

Anglican Church Investigation
The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England
Update on the progress of Recommendation 7 of the Inquiry's Report dated 20 October 2020
as at 17 December 2021

1. This note responds to the Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse's (the "**Inquiry**") questions in connection with recommendation 7 (support for victims and survivors) of the Inquiry's Report dated October 2020 (the "**Wider Anglican Church Report**").
2. This note responds to the following matters:
 - a) The revision of the policy *Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse*
 - b) The Interim Support Scheme
 - c) The Church of England's national proposals regarding redress

Policy revision

3. The Church of England (also referred to in this note as the "**Church**") was in the process of revising its guidance entitled *Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse* (the "**Guidance**"), when it received recommendation 7 of the Wider Anglican Church Report, i.e. that the Church of England should introduce a church-wide policy on the funding and provision of support to victims and survivors of child sexual abuse by Church officers. The Church therefore ensured that the revisions which were in train reflected recommendation 7.
4. The National Safeguarding Team ("**NST**") has developed the amended Guidance following consultations with victims and survivors. This was approved by the National Safeguarding Steering Group ("**NSSG**") in September 2021 and is published online as part of the Safeguarding E-manual¹. It will come into effect on 4 April 2022, following an implementation planning period for Church bodies.
5. While stipulating the tangible support that must be provided, the Guidance is underpinned by principles of care, listening and trauma-informed provision, and it highlights the need for Church bodies to attend to the relational aspects of support for victims and survivors.
6. The Guidance addresses two linked issues under recommendation 7. Firstly, it stipulates requirements about what Church bodies must do if abuse is disclosed by any person, along with good practice advice about how healthy cultures can be created in Church bodies to make them conducive to safe disclosure. This part of the guidance requires Church bodies to provide accessible information about reporting abuse to statutory services.
7. Secondly, the guidance also makes provision for mandatory support for victims and survivors of Church-based abuse to be offered at a local and national level:

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/responding-well-victims-and-survivors-abuse>

- a) At a local level, the Guidance stipulates that therapeutic support² must be offered along with the assistance of a support person who can provide emotional and practical support during the investigation of the disclosure and subsequently, if the victim or survivor needs it. Taking into account the views of victims and survivors expressed during the consultation process, the Guidance also requires Church bodies to offer spiritual and pastoral support. Finally, it sets out a survivor-centred and trauma-informed process by which Church bodies must speedily issue apologies to victims and survivors, after taking appropriate advice.
- b) At a national level, the guidance refers to Safe Spaces and the Interim Support Scheme (to which we refer further below) which is to be provided centrally. The guidance further explains that it does not address questions about financial compensation for victims and survivors because a national, cross-Church, Church of England scheme known as the National Redress Scheme is in development (see further below).

Interim Support Scheme

Set up

8. In September 2020, the Archbishops' Council, (the "**Council**"), approved a pilot scheme (which became operational in October 2020) to make provision for immediate help and support to victims and survivors whose life circumstances have been significantly affected by Church-related abuse suffered, and the response to it. This scheme is designed to address immediate and urgent needs that help in the short term to put the victim or survivor's life back on track.
9. The pilot set up by the Council became what is now known as the Interim Support Scheme (the "**Interim Scheme**").

Terms of Reference

10. In December 2020, the Council agreed an initial version of the draft principles governing the Interim Scheme in the form of Terms of Reference. Since then the Council has continued to keep the Terms of Reference under review in order that improvements can be made in the light of experience.
11. The Council approved the current version of [the Terms of Reference](#) (version 1.0) in September 2021. Those Terms of Reference incorporate what are called "support principles", which seek to set out some basic overarching rules about how the Interim Scheme is intended to operate. The Terms of Reference together with a guidance note to assist applicants have been published on the Church of England's national website. These have been appended to this note.
12. Pending the establishment of a full redress scheme, the Interim Scheme exists to assist those victims or survivors with urgent or immediate needs. It is not intended to provide reparation or long-term support. It follows that the question of reapplying for funds should not arise in many cases, but there are some cases where further support is sought. Taking this into account, and for reasons of good governance, the Terms of Reference provide that an applicant may not receive more than £25,000 of support for more than six months,

² We note that this support is separate from assistance which may be provided under the Interim Support Scheme. The policy provides that this support should be provided by the Church body where the abuse took place or is alleged to have taken place.

unless certain criteria are met in which case up to a further £25,000 may be provided for up to a further six months³. Therefore, save in exceptional circumstances, victims and survivors are entitled to up to £50,000 in support for up to a year under the Interim Scheme. Victims and survivors have the right to an appeal process if they believe that a decision has been wrongly made. This is intended to be chiefly a paper-based process which minimises the additional input required from a victim or survivor.

13. Because of the nature of the Interim Scheme, decisions must be taken expeditiously and, as a result, some matters which would require detailed consideration or evidence to assess need are outside its scope (for example many claims relating to debt).
14. It is the Council's view that the Interim Scheme's approach to the amount and duration of payments provides panels with sufficient flexibility to provide immediate support whilst taking into account the Council's charitable obligations and its stewardship of charitable funds.

Operations

15. The Council has recruited a secretary and adviser to the Interim Scheme panel who provides a single point of contact for applicants to the Interim Scheme.
16. Victim and survivor applicants to the Interim Scheme submit applications through a dedicated email inbox to request items of support which are in scope, such as home support, therapeutic support, and in connection with other urgent needs. A 'How-to' guide is sent to applicants and, where appropriate, the secretary provides clear and simple instructions on the basic requirements of an application. Some victims and survivors use an advocate of their choice whose charges are covered under the Interim Scheme subject to a cap.
17. The Council has delegated the consideration of applications and decisions on awards to an arms-length panel whose members comprise three different role profiles: survivors, independent members, and Church representatives. Most of these panel members were recruited by open competition and interview, with an advertised list of the skills and experience required⁴.
18. At least one representative from each of the three represented groups (survivor, independent, Church) sits on every panel and panels meet two to four times each month to consider applications. A standard application form is being developed⁵ and applications are ciphered to protect the confidentiality of the applicants.
19. Minutes of discussions and decisions are always taken. Offer letters are compiled and reviewed by panel members before they are sent to victims and survivors.
20. In cases of extreme urgency, arrangements are in place to make and ratify panel decisions by members of the panel or by trustees of the Council outside the Interim Scheme's normal funding cycles. In such circumstances payments can usually be made well within 48 hours.

³ This would need to be approved by two trustees of the Council.

⁴ Two current panel members were originally recruited prior to this recruitment process, at the time the panel was first set up at speed, in order to address the urgent needs of a survivor who was in extreme distress.

⁵ The Council intends this to be in place by mid-January 2022.

Support to date

21. To date, 60 victims and survivors have approached the Interim Scheme and 40⁶ have received an offer of assistance, although a few remain to be assisted as the Interim Scheme awaits some evidential requirement, such as a therapist's invoice, before funds may be transferred. As of 17 November 2021, total funds disbursed stand at £777,673.19. Further victims and survivors continue to seek assistance from the Interim Scheme.

Six-month extension

22. Many victims and survivors do not return to the Interim Scheme after their initial application. In cases where the urgent and immediate needs of a victim and survivor continue, some return to the Interim Scheme.
23. At the six-month mark, applicants do not have to resubmit any details of their abuse or appear before the panel. This is evidenced in the Terms of Reference. When initially applying for support, paragraph 7 of the Terms of Reference states that the panel must be satisfied that (1) victims and survivors have experienced Church-related abuse based on available information; (2) they need immediate support to avoid either a substantial risk to their mental or physical health or a substantial risk that they will be unable to carry out normal day-to-day activities⁷; and (3) their needs arise from the Church-related abuse. However, when applying for further support under the Interim Scheme it is clear from paragraph 41 of the Terms of Reference that there is no requirement for the panel to determine whether victim and survivors have experienced Church-related abuse.
24. The application (and any re-application) process is intended to be straightforward, and carried out without any disruption of funding or support. However, applicants do need to provide an up-to-date needs assessment taking into account the impact of any previous support under the Interim Scheme (paragraph 41.3 of the Terms of Reference). The Council is aware of a very small number of applicants who do not wish to provide up-to-date details of their financial circumstances, and some are reluctant to provide invoices for expenditure which has been awarded and earmarked for particular purposes. For audit purposes the Council cannot simply pay against a demand for funds.
25. In some cases, when the initial six-month period comes to an end but the victim and survivor is unable to submit an application in time to continue the support of their urgent and immediate needs, the Interim Scheme's secretariat suggests that the victim or survivor applies for emergency funding, which, depending on each case, can be equivalent to a month's support, with a maximum payment of £2,500.
26. The Council is only aware of one case, in which the history and effect of abuse of the applicant was described in subsequent re-applications for further funds. The applicant's advocate submitted requests (including an impact statement) that had been deemed out of scope by the panel in the past – in this case, the advocate, not the Interim Scheme, led to the further description of the abuse with a view to justifying the request. The panel had

⁶ Of the 20 individuals who did not receive support, 2 individuals' applications were deemed ineligible and the remainder approached the Interim Scheme requesting further information and then chose not to engage further.

⁷ The panel has always accepted requests for therapy. For monthly subsistence, the panel requires an income and expenditure form in order to perform an assessment of means before distributing charitable funds. In cases where subsistence was approved in the infancy of the Interim Scheme without the submission of this form, the Interim Scheme asks for the form to be submitted at the stage of any re-application. In cases where this form was not provided, the panel provides a two-month extension of the applicant's support to allow time for the applicant to submit this form.

assumed that the applicant wished to provide the material. When the applicant clarified whether further applications could be provided without the need for any further impact statement, the panel confirmed that this was not required.

National redress scheme

Background & Objectives of the scheme

27. The Church of England's proposed national redress scheme (the "**Redress Scheme**") arises out of a commitment by the General Synod of the Church of England in February 2020 to provide redress for victims and survivors of abuse within the Church. The Council intends to put in place a redress scheme, which will provide a timely, user-friendly, and survivor-centred response to victims and survivors.
28. Alongside financial reparation, taking into account that no amount of money will remove the consequences of abuse, the Council intends that the Redress Scheme is also to include access to counselling, therapeutic, psychological and spiritual support, acknowledgment of wrongdoing on the part of the Church, and an apology.
29. The Redress Scheme will provide a single point of entry for victims and survivors of abuse, based around standardised, user-friendly eligibility criteria and supplementary documents that will help victims and survivors to navigate the Redress Scheme. So far as is practicable, the Redress Scheme will aim to avoid a formal, legalistic approach to its work, and take account of the views of victims and survivors in its formulation.

Progress made to date

30. The Council is acutely aware from its previous experience that it is important to put in place a proper project management process, which is sufficiently resourced. As such, taking into account some unavoidable delay arising from the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020, during 2021 the Council has taken the following steps.
 - A. *The Project Team*
31. The Council (together with the Project Board when it was appointed) has put together a team including a dedicated National Redress Scheme Development Manager, a Senior Project Manager, a Project Support Officer, and some administrative assistance (the "**Project Team**"). The Partnerships and Engagement Lead, who has been appointed by the Council to support the development of survivor engagement more generally (and the development of a survivor engagement framework), also works with the Project Team. The Team is responsible for developing the Redress Scheme but reports to the Project Board (see below) which is responsible for making the final recommendations in relation to the Redress Scheme to the appropriate governance bodies.
 - B. *The Project Board*
32. The Joint Response to the Inquiry's Recommendations from the NSSG, the House of Bishops and the Council, stated that in order to address the Inquiry's recommendations, they intended to set up dedicated project boards for each recommendation to ensure effective delivery and accountability. This is particularly important in the case of the Redress Scheme because of the complex issues involved.
33. Accordingly, a project board has been established to provide governance and oversight of the development of the Redress Scheme (the "**Project Board**"). The Project Board is

intended to support and challenge the Senior Responsible Officer⁸ to ensure the Redress Scheme is delivered as expeditiously as practicable and meets the expectations of the survivors and the wider Church. It will be responsible for signing off on the key decisions relating to the mechanism and funding for the scheme. It had its first meeting chaired by the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Bishop for Survivors, in April 2021, and is currently chaired by the Bishop of Truro.

34. The members of the Project Board include representatives of national Church institutions and the House of Bishops. The Project Board also wished to include victims and survivors in its membership as early as practicable and after the National Redress Scheme Victim and Survivor Working Group was set up (see below), two survivors were selected by members of the Working Group and joined the Board as full members.
35. Since its inception the Project Board has been focused on making sure the proper structures are in place in order to facilitate the process of setting up the Redress Scheme. In particular it has:
 - a) Established terms of reference (which are in the process of being finalised) for how the Project Board should operate, including attendance, quorum, decision-making etc;
 - b) Recruited members of the Project Team, for example the Senior Project Manager was appointed in May 2021;
 - c) Set up the Survivors Working Group referred to below; and
 - d) Convened a workshop of key stakeholders within the Church in September 2021 to brainstorm how to approach some of the fundamental questions concerning the Redress Scheme.
36. The Project Board's most recent meeting took place on 22 November and it will continue to meet every 6 to 8 weeks during 2022.

C. National Redress Scheme Victim and Survivor Working Group

37. As Melissa Caslake stated in her second witness statement dated 8 April 2020 "*we wish to involve survivors of abuse from the outset in the design of any redress scheme.*" Further, GS2184, which was produced by the General Synod in November 2020 in response to the Wider Anglican Church Report, stated that "*we will seek feedback from victims and survivors through ongoing engagement on the implementation of the IICSA response, in particular recommendation 7*".
38. To this end, the Project Board set up a National Redress Scheme Victim and Survivor Working Group (the "**Survivors' Working Group**") to ensure that the voices of victims and survivors are heard and given appropriate weight throughout the development of the Redress Scheme; and to ensure that the project maintains a focus on victims and survivors in all aspects of its work.
39. In June 2021, role outlines for members of the Survivors' Working Group were developed. Those roles were then publicly advertised as part of an open recruitment process in July 2021, with interviews in August 2021.
40. Seven victim and survivor representatives have now been recruited to the Survivors' Working Group. The Working Group has met four times on 1 October, 18 October, 8

⁸ In this case the role of Senior Responsible Officer is shared by the Interim Director of Safeguarding and the National Redress Scheme Manager

November and 30 November and is next expected to meet on 26 January 2022⁹. At these meetings they have focused on agreeing their terms of reference, working practices and representation on the Project Board. The representatives for the Project Board were selected by the Survivors' Working Group at their meeting on 8 November 2021, and the two representatives attended the Project Board meetings for the first time on 22 November 2021.

Next steps

41. The Project Team is studying and assessing the approach taken by other institutional and national redress schemes and will bring forward proposals during 2022 to the Project Board. The Board will be asked to agree a recommendation in connection with the fundamental elements of the Redress Scheme, in particular the precise mechanism by which the requests for redress will be addressed and how these requests will be funded. This also includes important questions about whether this can be achieved within the existing legal powers of the Church's governing bodies
42. The Project Team understands the importance of transparency about the proposals. Plans for a webpage to provide regular updates on the activity of the Redress Scheme are in train and the Project Team is aiming for this to be up and running in mid-January 2022.
 - A. *Mechanism*
43. Discussions to date have made clear that the Redress Scheme will need to consider applications of different types depending on the extent to which the applicant has had any prior engagement with the Church of England. Some applicants may not be known to any Church body or their insurers and will not have received any previous payment; other applicants may already have received a full and final settlement on particular terms, which some applicants might wish to re-open and/or support from the Interim Scheme (which would need to be taken into account).
44. As part of the scope of the Redress Scheme the Project Board is exploring an early mediation model which would allow a speedy and proportionate route for the resolution of new claims for compensation, but which would allow access to a court if that was the preference of the victim or survivor. Discussions are taking place with the organisations which have an interest in such claims, including insurers.
45. Whatever approach is adopted, the Council anticipates that applicants will be offered the opportunity of proportionate legal representation to support their interaction with the Redress Scheme, free at the point of need.
 - B. *Funding*
46. The Project Board is currently considering which body or combination of bodies would be the most appropriate source of funding for the Redress Scheme. The Project Board bears in mind the principle of subsidiarity, namely that to be effective reparation should be offered locally and as near as possible to the source of the harm. At the same time, careful consideration needs to be given as to whether the bodies in question actually have the power to make such payments by way of redress and what steps would need to be taken to provide them with such powers.
47. In the Project Board's view, the starting point needs to be a rational assessment of demand; from there with sensible extrapolation it is hoped that the Project Team can work

⁹ The Partnerships and Engagement Lead is supporting the Survivor's Working Group and has been chairing the group's meetings.

through different models for what redress might look like and come up with a proposal of what financial provision may be needed. The Project Team is in the process of trying to obtain some reliable data to inform these discussions. Such discussions will also need to factor in some important questions of principle; for example the types of claim which are in scope.

C. Timeline

48. The Project Board has identified four key stages for developing the scheme, which aim to move the development of the Redress Scheme from the establishment of good governance, through to scoping out and design, to the initiation of a possible pilot, followed by the launch of a full scheme. The first stage is complete and the Project Board is now considering the production of an outline proposal to include consideration of budget and scope. Once those matters are decided, which the Project Board hopes will be completed by the end of Q2 in 2022, the Project Board will be better placed to set out the likely timescale for the delivery of the next stages.
49. During these stages, the meeting cycles of the appropriate governance bodies will need to be factored in. Thought will also need to be given to engaging in meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, particularly victims and survivors, as the Project Board deems necessary. Depending on the final structure, the Project Board may also have to obtain General Synod's approval.
50. As the Church has emphasised in its response to the Wider Anglican Church Report, the Church is working to repair the wrongs of the past and improve the experience for victims and survivors. In order to repair the trust that has been lost and to generate trust going forward, it is of paramount importance that the Redress Scheme is well-resourced and that the mechanics of the process have been thought through properly to ensure its success. The Church is confident that with victims and survivors at the heart of the development of the Redress Scheme, it can get this right.