A summary of the meeting of the Diocese of Leeds

**Strategic Safeguarding Committee (SSC) held 3 November 2020**

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| A discussion was held about the publication of minutes to provide greater transparency about the work of the Committee. The National Safeguarding Steering Group (NSSG) publish a summary of work (since April 2020) and it was agreed that this could be used as guidance in terms of style and structure. It was agreed that a summary of the Leeds Diocese Strategic Meeting minutes would be shared before publishing as this would be more useful than a redacted set of minutes. This will be shared with the Committee prior to publishing.Agreed action:* Summary to be shared prior to next SSC meeting for approval.
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| The meeting considered the response from National Safeguarding Team (NST) to a letter sent from the SSC. The team were encouraged to keep feeding back to the NST with issues/concerns that arose as the dialogue will be useful.The Dean of Bradford Cathedral updated the meeting around the remaining Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) audit timescales for the Cathedrals. Ripon Cathedral had been put on hold owing to COVID19 and is due to start in the new year, with Bradford Cathedral in the Summer 2021. A query was raised that early SCIE audits may be handled differently as the process evolves and whether there would be consistency in responses. The Chair felt that her understanding of the model is that is it iterative and intended to evolve depending on the findings so each one will be different and this seems appropriate.The Dean of Bradford Cathedral updated the meeting on recruitment to current vacancies. All three Cathedrals recognise that there is a re capacity and expertise and that there are real benefits in having a specific safeguarding role. An updated version of the Cathedral Service Level Agreement was currently being considered. This was a recommendation from the recent SCIE report. |
| A report from the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors (DSAs) had been circulated prior to the meeting. The team has expanded with a new part-time assistant DSA and part-time trainer in post to support the busy work of the team and to specifically address the new training demands.The new and more intensive leadership training had commenced. A discussion took place over various options to ensure that everyone who is eligible attends and the options would be fully supported by the Bishop of Leeds.The meeting considered the new style of training and how this had changed from a “tick box” system to a real learning journey which connects with our ministry. This was about reinforcing a culture change.Safeguarding Dashboard had now been introduced as part of a 6 week trial. Over half the dioceses in the nationally were now using this audit system specifically designed to assist Parish Safeguarding Officers with their safeguarding responsibilities. The Archdeacons were thanked for submitting volunteers to pilot this system with a view of obtaining feedback to assist in making a decision on whether or not to invest with the Dashboard. The Chair asked if a presentation could be given at the next SSG if it was decided to roll this out to other parishes. This was agreed.The Chair requested that future DSA reports should provide examples of ongoing good practice. |
| The Committee was updated on the Past Case Review 2 (PCR2) work.The Independent Review re-started mid-July. Work has been frustrated due to lockdown but the PCR2 team are working with the DSA’s to ensure that the Independent Reviewers (IR’s) to ensure that they have the answers to any queries. The PCR2 reference group had met earlier today. This was a useful positive meeting.The meeting recognised that access issues to files due to lockdown and the numerous file sites were causing complications and time delays but everything was being done to overcome these issues.An approach has been made to the NST in relation to the additional costs of PCR2 as a result of having three former dioceses records to review. A response was still pending. |
| The Wakefield Cathedral Dean attended the meeting to update on the SCIE Audit which took place at the end of January 2020. An overview was given that included how it had been felt that the auditors were professional, clear and alert to the day job. Their report had been received before the first lockdown and was available on their website. A response is still being completed and is intended to be with SCIE by the end of November. Their findings had been accepted with sensible considerations and learning points.The Dean commented that he had been given exemplary support from the DSA’s and he felt there was a close relationship between the Diocese and the Cathedral. The Committee felt this was a very positive report in terms of Cathedral Safeguarding work. |
| An update was given to the Committee by the NST Safeguarding Lead/Bishop around the published Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) report, published on the 6/10/20. There was considerable media coverage and the NSSG had met the following week. The report had been distilled to the House of Bishops, the Archbishops’ Council and the General Synod. The various recommendations were discussed, which included the structure of safeguarding, the revision/review of the Clergy Discipline Measure and around support for victims and survivors. The House of Bishops passed a motion which fully accepts the report, unreservedly apologising to victims and survivors and commits to urgently implementing the recommendations. |