondence is likely to have been filed according to the issue or person it related to.”* She stated that given Bishopthorpe did not hold any file for either Whitsey or Archbishop Blanch and that they cannot identify which individual files may hold correspondence between the then Archbishop of York and Whitsey, there is *“simply not another file for us to search.”* DC McGuinness replied on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017 to say that he was particularly interested if Bishopthorpe held anything in connection with Bishop Gordon Strutt in terms of correspondence he may have had with Archbishop Blanch between 1978 and 1982. Canon Daphne Green replied on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017 stating that they would review the archive material and get back to the police as soon as they could.

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<sup>74</sup> Also known as the clergy blue file system.

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664. In fact, Canon Daphne Green did not reply to DC McGuinness until 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017, thus after publication of the *Operation Coverage Summary Report*, to say that they had retrieved papers from the archives, examined them and referred them to the Archbishop. Her email goes on: *"The Archbishop has decided not to divulge to the Police any of the papers from the archive and he considers they will not be relevant to your investigation."*
665. It would appear that the Archbishop took the view, in a reply to a memo to him from Canon Daphne Green dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017, that *"a spat"* between two Bishops should not be disclosed unless it is about allegations of abuse. It is our opinion that it is for the police to decide on their relevance.
666. **We recommend that the National Church and the National College of Policing work together to develop an information sharing agreement which sets out clearly the importance of sharing information between the Church and the police (Recommendation 30).**
667. Both Police Officers played a full part in the work of the core groups relevant to them, and in particular they had a very good working relationship with the Northern PSA and the Chester DSA.
668. We asked the police about two other matters relevant for learning lessons. First, it was the case that no one from the Church approached the Whitsey family prior to the police speaking to them (because they were expressly asked by the police not to contact them). We are aware that both Bishop Peter Forster and the Archbishop of York were concerned about the impact the police report would have on the family, especially on the elderly Mrs Whitsey.
669. We understand why the police were reluctant to support visits by the DSA in Blackburn to the Whitsey family prior to their speaking with them. However, we do think that in similar situations arrangements should be made at a very early stage for a DSA visit to the alleged perpetrator's family. If it is necessary for the police to visit them first, then the police should put this as a top priority. The police had been conducting their enquiries for over a year before they visited the Whitsey family and this, in our view, was far too long a period for the Whitsey family not to have had contact from the Church.
670. The core group members still had concerns about the openness of the police as late as core group six (7<sup>th</sup> November 2017) where it is minuted, after the police had left the meeting, that *"the Police have not been as open as they could have been thus far...There is concern that the Church has been more open with the Police have been in return."* We have to say that we have not found any real evidence of this in the documentation that we have looked at. An ongoing active police investigation will obviously limit to an extent what information can be shared by the police, and there will be cases (as there are in this inquiry) where the victims do not want information to be shared with the Church.
671. Similarly, there may be issues involving legal privilege where the Church would be constrained by what can be shared with the police, and at the very least the Church lawyers would have to be involved.

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672. The second matter we asked the police about was whether they supported a victim peer support group. We have further addressed the issue of victim peer support in the next paragraph but note that apparently, the Chester DSA had contacted the police about putting victims in touch with each other. This is referred to in the minutes to the core group seven (25<sup>th</sup> April 2018). The minute suggests that the police have no problem with this, but the police could not facilitate such meetings themselves. The police told us that they could not facilitate such an arrangement because they could not manage it, and peer support is for another agency, not for the police.

### **8. Victim Peer Support**

673. We suggest that this issue of victim peer support should be explored by the NST. Some of the victims in this case wanted to be put in touch with each other and when this did happen, they found comfort in sharing their past experiences. We recognise the complexities and difficulties which could arise in facilitating such connections and it may well be that the Church cannot be responsible for this. However, these discussions should be had and the help of outside agencies should be sought in progressing who should take responsibility should victims in a complex multi victim case, request that they be put in touch with other victims of the same abuser/s.
674. **We recommend that the NST explore the issue of facilitating victim peer support; which agency should take responsibility for this and how this should best be managed (Recommendation 31).**

## **Chapter 17: The Independent Review of Bishop George Bell (The Carlile Report)**

### **1. Consistent Membership of Core Groups**

675. We turn our attention to the recommendations by Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE QC in his [Independent Review: Bishop George Bell](#) report published in December 2017. The report made 15 recommendations about how to handle cases of this nature in the future, and we have looked at all of these recommendations together with the response by the NSSG chaired by Bishop Peter Hancock. Much of the [Carlile Report](#) is taken up with informing the working of the body with the responsibility for making decisions in an uninsured civil claim. These are not matters within our Terms of Reference, although we do agree with the [NSSG Response to the Carlile Report](#) that core groups (whether local or led by the NST we should add) should not make findings of fact or take decisions in civil claims processes.
676. The [NSSG Response](#) deals primarily with civil claims matters, although the response can be read in a wider context to include NST core group meetings. Recommendation 1 of the [Carlile Report](#) states that core groups should have a consistent membership, including a nominated chair. We agree to this recommendation and note that the NSSG agrees.

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677. **We recommend (as in the Carlile report) that core groups should have a consistent membership, including a nominated chair (Recommendation 32).**
678. We note also that the Church recognises the difficulties which are inherent in the management of disclosures where the alleged perpetrator cannot participate in the process, especially of course in a case where the allegation relates to a deceased person.
679. We note that the Church intends to put in place an addendum to the [Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers \(2017\)](#) document ([see paragraph 523](#)), which will include guidance around sharing sufficient information with close living relatives of a deceased alleged perpetrator. We have not seen this addendum as yet. We believe that recommendation 13 at [paragraph 519](#) will address this issue.

### **2. Apologies**

680. There is one matter of concern arising out of the [Carlile Report](#), and that relates to the timing of apologies. We note that the Legal Department urged caution in sending out apology letters in the light of the [Carlile Report](#) and whilst civil claims were still pending. Martyn Burrell in his interview with us indicated that the legal response was in part responsible for the delay in the sending of the letters, concerned as the Legal Department were with the recommendations in the [Carlile Report](#) to exercise caution in sending apologies prior to settlement of claims.
681. **We recommend that the practice guidance be looked at to see whether it can be possible to send out letters of apology, prior to completion of any ongoing claims, to complainants at an early opportunity (Recommendation 33).<sup>75</sup>**
682. Bishop Thornton, in his reply to the Chester DSA's email to the Archbishop of Canterbury, both dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 said *"it does seem to me that an apology is something that could and should be given and hope that this can now happen."* We agree with these sentiments.
683. These letters, surely, can be made available even before decision making on the allegation is concluded. Many involved in the Whitsey investigation, in particular the Chester DSA were of this view, and we agree with her.

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<sup>75</sup> The [policyholder guidance by Ecclesiastical Insurance](#) states that *"to give an apology or simply acknowledge the abuse circumstances will not normally prejudice the insurance position, but such action is best considered by policyholders in consultation with Ecclesiastical."*

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## **Chapter 18: Inquiry into the Church of England's response to child abuse allegations made against Robert Waddington (Cahill Report)**

684. We turn finally to consider the recommendations in the *Cahill Report*, published on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 (*Inquiry into the Church of England's response to child abuse allegations made against Robert Waddington*).<sup>76</sup>
685. The first recommendation is that child protection needs to be approached on a national basis not a Diocesan basis. Much work has been done in the intervening six years to set up national guidance, and the NST of course takes the lead in cases such as the one we have been considering.
686. The *Cahill Report* recommends that information is shared, and records are shared. We are satisfied that this recommendation has been adopted by the Church, and we can point to the work done by the DSA in London in the early stages of the NST Whitsey core group, and the involvement of Manchester, Blackburn and York, as well as Chester, in the various stages of the core group work.
687. Recommendation 2 of the *Cahill Report* states that “*there needs to be a National Policy, procedure and guidance in relation to child protection with no local variations, the document needs to cover both current and historic cases*”. We agree that the Church has done much to implement this recommendation, and the [Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance](#) section of the Church of England website is user friendly. There is always room for improvement to make the procedures clear and precise, but we are satisfied that the policies and practice guidance documents are to be kept under constant review, we believe primarily by the House of Bishops and the NSSG.
688. Recommendation 3 of the *Cahill Report* recommends a national Child Protection Service for the Church of England. The NST of course has been instituted subsequent to the *Cahill Report*, and takes the lead in cases such as Whitsey. Within that recommendation, the *Cahill Report* also recommends that the regional Child Protection Officer (now of course the DSAs) should be empowered to refer any matter in their discretion to the relevant statutory agency or police without the need to consult the Bishop. We have noted already that the initial wording of paragraph 4(1) of the [Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016](#) was amended to provide more clarity about who should make the referral. We have noted however that there is still some tension in the regulations regarding ‘advising’ and ‘making a referral’. It is our view that recommendation 18 at [paragraph 588](#) will address this issue.
689. Recommendation 6 of the *Cahill Report* is particularly important. It states: “*Decision makers should not have pastoral responsibility for the alleged perpetrator.*” We have considerable sympathy for this view. The [SCIE report on the Diocese of Chester](#) (March 2017) made the following observations: “*The auditors are aware that this recommendation is not policy within the Church. It does though raise one of the underlying systemic difficulties there can be in decision-making relating to allegations of church officers, and consequently the need for a national position on the appropriate safeguards to minimise any potential for conflicts of interest involved in any decision-making about*

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<sup>76</sup> Not available online

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*referrals to statutory authorities.”*

690. Support for victims (pastoral and otherwise), however, has been an important part of our current inquiry. We refer to this issue at [paragraph 589](#).
691. The Chester DSA told us in her interview with us *“Often I was the first person to speak to the victims, they often latch on to someone they spoke to first. I was providing pastoral support...I shared this at a few core groups and it was agreed that I was the appropriate person and it was delegated to me to do. Victims really needed support and I was tasked with the role of supporting them. They were heavily reliant on me and it was draining.”*
692. It is our opinion, as we have expressed at [paragraph 591](#) before, that, although the Chester DSA provided considerable support to victims in the Whitsey inquiry, the impact on her was as she said *“draining”*. It should not have been allowed to happen, and it is the responsibility of the NST in high profile cases like this one to make sure that appropriate support is provided to the victims, and allow the DSA to engage in her primary function.
693. We agree with the *Cahill Report* that anyone who has pastoral responsibility within the Church (especially of course the Bishop of the Diocese) should not have the authority to make safeguarding decisions. Decisions on the threshold to report to a statutory agency are decisions for the DSA.
694. Recommendation 7 of the *Cahill Report* states that record keeping needs to be national. We refer to this issue at [Chapter 16, Section 4](#).

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## PART C

### Chapter 19: Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

695. We hope that this Report will be of value to the Church in the work it is at present engaged in, with embedding safeguarding as a key component of its ministry, and in providing a victim centred approach to all of its policy and practice guidance. It is in this spirit that we make our recommendations below.

696. Our recommendations broadly fall into the following categories:

- Case management processes
- National policy and guidance
- Roles and responsibilities
- Victim support
- Apology letters

Recommendation	Paragraph Reference
1. We recommend that all effort should be made by the DSA to ensure that there is support in place for someone who is exploring whether to disclose non-recent abuse, and there should be follow up enquiries with a potential complainant to encourage them to talk with the DSA.	65
2. We recommend that if a DSA is made aware that there has been a possible disclosure to a Church officer, whatever his or her rank, of abuse, there be immediate steps taken to make enquiries about this. This must be at national level if the circumstances warrant it, such as an alleged disclosure to a serving Bishop.	66
3. We recommend that the practice guidance is looked at carefully to ensure that there is no ambiguity, so that Church officers are in no doubt but that disclosures must be reported to the DSA, even in cases where the complainant is asking for it not to be shared. This must be made very clear to a complainant at the beginning of any disclosure in whatever setting including social situations.	179
4. We recommend that when case management passes to another member of staff in national cases, wherever possible, both the old and new casework managers should attend the next core group meeting to aid in a smooth transition.	247
5. We recommend that it in the current <i>Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017</i> document, it should be made clear that a Diocesan Bishop “ <i>being distant from the process</i> ” includes no direct involvement in the management of	253

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a safeguarding case.	
6. We recommend that an invitation be given to the police to attend all relevant core group meetings, in order to share information and to advise on matters which could affect a police investigation.	352
7. We recommend that in the absence of the DSA (or members of the safeguarding team) clear guidance is given to front line staff as to whom safeguarding calls can be transferred to.	419
8. We recommend that all diocesan staff (and particularly front-line staff) receive basic training on how to deal with phone calls relating to safeguarding matters, acknowledging how important it is to respond to these calls in a sensitive and appropriate manner.	420
9. We recommend that all members of the clergy be reminded that if any suggestion of abuse comes to the attention of a member of the clergy, the primary duty on that member of the clergy is to report the matter immediately to the DSA. That duty is set out clearly in all practice guidance and in all training programmes.	452
10. We recommend, that the Church should continue to explore ways in which PTO should be granted and/or extended, only when the Bishop is satisfied that there is no suspicion whatsoever of the recipient's behaviour. PTO should not be an expectation.	465
11. We recommend that apology letters be signed by the appropriate Archbishop in a case where the perpetrator is a Bishop, and victims be given the opportunity to meet with the lead Bishop for Safeguarding.	485
12. We recommend that, in future, whenever apologies become necessary, they are written in a way that reflects the particular and individual set of facts appertaining to that particular victim.	495
13. We recommend that all relevant practice guidance documents be amended to reflect that safeguarding does not cease on the death of an alleged perpetrator.	519
14. We recommend that the practice guidance documents make absolutely clear that discussions between clergy and the DSAs relating to disclosures and allegations are made the subject of a contemporaneous note and are agreed by both parties to the conversation (possibly by email).	533
15. We recommend that the <i>Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies 2017 practice guidance</i> document be looked at in the light of potential disagreements between a Bishop and his/her DSA. We recommend also that when conflicts and tensions arise, there should be an agreed escalation strategy in place which may lead to the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop ultimately having to intervene in those circumstances with support from one of the two Archbishops if necessary.	539



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16. We recommend that consideration be given to strengthening the wording of the role description of the National Lead Safeguarding Bishop's role in <i>Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies 2017 practice guidance</i> document to include " <i>and where necessary, to make decisions on the resolution of the management of safeguarding cases.</i> "	581
17. We recommend that consideration be given to DSAs becoming a part of the Diocesan Senior Leadership Team.	583
18. We recommend that it should be made clear in the DSA Regulations that the DSA should be the responsible person who makes the referral, notwithstanding a contrary view expressed for example by the Bishop. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations may require amendment accordingly.	588
19. We recommend that the issue of who should provide victim support be addressed with the intention of providing a clear victim strategy and that appropriate professional support be facilitated.	593
20. We recommend that the Church develop a handover protocol for safeguarding staff in Dioceses and the NST.	597
21. We recommend that both the NST core groups, and where appropriate the diocesan core groups, keep to practice guidance time scales (48 hours), whilst acknowledging that it is important to ensure that key personnel are available to attend the meeting and that these meetings could be by video link.	614
22. We recommend that when the current <i>Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 2017</i> document is updated, consideration should be given to including a template core group agenda.	616
23. We recommend that guidance is updated to use a more neutral word such as ' <i>alleged perpetrator</i> ' rather than respondent	618
24. We recommend that if there is to be a change of any key role or key responsibility within the core group, that this change should be appropriately communicated to key participants. The change should be noted in the minutes of a core group meeting and documented in the safeguarding case file.	634
25. We recommend that administrators who are appointed as core group minute takers receive specific training in relation to taking core group minutes.	646
26. We recommend that action points be drawn up and circulated in a timely fashion, and that the chair of the core group takes it upon himself/herself to ensure that the actions are dealt with within the time set out by the core group.	647
27. We recommend that further work should be implemented in order to consider introducing a central case management system for safeguarding cases managed by the NST.	651

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28. We recommend that the Church consider adopting the proposal that an independent person be in attendance at relevant core group meetings either as chair or member.	657
29. We recommend that the Church of England develop a clear action plan to increase the resources of the NST, especially in terms of personnel.	659
30. We recommend that the National Church and the National College of Policing work together to develop an information sharing agreement which sets out clearly the importance of sharing information between the Church and the police.	666
31. We recommend that the NST explore the issue of facilitating victim peer support; which agency should take responsibility for this and how this should best be managed.	674
32. We recommend (as in the Carlile report) that core groups should have a consistent membership, including a nominated chair.	677
33. We recommend that the practice guidance be looked at to see whether it can be possible to send out letters of apology, prior to completion of any ongoing claims, to complainants at an early opportunity.	681

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## **Appendix 1: Brief CVs of Review Team**

### **His Honour David Pearl – Lead Reviewer**

David commenced his career as an academic lawyer and he taught undergraduate and graduate students at Cambridge University from 1967 until 1989 when he moved to the University of East Anglia as Professor of Law and Dean of the Law School. In 1994 he left academic life on his appointment as a Circuit Judge. He held a number of important senior judicial positions; as Chief Adjudicator, Immigration Appeals and then President of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal, as Director of Studies of the Judicial Studies Board, and as President of the Care Standards Tribunal. He was also a Commissioner of the Judicial Appointments Commission from 2006-2012. He sat as a Deputy High Court Judge in the Family Division and the Administrative Court. In 2012, he retired as a Judge and was appointed by the General Medical Council to head up the newly created Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service, which hears cases referred to it by the GMC regarding alleged misconduct and/or performance failures by registered medical practitioners. He retired from this position at the end of 2016. David is a Life Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, an Honorary Professor of the University of East Anglia, and a Bencher of Gray's Inn.

### **Kate Wood – Review Adviser**

Kate is a retired Detective Inspector from Sussex Police, with 20 years experience investigating, reviewing and managing serious crime. During her police career she specialised in the investigation and review of crimes against children and young people and the development of related policy.

Kate has been a Safeguarding Consultant for the past 12 years. She has undertaken numerous independent pieces of work for the Church of England both for the national Church and for several Dioceses. These include complex independent case investigations, risk assessments, case reviews and lessons learned reviews. She was the reviewer for the case of Bishop Peter Ball and the subsequent case manager. Kate is currently an Independent Reviewer for the Church of England Past Cases Review 2 and a member of the overseeing Project Management Board.

### **Hannah Sinclair – Project Manager**

Hannah works as an independent Administrator and Project Manager. She began her career working as a Secretary to a Community Mental Health Team in the NHS. She then worked for the National Safeguarding Team to the Church of England as an Administrator and Personal Assistant. She advanced to become the Office Manager and supervised a small team of administrators. During this period, she studied part time with the Open University. In 2018 she left her position of Office Manager to work independently. In 2019 she graduated with a BA Hons Open Degree (1<sup>st</sup> class honours).

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## **Appendix 2: Terms of Reference**

### **SCHEDULE A**

#### **Terms of Reference Part A Learning Lessons Case Review – the late Hubert Victor Whitsey**

**These instructions set out the basis on which the National Safeguarding Team of the Church of England commissions His Honour David Pearl (“the Reviewer”) to undertake a review into the handling of allegations that have come to the attention of the Church of England concerning the late Hubert Victor Whitsey, former Bishop of Chester.**

The review into the handling of the allegations will take place in two parts. These terms of reference deal with the first part (Part A) and focus on historic allegations relating to Hubert Victor Whitsey. Allegations which fall later than the time period specified will be dealt with as Part B and be subject to additional terms of reference.

These instructions are given by the National Safeguarding Team (NST) of the Church of England, acting on behalf of the Archbishops’ Council. This document should be read alongside, and forms part of, the agreement between the Reviewer and the Archbishops’ Council in relation to this investigation (“the Agreement”), in particular provisions relating to confidentiality and data protection.

#### **1. Introduction**

##### **Brief summary of the case**

In July 2016 Cheshire Constabulary commenced a police investigation – known as Operation Coverage - following a report from the Chester Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, which related to serious sexual abuse disclosures that had been made against the late Right Reverend Hubert Victor Whitsey, former Bishop of Chester.

At the start of the Police investigation it was alleged that the offences had only taken place in Chester diocese, although through subsequent enquiries alleged offences were also identified in the Lancashire area (Diocese of Blackburn). The investigation was focused on incidents reported to have occurred between 1974 and 1982, namely the period of time during which the Right Reverend Hubert Victor Whitsey held office as Bishop of Chester.

The first known allegation is reported to have occurred sometime during 1974 and the last reported allegation is reported to have occurred following the Bishop’s departure from the Chester Diocese in 1982.

Consistent with guidance given in Operation Hydrant, relating to investigations into allegations made posthumously, when Cheshire Constabulary finalised their investigation in Operation Coverage they concluded that:

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*“Based upon the accounts provided, Operation Coverage has determined that should Right Reverend Hubert Victor Whitsey have been alive today, then the police would have spoken to him in relation to 10 of the witness allegations. This is based upon the details they have provided within their accounts of the abuse they have alleged. The 3 other witnesses have provided only limited information to the police regarding the abuse they have alleged and, as such, it has been determined that we would have had insufficient information to speak to Right Reverend Hubert Victor Whitsey in regard to these specific cases.”*

The National Safeguarding Team is not aware of any ongoing criminal investigation. There are a number of civil claims underway.

The NST understands that 19 people have come forward to date with allegations of abuse by Whitsey. Not all of those individuals have expressed a wish (via police liaison officers) to be contacted by the Church of England.

The Archbishop of York has apologised to all those who have expressed a wish to receive a personal apology (in addition to the public apology made by the Archbishop of York) and offers have been made, for those who wish to do so, to meet with the Lead Safeguarding Bishop, the Rt Rev. Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath & Wells. Nine people have been contacted by letter offering an appointment with Bishop Peter, or their diocesan bishop should they prefer.

## **2. Objective of the Review**

This review (“the Review”) will allow those individuals who have indicated that they have sustained harm at the hands of Hubert Victor Whitsey or another Church body or officer to describe their experiences. The Review will identify both good practice and failings in the Church of England’s handling of the allegations relating to Hubert Victor Whitsey, including its safeguarding practice, in order that the Church of England can take steps to enhance and improve its response to allegations of abuse and, thereby, ensure a safer environment for all.

## **3. Scope of the Review**

3.1 The Review will focus on two related but distinct questions: (1) what did the Church of England know about alleged abuse perpetrated by Hubert Victor Whitsey, and (2) what was the Church of England’s response to those allegations.

3.2 In connection with the first question, the Review will consider:

(1) What information was available to the Church of England within relevant dioceses (see below) relating to Herbert Victor Whitsey’s alleged abuse of children and individuals, and whether this information was known to central Church authorities.

(2) Who had this information and when and what did they do with it.

3.3 In connection with the second question, the Review will consider:

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- (1) Whether, when the abuse was reported, Church officers and Church bodies responded in a timely and appropriate manner in line with policies, practice and procedures in place in the Church of England at the time, as well as appropriate statutory policy and legislation.
- (2) Whether such abuse, and any further abuse, could have been prevented.
- (3) Whether, taking account of the [Gibb review](#), what additional lessons can be learnt which are relevant and which might improve safeguarding practice in the Church of England.

### **4. Principles underpinning the Review**

#### 4.1 The Reviewer should:

- (1) Place the actions of individuals and organisations in context, showing understanding of the underlying reasons that led to individuals and organisations acting as they did, or which might explain why they did so.
- (2) Consider the actions of individuals and organisations against the standards of practice which applied at the relevant time, i.e. understand practice from the view point of the individuals and organisations at the time rather than using hindsight.
- (3) Be transparent and open about the collection and use of information.
- (4) Make use of relevant research (for example which allows the Reviewer to assess conduct at a particular date against the standards in place at that date) and appropriate evidence to inform all judgments.
- (5) Ensure that if, in the course of their work they identify additional relevant matters (whether additional allegations or failures to respond properly by a Church officer or Church body), that these are brought to the immediate attention of Elizabeth Pollard in the National Safeguarding Team.

### **5. Relevant material**

#### Time frame

- 5.1 The time frame for the Review will be the period from 1966 (the date of first known disclosure) until 27 July 2018 (date of the apology letter from the Archbishop of York).

#### Evidence

#### 5.2 The Reviewer may wish to:

- (1) Consider the oral accounts of those with an interest in this Review, namely survivors, those who have brought forward allegations of abuse, relevant

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clergy, and appropriate others (“Interested Parties”), to the extent that they are willing to take part in the Review; and

(2) Consider relevant documentary evidence from the sources set out below

5.3 Where appropriate the Reviewer may, with the agreement of Director of Safeguarding, follow up any alternate material lines of inquiry, not already detailed in these Terms of Reference, which in the Reviewer’s opinion might be relevant to the Review.

### *Oral accounts*

5.4 The Reviewer may approach Interested Parties to ask them to give an oral account in connection with any matter relevant to the Review. Any oral account given will be recorded and transcribed. Alternatively, where a relevant individual has already given their account to the police or a statutory agency, and would rather not retell their account, the Reviewer may have regard to any relevant account which that individual might obtain by making a data subject access request to the appropriate data controller.

5.5 The Reviewer should consider making approaches to:

- i) Survivors and those who have brought forward allegations of abuse
- ii) Relevant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (i.e. those in the dioceses of Chester, Blackburn, Manchester and St Albans)
- iii) Relevant bishops and clergy, to include the Bishops of Chester, Manchester, and Beverley
- iv) The Archbishop of York
- v) Officers of the Cheshire Constabulary
- vi) The close living relations of Bishop Hubert Victor Whitsey

### *Documentary evidence*

5.6 So far as they are available, the Reviewer will review relevant documents from the following sources:

- i) Diocese of Chester
- ii) Diocese of Blackburn
- iii) Diocese of Manchester
- iv) Diocese of St Albans (Hertford)
- v) The Office of the Archbishop of York
- vi) Any other diocese where Hubert Victor Whitsey held Permission to Officiate or held office
- vii) Cheshire Constabulary’s report of their investigation
- viii) The National Safeguarding Team
- ix) The Provincial Safeguarding Adviser in the Province of York

## **6. Involvement of Interested Parties and the Whitsey family**

6.1 In order to ensure that the Review is transparent and fair:

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- (1) These Terms of Reference will be shared with Interested Parties if they wish to see them. The National Safeguarding Team welcomes any feedback on this Review which those individuals may have.
- (2) Interested Parties will be asked if they wish to engage with the Review.
- (3) The Director of Safeguarding will ensure that the Review is shared with Interested Parties and the close living relations of Hubert Victor Whitsey with reasonable advance notice of publication.

### **7. Content of Review**

- 7.1 In light of the purpose of the Review (as set out above), based on the evidence available, the Reviewer will answer the questions which are set out in paragraph 3 above.
- 7.2 The Review should be accompanied by an executive summary.
- 7.3 The Reviewer should identify, in an appendix to the Review, all of the oral accounts and documentary records which he has considered.
- 7.4 The Reviewer will not be able to make formal findings of fact but is asked to give a view, informed by his professional judgment, as to what version of events seems most likely, on the balance of probabilities.
- 7.5 The Reviewer should identify examples of good safeguarding practice as well as examples of any inappropriate response.
- 7.6 The Review should be accompanied by a chronology of relevant events.

### **8. Timeline for the Review**

- 8.1 Work on the Review will commence on 20 May 2019.
- 8.2 It is anticipated that the Review shall be completed within no more than nine months from commencement.
- 8.3 Elizabeth Pollard will be the National Safeguarding Team's point of contact for the Review and it is anticipated that Ms Pollard and the Reviewer will meet regularly to review the progress of the Review. The Reviewer is asked to provide progress updates to Ms Pollard on a regular basis.

### **9. Presentation and publication of Review**

- 9.1 The Review should be drafted ready for publication, i.e. with appropriate steps taken to anonymise the name of individuals who do not wish to be named and to redact such information as might allow for identification.
- 9.2 The Reviewer should send the Review in a non-editable electronic format (pdf is best) to the Director of Safeguarding.



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- 9.3 The Director of Safeguarding will share the Review with the National Safeguarding Steering Group at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.4 The National Safeguarding Team intends that the Review will be published. The Director of Safeguarding will, in consultation with the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding and the Deputy Director for Communications, take all decisions regarding publication of the Review, including the timing of publication and any redaction which they consider may be appropriate.
- 9.5 In advance of publication, the Director of Safeguarding will take reasonable steps to give advance warning to any Church officer or body they consider has been subject to criticism in the Review and will provide a reasonable opportunity for that officer or body to respond.

**April 2019**

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## **Appendix 3: Those Interviewed During the Review**

Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) lockdown, some interviews had to be conducted either by teleconference or video conference. For ease, we have noted the format of each meeting.

During the course of this Review, we made attempts to contact Jane Dodds (via the National Church Institutions Human Resources Department, a publicly available email address and social media) to organise an interview but were unable to reach her whilst drafting the Report. However, during the representation process, we established contact with Jane Dodds and her response to the representation letter is included at [paragraph 240](#).

Throughout the course of the Review, the Review Team attempted to make contact with Sheryl Kent in order to meet with her to discuss her role in the Whitsey case and latterly, offer her the opportunity to make a written representation. Her previous employer, the Diocese of London, did not hold up to date contact details for Sheryl Kent and efforts to contact her at an old address were unfortunately not successful.

### **In person meetings:**

- Bishop Keith Sinclair – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019
- Cheshire Police – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019
- Bishop Peter Forster – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (with Kate Wood and Hannah Sinclair)
- Bishop David Urquhart – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- M2 – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- Martyn Burrell – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Moira Murray – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **Teleconference meetings:**

- The Chester DSA – 16<sup>th</sup> August 2019 (with David Pearl and Hannah Sinclair)
- The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser – 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019
- F1 – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Bishop Michael Baughen – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Bishop Glyn Webster – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 (with David Pearl and Hannah Sinclair)
- Canon Roger Clarke – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Graham Tilby – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020
- Professor Sue Proctor – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020

### **Videoconference meetings:**

- F6 – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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- Annette Gordon – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020
- Cleric A – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020
- Cleric X – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- The Northern Provincial Safeguarding Adviser – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- His Honour Tim Mort – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020
- The Chester DSA – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Debbie Dalby – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- M1 – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Cheshire Police – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- David Finan – 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Sharon Hassall – 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020
- Bishop Peter Price – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- Colin Perkins – 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

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## **Appendix 4: Documents Reviewed**

### Safeguarding Case Files

- Chester Diocesan safeguarding case file regarding Whitsey
- London Diocesan safeguarding case file regarding Whitsey
- Blackburn Diocesan safeguarding case file regarding Whitsey
- National Safeguarding Team safeguarding case file regarding Whitsey
- York Diocesan safeguarding case file regarding Whitsey

Requests were also made to the safeguarding teams in Manchester Diocese, St Albans Diocese and Ely Diocese but these Dioceses responded to state that they did not hold a safeguarding case file in relation to the Whitsey case due to very limited involvement.

### Archbishop and Bishops' Offices

The criteria for these requests were as follows:

- Correspondence and documentation relating to the allegations made in respect of Bishop Whitsey and if relevant his response to allegations made to him about others.
- Correspondence and documentation relating to contact with victims/survivors of Bishop Whitsey (including documentation relating to apology letters)

We received files from the following offices:

- Bishop of Bath and Wells office (contact logs and email correspondence with victims (F7, F6, M3 and M2))
- Bishop of Chester's office (email correspondence from Bishop Peter Forster to various people regarding the Whitsey case)
- Archbishop of York's office (file containing email correspondence regarding the Whitsey case, updates provided by the Northern PSA to the Archbishop of York and his responses, letters to and from the Archbishop regarding the case and a redacted copy of Cleric A's report)

Requests were also made to the Bishop of Manchester's office and the Bishop of Birmingham's office but both Bishop's offices responded to state that they did not hold any information in relation to the Whitsey case.

### Cheshire Constabulary

- M1 police witness statement and miscellaneous correspondence with the police
- F1 police witness statement
- F7 police witness statement
- M2 police witness statement and copies of letters M2 provided to the police

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- Redacted police referral to NST
- Redacted timeline of events
- Minutes of meeting with Church of England representatives at the conclusion of *Operation Coverage*
- Copy of Whitsey's Blackburn retirement file
- Archive material from Lambeth Palace Library

## Borthwick Archive

- Letters between Whitsey, Bishop Strutt and Archbishop Blanch regarding Whitsey's retirement

## IICSA

- F6 IICSA witness statement (via her solicitor)
- F1 IICSA witness statement (via her solicitor)
- M3 IICSA witness statement (via his solicitor)
- Peter Lee IICSA witness statement

## Other Documents

In some instances, the Review Team learned that individuals had documentation which may prove helpful to the Review and thus provided it to us afterwards.

- Copies of Book of Remembrance (provided by Elaine Chegwin Hall)
- Correspondence from BLM to Elaine Chegwin Hall regarding the Book of Remembrance (provided by Elaine Chegwin Hall)
- PSA protocol between Bishopthorpe and Lambeth Palace (provided by NST)
- Contract for CCPAS Whitsey helpline (provided by NST)
- PSA job description (provided by NST)
- National Safeguarding Adviser job description (provided by NST)
- National Safeguarding Casework Manager job description (provided by NST)
- National safeguarding policy timeline (provided by NST)
- NST structure diagram – July 2019 (provided by NST)
- House of Bishops' safeguarding paper regarding proposed regional model (provided by NST)
- Whitsey's obituary (The Daily Telegraph) (provided by his eldest son)
- Letter from Revd Paddy Benson regarding the Whitsey case (in response to a request for a meeting)
- M9 civil proceedings statement (via his solicitor)
- M11 civil proceedings statement (via his solicitor)
- Photograph of Bishop's House, Chester (current day) and a photograph of Whitsey in Bishop's House, Chester (provided by Canon Roger Clarke)

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- Letter from the Archbishop of York to Professor Sue Proctor regarding Cleric A's report (provided by Professor Sue Proctor)
- Document from His Honour Tim Mort regarding his involvement in the Whitsey case (provided by His Honour Tim Mort prior to our meeting with him)

We are grateful to all those who provided the Review Team with documentation.

### Publicly available documents consulted

- *To Heal and Not To Hurt* by Rosie Harper and Alan Wilson (2019) (ISBN: 978-0-232-53394-1) (provided by the NST)
- *For the Treasury Committee: A Review of Maxwellisation* prepared by Blackstone Chambers (November 2016). Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmtreasy/maxwellisation/a-review-of-maxwellisation-24-11-16.pdf>
- *The Anglican Church Case Studies: 1. The Diocese of Chichester & 2. The response to allegations against Peter Ball Investigation Report* by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) (May 2019). Available at: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/11301/view/anglican-church-case-studies-chichester-peter-ball-investigation-report-may-2019.pdf>
- *Diocese of Chester Independent Safeguarding Audit May 2016* by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (published March 2017). Available at: <https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f20800211eb6/content/pages/documents/1503654558.pdf>
- *Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) advice: Investigations into allegations of non-recent institutional child sexual abuse or child abuse by people with a high public profile* by the College of Policing (July 2020). Available at: <https://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Documents/SIO%20advice%20August%202020.pdf>
- *Operation Hydrant SIO advice* [redacted] by the College of Policing (November 2016). Available at: <https://www.college.police.uk/FOI/Documents/FOIA-2017-0104%20-%20Combined.pdf>
- *Bishop George Bell: The Independent Review* by Lord Carlile of Berriew, CBE, Q.C. (December 2017). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/Bishop%20George%20Bell%20-%20The%20Independent%20Review.pdf>
- *An Abuse of Faith: The Independent Peter Ball Review* by Dame Moira Gibb DBE (June 2017). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/report-of-the-peter-ball-review-210617.pdf>
- *National Safeguarding Steering Group Response to the George Bell Independent Review Recommendations* by the National Safeguarding Steering Group (February 2018). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/NSSG%20response%20to%20Carlile%20Review%20recommendations.pdf>
- *National Safeguarding Steering Group Response to the Independent Peter Ball Review* by the National Safeguarding Steering Group (February 2018). Available at:

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<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/NSSG%20Response%20to%20Peter%20Ball%20Review.pdf>

- *Interim Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse* by IICSA (April 2018). Available at: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/5368/view/full-interim-report-independent-inquiry-into-child-sexual-abuse.pdf>
- *Report into the Metropolitan Police Services' handling of non-recent sex allegations (Operation Midland)* by Sir Richard Henriques (October 2016). Available at: <https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/henriques-report/>
- *An Inspection of the Metropolitan Police Service's response to a review of its investigations into allegations of non-recent sexual abuse by prominent people* by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (March 2020). Available at: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/inspection-MPS-response-review-investigations-allegations-non-recent-sexual-abuse-prominent-people-1.pdf>
- *SCIE Final overview report of the independent diocesan safeguarding audits and additional work on improving responses to survivors of abuse* by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (March 2019). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/SCIE%20Final%20overview%20report%20of%20the%20independent%20diocesan%20safeguarding%20audits%20and%20additional%20work%20on%20improving%20responses%20to%20survivors%20of%20abuse.pdf>
- *Public Hearing Transcript 3 July 2019* by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (July 2019). Available at: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/12423/view/public-hearing-transcript-3-july-2019.pdf>
- *Inquiry into the Church of England's Response to child abuse allegations against Robert Waddington* [recommendations only] by Her Honour Judge Cahill (October 2014) (provided by the NST)
- *Terms of Reference* by the National Safeguarding Steering Group (November 2017). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/NSSG%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20and%20Membership%20Nov%202017.pdf>
- *Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors Regulations 2016* (includes 2017 amendment) by the House of Bishops under paragraph 1(2) of Canon C 30 (July 2017). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/dsa-regulations-as-amended-2017.pdf>
- *2016 Budget* by the Archbishops' Council (July 2015). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/gs%202002%20-%20the%20archbishops%20councils%20budget%202016.pdf>
- *2020 Budget* by the Archbishops' Council (July 2019). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/GS%202141%20budget.pdf>
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (March 2010). Available at: [https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/documents/WT\\_2010.PDF](https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/documents/WT_2010.PDF)
- *Promoting a Safe Church: Policy for safeguarding adults in the Church of England* by the Archbishops' Council, Church of England (2006). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/promotingasafechurch.pdf>

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- *Protecting All God's Children: The Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (Fourth edition, 2010). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Protecting%20All%20God%27s%20Children%204th%20edition.pdf>
- *Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused: Policy and guidance for the Church of England* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 2011). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Responding%20Well%20to%20those%20who%20have%20been%20sexually%20abused%200.pdf>
- *Practice Guidance: Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (June 2015). Available at: <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1456764905.pdf>
- *Practice Guidance: Risk Assessments for Individuals who may Pose Risk to Children or Adults* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (June 2015). Available at: <https://dioceseofyork.org.uk/uploads/attachment/2768/risk-assessment-guidance-individuals-who-may-pose-risk-to-children-or-adults.pdf>
- *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church* by the House of Bishops and the Methodist Church (June 2015). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20joint%20practice%20guidance%20-%20safeguarding%20records.pdf>
- *Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (July 2016). Available at: [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer\\_recruitment\\_practice\\_guidance\\_2016.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf)
- *Policy on Granting Permission to Officiate* by the House of Bishops Delegation Committee (July 2018). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/House%20of%20Bishops%20Policy%20on%20PTO%20July%202018.pdf>
- *Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers* by the House of Bishops, Church of England (October 2017). Available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/Responding%20PG%20V2.pdf>
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