

**HOUSE OF BISHOPS**  
**ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL**

**National Safeguarding Steering Group**

Appointment and Terms of Reference

*Appointment*

1. There is to continue to be a body known as the National Safeguarding Steering Group ('NSSG').
2. The following are ex officio members of the NSSG:
  - (a) the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding;
  - (b) the two deputy Lead Bishops for Safeguarding;
  - (c) the Chair of the National Safeguarding Panel;
  - (d) the Bishop at Lambeth or the person exercising a role which in the opinion of the Archbishop of Canterbury is equivalent, or in succession, to the role of Bishop at Lambeth;
  - (e) the chief of staff of the Archbishop of Canterbury;
  - (f) the chief of staff of the Archbishop of York.
2. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York must jointly appoint additional members to the NSSG as follows:
  - (a) not more than 5 members of the House of Bishops;
  - (b) not more than 2 members of the Archbishops' Council;
  - (c) not more than 2 members of the Board of Governors of the Church Commissioners;
  - (d) a dean of a cathedral;
  - (e) not more than 2 persons who hold the office of diocesan secretary.
3. In making appointments under paragraph 3 the archbishops must—
  - (a) under sub-paragraph (a)—
    - (i) appoint at least two bishops from each of the Provinces of Canterbury and York;

- (ii) have regard to the desirability of the NSSG's membership including at least one bishop who has knowledge of religious communities and at least one bishop who has knowledge of theological education institutions;

(b) under sub-paragraphs (b), (c) and (e), have regard to the desirability of the NSSG's membership including a number of lay persons;

4. A person appointed under paragraph 3 serves for a term of 5 years and may be reappointed for not more than one further term of 5 years.
5. A person appointed under paragraph 3 may resign and may be removed from membership of the NSSG if the archbishops jointly decide that there is good and sufficient cause to do so.

#### *Committee of the House of Bishops and of the Archbishops' Council*

6. Pursuant to Standing Order 15 of the House of Bishops the NSSG is constituted a committee of the House for the purposes set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 below.
7. Pursuant to paragraph 15 of Schedule 1 to the National Institutions Measure 1998 the NSSG is constituted a committee of the Archbishops' Council and has delegated to it by the Council such of the functions set out in paragraph 10 below as are functions of the Council.

#### *Functions*

8. The NSSG, as a committee of the House of Bishops, may exercise the functions of reviewing, preparing, consulting on and issuing Safeguarding Codes of Practice under sections 5A and 5B of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 on behalf of the House of Bishops.
9. The NSSG, as a committee of the House of Bishops and of the Archbishops' Council, must—
  - (a) exercise oversight of national safeguarding activity, including by making recommendations on the strategic development of that activity to the House of Bishops, the Archbishops' Council and other National Church Institutions as appropriate;
  - (b) oversee the work of the National Safeguarding Team, including by approving the annual National Safeguarding Team Business Plan / Strategy and responding to consultation on the annual National Safeguarding Budget;
  - (c) receive and consider recommendations and advice from the National Safeguarding Panel;
  - (d) review, prepare and publish safeguarding good practice advice, which accompanies (but is not part of) a Safeguarding Code of Practice;

- (e) receive on behalf of the Church of England safeguarding practice reviews and other reports on high-profile safeguarding cases, review and comment on any recommendations prior to the publication of such reviews, indicate, on behalf of the Archbishops' Council, whether it is in agreement with such recommendations and monitor the implementation of any agreed actions.
- (f) oversee the Church of England's response to the recommendations of relevant national reviews relating to safeguarding;
- (g) review and comment on the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Audits of dioceses, including by engaging directly with the diocese concerned on the implementation of any recommendations;
- (h) review annual diocesan safeguarding returns and other reports on safeguarding activity in dioceses and give direct advice and make recommendations on matters arising from them to diocesan bishops and other church bodies;
- (i) commission such other work from the National Safeguarding Team and others, as required, and receive regular reports from safeguarding working / task groups.

### *Business*

10. The NSSG is to be chaired by the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding or in his or her absence by one of the deputy Lead Bishops.
11. The NSSG must meet approximately every 8 weeks.
12. A motion or other proposal is deemed to have been agreed by the NSSG if a majority of its members present and voting are in favour.
13. A meeting of the NSSG may be held without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place; accordingly a member is deemed to be present at a meeting of the NSSG if that person is participating in the business of the meeting remotely by electronic means.
14. If the Chair considers that the NSSG has business which can properly be conducted by correspondence, the Chair may instruct staff to circulate to the members of the Commission written proposals requiring the approval of the Commission. Unless objection is received from a member of the Commission within 7 days of the date on which the proposals were posted or delivered, they are to be treated on the expiry of that period as approved by the NSSG as if they had been approved at a duly convened meeting.
15. The quorum required for the transaction of business is one half of the number of members of the NSSG for the time being.

*Reporting and publication*

16. The NSSG must report to the House of Bishops and to the Archbishops' Council as required by them.
17. The NSSG must prepare and publish an annual report on the work it has undertaken and may prepare and publish such other reports and documents regarding its work as it considers necessary.
18. Subject to paragraphs 17 and 18, the papers and proceedings of the NSSG are confidential to its members and staff.

*Staff support*

19. The Archbishops' Council will support the work of the National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) through the following staff:
  - (a) the Secretary General;
  - (b) the National Director of Safeguarding;
  - (c) the Director of the Central Secretariat;
  - (d) the Chief Legal Adviser or another legally qualified member of the staff of the Legal Office;
  - (e) the Director of Communications or another member of the staff of the Communications Office;
  - (f) such other staff as may be required to enable the NSSG to carry out its functions.
20. The staff of the National Safeguarding Team are responsible for arranging meetings of the NSSG, providing material and input for meetings, attending and minuting meetings, taking and typing minutes, writing draft papers, collating final papers and delivering the recommendations of the NSSG on a day-to-day basis.

*Approved by the House of Bishops on [date]*

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