

Statement from lead safeguarding bishop and national safeguarding director

The National Safeguarding Team, NST, has been updated on its complaint against the Reverend Mike Pilavachi, under the Clergy Discipline Measure, following the conclusion of its joint internal Church investigation with the Diocese of St Albans.

On the 4 September 2023 the NST was granted permission by the Deputy President of Tribunals to bring an allegation of misconduct against Mike Pilavachi under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003. This followed advice the NST has received from independent counsel on the merits of commencing CDM proceedings.

The allegation relates to the period after 2012, when Mr Pilavachi was ordained in the Church of England and was therefore subject to the Clergy Discipline Measure. It concerned Mr Pilavachi's verbal interactions with a vulnerable person. A bishop from outside the Diocese of St Albans was appointed to consider the allegation and the response from Mr Pilavachi. The result of the bishop's determination was that whilst no further action would be taken on the main allegation, Mr Pilavachi's conduct had nevertheless fallen short of that expected of a priest in the Church of England and in accordance with paragraph 163 of the Clergy Discipline Measure Code of Practice a written warning and advice has been issued to him.

In order that the decision be subject to independent judicial scrutiny, the NST requested that the President of Tribunals review the decision under section 13 of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003. The Deputy President, having carried out a review, determined that the decisions to take no further action and issue a warning and advice were properly made.

We commend the courage of the vulnerable person who came forward and gave clear evidence of the harm done in their life. We have been in contact with them throughout the process and offered continued support which is on offer to all those who have come forward and shared their experiences.

This process followed the conclusion of the joint investigation by the Diocese of St Albans and the National Safeguarding Team which concluded that the wider safeguarding concerns relating to conduct in Mr Pilavachi's leadership and ministry, both before and after he was ordained in 2012, spanning 40 years from his time as a youth leader through to current day, were substantiated.

Mr Pilavachi currently has no authority to minister, and should he wish to return to any ministry in the Church of England this will be fully risk assessed. The appropriate statutory referrals have been made.

Following recommendations by IICSA (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse) the Clergy Discipline Measure is being revised and will be replaced by the Clergy Conduct Measure, which is currently being considered by General Synod.

Conclusion of investigation: [September 2023 statement](#)

Further update statement: [November 2023](#)

Support and contact

If you would like to speak to anyone connected to this investigation or have been affected, please be assured that any concerns raised will be treated with the utmost sensitivity and support / access to counselling is available. Please contact safeguarding@churchofengland.org

If you or anyone you are in contact with are affected by this news and want to talk to someone independently, please call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056.

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