

Introduction

The Church of England is requiring each diocese to commission an independent review of all clergy and church officer files in 2020, to ensure that all known, recent & non-recent safeguarding concerns in relation to children and adults have been appropriately managed and reported to statutory agencies or the police.

Part of the review will also be ensuring that the support needs of any known victims of clergy and church officers have been considered. This work will be known as the Past Cases Review 2 (PCR2).

More detailed information about PCR2 can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/PCR2%20Protocol%20and%20Practice%20Guidance.pdf>

We understand that the wellbeing of victims and survivors must be central to this work and dioceses should ensure their voices can be heard. In Leicester Diocese we anticipate doing this in the following ways, through:

- The appointment of a named person to the PCR2 Reference group who can advocate survivor perspectives in the process
- An open invitation to victims or survivors of church related abuse who want to make representations to the Independent Reviewer about the response they have received from the church to their abuse
- New information or disclosures regarding church-related abuse
- Contact with individuals that the Independent Reviewers may identify through their work, where they deem this necessary.

Appointing an advocate for survivors

We have invited Shabnum Osman, Lead Clinical Therapist with Quetzal, to join the PCR 2 Reference Group that will support the work of PCR 2 and manage any issues that arise. It will be Shabnum's role to advocate survivor perspectives based on her extensive experience of working with people who have experienced sexual abuse.

Quetzal was established in 1989 and provides a range of services to support women in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland recovering from the trauma of childhood sexual abuse. Shabnum has no connection to the Church of England and joins 3 other external representatives on the Reference Group; Police, Children's Services and the Independent Chair.

Shabnum will take the lead in survivor support and engagement in Leicester's PCR2 and work with Rachael Spiers, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) to ensure that the support needs of all those impacted by PCR2 in Leicester diocese are considered and provided for.

Promoting opportunities to be heard:

The diocese will ensure that information about PCR2, and the opportunity to report abuse to the diocesan safeguarding team or to talk to the Independent Reviewer, will be made available on the diocesan website and through information shared with congregations at parish level (eg Diomail).

A press release will be made to highlight the start of the PCR 2 to survivors of church related abuse, who may be outside the Church. Information will also be shared with local post abuse services. Advice will be sought from the PCR 2 Reference Group on other ways to publicise this process.

All information will include the contact details of the diocesan safeguarding team *and* an independent helpline run by the NSPCC, for those who prefer to speak to someone outside of the church.

Speaking to the Independent Reviewers

When appointing Independent Reviewers the diocese will ensure that they have experience in speaking to survivors of abuse, understand the issues and concerns they may have and the impact that abuse may have had on their lives.

Survivors of abuse by clergy or church officers can contact the diocesan safeguarding team to request to speak to the Independent Reviewers. The DSA will speak to Shabnum Osman, the survivor engagement lead about any requests, to plan how best to receive any representations.

Where the diocesan safeguarding team or clergy *are in **current contact*** with victims and survivors who have experienced abuse by clergy or church officers, an invitation will be extended to them to have contact with the Independent Reviewers, if they so wish. Any approach will again be planned first by the DSA and the survivor engagement lead, to consider their current circumstances and what support needs to be in place. Any survivor engaging with the PCR2 process will be assured of anonymity and that any sensitive information shared will be protected.

The purpose of speaking to the Independent Reviewers is to generate information about how victims and survivors have been responded to by the church; for survivors to comment on how helpful they found the response; and what could have been done differently to assist them more. These insights will be utilised to assist the dioceses and the National Church Safeguarding Team to improve their responses to victims and survivors in the future.

If, during their contact with survivors, the Independent Reviewers identify any unmet support needs or are concerned that there is continuing risk, they will pass these to the DSA. The DSA will address these in line with House of Bishops' current practice guidance.

Reporting Abuse

Anyone wishing to report church related abuse can contact Rachael Spiers, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or Peter Holloway, Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Their contact details are available here:

<https://www.leicester.anglican.org/pcr2>

All concerns reported will be taken seriously and, where there are actions required to follow up concerns, the team will always try to talk these through first.

Help is available at the weekend or out of hours through a helpline offered by Thirtyone:eight. Tel 0303 003 11111, option 1. Any calls in relation to Leicester Diocese will be notified to the diocesan safeguarding team.

Those who do not feel safe to report concerns in this way can contact the national safeguarding team or a dedicated helpline operated, independently from the church, by the NSPCC, Tel **0800 80 20 20**

Contact by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team

In exceptional circumstances, for example where information has been identified in the audit suggesting on-going risk, criminal offences to be reported to the police or survivor support has been inadequate, the Independent Reviewers may deem that contact with individuals is necessary. Planning for any such contacts will be done in partnership with the police and/ or the local authority who will be carrying out investigations and the wellbeing of the individual concerned will always be the paramount consideration in any plans made.

No survivor will be contacted by the DSA, police or local authority without a plan in place first to offer immediate care and support them.

Support

The establishing or cementing of effective local partnerships will be undertaken by the Diocesan safeguarding team, with support from the PCR2 Reference group and the advocate for survivor care.

The diocesan safeguarding team recognises that there is no “one size fits all” approach to supporting someone who has experienced church related abuse. The team will always ask individuals how they can best offer support to them. This may include pastoral care, signposting to specialist support services or supporting them to access counselling.

Information about different local services is also available on the [diocesan website](#).

Rachael Spiers

DSA for Leicester Diocese