

The Archbishop of Canterbury has announced the appointment of Dame Moira Gibb to be chair of the independent review into the way the Church of England responded to the case of Peter Ball, the former Bishop of Gloucester, who was jailed last year for sex offences.

Dame Moira has worked at a senior level in the statutory sector - she was Chief Executive of Camden Council until 2011 - and holds a range of non-executive roles. Most recently she was the chair of the Serious Case Review (published January 2016) into safeguarding at Southbank International School in the wake of the crimes committed by William Vahey.

She will be assisted in the review by Kevin Harrington JP, safeguarding consultant and lead reviewer on a range of Serious Case Reviews; James Reilly, former Chief Executive of Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (until Feb 2016); Heather Schroeder MBE, currently vice chair of Action for Children and formerly held senior positions in social services and children's services in a number of local authorities.

The review will be published once Dame Moira and her team have completed their work which is expected to be within a year. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) chaired by Justice Goddard will also be looking at the Peter Ball case but have made it clear that institutions should continue with their previous commitments on safeguarding and the Church is in ongoing touch with IICSA on this.

The aim of the review will be to consider: What information was available to the Church of England, who had this information and when and to provide a detailed timeline and transparent account of the response; whether the response was in accordance with recognised good practice, and compliant with CofE policy and legislation as well as statutory policy and legislation; lessons about any necessary changes and developments needed within the CofE to ensure that safeguarding work is of the highest possible standard; how complaints and disciplinary processes are managed and any other specific areas of Church behaviour and practice identified by the review.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "I am hugely grateful to Dame Moira for agreeing to take up this vital role and chair the review, which will take a detailed look into how the Church handled the Peter Ball case. We have offered an unreserved apology to all the survivors and commend the bravery of those who brought these allegations forward, acknowledging how difficult and distressing this would have been. It is a matter of deep shame and regret that a bishop in the Church of England committed these offences. There are no excuses whatsoever for what took place and the systematic abuse of trust perpetrated by Peter Ball over decades. I hope the review will provide the Church as a whole with an opportunity to learn lessons which will improve our safeguarding practice and policy."

Should anyone have further information or need to discuss the personal impact of this news the Church has worked with the NSPCC to set up a confidential helpline no. 0800 389 5344.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Terms of Reference: Review - Peter Ball

Background

On October 5th 2015, the Archbishop of Canterbury announced the commissioning of an independent review of the way the Church of England responded to the case of Peter Ball, the former Bishop of Gloucester. The review follows the guilty plea by Peter Ball to two charges of indecent assault and one charge of misconduct in public office. The review will be conducted by an independent Review Group, who will examine the Church of England's response to the abusive conduct of Peter Ball.

Objectives

1. To review what information was available to the Church of England (within relevant dioceses, Lambeth Palace and central Church authorities) concerning Peter Ball's abuse of individuals; who had this information and when. To provide a detailed timeline and transparent account of the response within the Church of England.
2. To consider whether the response was in accordance with recognised good practice, and compliant with Church of England policy and legislation as well as statutory policy and legislation.
3. To learn lessons about any necessary changes and developments needed within the Church of England to ensure that safeguarding work is of the highest possible standard; how complaints and disciplinary processes are managed and any other specific areas of Church behaviour and practice identified by the review.
4. To produce a report, including recommendations, set out in a way which can be easily understood by professionals and public alike and suitable for publication. The report will be published on the Church of England website.

Review Group

- a. The Archbishop of Canterbury, having consulted the National Safeguarding Panel, will appoint a person to Chair the Review Group. That person will not be a member of the clergy and will not hold a senior diocesan or national position in the Church of England. He or she will have experience of safeguarding inquiries and complex case reviews.
- b. The Archbishop of Canterbury will also appoint a person with relevant experience to provide a detailed timeline and transparent account, as per 1a.

The Chair will appoint people with the relevant experience and skills to be specialist Advisers to the Review and professional administrative support.

- d. The Chair will be professionally supported by the National Safeguarding Team, the Legal Office and other relevant staff, and may seek other independent professional expertise as necessary.
- e. The Chair will present their report to the Archbishop of Canterbury for publication.
- f. If during the course of its work the Chair identifies any matters that have not previously come to attention, it will report these to the Police and the National Safeguarding Team.
- g. The Chair will keep the National Safeguarding Panel informed on its progress with the review, including the time within which it expects to complete the review.
- h. The review will proceed independently from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse as part of the Church of England's commitment to learning and further developing good safeguarding practice.

Scope of the Review

The Review team will:

- a. Have access to all of the material and files on this case within Lambeth Palace, and the Dioceses of Chichester, Gloucester, Bath and Wells and Truro and other locations as deemed appropriate.
- b. Consider relevant material provided by victims of Peter Ball, their families, and other individuals.
- c. Provide opportunities to victims of Peter Ball to share their experiences and the impact of those experiences on them.
- d. Provide opportunities to those within the Church of England (nationally and at Diocesan level) who worked closely on this case to share their experiences, in relation to each of the Objectives laid out in (1).
- e. Liaise and consult with relevant local statutory bodies to ensure appropriate sharing of information.

Archbishop announces independent review of Peter Ball case

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-news-releases/dame-moira-gibb-announced-chair-independent-review-peter>