

## **Summary of DSOG Meeting – 13.09.2023**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Oversight Group (DSOG) has oversight of, and scrutinises, safeguarding strategy and arrangements in the Diocese of Leicester.

DSOG meets quarterly and brings together officers from the Diocese with representatives from external agencies, including adult social care, the police, the probation service, and a local charity supporting survivors of childhood abuse. There is also a representative of the Parish Safeguarding Coordinators. DSOG is chaired by Adrienne Plunkett, a social work practitioner and manager, with experience of conducting Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews with Safeguarding Partnerships across the country.

At its meeting on September 13, 2023, DSOG had discussions about the following matters:

- Recent developments regarding the Church of England's Independent Safeguarding Board and investigations into Mike Pilavachi and Soul Survivor, and the impact of these on public confidence in safeguarding in the Church of England, particularly on victims and survivors, as well as the impact on the morale and wellbeing of staff here in the diocese.
- Synod's motion to change the role of Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO), ensuring that DSOs can operate independently of Bishops to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, as recommended by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).
- The potential impact on safeguarding activities of the transition to Minster Communities. DSOG were assured that parishes will retain locally based Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) and that Minster Communities may be a means through which PSOs will receive peer support, which could help to strengthen safeguarding practice.
- The diocese's plans to co-produce a Survivor Engagement and Care Strategy with survivors of church-related abuse, supported by a local charity supporting survivors of childhood abuse. We hope to be able to host a focus group with survivors in the next few months.
- Following a report from the Safeguarding Training Officer at the previous DSOG meeting, further consideration was given to the priority groups for training and escalation arrangements to promote compliance in completing safeguarding training.