

Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2)

**Diocese of Carlisle
Executive Summary
5 October 2022**

ISSUED BY THE
BISHOP OF CARLISLE
THE RT REV JAMES NEWCOME

THE DIOCESE OF CARLISLE



DIOCESE OF CARLISLE PCR2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Past Cases Review 2 has been a large-scale independent review of the Church of England's handling of safeguarding cases over many years. It has involved a scrutiny of clergy and church officers' files to identify persons presenting on-going risks to children, adults at risk of harm and domestic abuse.

The review was approved by the House of Bishops and has been carried out across all 42 dioceses nationally, including the Diocese of Carlisle.

The specific objectives of PCR2 have been:

- to identify all information held within parishes, cathedrals, dioceses or other church bodies which may contain allegations of abuse or neglect where the alleged perpetrator is a clergy person or other church officer/volunteer and ensure these cases have been independently reviewed
- to ensure all allegations of abuse of children, especially those that have been recorded since PCR 1 (2007-2009) have been handled appropriately and proportionately to level of risk identified and this evidenced within decision making.
- to ensure that recorded incidents or allegations of abuse of an adult (including domestic abuse) have been handled appropriately and demonstrate the principles of adult safeguarding.
- to ensure that the support needs of all known survivors / victims have been considered and offered support.
- to ensure all safeguarding allegations have been referred to the Safeguarding Team and are being/have been responded to in line with current safeguarding practice guidance and standards.
- to ensure that all cases that meet the relevant thresholds have been referred to statutory agencies.

As identified in the PCR2 Protocol and Practice Guidance, the Diocese of Carlisle's Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) was appointed lead person to coordinate the review process and to act as a single point of contact for the Independent Reviewers (IR), providing guidance on processes and for information and advice

A letter from the Bishop of Carlisle was sent to all incumbents and wardens in every parish explaining the remit of the PCR2 review and asking for their support in providing the necessary information needed in order to fully inform the review. Requests were sent to two hundred and thirty-four parishes.

A Diocesan PCR2 Reference Group was formed to provide oversight and subsequently approved the appointment of two Independent Reviewers: Carol Holt and Pam Hutton, both of whom have extensive senior management experience in Local Authority safeguarding contexts.

The Covid pandemic meant that case file reviews did not commence until October 2020. Subsequently 1,028 diocesan files* were reviewed, including Clergy Blue Files (personnel files for individual clergy), Cathedral records, HR files, parish returns, Reader files. The independent review identified one new safeguarding case** which was actioned accordingly by the DSA without need for onward reference to other statutory agencies.

*'Files' - written or electronic records as defined in PCR2 Guidance of July 2019 (p.4/5).

**'New safeguarding cases' - cases which have been added to the diocesan 'Known Case List', as defined in Phase Two of the PCR2 Guidance (p.10/12).

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LOCAL THEMES

The Independent Reviewers highlighted the following key themes which were fed into both the Diocese of Carlisle and National Safeguarding Team. These will further support development of a workplan being undertaken by the Diocese of Carlisle Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) to enhance and improve safeguarding practices and procedures.

Information management

Ensure there is robust record-keeping including adoption of a file tracking system, ensuring events are chronologically logged, there is use of a safer recruitment checklist, all files contain current information and references to any information which may have been removed.

Parish Returns

All parish returns to be completed and reviewed by the Safeguarding Team by 31 January, 2022.

Thresholds

Review the thresholds for referral to the Safeguarding Team in incidents where bullying /harassment behaviours have been identified and consideration is given to deciding who is a vulnerable adult, or are they placed in a vulnerable position by someone's treatment of them.

Safeguarding Team

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team to be managed via a two-tier management system including local and national oversight with consideration of further resourcing for the team to take forward suggested improvements. Acknowledgement of the vital work of Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) is needed, ensuring they are adequately resourced and supported.

Safeguarding and assessing risk

Both Clergy Senior Leadership and Local Senior Leadership need to maintain open minds when receiving safeguarding allegations/complaints regarding members of the clergy. A clear process of management must be established, with all investigations being open, transparent and in partnership with statutory agencies. If there are any suspicions or evidence that a criminal act has been committed, then consultation with Police should take place immediately

Survivors

Identify a method of supporting survivors who come forward to disclose abuse, so that they feel listened to and they have been believed. This should include a transparent process for decision making which can be explained and justified to survivors and adoption of a specific feedback tool to enable views and experiences to be gathered from survivors/victims on how they have been supported. The Diocese of Carlisle should also update their Survivor Strategy.

Training

Review of the training programme within the Diocese is suggested with consideration given to specific training for Clergy Senior Leadership on how to respond to children and adults who have suffered trauma. PSOs and members of clergy to attend multi-agency safeguarding training provided by the Cumbria Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Review the content of Domestic Abuse training and both Clergy Senior Leadership and Local Senior Leadership along with key staff from the Diocese to participate in a feedback session and any training identified regarding the findings of the PCR2 review.

Safer Recruitment

Develop a central database to record the tracking of DBS, safeguarding training and Permission To Officiate for all clergy, employees and volunteers who are working in the diocese.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Information Management

All new safeguarding cases are now filed chronologically, and a comprehensive training programme has been rolled out for clergy and church officers with a focus on the importance of record-keeping.

Parish Returns

The majority of Parish Returns have been returned and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) continues to liaise with those parishes yet to respond (some of those are in vacancy and some with new clergy recently appointed).

Thresholds

A review of thresholds has been undertaken by the DSA. It is expected that all cases of bullying or harassment will be reported, investigated and referred to external agencies where appropriate. This is being shared widely within safeguarding training delivery and will also form an action point on the new Diocesan Safeguarding Development Plan.

Safeguarding Team

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSOs) Induction course was trialled and is now being rolled out throughout the Diocese. This provides a forum for both established and newer PSOs to strengthen working relationships with those in similar roles and develop a supportive relationship with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. It also provides clear guidance on the role of the PSO, how to respond to complaints/concerns raised and an update on current guidance and policies that require implementation in a parish setting. Feedback from all PSOs is ongoing as to the ways support systems can be further strengthened.

Safeguarding and assessing risk

All cases that come to the DSA are referred to external agencies including the Local Authority Designated Officer, Children's Services and the Police, if necessary. Since these recommendations were tabled there are several instances whereby the DSA has worked with other agencies for guidance, advice and to ensure any perceived risk is appropriately managed.

Survivors

Work is ongoing to ensure that survivors and victims have a voice and feel listened to and supported. The new *Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse* guidance has been implemented which includes identifying and training both clergy and lay members of the diocese who will support those who come forward to raise concerns. A Safeguarding Season in October 2021 at Carlisle Cathedral provided a safe environment to offer support to all those who have experienced abuse. Plans are now being developed for events in 2022 to further promote and expand this work.

Training

More than 300 people across the Diocese have attended a Leadership Safeguarding Training course, with more training dates planned in 2022. The Diocese is also offering *Train the Trainer* training to assist with safeguarding delivery at a parish level.

Safer Recruitment

A central database for safeguarding training has been introduced following the roll-out of the Leadership Safeguarding Training. A database for DBS records is also in place.

The Diocese of Carlisle has invited both Independent Reviewers to complete a further review of the implementation of recommendations within 18 months of their PCR2 report having been submitted.

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SURVIVOR STRATEGY

As part of the PCR2 process, victims and survivors of church-related abuse were interviewed and consulted. The views gathered have been listened to and changes are being made to positively reinforce the commitment the Diocese of Carlisle has towards enhancing the support provided to victims and survivors of church-related abuse. We also are developing and improving the ways in which we appropriately support those whom allegations are made against.

Our Survivor Strategy is currently under review to ensure that all those affected understand the process of investigation and support available to them. Key priorities will be identified to ensure Diocesan and Church officers feel empowered and enabled to ensure our churches are safer places for all. The implementation of the new *Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse* guidance 2021 will be at the centre of our new strategy and vision moving forwards.

THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY PANEL

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP) provides advice and challenge to the Diocese and Cathedral as a “critical friend”. This is independently chaired and provides independent oversight of safeguarding with the Diocese.

The DSAP Terms of Reference state panel membership should include at least three independent members with relevant current/recent child protection or adult safeguarding experience at a senior level in statutory, voluntary or private organisations, including social care, probation and police.

As part of the PCR2 process, the Independent Reviewers met with the DSAP to ensure there was standardisation and quality assured methodology throughout the review. In light of the review's recommendations, the DSAP is currently developing a revised safeguarding plan.

Since completion of the review a new independent chair of the DSAP has been appointed. This is Carol Holt, who was one of the independent reviewers for the Diocese of Carlisle's PCR2 review. It is recognised that this appointment will have huge benefits both in terms of development of the safeguarding plan and independent oversight of the implementation of recommendations as set out in the Diocese of Carlisle's PCR2 report.