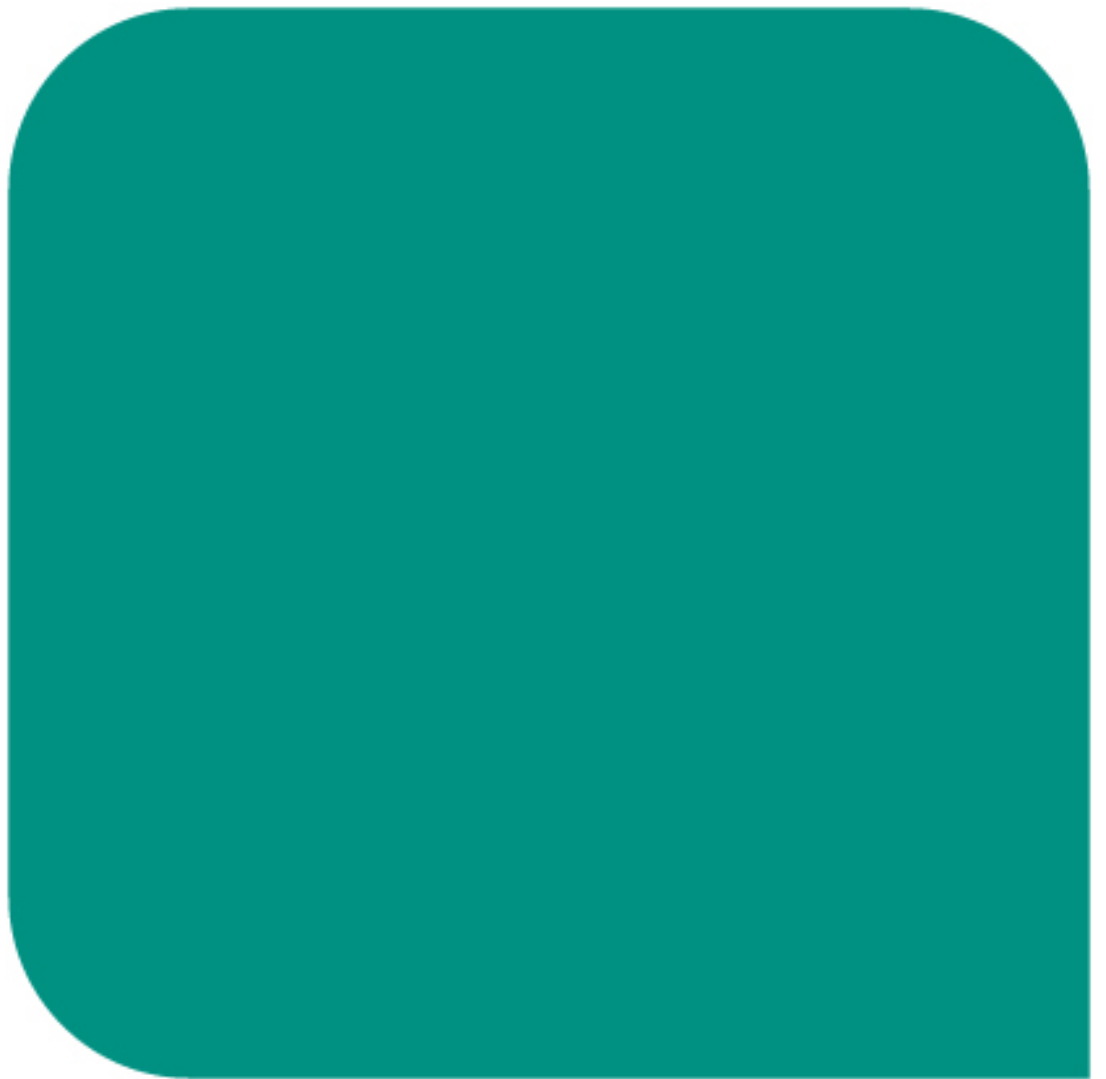




social care  
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# **Diocese of Lincoln independent safeguarding audit (November 2017)**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CONTEXT

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has been commissioned to undertake an audit of the safeguarding arrangements of each diocese of the Church of England. The aim of these audits is to work together to understand how safeguarding is working in each diocese, and to support the continuing improvements being made. Following pilot audits of four dioceses in 2015, an agreed audit model was applied nationally from 2016.

The audit of the Diocese of Lincoln was carried out by Leethen Bartholomew (the lead auditor for this diocese). The second auditor, Lucy Erber, was unable to proceed after the first day of the audit and was replaced by Hugh Constant. The audit took place between 7 and 9 November 2017. The audit process involved an examination of case files and other documents, along with conversations with key individuals and a Focus Group of parish representatives in the Diocese. Details of the process are provided in the appendix.

## 1.2 THE DIOCESE

The Diocese of Lincoln was constituted by William the Conqueror and at that time stretched from Humber to the Thames. Today, it covers the areas of Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, and North East Lincolnshire and is one of the larger Church of England dioceses. This geographical spread is 2,673 square miles. The Diocese has a population of 943,000 and there are approximately 31,000 people on the Church Electoral Rolls.

The Diocese of Lincoln is divided into three archdeaconries: Lincoln, Boston and Stow & Lindsey. The church is served by more than 220 clergy and lay workers serving 240 benefices with 514 parishes and 647 church buildings.

The Bishop of Lincoln, who was appointed in November 2011, is the strategic lead of the Diocese and is supported by two Suffragan Bishops, of Grimsby and of Grantham.

The Diocese is currently involved in a significant police investigation relating to a number of cases of non-recent sexual abuse. This investigation was instigated following a review of safeguarding documents and procedures. The remit of the SCIE audit focuses on recent safeguarding practice, therefore the auditors did not focus on historical cases. Additionally, in order to not compromise any ongoing investigation, cases under investigation by the police or being reviewed by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse were not audited. The auditors did however consider how these impacted on the current culture of safeguarding.

## 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is divided into:

- Introduction

- The findings of the audit [links have been made with the s.11 (Children Act 2004) Church of England national audit form]
- Considerations for the Diocese are listed, where relevant, at the end of each finding
- Conclusions of the auditors' findings: what is working well and areas for further development
- An appendix sets out the audit process and any limitations to this audit

Please note that the term 'considerations' instead of recommendations is used in the SCIE Learning Together methodology. The reason for this is that it is important that each diocese decides exactly how to implement the improvements indicated; this is likely to be different from place to place. Some considerations will be around taking specific types of action, whilst others will be alerting the diocese to develop its safeguarding planning in the future

## 2 FINDINGS

### 2.1 SAFEGUARDING MANAGEMENT

#### 2.1.1 Leadership

The Bishop of Lincoln is the Diocese's spiritual, pastoral, ministerial and strategic lead and within this he assumes the role of ultimate lead for safeguarding. When the Bishop took to the helm six years ago, he inherited a diocese beset by less than adequate safeguarding practices. The Bishop spoke about the challenges this created and of his steadfast drive towards improving the Church's response to safeguarding. The Bishop acknowledges that there are still areas for improvement but believes that they are on the correct path towards creating a culture based on professional challenge and survivor focused. According to the Bishop, as a diocese we are 'not claiming to be the best, but the best we can be'.

The Bishop spoke about his drive towards making sure that safeguarding was inextricably woven into the life of the Church and not seen as an accessory. He was precise in his thinking about the importance of him setting the tone and vision for the organisation to achieve this change. One such vision is the current discussions between the Diocese and a tertiary institution to develop an accredited course on safeguarding for those with safeguarding responsibilities but with little background in safeguarding.

The Bishop told the auditors that for him leadership was about putting the correct safeguarding structures in place, making sure sufficient resources were available and creating a culture where professional challenge was the norm. With regards to safeguarding structures, he spoke about the Diocesan Safeguarding Group as being a 'critical friend' to the Diocese and he expressed his confidence, in what this group has achieved thus far. He also spoke about the importance of him leading by example, especially in terms of decisive decision-making when required. The Bishop has made a number of decisions that has set the tone on the importance of safeguarding. Such decisions include not granting Permission to Officiate (PtO) without safeguarding training, and making e-learning training mandatory for all.

Based on the auditors' conversation with the Bishop and subsequent conversations with other key individuals, it was felt that he has utmost respect for the Safeguarding Team and has taken the necessary steps towards sufficiently resourcing it.

Operational responsibility for casework is left to the Safeguarding Team and there is recognition and acceptance that it is imperative that the Safeguarding Team remains independent.

The growing and changing nature of ministry e.g. Fresh Expression and Messy Church were discussed with the Bishop. The auditors were told that there is a Fresh Expressions coordinator. The Bishop was keenly aware of the concomitant challenges this format of ministry presented. The Bishop was clear in his view that the same safeguarding measures must be consistently applied across all aspects of church ministry.

### **2.1.2 Structure**

The Archdeacon of Lincoln, is the Bishop's delegated lead for safeguarding. He assumed this role within the last month following the sudden departure of the previous Diocesan Secretary, who was the delegated lead for safeguarding. Prior to taking on this role, he was the Cathedral Precentor and Chapter lead for safeguarding. He therefore, comes into his current role with a good understanding of safeguarding.

As the delegated lead for safeguarding, he has overall responsibility for the Safeguarding Team and is the line manager of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA). He views his role as a conduit through which information is shared with the Bishop and spoke of using his authority to assist the Safeguarding Team in achieving its agenda.

The interim Diocesan Secretary, who is also the Archdeacon of Stow and Lindsey, has been in the role for the past month. His archdeaconry duties are now being undertaken by the rural deans. The interim Diocesan Secretary told the auditors that he is in agreement with the change in the reporting structure of the Safeguarding Team and echoed the Bishop's view of the need to have a fully resourced Safeguarding Team.

The Bishop's Staff team is a collection of the diocesan leaders responsible for the strategic direction of the Diocese. Bishop's Staff meets fortnightly and safeguarding is an agenda item at every meeting. The Archdeacon of Lincoln takes responsibility for presenting this. The DSA attends Bishop's Staff quarterly and at other times if required.

There are scheduled meetings between the Bishop and the Archdeacon of Lincoln where safeguarding is discussed and this is bolstered by an 'open door' policy where the Bishop makes himself available when needed. The DSA also has formalised set diarised meeting dates with the Bishop and benefits from the same 'open door' arrangements that has been extended to the Archdeacon of Lincoln.

The Archdeacon of Lincoln attends the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel [DSAP], as well as the interim Diocesan Secretary. The Bishop has attended two DSAP meetings. The Archdeacon of Lincoln also reports on safeguarding to the Diocesan Synod.

### **2.1.3 Links with Cathedral**

There is a formal agreement with the Cathedral and there are close links between them. All aspects of safeguarding at the Cathedral are undertaken by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. This includes casework, training and the development and implementation of safeguarding policy and procedures. An example of this is the Cathedral safeguarding procedures for Choristers.

The Cathedral is represented on the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel.

### **2.1.4 Culture**

The Diocese has been beset by a number of failures in its safeguarding practices over



the years. The ramifications of this, coupled with a current ongoing police investigation along with a number of recent resignations by key individuals within the safeguarding structure, have had some impact on the Diocese. The key individuals spoken to by the auditors were candid about the residual impact this has had, especially on staff morale. The auditors felt that the complicated history has acted as a leverage for culture change and there is a drive to inculcate an ethos of teamwork and professional challenge. The Diocese has managed to achieve this by being outward looking and has made great strides in partnering with statutory and voluntary sectors, who are their 'critical friends'. This has also created a culture of transparency.

The Diocese of Lincoln is a learning organisation and there is a sense of wanting to resolve challenges in innovative ways, if routine solutions do not apply. The auditors felt that there is a good degree of cohesion within the Safeguarding Team and this was confirmed by members of the Focus Group. Overall, there is an eagerness to improve and there is a trajectory towards being outcomes-focused.

*(Reference: part 1 of S.11 audit: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese. Also to part 2: The Bishop appoints a member of his senior staff to be the lead person for safeguarding.)*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider how best to provide continued support for the Safeguarding Team given the impact of the recent departures of key individuals and the ongoing work commitments in relation to past cases being investigated.*

## **2.2 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISER/S**

### **2.2.1 Roles and responsibilities**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team originally comprised a part-time DSA but an increase in the DSA's workload, led to a gradual expansion of the team over the years. The team now comprises a full-time DSA and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO), a part-time Diocesan Safeguarding Support Officer (DSSO) and a full-time administrator. The DSA is responsible for the daily running of the team and line manages the staff. The auditors heard of the increasing demands placed on the team, in terms of casework, training, supporting parishes and working with survivors. This has been matched with an increase in resources to the team. There are confirmed plans to recruit another full-time worker, who will be responsible for training and the office space occupied by the team is being expanded to provide more accommodation.

The DSA is a qualified social worker by background and over her 19-year career has held a number of senior positions in the safeguarding children sector. Before taking up the role of DSA, she worked as a service manager in both children's social care, and Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. She was also a principal social worker for a local authority. The auditors were told that the bulk of the DSA's current workload is centred on non-recent abuse investigations.

The DSA spoke highly of the current line management arrangements, which she views as markedly different from what was provided before. According to the DSA, the pastoral support she receives and weekly meetings with her manager has been a vital support mechanism.

The DSA's professional supervision was initially provided by a DSA from another diocese. To prevent any future possible conflict of interest due to being supervised by a counterpart, a decision was made to change this supervision arrangement. Since March 2016, the DSA has been receiving regular clinical supervision from a therapist, who is external to the Church of England. The supervision is reflective and helps the DSA to manage the emotional dimensions of the job. The auditors were told by the DSA that the contracted organisation providing the supervision recently started to support church survivors. Therefore, she believes that there is a need to explore what impact this could have on her supervision arrangement.

The auditors were told that no formal arrangement is in place between the professional supervisor and the line manager to discuss progress. The auditors felt that the professional supervision of the DSA should be linked to her overall management and should inform her appraisal. However, the Diocese does not have an appraisal and professional development system in place. Key individuals spoken to by the auditors acknowledged that this is an identified gap, which affects their ability to foster professional learning and growth.

The auditors were told by the DSA that she accesses casework advice and support from the provincial safeguarding adviser and when necessary the National Safeguarding Team (NST). The auditors were of the view that the DSA's professional supervision could also include casework advice, opportunity for reflection, and critical thinking and emotional support.

The DSA's father is an ordained clergyman in another diocese. The auditors explored this with the DSA and found that it did not present a conflict of interest. The DSA has no other role or responsibilities in the Church of England.

### **2.2.2 Diocesan Safeguarding Officer**

The DSO qualified as a social worker in 2005 and has worked as a frontline social worker in children and adults safeguarding. Preceding her appointment as DSO, she ran her own training and management consultancy business. The DSO has been in role for the past two years and is principally responsible for casework and the managing of safeguarding agreements. She currently manages 24 safeguarding agreements. The DSO also delivers training and manages a cohort of volunteer trainers. The DSO's training responsibilities will change when the new Safeguarding Support Officer is recruited. The DSO told the auditors that this will give her the opportunity to specialise in risk management.

The DSO's remit also includes providing support to Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs).

The Diocese is part of the Circles of Support and Accountability Project (Circles). The DSO is responsible for this area of work in the Diocese and represents it at Circles steering meetings.

### **2.2.3 Diocesan Safeguarding Support Officer**

The DSSO is a very new addition to the Safeguarding Team. She has a background in nursing and is also a qualified Independent Sexual Violence Advocate. She was

recruited to the post because of the experience of working to support survivors in another diocese. The DSSO's remit will continue to focus on working with survivors.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Diocese to consider reviewing the current professional supervision arrangements for the DSA so that casework management is included.*

*Consider implementing a professional development and appraisal system.*

*Consider linking the outcome of the DSA's supervision to her annual performance appraisal.*

## **2.3 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING GROUP**

The Bishop's Safeguarding Oversight Panel (BSOP) (soon to be renamed Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel), was reconfigured in early 2016 and an Independent Chair was appointed in April 2016. BSOP's remit also includes the Cathedral. The role of Independent Chair is voluntary. The Chair and Vice Independent Chair resigned in September 2017. The lead auditor met with the former chair and was provided with a cogent overview of the work of BSOP. The former chair told the auditor that whilst the Diocese has made enormous strides in improving its safeguarding practices, the pace at which some of this change occurred could be frustratingly slow. An example of this given to the auditor was the long length of time it took the Diocese to develop a whistleblowing policy, in spite of this being on the agenda for several months.

The Acting Independent Chair is a serving senior police officer with Lincolnshire Police and has been a member of BSOP since its inception in 2016. The Acting Chair performs no other role within the Church of England. He is yet to chair a meeting.

There are clear Terms of Reference outlining its purpose. The group sees itself as providing independent scrutiny of safeguarding practice and policy. There is a work plan in place but not a strategy. The group meets quarterly and is attended by an impressive membership of diocesan and cathedral staff, lay church personnel and external partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors. This is a particularly strong feature of the group and external representation has added a certain robustness to the group's ability to be a 'critical friend'. A Focus Group was held with BSOP's external statutory partners, the representative from Victim Support and the Independent Chair of Lincoln Safeguarding Children Board. The auditor was told by the Focus Group that there was a strong sense of transparency and accountability in the work of the Diocese. The Independent Chair of Lincoln Safeguarding Children Board provided an example of where he provided challenge to the Diocese, in relation to what he saw as the apparent incompatibility in the use of the Clergy Disciplinary Measure and safeguarding.

BSOP has commissioned a number of reviews related to past serious cases and clergymen with PtO. There was also an audit of a parish following a serious incident. The concerns raised by these reviews and audits have largely been acted upon and the learning has been used to inform future work. The auditors were of the view that

whilst the BSOP's work has been in response to past safeguarding concerns, there is evidence that it has been proactive in its thinking. It has effectively developed strategies to address issues. However, the auditors felt that the Diocese could benefit from developing a strategy that provides strategic direction as this will assist it in being forward thinking.

In September 2017, the former Independent Chair presented its first annual report, which provided an overview of the work undertaken along with recommendations. The Bishop attended this meeting. The report is yet to be presented to Bishop's Council and Cathedral Chapter.

The Diocese compiles a Safeguarding Risk Register, which the former Independent Chair played a key role in devising.

The Diocese has committed to contribute financially towards Lincoln's Safeguarding Children Board. The Diocese is also represented on the Operational Boards. Arrangements have been made for the Diocese to be represented on the North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards.

### **2.3.1 BSOP work /sub groups**

The Safeguarding Delivery Group is a sub-group of the BSOP responsible for ensuring the implementation of BSOP decisions and is chaired by the DSA. It includes specific task and finish work streams covering policy development and training. There are Terms of Reference outlining the role and functions of the group.

The Serious and Significant Incident Group is a sub-group of the BSOP function to provide casework scrutiny and guidance in difficult cases. The group's Terms of Reference provides a definition of 'difficult' cases. The auditors were of the view that this sub-group replicated the function of core groups. There is also the concern that the BSOP, which is a strategic panel, is allowing itself to be part of the case management process. The auditors were of the view that the BSOP could instead exercise its quality assurance role by having the sub-group review the quality of safeguarding agreements and risk assessments. This will be in line with House of Bishops guidance on key roles and responsibilities.

The Policy and Training task and finish work group is overseen by the Archdeacon of Lincoln, and as it is not a separate sub-group does not have specific Terms of Reference. External membership includes the Lincoln Safeguarding Children and Adult Board training officer.

*(Reference: part 1 of S.11 audit: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese. Also to part 2: The Bishop appoints a member of his senior staff to be the lead person for safeguarding.)*

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Diocese to consider whether the role and function of the Serious and Significant Incident Group is in conflict with House of Bishops practice guidance.*

*Diocese to consider developing a safeguarding strategy and work plan with set dates for completion of actions*

## **2.4 GUIDANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Diocese has adopted all House of Bishops safeguarding policies, procedures and practice guidance. However, there has been some confusion with the use of core groups.

The diocesan website is easy to manoeuvre, and safeguarding is clearly posted and accessible. It contains a section with links to national safeguarding guidance and procedures and another section allows the user to download local parish resources. The parish resources include documents such as a whistleblowing policy, a draft parish handbook and handling disclosures of abuse. These documents offer the reader good advice and guidance.

*(Reference: part 1 of the S. 11 audit: Ensure the Diocesan Synod adopts the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies, together with any additional diocesan procedures and good practice guidelines.)*

## **2.5 CASEWORK**

### **2.5.1 Quality of response to allegations**

A total of 11 cases were audited. The files audited included a mix of safeguarding children and adult cases. The auditors found that decision-making is of a good standard. In addition to there being a timely response to referrals, recording was excellent and the outcome of casework were recorded.

There is strong evidence of a consultative approach to casework with statutory services including sound partnership working. Feedback submitted to the auditors from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and a probation officer commended the Safeguarding Team on its transparency, eagerness to work in partnership and professionalism.

Members of the Parish Focus Group spoke highly of the Safeguarding Team and unanimously agreed that they receive proportionate and sound advice. The Parish Focus Group told the auditors that following an initial contact with a member of the Safeguarding Team, they do not have to repeat their concern in any subsequent contact with another member of the team. This they felt was a reflection of good team work and effective communication between members of the Safeguarding Team.

A particular strength of casework is its focus on engaging with victims/survivors. In cases where it was possible to engage with survivors, it was possible, from the records to see that their views were being garnered and listened to in a meaningful way by the DSO and DSA. The approach used by the DSO and DSA showed that they were willing to make an extra effort to guarantee victims/survivors received the right support. They also appropriately communicated with and shared information with them. Case files were also opened in the name of victims/survivors and this the auditors felt allowed the team to remain focused on their needs. In one case audited, an apology from the Bishop took longer than expected and when the outcome of the CDM process was felt not to be survivor-centred, the DSA met with the survivor to explore this further. The DSA then followed this up with the Bishop.



The auditors were told that in the recent past, core groups were not consistently convened in line with House of Bishops practice guidance, as the former Diocesan Secretary questioned its utility. Key individuals spoken to indicated that they registered their dissatisfaction with this stance at the time. There is now an acceptance by the Diocese that core groups must be convened in keeping with House of Bishops practice guidance.

In some of the files reviewed there was evidence of core groups being used. However, there was one issue the auditors felt needed consideration. In one case a core group was convened along with a parish core group. The latter being a core group for non-church officers. The auditors were of the view that a parish core group suggests that a parallel approach was being used to oversee and manage a safeguarding concern or allegation. The auditors felt this approach should be reconsidered, especially since it is not in line with House of Bishops guidance.

### **2.5.2 Quality of risk assessment and safeguarding contracts**

The auditors reviewed a number of standard and independent risk assessments. The risk assessments reviewed were of a good standard. The pre-audit feedback submitted by a probation officer highlighted that the risk assessments completed by the Safeguarding Team are comprehensive and are of a high standard.

The standard risk assessment is not a standalone document but is built into the safeguarding agreement. The risk assessment is based on the managing sex offenders and violent offenders risk assessment format. Therefore, the focus of risk assessments are skewed towards concerns or allegation relating to sexual abuse. The auditors were told that where there are other types of concerns or allegations, the risk assessment will be redesigned to include relevant questions. The auditors were of the view that redesigning the risk assessment format for every eventuality is unsustainable and a more appropriate step will be to adhere to House of Bishops practice guidance which outlines what should be included in risk assessments.

The safeguarding agreements reviewed were of a very good standard. They were informed by the risk assessment and included input from the parish, relevant statutory services and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. A system is in place to alert the DSO when they are to be reviewed and there is evidence of reviews taking place at least every three months. The safeguarding agreements whilst signed by the incumbent do not include the name of the church.

The auditors received pre-audit feedback submitted by two respondents subject to safeguarding agreements. They both commented that the approach used by the Safeguarding Team provided clarity about the process and purpose of such agreements. They both felt supported throughout the initial and review process. Feedback from respondents are used in training to help participants understand how the process is viewed by those subject to safeguarding agreements.

*(Reference: part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide access to a risk assessment service so the Bishop and others can evaluate and manage any risk posed by individuals or activities within the Church.)*

### **2.5.3 Recording systems**

The Diocese uses an electronic recording system called CPOMS. This is a secure

system and the auditors found it easy to use. The Safeguarding Team currently uses it for two functions, that is, as a running record and to upload documents.

Records are up to date, concise and the narrative is easy to follow. The DSA can use the system to allocate work to the DSO and they can both access each other's files.

The Diocese is aware that there are limits to CPOMS, as it is designed for schools. The auditors were told about plans to make the necessary changes. For example, to embed a front page on each file containing the necessary relevant information about the case subject, concern, survivor, professionals involved etc. The Diocese is aware of plans by the National Safeguarding Team (NST) to implement an electronic recording system across all dioceses.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider discontinuing the use of both a parish and diocesan core group in a case so as to be consistent with guidance and avoid any potential for confusion in the management of the case.*

*The Diocese to adhere to House of Bishops practice on the guidance relating to risk assessments.*

## **2.6 TRAINING**

### **2.6.1 Delivery**

Training is high on the agenda and there is a training strategy which covers the period 2017 to 2020. The aim of this three-year strategy is to support and enhance the local authority's (Lincoln) plan to make sure that safeguarding is everybody's business. The strategy is comprehensive and, based on what the auditors have seen, it is in the process of being put into action.

There is also a work plan that accompanies the strategy. This document outlines who needs to be trained, the approximate numbers to be trained and number of courses to be delivered to meet the demand. The strategy and work plan show that there has been careful consideration of the level of resources needed to make sure that church officers and others are appropriately trained.

The Diocese has high aspirations to achieve its aim and its ability to do this is strengthened by its close links with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board and Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board (LSCB & LSAB). This partnership has provided some of the impetus towards implementing the strategy and work plan.

The Diocese made the decision that the e-learning training provided by the LSCB & LSAB is a prerequisite to attend face-to-face training. Consideration has been given to how poor internet access and limited internet literacy may act as a barrier to completing this training. This has been overcome by providing direct one-to-one support to those requiring help and the DSO has also held group sessions. A training report provided to the auditors dated 30 Jan 2017 recorded that 775 diocesan members had completed the online course. There are plans between the Diocese and

LSCB and LSAB to contextualise this training to meet the needs of diocesan members.

The Diocese made the decision to amalgamate the C1 and C2 (Parish Based Safeguarding Foundation Module) training into one course. The work plan outlines that 140 C1/C2 and 56 C3 (clergy training) courses will need to be delivered over the three-year period to train everyone requiring it. There is recognition that achieving this is a challenge. In response to this the Diocese embarked upon a plan to recruit 44 volunteer deanery trainers, who will be responsible for co-delivering C1/C2 training in their respective deanery. Thus far, it has only been able to recruit eight volunteer trainers. Another plan is being considered to recruit paid part-time deanery administrators, who will also be responsible for delivering training. The auditors questioned the feasibility of such an approach, as there might be difficulties with recruiting administrators with the skill set to also deliver training.

Clergy training (C3 module), is co-delivered by the DSA and archdeacons. The auditors felt that archdeacons' involvement in the delivery of training promotes the importance of church officers attending training, and shows good leadership and commitment. The Archdeacon of Stow and Lindsey told the auditors that he viewed training as an integral part of mission and was not a secular add-on. Hence his commitment to be involved in the delivery of training.

The DSA has also delivered training to the police public protection unit on the role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and has worked with prison chaplains.

The Diocese is yet to deliver S1 (Safer Recruitment) and S3 (Domestic Abuse) training. Those wishing to attend S1 training are encouraged to attend the equivalent delivered by LSCB.

The BSOP has played a key role in satisfying itself that the quality of the training delivered is of an adequate standard. The former vice chair attended a number of training sessions and submitted a report to the BSOP. The salient points identified in the report showed that the training was of a good standard. Lincoln Safeguarding Children Board's training officer has also quality assured training and submitted a report to the BSOP.

The diocesan administrator keeps detailed information about the training delivered and produces training statistics along with training evaluation summaries. The auditors were provided with evaluations forms for two C1/C2 and one C3 safeguarding training courses delivered between 2016 and 2017. The general response showed that the set objectives were achieved. The Focus Group members spoke positively about the training content and abilities of the trainers. The auditors were however concerned that one member of the Focus Group is yet to receive training despite being in post for several years.

The Focus Group conversation further illuminated to the auditors the extent of the demand for training. Some Focus Group members spoke about different ways they were considering to deliver training themselves.

There is a system in place to record church officers attending training. The system is also able to provide an alert when refresher training is due but this element is in the process of being implemented.



*(Reference: part 1 of S.11 audit: Select and train those who are to hold the Bishops' Licence in safeguarding matters. Provide training on safeguarding matters to parishes, the Cathedral, other clergy, diocesan organisations, including religious communities and those who hold the Bishops' Licence. And to part 8: Those working closely with children, young people and adults experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect ...have safeguarding in their induction and are trained and have their training refreshed every three years.)*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider exploring how to recruit a cohort of trainers*

## **2.7 SAFE RECRUITMENT OF CLERGY, LAY OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

The Diocese is in the process of reviewing all Blue Files (HR) to satisfy itself they contain all relevant documentation and it is filed appropriately. An administrator has been specifically recruited to complete this task and is already halfway through the process. If any documentation is found to be missing the administrator will alert HR and the file will be updated.

The auditors looked at five Blue files (HR), which were randomly selected to check that safer recruitment procedures were being adhered to. The auditors saw evidence of the administrator's work and found this to be an effective approach. Safer recruitment guidelines were being followed. The auditors felt that the files could have indicated whether safeguarding training was attended.

Six HR files for lay officers were also reviewed for evidence of Safer Recruitment. Safer Recruitment processes were followed in all but one file. This file did not have copies of qualifications and the way references were received was inconsistent with the diocesan practice.

*(Reference to part 7 of S.11 audit: The Diocesan Secretary has implemented arrangements in line with the House of Bishops' policy on Safer Recruitment 2015. And to part 1: Keep a record of clergy and church officers that will enable a prompt response to bona fide enquiries...where there have been safeguarding concerns, these should be clearly indicated on file.)*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider how to facilitate consistent compliance to House of Bishops guidance on Safer Recruitment.*

## **2.8 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)**

In March 2017, the BSOP considered the challenges preventing DBS checks from being undertaken. It made a recommendation that someone should be recruited to focus on the routine processing of DBS checks. This was acted on by the Diocese and a DBS administrator has been in role since April 2016. Churches Child Protection Advisory Service has been contracted to administer DBS checks. The auditors were told by the Focus Group members the service is efficient.

In 2016, the Diocese applied for 634 checks with seven of these being returned with a blemish. Blemished DBS checks are assessed by the Safeguarding Team. A system is not in place to track DBS renewals, and it may be advantageous to have one.

The safeguarding team makes appropriate referrals to the DBS.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider putting in place a system for tracking DBS renewals.*

## **2.9 COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING**

### **2.9.1 Complaints**

The Diocese's complaints procedure is a work in progress as it is still in draft form. The auditors were told that following a 'road test' of the procedure with rural deans, it was presented to Bishop's Staff and it is in the process of being adopted.

### **2.9.2 Whistleblowing**

There is a whistleblowing policy in place but this is a new development. It was developed a week before the SCIE audit was undertaken. The auditors were only able to review the policy following the audit, as a copy was only provided during the audit. Whilst there are good elements to the policy, it does not explain the difference between whistleblowing and a grievance. It doesn't make it explicit that volunteers will be afforded the same level of protection – the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 does not provide the same level of protection for volunteers. There is no information outlining the consequences of maliciously making a false allegation and that in relation to charities allegations could also be made to the Charity Commission. The policy is accessible on the diocesan website.

*(Reference: part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide a complaints procedure which can be used by those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues. Also part 4: There is an easily accessible complaints procedure including reference to the Clergy Disciplinary Measures and whistleblowing procedures.)*

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider reviewing the whistleblowing policy.*

## **2.10 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES**

Quality assurance has featured strongly in the work of the BSOP. Members of the BSOP have been involved in quality assuring training. It has also reviewed implications of a lack of resources on the work of the Safeguarding Team. The auditors saw evidence of recommendations made by the BSOP being acted on.

The Diocese has commissioned a number of case reviews. The lead auditor met with one of the reviewers, who completed a recent review of past cases. The reviewer told the auditor about what she felt was the transparent approach employed by the Diocese and that the recommendations have been duly implemented.

The Diocese has recently piloted a parish safeguarding self-audit. Its implementation involved the Safeguarding Team visiting parishes to raise awareness of the audit tool. The auditors heard from some members of the Focus Group that the audit tool prompted them to update safeguarding policies and procedures. The auditors also received written feedback from a parish member, who echoed the feedback given by the Focus Group on the usefulness of the self-audit. This shows that the self-audit has had a tangible impact and is making a difference.

The DSA, as manager of the DSO, will audit her casework. The auditors saw evidence of this taking place on some of the files audited. The direction given on these files by the DSA were clear and helpful.

## **2.11 HOW THE DIOCESE PROVIDES SUPPORT & MONITORING OF SAFEGUARDING IN PARISHES**

### **2.11.1 Archdeacon's responsibilities**

There are three archdeacons in the Diocese of Lincoln. One archdeacon is currently on sabbatical. The auditors held conversations with both the Archdeacon of Lincoln and Stow and Lindsey. Visitations is a quadrennial event in the Diocese of Lincoln. The Archdeacon of Lincoln told the auditors that he uses this as a mechanism to raise awareness of safeguarding e.g. check that parishes have policies.

The auditors were provided with evidence which showed that safeguarding has been part of the Articles of Enquiry since 2015.

The Diocese reviewed safeguarding processes in a parish following a serious incident that was not directly linked to the Church. Although the concerns raised in the review would not have affected the outcome of the case, there were a number of significant safeguarding issues identified. The findings of this review were used to formulate five safeguarding questions, which were then added to the annual Articles of Enquiry. This has provided the Diocese with rich data about what safeguarding is like at parish level.

### **2.11.2 Support given to Parish Safeguarding Coordinators**

Key individuals, acknowledged to the auditors that they can encounter the occasional recalcitrance towards safeguarding at parish level. This was viewed as inevitable but there was a general sense that with the right support things were changing. Focus Group members told the auditors that they were of the view that attitudes were changing and this was partly due to the support provided by the Safeguarding Team and safeguarding scandals occurring in wider society.

The auditors were told of a number of initiatives that have taken place and ones that are in the pipeline. The Safeguarding Team provides advice and support to parishes as and when requested. They have also held surgeries in parishes following serious incidences. These surgeries were aimed at providing support and advice but also had the dual effect of sending the message that the Diocese cared.

Over the years, a number of electronic communications have been released by the Diocese aimed at parishes. For example, the Bishop has published briefings, the DSA published an article on topical safeguarding advice with a leaflet on this also being

published. Additionally, the diocesan website contains information for parishes. There is a safeguarding handbook that can be downloaded but this is currently in draft form.

A newsletter on safeguarding was published in spring 2017 and featured the Bishop. Focus Group members were unaware of this. They all felt that the Diocese could improve its communication to parishes and use it as an opportunity to promote the outcomes of the work it is doing.

The auditors learned that the Diocese is in negotiations with a major mobile phone distributor to provide free mobile phones to Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs). There are plans to provide all church officers with a Diocese of Lincoln Outlook email address. In 2018, there will be a conference for PSOs. There is also an expectation that support to parishes will increase with the additions to staffing in the Safeguarding Team.

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider ways of improving its communication with parishes.*

## **2.12 RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **2.12.1 Responding to victims/survivors**

The Diocese has devoted an enormous amount of effort towards improving the support it provides to victims/survivors, both those linked to the Church and those who have suffered abuse not linked to the Church. The recruitment of a qualified sexual violence independent advocate is concrete evidence of this albeit this is a new development. Specialist advice leaflets have also been co-produced with Victim Support and the police specifically for victims/survivors of non-recent abuse. Victim Support is also represented on the BSOP and has extended training to the Safeguarding Team.

Some members of the Focus Group told the auditors that the Church generally in the past has been skewed in the direction of supporting perpetrators, especially if they were clergy, and felt more could still be done to support survivors. It was mentioned that the current Safeguarding Team in Lincoln does believe and support survivors, and one Focus Group member suggested that, in the same way safeguarding agreements are designed to support perpetrators, a similar approach using 'supporting agreements' could be used to support victims/survivors. The auditors thought that this was a good idea as it will show the Diocese's commitment to victims/survivors.

The auditors were told that victims/survivors may sometimes believe that forgiveness is a barrier to making a disclosure. This prompted the Archdeacon of Lincoln to produce a statement on forgiveness, which has been used in the diocese's work with victims/survivors. The auditors were told by several key individuals spoken to that this has played a vital part in encouraging victims/survivors to make disclosures about non-recent abuse.

There is only one Authorised Listener and this service has not been used. The Focus Group members were unaware that it existed.

The Diocese has instead developed a complementary service called Bishop's Safeguarding Supporters (BSS), which is being used. This initiative was developed following a serious incident. The auditors were told that victims/survivors when consulted were requesting pastoral and theological support. This led to the formation of a team of clergy and lay ministers whose role is to walk alongside those affected by current and historical safeguarding matters. There is a policy and framework document outlining the parameters of its work. The auditors were told that the BSS will also work with perpetrators – clarity was provided about how this will work during conversations with key individuals. However, the policy and framework document does not provide this clarity.

### **2.12.2 Proactive efforts to create a safe culture**

At a parish level there has been a drive to make certain that Childline and NSPCC along with elder abuse posters are on display in churches. Posters from the Diocese with numbers to call and safeguarding 'credit cards' are also available.

Clergy who participated in the Parish Focus Group told the auditors about the work undertaken to make churches dementia friendly and there are pastoral guidelines on making churches dementia friendly.

A dedicated diocesan youth worker does not exist. The auditors were told that the Bishop of Grimsby's remit includes work with young people but this related to mission work.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*The Diocese to consider updating the BBS Framework and Policy guidance to reflect who safeguarding supporters will be working with and how this will be approached.*

*Develop its work with promoting the voice and engagement of young people*

*The Diocese to consider developing an approach to working with victims/survivors which incorporates the use of supporting agreements.*

## **2.13 INFORMATION SHARING**

Partnership working is central to the Diocese of Lincoln's work. Central to this is the understanding that information sharing is a necessary part of the work. This was demonstrated in the case files audited and in the work of the BSOP. Electronic and hard copy documents are stored securely and confidential agreements are put in place when needed.

## **2.14 LINKS WITH NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

The Diocese appears to have a good links with the National Safeguarding Team (NST). The Head of the NST attended the BSOP in June 2017 and provided an update on the team's direction.

The DSA was previously seconded to the NST one day a week to provide casework support and has delivered a presentation at the DSA national safeguarding conference on managing critical incidents.

The Archdeacon of Stow and Lindsey previously worked with the NST to draft policy on responding to serious safeguarding issues and has recently been involved in drafting guidance on spiritual abuse.

## **3 Conclusion**

### **3.1 WHAT'S GOING WELL?**

There is a committed Senior Leadership Team, starting with the Bishop. There is a strong message that safeguarding is part of the core business of the Church and not a secular addition. This is supported by active and engaged archdeacons, who provide excellent support to the Safeguarding Team. The Archdeacon of Lincoln is a valued line manager. The Archdeacon of Stow and Lindsey has stepped into the Diocesan Secretary role at a difficult time, but seems to have had an immediate impact. It is impressive that at a time of senior staff changes, good work has been maintained.

The Diocese has been able to forge good links with statutory and voluntary sector partners at every level. External partners have shown their commitment towards supporting the Diocese.

Past safeguarding concerns have engendered an atmosphere of learning and there is strong evidence of recommendations being implemented.

Although the Bishop's Safeguarding Oversight Panel has been through a number of transitions, it is clear in its sense of purpose. There is excellent external representation, clear outputs and evidence that it is making a difference.

There is an impressive funding commitment towards getting the Diocese equipped to respond appropriately to the task at hand. The Safeguarding Team is therefore growing in response to the increasing demands placed on it. It is an industrious Safeguarding Team and staff members possess a good array of skills and knowledge.

Casework is excellent. Multi-agency working and being victim/survivors-focused are the bedrock of practice.

There is a good, well-established and contractually mapped out relationship with the Cathedral.

The work to support victims/survivors is impressive. The Diocese has thought hard about how to support victims/survivors. It has adopted a broad definition of victim/survivor and has worked with Victim Support and others to develop the right type of service.

There is a strong dedication towards engagement with parishes and providing ongoing support.

### **3.2 AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

Managing the work related to non-recent abuse cases has been time-consuming and emotionally taxing for the Safeguarding Team. Coupled with this the Diocese has had to respond to the recent departures of key individuals. Whilst the Safeguarding Team has shown great resilience there is still some work to be done to address the residual impact this continues to have on the wellbeing of staff.

The Diocese has rightly had to deal with safeguarding issues of the past. However, at the same time it needs to be forward thinking. The Diocese's strategic direction could benefit from developing a safeguarding strategy which will assist it in mapping out its future trajectory.

The absence of a staff appraisal and development process affects the Diocese's ability to evaluate staff performance. This is an area requiring further development.

There is a need to consistently apply House of Bishops' policy on the use of core groups and Safer Recruitment.

The Diocese has undertaken a number of initiatives and reviews. After listening to the Parish Focus Group, the auditors are of the view that the Diocese could further develop the way it communicates key safeguarding messages and success with parishes.

The aims outlined in the Training Strategy will be difficult to achieve within the set timeframe. Further consideration is needed on devising a new approach.



## **APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS**

### **DATA COLLECTION**

#### **Participation of members of the Diocese**

- Bishop of Lincoln
- Archdeacon of Lincoln
- Archdeacon of Stow and Acting Diocesan Secretary
- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
- Former Independent Chair of BSOP
- Independent Reviewer of past cases

#### **Focus Group with BSOP members**

- Acting Independent Chair of BSOP
- Manager, Lincolnshire Adult Safeguarding Board
- Manager, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Manager, Victim Support
- Independent Chair of Lincoln Safeguarding Children Board (not a BSOP member)

#### **A Parish Focus Group comprised the following roles:**

- One churchwarden
- Four clergymen
- Two PSOs
- One Cathedral Administrator
- The training and development officer from Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards (not a parish member)

#### **Information provided to auditors**

- Pastoral Safeguarding Record
- Bishop's Safeguarding Supporters – Framework and Policy
- Bishop's Safeguarding Supporters – Pastoral Statement
- Application form for voluntary workers with children and vulnerable adults
- Role description: Authorised Listener
- Bishop's Safeguarding Oversight Panel Minutes: 29/11/16, 03/03/17, 09/06/17, 15/09/17
- Safeguarding Group Meeting Minutes 11/09/13, 12/01/15
- Safeguarding Committee Minutes 13/10/14
- Child and Adult Safeguarding Group 08/10/12,
- CPVA Trainers Minutes 01/10/14

- Safeguarding Structure for the Diocese of Lincoln 2016
- Bishop's Staff Response to the Independent Overview Report
- BSOP Terms of Reference
- BSOP Annual Report September 2017
- BSOP Briefing Paper
- BSOP and Safeguarding Delivery Group Flowchart
- Newsletter: Safeguarding Now
- Statement from the Bishop of Lincoln 21/09/2017
- Topical advice from the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser
- Summary Report for Joint Board Review
- Meeting in relation to Spalding Minutes
- Terms of Reference in relation to Spalding
- Complex Cases sub-group Terms of Reference
- Safeguarding Delivery Sub Group Terms of Reference
- Church of England – Self-Assessment of Diocesan Safeguarding Arrangements 2016
- Church of England – Self-Assessment of Diocesan Safeguarding Arrangements 2015
- Diocese of Lincoln Safeguarding Training Strategy 2017–2020
- Independent Lay Chair role description
- Risk register
- Lincoln Diocesan Safeguarding Training Plan 2017–2020 Working draft
- Training report
- Complaints process for Rural Deans to consider and use
- Safeguarding Flow Chart for Parishes in the Diocese of Lincoln
- Diocese of Lincoln Complaints Procedure (draft 8 September 2014)
- Procedural Flowchart: when concerns arise about an adult posing a risk
- Procedural Flowchart: when concerns arise about a child at risk
- Procedural Flowchart: when concerns arise about a vulnerable adult
- Application form for voluntary workers with children and vulnerable adults
- Role description: Authorised Listener
- Safeguarding Pastoral Support Team Ongoing Support Recording Sheet
- Pastoral Safeguarding Record
- Articles of Enquiry questions and responses 2015
- Parish Safeguarding Implementation Self Audit 2017
- Archdeacons' Articles of Enquiry 2017
- Response to Parish Safeguarding Audit
- The Anglican Diocese and Cathedral of Lincoln Past Cases Review 2015: Overview report
- Diocesan list of safeguarding priorities
- Review of Files of Deceased Clergy in Lincoln Diocese

- Initial terms of reference for the exploration of issues of concern regarding historical safeguarding matters
- Addendum report to the 2015 Overview report
- Historical Cases of Concern Review 2015
- Past Case Review
- Independent Safeguarding Review of all Clergy with PTO August 2017
- BSOP Confidentiality Agreement and all related safeguarding sub-groups
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Group agenda 02/05/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Group minutes 02/05/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup minutes 26/06/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup agenda 26/06/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup agenda 08/09/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup minutes 13/03/17
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup Terms of reference
- Bishops Safeguarding Delivery Subgroup minutes 22/02/17
- Choir Handbook
- Written feedback from a parish member on the implementation of the self-audit tool
- Safeguarding the choristers at Lincoln Cathedral: Code of practice
- Choristers Helping Hand power point presentation
- Lincoln Cathedral Safeguarding Protocol
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Lincoln Diocesan Trust and Board of Finance Ltd and Independent Safeguarding Adviser for the provision of safeguarding support in the Diocese of Lincoln and Lincoln Cathedral
- Volunteer role description for children's chaperone
- Parish Handbook (draft)
- Parish safeguarding leaflet
- Confidential Safer Church Agreement Guidance
- Safer Church Agreements
- Online training email discussion
- Safer Recruitment
- Training and Development- strengths and weaknesses
- Training and Development for the Diocese and Cathedral
- Foundation training materials
- Joint domestic abuse training materials
- Leadership module training materials
- Dementia: an idea for Pastoral Care Guidelines
- Theological reflection from House of Bishop's policy guidance
- Power point presentation: An introduction to responding well to those who have been sexually abused
- Power point presentation: Safeguarding Reflection Session
- Power point presentation: The Church's mission

- Training presentations for the following courses: C1/C2, C3, Cathedral Heads of Department and Diocesan Curates
- Training videos
- Trainer job description
- Responding to a Safeguarding Situation Flow Diagram
- What is confidential information?
- Mandatory Safeguarding Training
- Safeguarding Training Plan 2017–2020
- Safeguarding Training Scrutiny Report May 2017
- Proposal for provision of victim support and advocacy during on-going case review processes and current safeguarding court cases
- Safeguarding Communication Strategy
- Multi-agency feedback Local authority designated officer
- Multi-agency feedback Yorkshire, Humberside & Lincolnshire Circles of Support & Accountability, probation service
- Multi-agency feedback police managing sexual and violent offenders team
- Feedback from two respondents subject to safeguarding agreements

***During the audit, the Diocese supplied:***

- Whistleblowing policy
- A Reflection on Forgiveness, written by the Archdeacon of Lincoln
- Training statistics 2014–17
- Diocese training report 30/01/17
- Diocese training report March 2014
- Training and Development: strengths and weaknesses
- Training evaluation feedback forms: C3 26/09/17
- Training evaluation feedback forms: C1/C2 15/10/16
- Training evaluation feedback forms: C1/C2 18/01/17
- Training evaluation summary C1/C2 18/01/17

## **LIMITATIONS OF AUDIT**

The process of auditing involves two SCIE auditors undertaking a site audit over a three day period. After the first day of the audit, one of the auditors was unable to continue due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, on the second day of the audit only the lead auditor was able to review the Clergy and lay HR files. Two conversations were also held by the lead auditor alone.