

## National Safeguarding Team (NST), Northern and Southern Provinces, Past Case Review 2

### Terms of Reference

The terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the “Past Case Review 2 Protocol and Practice Guidance July 2019” and “Background and Overview, Past Cases Review 2” July 2019

**Responsible Person:** Independent Chair: Chris Robson

#### 1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference (TOR) relate to the NST, the Province of Canterbury (Southern) and the Province of York (Northern) Past Case Review 2 (PCR2) Reference Group.

It is expected that the members of the Reference Group will familiarise themselves with the guidance and associated published documents noted above, including the report of the Independent Scrutiny Team into the adequacy of PCR1, July 2018

#### 2. Purpose of the review

To perform the key tasks below to enable the NST and Northern and Southern Provinces to participate in the PCR2 process, support Dioceses in their PCR2 task, and learn lessons for future work of NST and Provinces with regard to safeguarding and casework. The objectives are:

- To ensure any allegation made since the original PCR took place have been handled appropriately and proportionately to the level of risk identified, and with a focus on the support needs of any known victims or survivors
- To identify all cases of concern relating to clergy or church officers causing harm to children or vulnerable adults or where domestic abuse is alleged and ensure they have been independently reviewed
- To ensure that all identifiable safeguarding concerns relating to living clergy or church officers have been referred to the relevant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- To ensure that cases meeting the relevant thresholds have been referred to statutory agencies and that all cases are managed in line with current safeguarding practice guidance

### 3. PCR2 Reference Group's Functions

This reference group reports to the National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG).

The purpose of the reference group is to:

- Provide an independent assessment of the measures in place to manage risk and provide feedback to the NST PCR2 Project Team and the Director of Safeguarding or the completeness of risk management measures as a whole - where these are assessed as inadequate.
- Provide dispute resolution when there is differing professional opinions between the PSA or NST caseworker and the Independent Reviewer (IR).
- Have oversight of the care and support provision for victims and survivors and provide advice to the NST PCR2 Project Team and the Director of Safeguarding where this can be improved.
- Review the recommendations from the PSA regarding the exemption of a proportion of previously reviewed cases/files and ensure that agreement to seek exemption is unanimous.
- To monitor the timeliness and efficiency of the review and to provide feedback on its progress to the Director of Safeguarding.

### 4. Membership

At least half the Reference Group should comprise of people who are independent, experienced safeguarding professionals. There should be representation from both the police and local authority.

#### PCR2 Reference Group membership

Chair: Chris Robson

Contact email: [safeguardingeo@churchofengland.org](mailto:safeguardingeo@churchofengland.org)

The group also comprises:

Police, Local Authority representative, Senior Social Worker, Archbishops' nominated Lead for Safeguarding, Senior member of Archbishops' staff, Comms officers for the Archbishops and the NClS, Person with lived experience of abuse or survivors group, Lead for survivor support and engagement, Project manager (Lambeth Palace), Project manager (Bishopthorpe Palace), Project Manager (NST for the NClS).

## 5. Meeting Arrangements

The Reference Group will meet monthly to establish the review and then every two months to monitor and track progress.

The duration of the meetings will be dependent on the agenda but are not expected to take more than 2½ hours.

The Independent Chair may at any time convene extraordinary meetings to consider business that requires urgent attention or when required to manage significant risks or meet with smaller group as necessary between reference groups.

The Reference Group will be supported by the NST admin team.

## 6. Key tasks of the PCR2 reviewer

- Read the files of all church officers within scope and record cases of concern
- Consider the known cases list that are held at the Archbishops offices
- Prepare summaries of cases where the Independent Reviewer/s consider/s that further or different action should be taken and discuss these cases with the Deputy Director of Casework
- Engage with those victims and survivors who wish to make contact
- Prepare a summary report for the Archbishops, the Independent Chair and the NST Director of Safeguarding, including such recommendations as the IR considers will improve the NST and the Provinces and the wider Church's safeguarding performance
- Attend meetings of the Reference Group (or its relevant sub-group) and/or with the lead NST officers as may be needed to present findings and discuss cases
- Link, where necessary, with IR's and/or staff of other dioceses and National Church Institutions to fulfil their responsibilities

If an IR identifies any issues that require action to:

- mitigate risk
- report offences to the police
- report concerns to the local authority or another body

- provide support to an individual who has previously asked for help and where there is no evidence that appropriate support was offered

The IR must inform the Deputy Director of Casework or PSA (as appropriate) immediately.

## **Methodology**

The review will be conducted at Church House, Westminster, Bishopthorpe Palace and Lambeth Palace and where possible remotely (due to Covid 19 restrictions). Reviewers will have full access to files required, either in hard copy or electronic, depending on format.

Each file reviewed will be subject to a separate template report, which will be signed by the IR, including recommendations on any further action required.

Any case that has outstanding actions or current risks identified by the IR will be brought to the attention of the Deputy Director of Casework or the PSA's immediately.

If there is a case that involves, or is believed to involve, senior clergy or management, or there is a suspicion of collusion or 'cover up' the matter will be referred to the Deputy Director of Casework. If the IR does not wish to discuss with the Deputy Director of Casework this can be referred to the Independent Chair and the Director of Safeguarding.

IR's will use their best endeavours to bring sound professional competence to their tasks. They will apply confidentiality in relation to talking or writing about the assignment.

IR's will have professional indemnity insurance and a current DBS certificate.

## **Verification**

Once the file reviews have taken place the IR will have a meeting with the Deputy Director of Casework and the PSA's to consider the reviewer's report on each case. They should confirm the current arrangements for managing each case is satisfactory.

Summaries of any urgent actions needed for cases should be submitted via the Deputy Director of Casework to the Independent Chair of the PCR Reference Group for oversight and verification, using the relevant proforma.

Once the IR has finished their work and the Independent Chair has made decisions on referred cases, the IR will provide a short report to be shared with the NST Director of Safeguarding and the PCR2 Project Board.

The NST Project Manager will provide an overview to the PCR2 Project Management Group.

## **Consultations with victims and survivors**

Where there are known victims or survivors that the DSA is in current contact with they should be contacted by an IR and given the opportunity to give their experiences which can be taken into consideration by the IR when making recommendations. The NST guidance should be consulted for further information.

## **Governance**

The PCR Reference Group will provide oversight on the ongoing progress of the review and will meet as required during the course of the review.

The Independent Chair and Deputy Director of Casework will receive monthly updates from the NST project team.

Once the IR has finished their work and the Independent Chair has made its decisions on referred cases, the ongoing monitoring and management of the cases will be taken forward in the usual way by the NST or referred to the local DSA.