

The September meeting was chaired by the Church of England's lead safeguarding bishop, Joanne Grenfell who led prayers and gave thanks for the life of Bishop Karowei Dorgu, who had recently died in office and had been a member of the NSSG.

Matters arising from the previous meeting included a discussion on the remit of Professor Jay's review noting her recommendations are due to be received by the end of the year. There was an update on the Mr X case, noting that the safeguarding director had ongoing personal contact and there continued to be support from the Interim Support Scheme, ISS. Members approved the new Terms of Reference for the ISS which meant that Mr X and many others will continue to have this support.

Kevin Crompton, the interim commissioner of independent reviews and complaints relating to the work of the former ISB, introduced himself to members and gave an update on his work. He committed to reporting back to the NSSG on his progress.

Members were updated on national safeguarding work including challenges in some areas particularly around recruitment for the National Safeguarding Casework Management System and a delay in the *Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations* policy due to the need for comprehensive consultation which begins this month. This policy will come back to the NSSG in March and go to Synod for approval in July 2024.

The PCR2 update showed that diocesan lessons learnt reviews were now being shared with the NST as per the recommendations and the top 10 themes from the report were being collated. There was a discussion on the need to be clear about the role of DSAP chairs followed by a presentation on data from work identified by PCR2. Although the majority have been resolved, the importance of the narrative to explain the stories behind the numbers, was stressed.

There was also an update on the Safe Spaces service and survivor engagement particularly the national anonymous survey which had a good response (171) and is the largest survey to date in this area. Findings showed survivors want openness, transparency, acknowledgment, and thanks for their input. There are currently 82 survivors willing to engage with the national Church. The findings of the survey have now been published with a view to developing a survivor engagement framework. Members expressed thanks for the current important input survivors and victims are making to many projects and groups.

Members were updated on engagement with and support for PSOs, parish safeguarding officers, including updating the role definition, encouraging the use of the parish dashboard and the need to develop PSO training with guidance and policies all in one place. There was a wider discussion around the issue of recruiting volunteers and introducing refresher training for PSOs rather than the annual three-hour course.

There was also an update on the IICSA 1 & 8 project (from the relevant IICSA recommendations) noting two sets of regulations going to the project board – including what the DSO (diocesan safeguarding officer) role will look like, how to handle the roll out, and how supervision works.

This will come to the NSSG after the project board and then out for consultation. There is a plan for national roll out in July 2024. Members discussed the need for more information for those dioceses not involved in the regional pilot and for more information on the Quality Assurance process (IICSA recommendation 8).

Members also highlighted the forthcoming Synod report on redress and the need for national recommendations from diocesan reviews to come to the NSSG.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-news-releases/nssg-september-meeting>