

Safeguarding Commissions in the Dioceses and Independent Religious Safeguarding Commissions.

Commission Chair: Model Person Specification & Role Description.

1. Context:

- 1.1. The Catholic Church in England and Wales is committed to the development of the highest standards of safeguarding practice as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. An important aspect of this is through the work of individual Safeguarding Commissions.
- 1.2. The role of these Commissions is to oversee safeguarding practice and compliance with national standards and procedures across the Diocese/Religious Community in respect of everyone who is involved with the Church, its organisations and ministry.

2. Function:

- 2.1. The Chair is an independent, lay appointee with responsibility for ensuring the Commission's regulatory, advisory and scrutiny functions are carried out effectively in regard to matters relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk within the diocese/religious order.
- 2.2. The appointment process should be in line with the recruitment and selection standards approved by the NCSC.

3. Person Specification:

- 3.1. Appointees should demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and experience:

- 3.1.1. Knowledge and understanding of the strategic context of safeguarding within the Church.
- 3.1.2. Direct experience of safeguarding in either statutory services (social work, health, probation, police) the legal profession or a relevant voluntary agency, together with an appropriate professional qualification. In addition, they should have relevant management and supervisory experience.
- 3.1.3. A confident leadership style with the ability to effectively manage meetings and build capacity and consensus within the Commission.
- 3.1.4. An ability to promote and represent the Commission and its safeguarding activities at all levels within the Diocese/Religious Order and externally as required.
- 3.1.5. Experience of membership, governance and contribution to Committees, Boards, etc.
- 3.1.6. Up to date knowledge of multi-agency safeguarding practice and processes, research, law and policy matters in relation to safeguarding.
- 3.1.7. Experience of strategic planning, risk management and promoting standards.

4. Role Description:

- 4.1. To provide effective leadership and governance of the Commission.
- 4.2. To ensure the Commission has a strategic overview of safeguarding practice across the diocese/religious order in line with agreed national policies and procedures, together with appropriate quality assurance and risk management systems.
- 4.3. To develop an over-view and contextual understanding of the characteristics of the diocese/religious order in respect of safeguarding. In particular, where religious communities are aligned to a diocese, to understand the distinctive features and ministries undertaken by these communities.

- 4.4. To ensure the Commission is adequately resourced; ensuring sufficient capacity and diversity in terms of the skill set and experience/background of Commission members. To lead on the recruitment and succession planning of Commission members.
- 4.5. To ensure that the Commission receives all information relating to safeguarding matters within the diocese/religious order and decide upon appropriate action through the Commission, including where necessary advising the Bishop/Religious Leader and Trustees of specific concerns/issues.
- 4.6. In liaison with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, and Commission Secretary, (if in post) to schedule meetings, set agendas and approve minutes and casework recommendations, together with ensuring an appropriate audit trail of decisions.
- 4.7. To monitor the workload of the Safeguarding Office and advise the Trustees on capacity, resources and budget requirements.
- 4.8. To ensure the Commission considers welfare matters relating to victims and those impacted by abuse together with recommendations for appropriate action including advising the Bishop/Religious Leader and Trustees of specific concerns.
- 4.9. To ensure that there are clear, transparent and consistent working practices regarding the case management of allegations against members of the church and their employees and to ensure there is effective liaison with all relevant Statutory Agencies. To ensure arrangements are in place for the pastoral care of individuals and communities affected by abuse.
- 4.10. To agree Covenants of Care and to ensure the Commission's oversight of their compliance. To ensure any concerns regarding specific breaches of Covenants are reported to the Diocesan Bishop/Religious Leader.

- 4.11. To monitor compliance of the arrangements for members of the Church, Religious Community and Laity who are known abusers, including the commissioning of risk assessments, and risk management plans.
- 4.12. To ensure the Commission is kept apprised of the safeguarding agenda within the wider Church, to attend regional meetings or events to represent the Commission, and to contribute to the development and review of national policies, practice and principles as required.
- 4.13. To oversee the appointment of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, and ensure the availability of relevant training, appraisal and supervision for the post-holder. To provide an *ad hoc* point of contact/"sounding board" for the Safeguarding Co-ordinator outside of the formal supervisory and management arrangements.
- 4.14. To oversee the production of a local Annual Report to the Trustees and contribute to the NCSC Annual Report as required.
- 4.15. To oversee compliance with "safer recruitment" practices in terms of DBS policy and procedures in line with national procedures.
- 4.16. To ensure the Trustees are sufficiently informed to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities to the Charity Commission in respect of safeguarding matters

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