

## The Past Cases Review 2 – Executive Summary

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### 1. What is PCR 2?

In 2007, the Church of England commissioned a Past Cases Review, which sought to look at the handling by the Church of child protection cases over many years. This entailed an independent scrutiny of the files of clergy and church officers to identify any persons presenting on-going risks to children and young people (a child or young person is anyone under the age of 18) which had not been acted on appropriately.

The House of Bishops wants to ensure that our churches and church-related activities are as safe as possible for children and vulnerable adults. All Dioceses were asked to extend the review to include children, young people and vulnerable adults. This process is called **Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2)**.

The review commenced on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 under the Protocol and Practice Guidance set out by the Management Board of the Past Cases Review commissioned by the Archbishop's Council with the support of the National Safeguarding Steering Group by the named independent reviewers.

The objectives of PCR2 are;

- To identify all information held within the parishes, cathedral, diocese or other church bodies, which may contain allegations of abuse or neglect where the alleged perpetrator is a clergy person or other officer and ensure these cases have been independently reviewed.
- To ensure all allegations of abuse of children, especially those that have been recorded since the original PCR, have been handled appropriately and proportionately to the level of risk identified and with the paramountcy principle evidenced within the decision making.

- To ensure that recorded incidents or allegations of abuse of an adult (including domestic abuse) have been handled appropriately demonstrating the principles of adult safeguarding.
- To ensure that the support needs of known survivors have been considered.
- To ensure that all safeguarding allegations have been referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers and are being/have been responded to in line with current safeguarding practice guidance.
- To ensure that cases meeting the relevant thresholds have been referred to statutory agencies.

## 2. What were the local findings of the Review?

All safeguarding files from across the diocese were reviewed by the independent team. These totalled 1430. No cases were found that were of concern and all safeguarding allegations reported to the church were found to have been dealt with correctly.

5 of these cases were not known during the original Past Cases Review. These were also found to have been dealt with correctly by the independent reviewers. 3 additional files were opened for auditing purposes, but did not relate to new cases.

The reviewers found that good practice was evident throughout the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel, the Bishop's Office and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers. All cases were clearly documented with the actions taken, along with minutes of meetings, emails and safeguarding agreements. The independent reviewers were confident that the Diocese Safeguarding Team have a clear understanding of what is appropriate and proportionate to each investigation, what agency and when to refer and most importantly the voice of the child/adult. The Safeguarding Team were also praised for their pro-active inter-agency liaison work.

A survivors strategy is now in place and there were a number of cases where there was evidence of good practice in survivor work and respondent management.

## 3. How are we listening to survivors of abuse?

Listening to the voices of survivors has been central to the PCR2 process. Peterborough Diocese is looking to appoint an Advocate for survivor care who provides support to an individual who has previously asked for help where there is no evidence that appropriate support has been provided or offered. They will also work with the Safeguarding Team to ensure the support needs of all

those impacted by PCR2 are considered and provided for and will act as liaison between the survivor and the Independent Reviewer to ensure the voices of the survivor is heard.

We, as the Diocese, will continue our communication strategy to ensure that everyone is aware of all organisations offering support to survivors, including therapy and counselling resources.

We urge anyone wishing to give information or make disclosures of Church-related abuse to make direct contact with our Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 01733 887040 / 887041. If you feel it would be easier to email, then please contact [safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk).

We recognise that this option may not feel safe for those with a lived experience of abuse from within the Church. A dedicated telephone helpline, operating independently from the Church, has therefore been set up – the number is 0800 80 20 20.

#### 4. What's next?

I am indebted to the Safeguarding Team, especially Bev Huff and the safeguarding panel, for their diligent work both on this Review and on a daily basis to promote a safer culture in all our churches. I am grateful that this report recognises the quality of the work that goes on within the diocese to ensure that safeguarding is understood as being at the heart of our Christian Faith.

As a diocese we will continue to resource our dedicated Safeguarding Team, making sure that we provide support, guidance and training. We will work to prevent abuse from occurring and to prevent those at risk of being abused. We acknowledge that the affects of abuse are life-long and seek to respond well to those that have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald Pembry". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

The Right Reverend Donald Allister, Bishop of Peterborough