

The Archbishops' Council has voted unanimously that a proposal on interim independent oversight of the National Safeguarding Team is to be put in place before February Synod (2021) to pave the way for full independent oversight, by February Synod 2022. Both the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops have already endorsed the principle of independence for the Church's safeguarding work.

The House of Bishops also discussed this at its meeting today supporting the direction of travel for these proposals while noting the importance of engaging with dioceses. The interim oversight model would include the creation of a new safeguarding board with a majority of entirely independent members, including a Chair, who would have delegated responsibility for the oversight of the NST, to ensure independence of scrutiny and feedback. The Board could then help determine the approach to implementing full independent oversight which will include proposed structural changes for closer working with and oversight of diocesan safeguarding officers, particularly on casework, as outlined in [the IICSA recommendations](#). The detailed arrangements for this, and the resulting allocation of responsibilities, will need to be worked out fully through this process of consultation.

Consultation with survivor representatives has made it very clear that they want to see independent oversight for all cases, not just national ones. This particularly reflects the first IICSA recommendation. There will be full consultation with survivor groups and with dioceses as detailed proposals are drawn up. The Archbishops' Council noted the importance of how the principle of independence is worked out in relation to dioceses and of ensuring input and feedback from parishes and PCCs. There will be a more detailed timeline in place by February Synod for the following 12 months as this work is progressed. The Council agreed the importance of increased resources to ensure this structure is in place by February Synod.

The Council also unanimously endorsed the setting up and funding of the Interim Support Scheme for survivors.

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