



social care  
institute for excellence

# Bradford Cathedral

## Independent Safeguarding Audit

June 2021



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



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## About SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence improves the lives of people of all ages by co-producing, sharing, and supporting the use of the best available knowledge and evidence about what works in practice. We are a leading improvement support agency and an independent charity working with organisations that support adults, families and children across the UK. We also work closely with related services such as health care and housing.

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- identifying and sharing knowledge about what works and what's new
- supporting people who plan, commission, deliver and use services to put that knowledge into practice
- informing, influencing and inspiring the direction of future practice and policy.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 THE AUDIT PROGRAMME

- 1.1.1** The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is delighted to have been asked to provide an independent audit of the safeguarding arrangements of the cathedrals of the Church of England.
- 1.1.2** This programme of work will see three cathedral audits in 2018, 16 in 2019, four in 2020, 17 in 2021 and a final three early in 2022. There are 43 in total. It represents a significant investment in cathedrals and an important opportunity to support improvement in safeguarding.
- 1.1.3** All cathedrals are unique, and differ in significant ways from a diocese. SCIE has drawn on its experience of auditing all 42 Church of England dioceses, and adapted it, using discussions and preliminary meetings with different cathedral chapters, to design an audit methodology fit for cathedrals. We have sought to balance cathedrals' diversity with the need for adequate consistency across the audits, to make the audits comparable, but sufficiently bespoke to support progress in effective and timely safeguarding practice in each separate cathedral. Cathedral representatives will play a key role in adapting the audit framework to their particular cathedral context. Only in this way will we achieve bespoke audits that are right for each place respectively. Bespoke audits will in turn optimise the usefulness of the audit process and outputs to supporting progress in effective and timely safeguarding practice. We look forward to working with you to this end.

### 1.2 THE AUDIT PROCESS

#### **SCIE Learning Together and our approach to audit**

- 1.2.1** SCIE has pioneered a particular approach to conducting case reviews and audits in child and adult safeguarding that is collaborative in nature. It is called Learning Together and has proved valuable in the adults' and children's safeguarding fields. It is built on work in the engineering and health sectors that has shown that improvement is more likely if remedies target the underlying causes of difficulties, and so use audits and reviews to generate that kind of understanding. So Learning Together involves exploring and sharing understanding of both the causes of problems and the reasons why things go well.

#### **Key principles informing the audit**

- 1.2.2** Drawing on SCIE's Learning Together model, the following principles underpin the approach we take to the audits:
- Working collaboratively: the audits done 'with you, not to you'
  - Highlighting areas of good practice as well as problematic issues
  - Focusing on understanding the reasons behind inevitable problems in safeguarding
  - No surprises: being open and transparent about our focus, methods and findings so nothing comes out of the blue

- Distinguishing between unique local challenges and underlying issues that impact on all or many cathedrals

### Supporting improvements

- 1.2.3** The overarching aim of each audit is to support safeguarding improvements. To this end our goal is to understand the safeguarding progress of each cathedral to date. We set out to move from understanding how things work in each cathedral, to evaluating how *well* they are working. This includes exploring the reasons behind identified strengths and weaknesses. Our conclusions will pose questions for the cathedral leadership to consider in attempting to tackle the underlying causes of deficiencies.
- 1.2.4** SCIE methodology does not conclude findings with recommendations. We instead give the cathedral questions to consider in relation to the findings, as they decide how best to tackle the issue at hand. This approach is part of the SCIE Learning Together audit methodology. The approach requires those with local knowledge and responsibility for progressing improvement work to have a key role in deciding what exactly to do to address the findings and to be accountable for their decisions. It has the additional benefit of helping to foster ownership locally of the work to be done to improve safeguarding.

### The process

- 1.2.5** The process will involve reviewing documentation as well as talking to key people, including focus groups. Further details are provided in the Appendix.
- 1.2.6** The site visit will be either three days or 2.5 days. Cathedrals have been selected for the three-day audit to provide a broad base, or on the scale of an operation and/or where concerns may have been raised in the past for the cathedral.

## 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is divided into:

- Introduction
- The findings of the audit presented per theme
- Questions for the Cathedral to consider are listed, where relevant, at the end of each Findings section
- Conclusions of the auditors' findings: what is working well and areas for further development
- An appendix sets out the audit process and any limitations to this audit

## 2. CONTEXT

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### 2.1 CONTEXT OF THE CATHEDRAL

**2.1.1** The leadership in each cathedral, as part of the audit process, is asked to supply a brief description of the institution. Bradford Cathedral stated:

*‘Bradford Cathedral is a Grade 1 listed building at the heart of Bradford city centre, standing on a site that has been a place of Christian worship and mission for over 1,000 years. A stone church has existed here since at least 1327 and the oldest parts of the current building, originally the Bradford parish church of St Peter, date back to 1458.*

*The Diocese of Bradford was created in 1919, at which time the old parish church became Bradford Cathedral, which means that we have recently celebrated our centenary year. Our commitment today, is to making the Cathedral a place of welcome to everyone in our community – which includes some of the poorest and most diverse neighbourhoods in the country – and to serving those in our city who are disadvantaged, marginalised and vulnerable.*

*We have grown significantly in the last three years, in terms of our staffing, public ministry and the numbers of people we are welcoming to the Cathedral and engaging with. In this respect we are still in a period of transitioning, and are working extremely hard to ensure that our administrative infrastructure and processes keep pace with our development.’*

- 2.1.2** The Cathedral sits within the Diocese of Leeds, which covers a large geographical area, including Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds, Ripon and Wakefield. The diocese was created in 2014, becoming the first new diocese in the Church of England since 1929 and the largest, covering some 2,400 square miles. This includes the three cathedrals of Wakefield, Ripon and Bradford.
- 2.1.3** The Cathedral itself sits in the heart of the city of Bradford, within the county of West Yorkshire. The city has a population of around 540,000 people. The city is served by the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, including social care functions for both children and adults. The local police service is West Yorkshire Police.
- 2.1.4** Bradford is a diverse city, with a large Asian community making up around 27 per cent of the population. Whilst around 46 per cent are of Christian faith, Islam is the second largest religious group at 25 per cent of the population.
- 2.1.5** Like some other local cities, Bradford’s main historic industry was textiles, which has been in decline for many years, leading to de-industrialisation and some of the country’s highest levels of social deprivation, with some areas of significant unemployment.
- 2.1.6** Bradford Cathedral is in a challenging financial position and relies significantly on grants to enable its operations and outreach activities. There is no fee for entering the Cathedral, seen as important for encouraging engagement of the community in the life of the Cathedral, but donations are welcomed.

### 2.2 CONTEXTUAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO SAFEGUARDING

**2.2.1** Bradford Cathedral was significantly extended in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, including a rebuild of the east end, including the addition of the current Chapter House, St Aiden’s

Chapel, Hold Spirit Chapel and the Lady Chapel. Wings were also added to the west end, providing a dedicated song room and Cathedral staff offices. The nave remains a very open space with generally good visibility across all areas, with the exception of some side chapels.

- 2.2.2** The Cathedral has five main entrances, four of which are accessible to the public (north, south and west doors, and off the south transept). During the COVID-19 pandemic, this has been reorganised to allow for a one-way flow of traffic, to make the north door the main point of access.
- 2.2.3** The Cathedral is situated in a raised position from the rest of the main city centre, and surrounded by an extended grassy area to the north and west aspect. The precinct is walled and gated and so enclosed on all sides, including the Cathedral Close, which provides housing for the senior clergy and Head Verger.
- 2.2.4** The Cathedral has, in recent years, seen growth in its staff body, and now employs 23 staff (including clergy) the majority of whom report to heads of department, that in turn report into the senior management team including the COO, Canon Precentor and Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development. The Cathedral benefits from support from around 150 regular and occasional volunteers (pre-pandemic), working across a large range of roles.

## **2.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE (INCLUDING LINKS WITH THE DIOCESE)**

- 2.3.1** The Dean of Bradford, as the lead figure in all aspects of Cathedral life, carries the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding. At the time of the audit, the current Dean was imminently retiring and recruitment for their successor underway. Supporting them in their role are a number of clergy and staff, including:
- The Canon Precentor, with responsibility for music and liturgy including the choirs, servers and the bell tower. They are a member of Chapter and will become Acting Dean before a new Dean is appointed
  - The Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development, with responsibility for learning and visitors and safeguarding in their dual role as the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO). They are a member of Chapter
  - The Chief Operating Officer (COO), who oversees the operations of the Cathedral, including recruitment and business functions
  - The Director of Finance, who is also the Chair of the Safeguarding Committee
  - The Head Verger, who is principally responsible for the safety and security of the site
  - The Director of Music, who reports to the Canon Precentor and has oversight of the choirs, supported by an Assistant Director of Music, Choir Matron, and Choir Administrator
  - The Director of Education and Visitors, who reports to the Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development, and has oversight of the learning team and other visitor engagement activities
  - The Tower Captain, who oversees the activities of the band of bell ringers and associated safeguarding procedures

- The Team Leader of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors (DSA), who is the link DSA for Bradford and supports a team of two other DSA's, an Assistant DSA and a Training Officer.

**2.3.2** The Cathedral is supported in its governance by Chapter, which has eight members, including the senior clergy, churchwardens, COO, two Bishop's representatives and a Community Committee representative.

## **2.4 WHO WAS SEEN IN THE AUDIT**

**2.4.1** The audit involved reviewing documentation and case files and talking to people at the heart of safeguarding in the Cathedral, including the Dean, Chapter members, safeguarding staff, music leads, the Tower Captain, education lead and those managing the floor of the Cathedral. The fieldwork aspect of the audit was conducted over 2.5 days. Further details are provided in the appendix.

## **2.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE AUDIT**

- 2.5.1** This audit was conducted in a fully face-to-face format, albeit socially distanced at all times and observing all COVID-related government rules and guidance. However, some limitations remained that make some aspects of the audit necessarily different.
- 2.5.2** No focus groups were held during this audit and instead surveys were made available for both adults (staff, congregants, volunteers and parents of choristers) and children. These were analysed by the audit team and findings explored and referenced throughout conversations. The children's survey saw only five respondents, so any findings drawn from this number are limited by the extent to which they can be generalised to the wider chorister and child group. The adult survey saw 89 responses, across a broad spectrum of roles, including congregants. Surveys nevertheless limited the depth of knowledge that could be gained from participants and this was further limited by the inability to hold follow-up discussions with respondents.
- 2.5.3** Whilst the auditors saw the chorister rehearsal, pre-service arrangements and an evensong service, due to COVID restrictions this was conducted in the main nave of the Cathedral as opposed to the song rooms. It was therefore not possible to see the safeguarding arrangements of this space in action, though supplemented with a tour of the space and verbal discussion about arrangements.
- 2.5.4** The Cathedral was open for services, with socially distanced seating, but not for general visiting. It was not possible to observe how things normally work, e.g. how staff, volunteers and welcomers interact with visitors.

## 3. FINDINGS – PRACTICE

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### 3.1 SAFE ACTIVITIES AND WORKING PRACTICES

#### Precincts and buildings

**3.1.1** There are significant challenges to running a place of worship that welcomes large numbers of worshippers each week, receives several thousand visitors a year and is open to the public, some of whom may be vulnerable themselves, or a possible risk to others. A prominent public building like a cathedral is also vulnerable to external threats. The commitment of the Dean and Chapter to make the Cathedral a public space as well as a place of worship means that a consistent balance must always be maintained between being open and welcoming and ensuring safety and security.

#### *Description*

**3.1.2** Bradford Cathedral is a relatively open space with good visibility across the nave, the north and south transepts and chancel. The Song School, Chapter House and staff and clergy offices are also based in the main Cathedral building.

**3.1.3** Whilst, like many cathedrals, Bradford has several side chapels, these again benefit from good visibility by virtue of their positioning, windows and glass doors. The exception is St Aiden's Chapel which sits to the north side of the building, is more concealed and behind a solid wooden door.

**3.1.4** The precinct includes the Cathedral Close, with housing for the Dean, Canon Precentor, Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development and the Head Verger. The parish rooms are also within the Close and offer a space for various Cathedral or community group meetings and events. The precinct is a relatively enclosed area surrounded by lockable gates on all aspects.

**3.1.5** The management of the Cathedral, including security and safety, is principally the work of the verger team, which comprises the full-time Head Verger, another full-time and two part-time vergers. All have recently completed basic and foundation safeguarding training. The team is supplemented, in normal times, by a number of volunteers who support liturgical and other duties during services and other events. The verger team is identifiable with name badges and its office is situated in the middle of the Cathedral building, within the sacristy.

**3.1.6** Pre-pandemic, the verger team would open the Cathedral in readiness for morning prayer and close after evensong or other events and the site is more widely open to the public from around 9am, closing at around 6pm. Whilst two vergers are generally on duty for the majority of each day, there is a short window of time at the start and end where there will be only one on shift. Staff may be on site, accessing the office spaces, ahead of the verger team's arrival and after its leaving. The Head Verger secures the grounds in the evening, locking the gates of the precinct and ensuring all visitors have left the site.

**3.1.7** Public access to the Cathedral has historically been through several doors, but to aid social distancing this has been reduced to a one-way flow entering through the north door and exiting through the south door. There is an intention to keep this reduced use of entrances and exits in place post-pandemic restrictions. The welcome desk is situated in the middle of the nave and ordinarily staffed by volunteer welcomees.

**3.1.8** CCTV is in place in some areas of the Cathedral, including outside and inside the north door, across some aspects of the nave and in the song school. Cameras are

accessible through monitors in the verger's office, but not remotely. Blind spots are known by the verger team and activities are planned around this coverage. There is intention to further expand coverage as finances allow.

- 3.1.9** By virtue of the Cathedral's position, above the main city centre and not on many through-fares, and the gated security to the precinct, those visiting come with intent and are known to the team and it is relatively uncommon to experience antisocial behaviour or for the homeless of Bradford to sleep rough on the grounds. The auditors heard of some instances where, historically, there has been drug-taking in one aspect of the grounds.
- 3.1.10** Out-of-hours alarms are responded to by the Head Verger. The intruder alarm is monitored by a third-party company which notifies the Head Verger when it is activated, and they respond to check the site – often alone, though with access to clergy who live on site if needed. When alarms are triggered twice in a short period, police are called by the monitoring company.
- 3.1.11** The Head Verger has recently developed a comprehensive emergency plan which covers aspects such as terrorism, unattended bags, evacuation and lockdown procedures. Processes for responding to instances of a lost child/adult are not formally in place.
- 3.1.12** A weekly diary meeting is held and attended by all departments and clergy, and allows for the coordination of staffing and events across the site.

### *Analysis*

- 3.1.13** The auditors judged that Bradford Cathedral is a welcoming and relatively safe environment, and the vulnerabilities of the site are widely understood. However, further consideration should now be given to the mechanisms available to staff and volunteers to communicate and summon help and to mitigate against the risks of lone working.
- 3.1.14** The verger team is effective, experienced and skilled in its work of ensuring safety and security, and the auditors heard of how it is well recognised across the departments of the Cathedral, visible and alert for risks. The new emergency plan is a detailed and useful guide for the team, and others, to support awareness of procedure for responding to risk or serious events.
- 3.1.15** Site security is well understood and the auditors heard clear recognition of how and where the Cathedral remains vulnerable, and of the plans in place to reduce this risk. One example is the moving of the location for pastoral conversations to a table next to the north door, a very prominent spot, allowing for passing staff and volunteers to be on hand for support if needed.
- 3.1.16** Whilst the Cathedral floor is relatively open, the auditors reflected some concern about St Aiden's Chapel as an outlier, whereby those inside may be concealed from view and not covered by cameras, making it a high priority for security development. Plans are in place to widen CCTV coverage of the Cathedral and the precinct to include this area.
- 3.1.17** This picture is, in part, complicated by the lack of a robust mechanism for summoning help and communicating with others in the Cathedral; currently, mobile phones and some landline phones are used, but this is not a reliable mitigation and depends on individuals having their own phone and being able to use it quickly in an emergency. A radio system is not currently in use but is being considered by the Cathedral as part of the rollout of the emergency plan, and the auditors reflected that this would be a worthwhile investment.

**3.1.18** The auditors were concerned that, despite informal practices for reducing instances of lone working, it remains a significant risk to many within the Cathedral – including those on site early in the morning and late in the evening, and those responding to incidents at the Cathedral out of hours. This was supported by survey results from staff, volunteers and congregants of the Cathedral, whereby 27 per cent (n=24) felt this was only moderately avoidable and 5 per cent (n=4) felt this not at all avoidable. The current mitigations are not sufficient, in practice, to keep people safe and some review of these procedures would now be beneficial.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What further resource or support may be required to ensure that planned development of a Cathedral-wide communication system, together with better mitigated safety and security risks in St Aiden's Chapel are prioritised?
- Who is best placed to review the current lone-working procedures to ensure that current vulnerabilities are addressed?

### Children

This section is about children who come to the Cathedral in various capacities. It does not cover choristers, or children who bell ring, who are referred to in section 3.2.

#### *Description*

- 3.1.19** The auditors heard how Bradford Cathedral has invested significantly in recent years in the outreach and engagement activities offered to children and families from the local and surrounding area, in order to raise awareness of the Cathedral and further its mission of transforming lives through welcome, worship and encounter.
- 3.1.20** The education department is led by the Director of Education and Visitors who has been at the Cathedral since September 2018, from a background of 28 years of secondary school teaching, including aspects of pastoral leadership. They are supported by a part-time assistant, themselves bringing significant education experience, and a small group of volunteers. The Director of Education and Visitors has recently completed basic and foundation safeguarding training and is awaiting the start of the leadership pathway. They are line managed by the Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development.
- 3.1.21** The education offer reaches some 4,000 children per year, through a programme of visits and leavers services within the Cathedral. During the pandemic, this has been expanded to include online resources, services and videos to further promote learning and engagement.
- 3.1.22** School visits are managed safely and there are agreed procedures in place for booking, sharing of a very comprehensive risk assessment and clarity about schools having supervisory responsibility. Safety briefings are provided on arrival at the Cathedral (including evacuation and lockdown). Due to identified vulnerabilities in previous arrangements for the location of school visits in the Cathedral, this has now moved to the south transept which is a contained space that can be effectively demarcated from other areas used by the wider Cathedral body and visitors.
- 3.1.23** Bradford Cathedral also offers and hosts a range of other activities, including Messy Church (which meets five to six times per year), family activity days and a community toddler group run from the parish rooms. The Cathedral's Sunday school, called Children's Space, takes place during the main Sunday Eucharist service and has

recently moved to the Chapter House. This is run by volunteers, with support from the wider team. Procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all activities, with regularly reviewed risk assessments in place that include safeguarding aspects.

**3.1.24** The Cathedral does not have any child servers, and the auditors heard how this aspect of ministry does not feature heavily within the Cathedral.

#### *Analysis*

**3.1.25** The auditors judged that there is a wide variety of outreach activities undertaken at Bradford Cathedral, safely operated and with a robust understanding of risk and appropriate mitigations in place.

**3.1.26** The auditors were struck by the extent to which the Cathedral's work with children and families, more broadly, is well informed by the local context and demographic of the city and surrounding area and there is clear recognition of the role that the Cathedral can play in being a place of welcome and support for the whole community, including those of other faiths and none. The auditors heard one example in which mothers from the local toddler group, not of Christian faith, were supported to see the Cathedral as a place of welcome leading to them choosing to engage in wider Cathedral outreach activities.

**3.1.27** School visits are safely managed and regularly reviewed, benefitting from the education team's close relationship with the vergers and other departments, ensuring a well-coordinated approach and for new initiatives (such as evacuation and lockdown procedures) to be trialled and introduced into practice.

**3.1.28** However, one respondent to the child survey reported attending Children's Space and reflected that they were not at all clear on who they should speak to if they had a concern about themselves or others.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- Is the Cathedral confident that safeguarding arrangements for raising a concern are sufficiently clearly explained and understood by those who attend the Cathedral as part of Children's Space?

#### **Adults**

##### *Description*

**3.1.29** Bradford Cathedral represents a place of welcome for those seeking worship and support within the local and wider community. Perhaps in some contrast to other city centre cathedrals, Bradford's position as raised above the main city concourse and away from typical routes of passers-by means that it receives relatively less visitor traffic aside from those directly seeking to attend. Despite this, it is not uncommon for staff and volunteers to encounter those who may be vulnerable by virtue of a range of factors, including mental health problems, substance abuse and homelessness. In general, individuals are well known to the verger team and specific approaches have been developed to best support them.

**3.1.30** Despite this, the verger team and others do not 'rest on their laurels' and maintain vigilance across the Cathedral grounds and during events and services, moving individuals to places of safety to seek support or encouraging those who may pose a risk through anti-social behaviour to leave the Cathedral precinct. The auditors heard and saw much evidence of this being effectively done and with support of the local police and Police Community Support Officer team.

- 3.1.31** In the past, the Cathedral offered food and warm drinks to those in need, but on advice of local forums this was reduced to set times of the day in order to better predict staffing and supervision arrangements. The verger team has access to details of local support groups and charities in the area (e.g. food banks) and regularly signposts or supports individuals by making calls on their behalf to help them to access services.
- 3.1.32** The Cathedral does not operate a day chaplain system, but instead has a Canon in residence rota, which the Dean, and two residentiary Canons staff for a week at a time each and can be accessed to provide pastoral support.
- 3.1.33** Like the programme of outreach offered to children and families, similar opportunities are also offered or hosted for adults – some of which are supported by the Director of Education and Visitors. These include Monday Fellowship (at which external speakers are booked to speak to a group of adults on a variety of topics) and Carers Craft sessions.
- 3.1.34** There is a developing awareness of the potential for volunteers themselves to be vulnerable by virtue of a range of factors, and the need to develop systems that monitor and provide support to enable individuals to engage with the Cathedral safely and to fulfil a pastoral duty to them. As discussed further in section 3.6, the new volunteer recruitment processes will be further developed to include induction and stewardship arrangements to support this aim.
- 3.1.35** At Bradford Cathedral, there are many links throughout the building and its heritage to the role and empowerment of women and to gender equality. This is seen to be an important asset and aspect of its mission, particularly in the context of the local community and equality and diversity issues that permeate it.

### *Analysis*

- 3.1.36** The auditors judged that the Cathedral has a sound understand of the potential needs of its visitors and congregants and has arrangements in place to support safe working practices and pastoral care. There is now an opportunity to formalise both information-sharing mechanisms and support and training for the wider team, to develop the existing, more organically developed, ways of working.
- 3.1.37** Despite assumed and largely effective practices, particularly within the verger team, for supporting those adults who may be vulnerable, their skills have not been systematically underpinned by a formal programme of training, potentially therefore leaving them and others working in this space vulnerable to risk. It is positive that in the coming months the emergency plan will be accompanied by a training plan, which will detail the topical needs for further learning such as de-escalation techniques and mental health awareness. The auditors agree that this is an important investment, not just on behalf of vergers but of potential benefit to staff and volunteers who may find themselves in such situations.
- 3.1.38** Whilst the auditors saw and heard of much evidence of vulnerable adults being supported sensitively, and of those displaying anti-social or risky behaviours being challenged, it was unclear how the extensive knowledge of individuals who may pose a risk is reliably captured and shared with others who may need to understand it. For example, and as reflected by a respondent in the adult survey, volunteers without this awareness may find themselves faced with an individual requiring careful management and presenting risks that they have no knowledge of. The current arrangements of recording incidents within an incident book, and verbal conversations to share information does not appear to reliably mitigate against this, and the

Cathedral may reflect on whether such mechanisms are ensuring sufficient awareness and risk management.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What logistical and other support is needed to enable the prioritisation of training in contextual issues to be delivered to those in public-facing roles within the Cathedral?
- Is the Cathedral confident that its current system for communicating about the support needs of, or risks posed by, individuals to those in wider-public facing roles within the Cathedral remains sufficient?

## 3.2 CHOIRS AND MUSIC

**3.2.1** All cathedral choirs raise particular safeguarding issues, particularly for children. As young children, sometimes away from home, working towards a highly-prized goal, firstly, there is the vulnerability of choristers to being groomed by people in positions of trust within the choir context. Secondly, the demands of regular public performance, in some contexts to elite standards, can be in tension or conflict with child welfare requirements and expectations.

#### *Description*

**3.2.2** Bradford Cathedral has a large and developed and busy music department, comprising both boys' and girls' choirs, junior choral scholars, lay clerks, an adult voluntary choir ('Consort') and a Grace Notes choir of those of primary school age, seen as both an additional musical outreach opportunity and potential feeder for the other choirs.

**3.2.3** The department has made a conscious decision in recent years to achieve parity between the boy and girl choirs, both receiving children from age 6 up to age 12, and rehearsing and singing an equal schedule. Both choirs are capped at 24 choristers, currently with 13 boys and 21 girls. Choristers have a handbook in place, making expectations and arrangements (including for safeguarding and welfare) clear. Lay clerks also have clear expectations regarding their conduct, are never alone with choristers, sign a confidential declaration and have a DBS check undertaken.

**3.2.4** Upon leaving the boy and girl choirs, chorister have the option to progress to be a junior choral scholar, singing Sunday evensong and receiving singing tuition and the opportunity to undertake formal examined qualifications.

**3.2.5** In the absence of a Cathedral school, Bradford is reliant on recruitment from a range of largely outer-urban areas and schools. Given the demographic of Bradford, this means that choristers may come from a diverse background and from families with socio-economic and other challenges. The auditors heard how recruitment is therefore a consistent challenge, but the diversity that it brings as a significant strength of the Cathedral's work.

**3.2.6** The music department team is relatively young, led by a Director of Music who has been at the Cathedral for some four-and-a-half years. They are supported by an Assistant Director of Music, part-time Choir Matron and part-time administrator. All have completed both basic and foundation safeguarding training. The department also draws upon a small number of tutors to support chorister musical tuition.

**3.2.7** The auditors heard clearly of a turbulent past within the music department, including some significant safeguarding concerns, prior to the arrival of the current team and

Canon Precentor, who works closely with the department to support its ongoing development and oversight. Since this time, the department has made rapid change and is now seen as a model of much good practice across the wider Cathedral.

- 3.2.8** Supervision and the pastoral welfare of choristers is principally the work of the Choir Matron, who joined the Cathedral 18 months ago from a background in musical tuition and pastoral voluntary roles. This represented a professionalisation of the function, moving from a previous reliance on volunteers. They oversee a team of chaperones, who until recently were predominantly choir parents. As a result of the impact of the pandemic, the Cathedral is now looking to recruit chaperones from a wider volunteer pool. Each rehearsal and service benefits from the presence of both the Choir Matron and at least one other chaperone.
- 3.2.9** Chaperones are safely recruited and go through both basic and foundation safeguarding training, supplemented by a specific safeguarding induction delivered by the Choir Matron. Roles and responsibilities have also recently been formalised, and supported by a handbook.
- 3.2.10** The Song School itself is a self-contained space, behind secured door, comprising a rehearsal room, robing areas, separate chorister toilets and an office and tuition space. CCTV has recently been introduced and is monitored by the music team.
- 3.2.11** Bradford Cathedral has introduced the ChurchSuite system for record keeping in terms of both consent forms, chorister information, attendance and pastoral concerns and actions. This platform is also used for communications with parents.

### *Analysis*

- 3.2.12** The auditors judged that the safeguarding arrangements within the choirs are robust, and the music department is led and staffed by well-qualified, experienced and highly effective individuals that take a holistic view of chorister welfare that is integral to all that is done.
- 3.2.13** Despite the small number of respondents (n=4), the auditors saw, through chorister and parent surveys, indication of a positive reflection of the choirs at Bradford Cathedral. One hundred per cent of child respondents stated that they feel extremely safe, well supervised and respected by staff at the Cathedral. One hundred per cent were also confident on who to speak to if worried and that these concerns would be acted upon. However, Fifty per cent of respondents (n=2) were only moderately clear on what would happen if they were unwell before a rehearsal or service. Whilst a possible result of the impact of changing arrangements during the pandemic, further clarification and review of such procedures may therefore be indicated.
- 3.2.14** The auditors were struck by the extent to which safeguarding and pastoral welfare is taken seriously within the choirs, often going above and beyond to support choristers and their families both inside and out of the Cathedral. In several cases seen, this included liaising with schools and other agencies and conducting home visits where concerns were held or contact could not be made. There is a palpable awareness of the challenges and individual circumstances of the diverse chorister body, resulting in a strong sense of duty for a holistic approach to their work with children.
- 3.2.15** The music department has also led and developed several strong initiatives to further develop processes and procedures, including the nuancing of the Cathedral's flowchart for raising safeguarding concerns, development of induction training for chaperones and the introduction of weekly pastoral meetings to discuss chorister welfare.

- 3.2.16** The auditors were also pleased to see the Cathedral's commitment to the role of Choir Matron, extending their hours from part-time to near full-time from September 2021 in recognition of the central role they play in safeguarding and welfare support.
- 3.2.17** Gender imbalance and its potential safeguarding import is an issue that is inherent in the structure of many cathedral choirs. Bradford Cathedral's approach to establishing complete parity across boys and girls was seen by the auditors as a very positive development and reflective of the wider ethos and mission of the Cathedral.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There were no considerations under this heading.

### Bellringing

#### *Description*

- 3.2.18** Bradford Cathedral benefits from a bell tower of 12 bells – the entrance to which is situated inside the Cathedral, next to the west door. The tower houses 10 memorial bells that commemorate the impact of World War One on the people of Bradford and the local area, benefitting over recent years from a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to support their maintenance.
- 3.2.19** Cathedral bells are rung by a small band that currently comprises five ringers. The band is led by the current Tower Captain, who has been in their role for some 40-years, ringing within the Cathedral for c.50 years. The auditors heard how, compared to earlier days, recruitment and training is necessarily much more important to sustain numbers, but even with this the band often struggles to meet sufficient numbers and may rely on visiting ringers and bands from surrounding areas.
- 3.2.20** The Tower Captain has a DBS check in place and has undertaken basic and foundation safeguarding training and is present at every rehearsal or practice.
- 3.2.21** There are not currently any child ringers; historically, children have been part of the band and there is a well-established procedure of requiring parents to be present with them at all times.
- 3.2.22** The auditors heard of a clear understanding of the risks that a bell tower poses due to the nature of the activity, and Bradford has mitigations in place including fire extinguisher and a first-aid kit.
- 3.2.23** Lone working does, on occasion, take place and most common when the Tower Captain needs to access the tower for maintenance. In such instances, they alert vergers on arrival and on leaving, and carry a mobile phone to summon support if required. For rehearsals and performances, the band arrives and exits together.
- 3.2.24** Visiting ringers are welcomed but required to contact the Tower Captain and complete a booking enquiry form which asks for assurances about safeguarding processes and procedures of the visiting group, makes clear the Cathedral's arrangements and processes and places a duty on the lead to take responsibility for the group at all times. Any bookings are checked and confirmed with the Cathedral to ensure awareness and coordination of the visit.

#### *Analysis*

- 3.2.25** The auditors judged that bell ringing is safely managed and benefits from a range of safeguarding processes and controls, including for visiting ringers.
- 3.2.26** The auditors reflect that there is a clear understanding of both the risks posed by bell ringing and the protections required to keep ringers and others safe from harm.

**3.2.27** A degree of separation between the bell tower and wider Cathedral can be commonplace by virtue of the physical space and time of rehearsals that bands often keep. The auditors reflected that this does not appear to be the case at Bradford, with a clear recognition of key Cathedral staff (including the CSO) and how to contact them. The Tower Captain is kept informed of policy and procedure developments and practice is supported by the wider safeguarding team to ensure compliance and safety.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There were no considerations under this heading.

### 3.3 CASE WORK (INCLUDING INFORMATION SHARING)

**3.3.1** When safeguarding concerns are reported, a timely response is needed to make sense of the situation, assess risk and decide what action needs to be taken, including whether statutory services need to be informed. In a Cathedral context, this includes helping to distinguish whether there are safeguarding elements to the situations of people receiving pastoral support.

**3.3.2** The auditors judged that there has been a positive shift in the quality of responses to safeguarding concerns and their management. Further opportunities now exist to ensure this response is consistent and predictable and includes those who have cause to be informed.

#### Effectiveness of responses and information sharing practice

**3.3.3** The auditors looked at eight case files as part of the audit, ranging from 2018–2021. They included a range of issues relating to children and young people, adults and an assessment of an ex-offender wishing to participate in the Cathedral choirs. One file related to a complaint about the safeguarding service and this is discussed further in section 5.2. In addition, several cases were discussed as part of conversations and considered as part of any judgements on the effectiveness of case work.

**3.3.4** As discussed further in section 4.2, Bradford Cathedral has a service level agreement (SLA) in place with the Diocese of Leeds, which was recently updated to reflect the changing nature of the relationship. This SLA covers safeguarding advice and support on cases relating to children, adults, staff, volunteers and other church officers.

**3.3.5** The auditors found that the case files seen reflected a positive shift in practice over the course of the period considered. In one case pertaining to the choir, occurring in 2018, there were concerns reflected by the auditors in terms of confidentiality with email trails regarding the incident including some individuals that did not have cause to be informed or involved. There was also evident confusion regarding how/when to communicate with family members and any increased risk to the child that this might pose. Recognising poor practice, the CSO raised concerns and the Dean commissioned an independent review of the case, concluding with a set of appropriate actions.

**3.3.6** Following 2018, cases read by the auditors demonstrated much improved practice, with timely responses, appropriate advice, multi-agency working and referral and involvement of the DSA as appropriate for further support as required.

**3.3.7** Where safeguarding concerns were raised, evidence was also seen of ongoing monitoring and pastoral support being provided and this was particularly effective within the music department.

- 3.3.8** However, concern was raised by several spoken with about the extent to which advice was consistent and predictable between different members of the safeguarding team, experiencing sometimes conflicting advice when speaking with either the CSO or Assistant CSO, leaving staff in a position of feeling under-confident that their approach was the right one.
- 3.3.9** The auditors also recognised some inconsistent practice, regarding the involvement of key people when concerns or referrals were raised. This included both the point at which the safeguarding team was involved or excluded by other staff and clergy, and when key responsible staff and clergy were, or were not, involved and informed about cases by the safeguarding team.

### **Effectiveness of risk assessments, safeguarding agreements and the risk management plan**

- 3.3.10** The auditors saw one example of an assessment of safeguarding risk in relation to an adult applicant to the Cathedral. DSA advice was sought which contradicted the initial view of the Cathedral regarding the manageability of risk.
- 3.3.11** The auditors agreed with this advice and the degree to which appropriate consideration of risk was applied, by the well-qualified and experienced DSA involved. However, the auditors also heard of a persisting degree of disagreement on the issue between key people within the Cathedral, suggesting the need for further support and training for department heads on the principles of safeguarding risk management that the instance raised. This is addressed further in section 5.6.

### **Quality of recording**

- 3.3.12** The auditors reflected that case files were generally presented well, with use of the Cathedral's single incident form being well used and applied – capturing safeguarding, pastoral and health and safety incidents through one route.
- 3.3.13** However, there are further opportunities to develop this practice more consistently to include a chronology of events as standard on each case file, allowing for the oversight of both longitudinal risk and patterns of concerns, and clarity about the outcomes of cases, which was not always evident to the auditors.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How might the Cathedral use its existing structures and mechanisms to ensure that safeguarding advice is consistent and predictable for those who have cause to seek it?
- How might the current safeguarding reporting flowchart be expanded to formalise and clarify the procedure for information sharing and communication between the safeguarding team and key leads within the Cathedral, as well as guidance about who this might include and when it would not be appropriate?
- What amendments to the current incident report form might aid the oversight and management of cases?

## **3.4 CLERGY DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

- 3.4.1** The auditors did not see any clergy disciplinary measure files as part of this audit.

### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There were no considerations under this heading.

## 3.5 TRAINING

**3.5.1** Safeguarding training is an important mechanism for establishing safeguarding awareness and confidence throughout the Cathedral. It requires good quality substance, based on up-to-date evidence, with relevant case studies, engaging and relevant to the audience. It also requires strategic planning to identify priority groups for training, details of the training needs/requirements of people in different roles, and an implementation plan for training over time that tracks what training has been provided, who attended, and who still needs to attend or requires refresher sessions.

### *Description*

**3.5.2** Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained at a level commensurate with their post within the Cathedral context is a challenge. Bradford Cathedral has taken up the safeguarding learning pathway framework published by the National Safeguarding Team (NST) in 2021.

**3.5.3** Recognising a need to transition to the new training pathways, Bradford has implemented a requirement whereby those staff and clergy who have completed training under the previous pathway over six months ago are required to complete both the new basic and foundation courses. Appropriate staff and clergy have also been identified for undertaking the leadership pathway and senior leadership pathway, guided by a matrix of requirements relevant to Cathedral roles.

**3.5.4** All active volunteers within the Cathedral have similarly completed basic and foundation safeguarding training, including those involved in the music department, vergers team and Children's Space. Other volunteers not currently working within the Cathedral due to pandemic restrictions are flagged as still requiring training.

**3.5.5** Training completion is monitored using a 'training tracker' spreadsheet, and overseen by the Executive Assistant on behalf of the COO. This record details both the levels required, dates completed and when renewals are due for each individual. Once training is completed, copies of certificates are held centrally but are not yet part of an individual's personnel file, as discussed further in section 3.6. The auditors heard how this system has addressed issues in previous recording on ChurchSuite which recorded completion but omitted to record dates of completion.

**3.5.6** To supplement more formalised learning, induction training is also now provided as standard to any member of staff joining the Cathedral and delivered by the CSO. This includes ethos, how to report concerns, safe working practices, appropriate use of social media and the importance of policy and risk assessment.

**3.5.7** The auditors also heard how safer recruitment training under the previous pathway is currently held by the Canon Precentor and Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development. Other key individuals have been identified to add to this list, for completion when the new course is available, including the Executive Assistant, COO and the Cathedral Secretary, as DBS administrator.

### *Analysis*

**3.5.8** The auditors judged that the Cathedral has made good progress in the roll-out of training across the staff body. Further priority must now be given to ensuring similar

plans are in place to achieve compliance across the volunteer body, and that the impact of training is properly understood.

- 3.5.9** The auditors reflected that the plans for volunteer training, as part of the wider reforms to the oversight and recruitment of volunteers, are in the early stages of development – though with demonstrable success amongst those who are actively working with the Cathedral. The matrix of training need across staff roles is clear and appropriate.
- 3.5.10** However, the auditors also considered that the oversight of the new tracker, whilst a helpful tool, will remain a very manual task and require cross-checking with other recruitment and induction recording tools, and perhaps increasingly so as more of the volunteer body are added to it. At this stage of development, an early opportunity is presented to consider how recruitment and training data can become more integrated onto one single record, and how this may support future monitoring, administration and assurance.
- 3.5.11** Whilst it was noted by those spoken with that the volunteer body were very accepting and receptive to safeguarding training, it was not clear to the auditors how the completion of training was being communicated as an imperative and mandatory. Achieving and coordinating compliance across a large group is a challenge, and there is now an opportunity for those in senior leadership to further clarify this expectation and the implication of non-compliance on future work within the Cathedral.
- 3.5.12** As discussed above in section 3.3, future plans for additional and more contextualised training relevant to the local context and key roles in development should form part of this training strategy, going forwards, to ensure a more systematic and consistent approach to the support provided the wider Cathedral body outside the provision of the national framework.
- 3.5.13** To date, reporting on training to the Safeguarding Committee and Chapter has been focused on completion rates as an indicator of progress. There is now an opportunity to consider how the impact of such training can be better understood and included as an indicator of success or development need.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What would a single recruitment and training register look like for both staff and volunteers?
- Is the Cathedral confident that it has agreed and established an imperative for training completion amongst the wider volunteer body?
- What opportunities exist, or could be created, to support the evaluation of training quality and impact and how could this data be used strategically?

## 3.6 SAFER-RECRUITMENT

### *Description*

- 3.6.1** The safe recruitment of staff and volunteers falls within the remit of the COO who, at the time of this audit, had only been at Bradford Cathedral for around six months, from a previous role within the Cathedral as Income Development Officer. They are supported in this role by a DBS administrator – the Cathedral Secretary – who works with a third-party company to support the identification of DBS requirements by role and the application for such a check.

- 3.6.2** In any instances where a DBS check is ‘blemished’, or in which a confidential declaration reveals prior convictions, the Cathedral works with the DSA team to risk assess and support a decision to either accept or decline to recruit.
- 3.6.3** Historically, a volunteer manager position was maintained by the Cathedral as a result of Heritage Lottery Fund grants, but this role was removed when this funding ended, leaving vacant the coordinating role in ensuring appropriate procedures and checks are in place for the volunteer body and leading to its incorporation into the COO remit.
- 3.6.4** The auditors heard how the current COO has supported the development of a redesigned approach to volunteer recruitment, including an increased digitisation of the process and tools and a scheme of delegation whereby heads of department administer the core stages of safe recruitment, with final oversight retained by the COO position.
- 3.6.5** The reformed system remains awaiting roll-out and so the auditors were unable to see any examples of its operationalisation. However, they were able to review the templates and guidance documents produced that will be used by staff.
- 3.6.6** The auditors reviewed three lay staff recruitment files. These files reflected much good practice, including job descriptions and person specifications with reference to safeguarding, interview notes and evidence of questioning to probe safeguarding understanding and attitudes, job offer letters, contracts, and references. Files also contained probation information and appraisals as appropriate.
- 3.6.7** In one instance, the auditors noted the inclusion of a separate safeguarding interview as part of the recruitment process, where the role related to safeguarding responsibility for children.
- 3.6.8** None of the files seen recorded whether a DBS check had been requested or completed, though job advert packs included reference to their requirement as applicable to role. No files contained confirmation of identity or status of their right to work in the UK. However, the auditors understand that this has recently been rectified and future recruitment files will include copies of identification evidence.

### *Analysis*

- 3.6.9** The auditors judged that the safe recruitment of staff reflects much good practice. The safe recruitment of volunteers remains in its early stages, though with a sound suite of procedures and tools developed to support the process.
- 3.6.10** Safer recruitment is the front door of safeguarding and is an important opportunity to establish the Cathedral’s commitment to it through the assurance of a safe workforce. There should be a clear and predictable standard that is consistently applied. The auditors reflected that this is generally effective for staff, and the processes involved show much positive practice. Where information is not currently held on recruitment files, the auditors were reassured that it is held in other databases, and there is now the opportunity to further develop recording practice to ensure an accurate picture is reflected through individual records and files.
- 3.6.11** One risk in the devolution of responsibility for volunteer recruitment to different people is that practice becomes inconsistent and poorly applied. The auditors reflected that the new suite of tools and guidance produced to support this process provide a clear framework for this important function and will likely mitigate against this happening in practice, with sufficient oversight from the COO and CSO.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- In addition to those already identified for safer recruitment training, who else may benefit from it in order to support consistent and effective practice in volunteer recruitment under the new devolved approach?
- What might a personnel file checklist look like at Bradford Cathedral, to support oversight and assurances of the completion of all relevant checks?

## 4. FINDINGS – ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORTS

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### 4.1 POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

#### *Description*

- 4.1.1** Bradford Cathedral has accepted the Church of England's Promoting a Safer Church statement as its main policy document, signing it into effect from March 2019.
- 4.1.2** Over time, the Cathedral has also developed a suite of supplementary guidance and policy to sit alongside this, on topics relating to safeguarding. These include:
- Chorister Handbook
  - Choir Chaperone Handbook
  - Safeguarding leaflet (staff and volunteers)
  - Serious Incident Reporting guidance
  - Emergency Plan
  - Church of England Social Media Code of Conduct
- 4.1.3** In addition, the Cathedral has adopted the Diocese of Leeds's policies on complaints and whistleblowing, which are discussed further in sections 5.2 and 5.3 respectively.
- 4.1.4** The policy statement document, together with the social media code of conduct, are available on the Cathedral's website. No further policies are publicly available here.
- 4.1.5** The Cathedral has, in recent years, adopted a safeguarding process flowchart which details the steps that staff should take in instances where they have a safeguarding concern, and includes liaison with the DSA team and external reporting and referral. In efforts to increasingly contextualise this to the nuanced setting of the choirs, the music department has further developed its own process and drawn in additional information regarding specific contacts, roles and responsibilities and recording and reporting systems relevant to the area.
- 4.1.6** Whilst Bradford Cathedral has, in the past, had a staff handbook, this is now out of date and not in use. There is similarly no handbook in place for volunteers. Current policies are instead stored on the 'M-Drive' of the Cathedral's own computer system, and so only reachable to those with IT access.

#### *Analysis*

- 4.1.7** The auditors judged that the current state of policy and procedure around safeguarding requires further development and remains in its relative infancy. There is a need to further contextualise procedures to the Cathedral and ensure that they are accessible by all who may have need to use it.
- 4.1.8** The safeguarding policy statement is currently the main guidance in relation to this area within the Cathedral. However, as a national document, it is relatively generic in its coverage of the overarching principles of safeguarding and the church's commitment to it. It is not contextualised to Bradford or to the work of the Cathedral more specifically. The auditors reflected on this as a missed opportunity to communicate more clearly how safeguarding works within the Cathedral, to standardise practice and to act as a central point of reference to all who use it.
- 4.1.9** Whilst a range of supplementary guidance is available to support clarity about

reporting and good practice, these are in various separate documents. This risks a situation whereby staff and, especially, volunteers need to have knowledge of specific information to properly understand how safeguarding works at the Cathedral and their duties. This is complicated by the current situation whereby such documents are stored within a computer drive, and the auditors were unclear how easily accessible these actually are to those within the Cathedral.

- 4.1.10** A staff and volunteer handbook would be one way in which this problem could be overcome, centralising all information in one document that individuals have as a running point of reference. The auditors reflected, therefore, that the time needed to produce this would be well worth the investment, and may be helped by the already-comprehensive induction training presentation, which could form their basis.
- 4.1.11** The auditors were pleased to hear of the positive work that has happened within the music department to develop such handbooks for their practice, including for choristers, chaperones and adult members of the choirs. The chorister handbook in particular is a very detailed document which captures key areas of safeguarding, behaviour, conduct and expectations clearly.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Does the current suite of policy and guidance effectively capture the Cathedral's context in relation to safeguarding? How could this be further developed?
- What would staff and volunteer handbooks look like, and who should be involved in their creation?
- How will the Cathedral ensure access to essential safeguarding material for all staff and volunteers?

## 4.2 THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR/ CATHEDRAL SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

### *Description*

- 4.2.1** Bradford Cathedral's Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development has the dual role of CSO and so has the responsibility for the majority of safeguarding work. They have been at the Cathedral since 2015, and bring experience to the safeguarding role by virtue of their previous background within education as a secondary school teacher. They have an enhanced DBS check and have completed basic, foundation and leadership safeguarding training. The CSO role is formalised through a role description, which includes both their operational and strategic functions.
- 4.2.2** The auditors heard how, on joining the Cathedral, the CSO inherited a system for DBS checks and for basic safeguarding training, but little else, requiring much work around wider systems implementation and cultural change.
- 4.2.3** The CSO is supported in their role by an Assistant CSO, who works at the Cathedral one day per week in their dual post as a vergier. They bring significant experience to the role from their prior work in education safeguarding.
- 4.2.4** The auditors heard how the Assistant CSO role was created to support capacity during the sabbatical of the CSO in 2018. Since this time, they have continued to support the Cathedral as part of the safeguarding team. Like the CSO, they also have an enhanced DBS check and have undertaken basic and foundation safeguarding training.

- 4.2.5** Historically, the Cathedral's COO has also taken an active role in safeguarding, bringing HR oversight and input. This has continued with the appointment of the current COO, who is part of the safeguarding team and meets together with the CSO and Assistant CSO on at least a monthly basis.
- 4.2.6** The Cathedral has a strong relationship with the Diocese of Leeds and the DSA team, guided by an SLA which was reviewed in 2021, developing the previous iteration based on emerging good practice. The full-time DSA Team Leader is also the link DSA for Bradford Cathedral, joining in 2020 from a background in policing, which included the management and risk assessment of sex offenders, in addition to wider safeguarding practice. They are supported by two additional DSAs, who are nominally the links for Ripon and Wakefield Cathedrals, but in practice offer support and advice across the Diocese through a duty system. The team is further supplemented by an Assistant DSA, a safeguarding trainer and an administrator.
- 4.2.7** To support the administration of safeguarding, the Cathedral Secretary is the DBS administrator and the Executive Assistant supports the recording and tracking of training.

### *Analysis*

- 4.2.8** The auditors judged that the current CSO is effective and has enabled much positive change within the Cathedral. They benefit from a positive relationship with a well-experienced diocesan team. However, there are now important opportunities to both formalise the support that the CSO receives, and to standardise practice across the Cathedral's safeguarding team.
- 4.2.9** The auditors heard of and recognised, throughout the audit, an understanding of the CSO's role and remit and of the positive change that they have helped to embed within the Cathedral over time. The CSO, Assistant CSO and DSA team have good awareness of Bradford's context and the specific risks that face many or all cathedrals, relevant to safeguarding. The closeness of the working between Cathedral and Diocese, as discussed further in section 5.4, is a notable strength.
- 4.2.10** However, the auditors heard the concerns of some spoken with about the consistency of the support that those from within the Cathedral receive from the CSO and Assistant CSO; differing approaches and advice mean that some reflected a degree of uncertainty about the correct way of handling specific concerns.
- 4.2.11** The Cathedral uses a generic safeguarding team email for sharing concern forms with key people, but the auditors remained unclear on the arrangements for staff and volunteers for accessing these individuals aside from this, and who should be contacted on which day, and at which times. This is, perhaps, inevitable to some extent but is clearly impacting on some of those working with children and adults and requires further attention to ensure a clear and predictable system for all.
- 4.2.12** Similar is true within the DSA team, whereby the duty system means that calls for advice from the Cathedral to the Diocese may receive responses from different individuals. Whilst the auditors reflected that the quality of such advice appears sound, the link DSA for the Cathedral was unaware of the live cases that the Cathedral was currently dealing with, thereby posing a challenge to ensuring that concerns are being picked up in the right way and any patterns identified.
- 4.2.13** The auditors became aware, during conversations, of Cathedral discussions around the potential benefits of retaining an independent entity for safeguarding advice to be sought through, as distinct from the current structures in place. The auditors were

unclear as to how this would further benefit the Cathedral, given the significant expertise already at its disposal, and were concerned that this may serve to further 'muddy the waters' as opposed to tackling the root causes of any inconsistencies being experienced. Further consideration of the wider system and how it is working would be a more useful next step in understanding and addressing barriers.

**4.2.14** However, the auditors did recognise a concern, and opportunity for further support, in that the current CSO does not receive any safeguarding-specific supervision or professional support for their role. They are line managed, in their capacity as a residentiary Canon, by the Dean. However, given the wider demands of their role, this leaves little time for discussion of safeguarding and means that independent, professional support and development cannot be meaningfully offered. The auditors recognised the impact of this on the current CSO, carrying the burden of safeguarding work and without appropriate outlets for resolving concerns, conflicts or for developing their practice further.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What opportunities already exist within the Cathedral's current structures to address concerns around the consistency and availability of safeguarding advice and how can this be further refined to improve the predictability of the response that staff and volunteers receive?
- What are the costs and benefits of independent, professional supervision for the CSO and what might such a provision look like?
- What opportunities exist, or could be created, to ensure that the Cathedral and their link DSA share a common understanding of live cases, concerns and patterns of need related to safeguarding at Bradford?

## 4.3 RECORDING AND IT SYSTEMS

### *Description*

**4.3.1** Bradford Cathedral employs a range of recording systems in the administration and oversight of safeguarding:

- Concerns are logged by staff, volunteers and others within the Cathedral using an incident form, which represents a single route for the sharing of instances of risk to individuals including pastoral, safeguarding and health and safety concerns.
- The information management system 'ChurchSuite' is in operation at Bradford and used for communication, planning and recording – including storing details of key individuals involved with the Cathedral. It is particularly used within the choirs, where chorister information, concerns and actions are logged into running records which are included in wider safeguarding files where concerns emerge.
- 'Parish Dashboard' is undergoing rollout within the Diocese of Leeds, to enable individual churches to self-audit their safeguarding compliance against three levels of practice, generating action logs and an overall picture of progress. Bradford has adopted this, having nuanced the language to better reflect the Cathedral context, and is working through the level 2 programme – discussed further in section 5.1.

**4.3.2** Bradford Cathedral also employs several additional recording tools and systems for

safer recruitment, including spreadsheets for the tracking of training and DBS completion. This is discussed further in sections 3.5 and 3.6, with relevant considerations for practice given.

### *Analysis*

- 4.3.3** The auditors judged that much positive work has taken place to develop systems for recording and reporting that are helping to coordinate and develop safeguarding practice. The integration of these systems remains a work in progress, but is generally well reflected in practice.
- 4.3.4** The auditors reflected that the introduction of the single incident form approach to sharing concerns across the Cathedral is a helpful approach, and is supporting the Cathedral to ensure that all incidents with possible safeguarding import are considered. Completed concern forms are sent to the safeguarding team via a dedicated email address, including the COO, CSO and Assistant CSO, thereby reducing staff and volunteer confusion about whether an issue relates to safeguarding, and the potential therefore for risks to go unnoticed and unreported.
- 4.3.5** However, there is now some opportunity to further refine this to ensure that it effectively captures all relevant information relating to individuals and the history of concerns – as highlighted in section 3.3.
- 4.3.6** The auditors also reflected that Parish Dashboard appears to be a supportive tool for safeguarding within the Cathedral. The auditors did not share the concerns raised by some spoken with that it risks fostering a false sense of security, whereby apparent compliance encourages leaders to ‘rest on their laurels’. On the contrary, the auditors felt that this is enabling the Cathedral to understand what ‘good’ looks like and measure this progress, and saw much evidence of a recognition that this is just one tool and does not itself assure that the day-to-day operationalisation of safeguarding is sound.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- There were no considerations under this heading.

## 5. FINDINGS – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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### 5.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE

**5.1.1** A safe organisation needs constant feedback loops about what is going well and where there are difficulties in relation to safeguarding, and this should drive ongoing cycles of learning and improvement. Robust quality assurance enables an organisation to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Potential sources of data are numerous, including independent scrutiny. Quality assurance needs to be strategic and systematic to support accountability and shed light on how well things are working and where there are gaps or concerns.

#### *Description*

**5.1.2** Bradford Cathedral has a safeguarding action plan which is drawn from the Parish Dashboard self-audit tool. The auditors heard how the Cathedral has progressed through the 'level 1' tool, and is now working through the next steps in development of the 'level 2' tool. This plan covers the comprehensive range of Cathedral activities, including specific Cathedral groups and outreach programmes, and identifies steps as 'completed', 'requiring action', or 'urgent'.

**5.1.3** This plan reveals that much work has been completed in the assurance of safe activities and working practices, but with much work still required around policy, training and governance oversight of key safeguarding documents.

**5.1.4** The auditors also saw some evidence of further discrete pieces of quality assurance activity taking place within the Cathedral, including:

- An independent case review, conducted in 2018, with associated report and action plan
- A dialogical workshop, conducted together with staff, and associated action plan
- A case and CCTV review conducted by the verger team, to generate learning from an incident experienced

**5.1.5** Chapter receives a verbal and written report from the CSO at each meeting, and the CSO attends in their capacity as Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item and discussion is recorded in the minutes of each meeting.

**5.1.6** At present, Chapter is supported in its scrutiny function by the Cathedral Council and, to a lesser extent, by the College of Canons which includes representation of the three cathedrals within the Diocese of Leeds.

**5.1.7** As a subcommittee of Chapter, the lay-chaired Safeguarding Committee meets three times per year to provide additional scrutiny of safeguarding progress and support wider discussion and learning. This is discussed further in section 5.4.

**5.1.8** Chapter also retains oversight of the Cathedral's risk register, which is maintained by the current COO, drawing on a range of expertise within the group around risk identification and management. The auditors saw a range of very comprehensive risk assessments from across the Cathedral's activities which help to inform the content of this overarching register.

### Analysis

- 5.1.9** The auditors judged that Bradford Cathedral benefits from quality assurance and scrutiny from a highly-skilled and experienced Chapter. There is much evidence of effective strategic safeguarding scrutiny. There is now an opportunity to further develop this to ensure that Chapter reliably receives the appropriate level of information, and to formalise wider activities into a quality-assurance framework.
- 5.1.10** Bradford Cathedral has developed a strong foundation of governance which is well placed to fulfil its quality assurance. The auditors heard how Chapter at Bradford Cathedral is an effective group, and provides a high degree of scrutiny and input. The auditors recognised this through the records of discussion, which reflects challenge, extensive discussion and the holding of others to account for progress and action.
- 5.1.11** This is effectively supported by the diocesan Strategic Safeguarding Committee (DSAP) and Operational Safeguarding Committee, and the Cathedral's own safeguarding committee, with an independent member (discussed further in section 5.4).
- 5.1.12** The auditors reflected positively on the examples of wider quality-assurance activities that have taken place within the Cathedral, in particular those that have looked at learning opportunities from case work to better inform and develop wider safeguarding efforts. However, this is not yet built into a coherent and consistent framework in which potential sources of learning are identified and activities planned for a more routine engagement in quality-assurance opportunities.
- 5.1.13** The auditors also considered that the current risk register is not yet capturing the optimum level of strategic risk detail to appropriately inform Chapter of risk and promote oversight and scrutiny. Those risks that do relate to safeguarding are notably specific (for example, photography of children in the Cathedral), but do not include the wider risks that a cathedral may encounter. This leaves a register that is therefore unhelpfully vast in what it is covering. The auditors were confident in the risk assessment happening at lower levels of the organisation, and now see an opportunity to ensure that is effectively 'filtering-up' into the document that the risk register is intended to be.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Who would be best placed to contribute to the development of a quality-assurance and learning framework for safeguarding?
- Is the Cathedral confident that its current risk register reflects the Cathedral's context, and contains the appropriate depth of detail required for strategic oversight?

## 5.2 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

- 5.2.1** A good complaints policy enables people to raise concerns, and to have timely and appropriate consideration of any problems. A strong policy is clear about who complaints should be made to, and how they can be escalated if necessary. Positive features include an independent element, and clarity that *raising a safeguarding concern*, and *making a complaint about a safeguarding service*, are two distinct things.
- 5.2.2** Bradford Cathedral has adopted the Diocese of Leeds's policy on the making of

complaints. This effectively differentiates the raising of safeguarding concerns from the making of a complaint about the safeguarding service and includes details on the prescribed procedure and signposting to external agencies for concerns that a child or adult may be at risk of harm.

- 5.2.3 As part of the audit, the auditors saw one example of a complaint made regarding the safeguarding service within the Cathedral, and the extent to which sufficient supervision was in place within the choirs in one specific instance.
- 5.2.4 The auditors judged that there was evidence of appropriate identification of this as a complaint, and handling of it in accordance with policy and procedure. This included investigation, information sharing and feedback and discussion with the complainant within an appropriate timeframe.
- 5.2.5 This case generated a log of four actions, relating to wider changes to scheduling, staffing and parental communication and their completion was overseen by the Cathedral's safeguarding committee.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- There were no considerations under this heading.

## 5.3 WHISTLEBLOWING

### *Description*

- 5.3.1 Bradford Cathedral has adopted the Diocese of Leeds's whistleblowing policy, and the policy is available on the Diocese's website. Staff and volunteers are required to read this as part of their induction, but the policy is not linked to from the Cathedral's own website and it was unclear to the auditors how this is publicised to staff, volunteers and others beyond this, in the absence of any formal handbook.
- 5.3.2 The diocesan policy strikes an effective tone about the importance of whistleblowing, including its relevance to safeguarding, and makes clear the qualifications for doing so as a public-interest disclosure.
- 5.3.3 Despite making clear that the policy applies to all those acting on behalf of the Diocese, it does not make reference to the Cathedral specifically and the auditors question the clarity of messaging to those who may have a concern from within the Cathedral and how intuitive it would be to look to the diocesan policy as the correct route.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- How can the importance of whistleblowing, and the application of the current policy to the Cathedral, be publicised and made clearer to those who may have cause to use it?

## 5.4 SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY PANEL

- 5.4.1 Based on the national guidance in *Roles and Responsibilities* for DSAPs, the panel should have a key role in bringing independence and safeguarding expertise to an oversight, scrutiny and challenge role, including contributing to a strategic plan. No specifics are provided in relation to cathedrals, with the apparent assumption being that cathedrals are part of diocesan structures.

### *Description*

- 5.4.2** The Strategic Safeguarding Committee (SSC), as the DSAP of the Diocese of Leeds, is attended by the Dean of Bradford on behalf of the Diocese's cathedrals, who communicates with the Deans of both Wakefield and Ripon to ensure that their interests are represented and to share key learning and actions. The auditors heard that this group is clear that it holds a quality-assurance function not just for the Diocese but also for cathedrals, and regularly share information such as the prior SCIE audit report for Wakefield Cathedral, for oversight and accountability.
- 5.4.3** Following the current Dean's imminent retirement, the Dean of Wakefield will attend DSAP on behalf of the three cathedrals.
- 5.4.4** The Diocese also has an operational safeguarding group, which is attended by the Archdeacons and DSA team with a remit for the discussion and actioning of more specific issues emerging from lessons learned. Discussions at this group are raised at the SSC and shared for the wider information of cathedral and other representatives.
- 5.4.5** Bradford Cathedral has a Safeguarding Committee, as a sub-committee of Chapter. It was established in 2016, and is guided by terms of reference (dated October 2019) which make clear its role in meeting bi or tri-annually with a view to receiving reports from the safeguarding team, having overview of safeguarding policy and procedure, risk assessment and training.
- 5.4.6** Meetings of the committee are chaired by a lay member of the Cathedral staff (currently the part-time Director of Finance, with significant experience in corporate and safeguarding risk management) and attended by the COO (as Vice Chair), the Dean, the DSA, CSO, Assistant CSO, Canon Precentor and heads of department (including the Head Verger, Director of Music and the Director of Education and Visitors). The group also has an independent member who brings additional safeguarding expertise.
- 5.4.7** Supplementing this group, the safeguarding team (including the COO, CSO and Assistant CSO) meets at least monthly to discuss the delivery of safeguarding, actions and implementation of policy and procedure.

### *Analysis*

- 5.4.8** The auditors judged that the structure of safeguarding governance at Bradford is well-established and benefits from close links with the Diocese and the SSC. However, these structures should now be reviewed to ensure that they are truly serving the purpose that they are intended to.
- 5.4.9** The current Safeguarding Committee is well established, and reflects a proactive effort of the Cathedral to formalise the scrutiny and the seeking of assurances around safeguarding at Bradford. The auditors reflected that it includes many with significant expertise.
- 5.4.10** However, the auditors were concerned that the format and function of these groups, and relationship between them, has become blurred over time, and it is now unclear whether the committee's remit is operational or strategic. This was particularly clearly reflected by one operational leader spoken with, who stated that it is 'unclear how this group relates to other structures' and that is no longer evident that this group fulfils a 'purposeful function'.
- 5.4.11** The committee's current membership of both strategic and operational leads appears to be compounding this, and the auditors reflected that this may now be an obstacle

to the ‘airing’ of strategic and cultural barriers to safeguarding in this forum. In one example, pervading disagreements about safeguarding by senior leaders in the Cathedral – well understood by several spoken with individually – have not been identified or addressed despite posing a barrier and risk to ongoing safeguarding leadership.

**5.4.12** The meetings of the safeguarding team have, in turn, further confused this picture meaning that many operational decisions and actions are taken at a level in which operational heads of department do not have input or involvement. The auditors reflected that reviews of terms of reference, including membership in different groups, regularity of meeting and clear delineation in the focus of the committee and safeguarding team meetings may enable a more effective line of governance and reporting, and the clearer carving out of a strategic forum in which transparent discussion and oversight of risks and progress can be held.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- Who is best placed to review the terms of reference of the Safeguarding Committee, and function of the safeguarding team meetings, such that the strategic and operational aspects of safeguarding are more clearly delineated?
- Which group would be best placed to hold the Cathedral’s safeguarding action plan, and what would membership of this group look like?

## 5.5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**5.5.1** Safeguarding leadership takes various forms – strategic, operational and theological – with different people taking different roles. How these roles are understood, and how they fit together, can be determinative in how well led the safeguarding function is.

### Theological leadership

#### *Description*

**5.5.2** As the leader of every aspect of the Cathedral’s life, the Dean of Bradford has overall theological responsibility for promoting safeguarding. The auditors heard of some limited examples in which safeguarding was included in sermons, preaching or prayer, including promotion of the annual national church initiative of ‘Safeguarding Sunday’.

**5.5.3** However, whilst it was clear that the current Dean has a clear understanding about the importance of safeguarding, they recognise that its integration into public messaging about both the mission of the Cathedral, and the foundations of Christianity is as yet relatively undeveloped.

#### *Analysis*

**5.5.4** The auditors judged that the theological leadership of safeguarding is not yet a well-established facet of the wider Cathedral’s approach to its messaging on the topic. This is perhaps particularly true of the messaging around the Cathedral as a safe and welcoming space for survivors to be part of.

**5.5.5** Despite some attempts to engage with safeguarding more explicitly through sermon and prayer, several of those spoken with recognised that there is more that can be done to root it in the wider mission and values of both the Cathedral and its faith.

**5.5.6** This was reflected in the findings of the survey of adults involved with the Cathedral,

which showed that 33 per cent (n=29) considered this messaging to be ‘extremely’ present in the message of sermons, 44 per cent (n=39) reflecting it was only moderately so, and 4 per cent (n=4) stating it was not at all present.

- 5.5.7** In the Cathedral’s own self-assessment, engagement with survivors was identified as an area for development, recognising a lack of knowledge of any survivors within the congregation and the potential implication of this being due to lack of knowledge as opposed to lack of individuals with lived experience of abuse. The auditors agreed with this characterisation and the potential for theological leadership to be a mechanism for establishing the Cathedral as a safe and welcoming space.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What opportunities exist or can be created to better share the message of safeguarding and its importance in the Cathedral’s mission and the Christian faith?

### Strategic leadership

- 5.5.8** The House of Bishops’ *Roles and Responsibilities* practice guidance assigns different and overlapping roles to Dean and Chapter, with the former having a clear leadership role in relation to safeguarding, and Chapter having a strategic and oversight role in relation to the Church of England’s Promoting a Safer Church safeguarding policy. This includes the requirement to have a Promoting a Safer Church action plan in place that sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the policy is being put into action, and is reviewed regularly.

#### Description

- 5.5.9** The Chapter of Bradford Cathedral usually consists of eight members, including the Dean and two residentiary Canons, two Bishop’s representatives, two Churchwardens and a lay community committee representative. The CSO is therefore in attendance in their dual role as Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development.
- 5.5.10** The Dean has been in their role since 2013, having been ordained in 1984 and undertaking a curacy, before becoming a team vicar followed by a roving ministry and a rector position before appointment at Bradford Cathedral. The auditors heard how each of these roles has brought the Dean into contact with safeguarding and some difficult specific cases, and so its importance is clearly understood and his role in it taken very seriously – stating that ‘the buck stops with me!’. The auditors also recognised the extent to which the Dean has a clear sense of the challenges that Cathedral contexts bring, and the position they hold in communities such as Bradford.
- 5.5.11** At the time of the audit, the current Dean is imminently retiring, with the current Canon Precentor taking on the role of Acting Dean, whilst recruitment for a replacement Dean remains ongoing. Additional support to the Canon Precentor in their new role will come from the Bishop of Leeds and the Deans of Ripon and Wakefield. A local Area Dean has been appointed to be Acting Canon Precentor for the period.

#### Analysis

- 5.5.12** The auditors judged that strategic leadership of safeguarding at Bradford Cathedral has a clear commitment to effective safeguarding. However, it is at a point of inevitable flux and this presents both a challenge and opportunity to further address underlying differences in the views and understanding of what constitutes effective safeguarding, among leaders.
- 5.5.13** The auditors heard and saw evidence, including in the Cathedral’s own self-

assessment, of concerns about the extent to which senior clergy within the Cathedral recognise and understand safeguarding in a coherent and consistent way. Whilst the commitment to a safe Cathedral was clearly felt, and much progress in the dynamics and interactions between key individuals made, there remain persisting disagreements about the way in which safeguarding is led and delivered within the Cathedral. The auditors were unconvinced as to the extent to which these issues have yet been properly understood and addressed.

**5.5.14** In the absence of reviewed and robust mechanisms to understand and challenge this picture (as discussed in section 5.4), this has led to instances where such disagreement has been shouldered by individuals in a very personal way, and added strain to an already demanding and challenging area of work. The Cathedral is cognisant of this picture and progress has begun to challenge it. However, with a shifting leadership dynamic over the coming months, continued attention, focus and challenge will be integral to ensuring that a cohesive and supported approach to safeguarding continues.

**5.5.15** Perhaps inherent, but complicating to this challenge is the operational role of CSO being held by a strategic leader, presenting a more complex picture whereby one individual must wear both 'hats' in their work around safeguarding. The auditors reflected that the current functioning of forums for supported decision-making in safeguarding, at both operational and strategic levels, is not yet providing the solution to this picture as well as it might.

**5.5.16** Key to strategic leaders having a clear understanding of the effectiveness of safeguarding, and of staff and volunteers seeing a recognisable and cohesive commitment to safeguarding across senior leaders, is the visibility of individuals around the physical spaces of the Cathedral. Through surveys of adults involved with the Cathedral, and in some conversations with individuals, it was made clear that there is not yet a sense that strategic leaders are sufficiently visible. Sixty-two per cent (n=55) stated that leaders were 'extremely' visible, whilst 26 per cent (n=23) reported only moderate visibility and 2 per cent (n=2) reported leaders being not at all visible.

#### Questions for the Cathedral to consider

- What systems and structures might enable a more shared and cohesive understanding and approach to safeguarding across the Cathedral's strategic leadership?
- Is the Cathedral confident that those in strategic leadership roles are sufficiently visible to all those who work or worship within it?

### Operational leadership

#### *Description*

**5.5.17** Bradford Cathedral's operational leadership team comprises many roles, like other cathedrals, that have roles in the delivery of safeguarding and safe working practices. This includes the Director of Music, the Director of Education and Visitors, the Head Verger. In recent years, and against a historic backdrop of financial challenges in the Cathedral, Bradford has invested in the increased recruitment of substantive, paid leadership roles which has developed the Cathedral's staff body significantly.

**5.5.18** The auditors heard and saw much evidence of the extent to which this team is

committed to, and skilled in, safeguarding and work cohesively together in its implementation across the Cathedral.

**5.5.19** There are, in practice, many forums in which these leaders may discuss or be made aware of safeguarding, on a regular basis and include:

- bi or tri-annual Safeguarding Committee meetings
- monthly safeguarding team meetings
- weekly diary meetings
- head of department meetings
- weekly staff meetings.

**5.5.20** In addition to these forums, the auditors heard how discussions around safeguarding may also happen more organically through passing conversations between each other or with the safeguarding team as they go about their other substantive roles within the Cathedral.

### **Analysis**

**5.5.21** The auditors judged that operational leadership at the Cathedral is strong and there is a clear and shared commitment to safeguarding across departments. There is now an opportunity to review the volume of meetings at which safeguarding features to ensure that all relevant discussion and input is effectively captured and coordinated.

**5.5.22** The auditors heard consistently of the extent to which operational leaders within the Cathedral are visible and recognised by those that work within it. This was particularly true of the CSO and Assistant CSO who are well known and deemed to be very approachable.

**5.5.23** The auditors were also struck by the degree to which wider leaders in the Cathedral have a clear understanding of where the Cathedral has been, and where it is going on its safeguarding journey, and the role that they have to play in it.

**5.5.24** However, the auditors reflected concern that the input of operational leaders is not yet clearly coordinated to ensure that all are having the opportunity to feed into the development of safeguarding and for their input to be captured. The sheer volume of meetings in which safeguarding currently functions means that much conversation happens on the periphery of any formulated safeguarding group, and neither is it consistently felt that it is being well captured by the Safeguarding Committee.

#### **Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- How can the many forums for operational safeguarding discussion within the Cathedral be more effectively streamlined as part of the wider governance review, reducing demand and increasing coordination?

## **5.6 CULTURE**

**5.6.1** The most critical aspect of safeguarding relates to the culture within any organisation. In a Church of England context, that can mean, for example, the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to the reputation of the Church, or the ability of all members of the Church to think the unthinkable about friends and colleagues. SCIE's experience auditing safeguarding in faith contexts

more broadly, suggests that in areas where there is experience among senior clergy of previous serious abuse cases, a culture of openness and humility in approaching safeguarding issues can be stronger and accompanied by a move away from responses which give too much attention to reputational issues and the welfare of (alleged) perpetrators, as opposed to the welfare of victims and survivors.

- 5.6.2** Any cathedral should strive for an open, learning culture where safeguarding is a shared responsibility, albeit supported by experts, and which encourages people to raise concerns about how things are working so they can be addressed. An open learning culture starts from the assumption that maintaining adequate vigilance is difficult and proactively seeks feedback on how safeguarding is operating and encourages people to highlight any concerns.

#### *Description*

- 5.6.3** Bradford Cathedral's own self-assessment identifies the embedding of safeguarding across the Cathedral as a priority area for its future development, in line with the wider drive for a paradigm shift in how safeguarding is seen within the Church. Two key areas were flagged as potentially integral to this approach, including staff training and development (especially the leadership pathway), and engagement of the wider staff, volunteer and congregation body.
- 5.6.4** However, the auditors heard consistently of the range of work that the Cathedral has done around safeguarding in recent years, increasing the work of the Cathedral and its prominence within the community, engaging a growing congregation and establishing a shared vision. The auditors heard how, in particular, Bradford considers its volunteers and congregation to be well informed and engaged with safeguarding, not experiencing significant resistance to change – benefitted by outreach events such as 'welcome evenings' for new congregants at which safeguarding is discussed, and offering basic safeguarding training to the congregation.
- 5.6.5** Around the Cathedral precinct, safeguarding is clearly publicised and prominent, including posters about relevant procedures and who to raise concerns to, and on specific issues of relevance such as domestic abuse.
- 5.6.6** The auditors also heard clearly of the work that has taken place over recent years to tackle established 'silo' working, to a current picture of cohesion and openness across the staff and volunteer teams.

#### *Analysis*

- 5.6.7** The auditors judged that safeguarding is well embedded into the culture at Bradford Cathedral and across the groups that work or worship within it. There is some further opportunity to now build on this foundation to ensure that all share a view that 'it could happen here'.
- 5.6.8** The auditors reflected positively on the extent of the engagement of the Cathedral with staff and volunteers and, increasingly, with the congregation to raise awareness of safeguarding and the Cathedral's commitment to it. This has included novel ideas such as making safeguarding training available to anyone interested in it, across the congregation.
- 5.6.9** This is benefitted by a very clear understanding of the Cathedral's local context and the challenges and issues faced by local residents. Bradford Cathedral sees its role as being a place of welcome and support to those of all faiths and none, and to promote its position in the city as one of outreach and social responsibility. This was tangible to the auditors throughout.

**5.6.10** As discussed in section 3.3, however, the auditors reflected that there is still some work to do to ensure that all those within the Cathedral are able to maintain an understanding that 'it could happen here'. In several conversations held, in reference to specific cases, a reputational priority was cited as being the driver for taking a defensive position on the handling of some specific decisions. The auditors did not share this view, and were reassured that the handling of such concerns was based on sound risk assessment and understanding, with no evident reputational factor. However, they did question whether further information sharing, training and support to staff around topics such as risk and grooming may support the ongoing challenging of any cultural naivety.

**Questions for the Cathedral to consider**

- Does the Cathedral recognise this picture of potential naivety around safeguarding risk? What resources and expertise does the Cathedral have to draw upon that might help to challenge this?

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

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- 6.1.1** Bradford Cathedral is a welcoming and relatively safe environment, and the vulnerabilities of the site are widely understood. However, further consideration should now be given to the mechanisms available to staff and volunteers to communicate and summon help and to mitigate against the risks of lone working.
- 6.1.2** There is a wide variety of outreach activities undertaken at Bradford Cathedral, safely operated and with a robust understanding of risk and appropriate mitigations in place.
- 6.1.3** The Cathedral has a sound understand of the potential needs of its visitors and congregants and has arrangements in place to support safe working practices and pastoral care. There is now an opportunity to formalise both information sharing mechanisms and support and training for the wider team, to develop existing, more organically developed, ways of working.
- 6.1.4** The safeguarding arrangements within the choirs are robust, and the music department is led and staffed by well-qualified, experienced and highly-effective individuals that take a holistic view of chorister welfare that is integral to all that is done.
- 6.1.5** Bell ringing is safely managed and benefits from a range of safeguarding processes and controls, including for visiting ringers.
- 6.1.6** There has been a positive shift in the quality of responses to safeguarding concerns and their management. Further opportunities now exist to ensure this response is consistent and predictable and includes those who have cause to be informed.
- 6.1.7** The Cathedral has made good progress in the roll-out of training across the staff body. Further priority must now be given to ensuring similar plans are in place to achieve compliance across the volunteer body, and that the impact of training is properly understood.
- 6.1.8** The safe recruitment of staff reflects much good practice. The safe recruitment of volunteers remains in its early stages, though with a sound suite of procedures and tools developed to support the process going forward.
- 6.1.9** The current picture of policy and procedure around safeguarding requires further development and remains in its relative infancy. This includes the need to further contextualise procedures to the Cathedral and ensure that these are accessible by all who may have need to use it.
- 6.1.10** The current CSO is effective and has enabled much positive change within the Cathedral. They benefit from a positive relationship with a well-experienced diocesan team. However, there are now important opportunities to both formalise the support that the CSO receives, and to standardise practice across the Cathedral's safeguarding team.
- 6.1.11** Much positive work has taken place to develop systems for recording and reporting that are helping to coordinate and develop safeguarding practice. The integration of these systems remains a work in progress, but is generally well reflected in practice.
- 6.1.12** Bradford Cathedral benefits from quality assurance and scrutiny from a highly-skilled and experienced Chapter. There is much evidence of effective strategic safeguarding scrutiny. There is now an opportunity to further develop this to ensure that Chapter is always apprised of the appropriate level of information, and to formalise wider activities into a quality-assurance framework.

- 6.1.13** The structure of safeguarding governance at Bradford is well established and benefits from close links with the Diocese and the SSC. However, these structures should now be reviewed to ensure that they are truly serving the purpose that they are intended to.
- 6.1.14** The theological leadership of safeguarding is not yet a well-established facet of the wider Cathedral's approach to its messaging on the topic. This is perhaps particularly true of the messaging around the Cathedral as a safe and welcoming space for survivors to be part of.
- 6.1.15** Strategic leadership of safeguarding at Bradford Cathedral has a clear commitment to effective safeguarding. However, it is at a point of inevitable flux and this presents both a challenge and opportunity to further address underlying differences in the views and understanding of what constitutes effective safeguarding, among leaders.
- 6.1.16** Operational leadership at the Cathedral is strong and there is a clear and shared commitment to safeguarding across departments. There is now an opportunity to review the volume of meetings at which safeguarding features to ensure that all relevant discussion and input is effectively captured and coordinated, avoiding overlap in meetings where possible.
- 6.1.17** Safeguarding is well embedded into the culture at Bradford Cathedral and across the groups that work or worship within it. There is some further opportunity to now build on this foundation to ensure that all share a view that 'it could happen here'.

## APPENDICES

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### Information provided to auditors

In advance of the audit, the Cathedral sent through:

- Bradford Cathedral – Our Context (June 2021)
- Cathedral Floor Plan (undated)
- Cathedral Risk Register (December 2020)
- Chapter Minutes (February 2021)
- Chapter Minutes (March 2021)
- Chapter Minutes (April 2021)
- Choir Chaperone Poster (undated)
- Choir Chaperone – Volunteer Role Description (undated)
- Choir Visit Risk Assessment (2021)
- Chorister Handbook (2020)
- Churchwarden Role Description (undated)
- Complaints Procedure – Diocese of Leeds (undated)
- Dialogical Safeguarding Workshop for Staff – Overview (undated)
- Dialogical Safeguarding Workshop for Staff – Responses (March 2020)
- Dialogical Safeguarding Workshop for Staff – Action Plan (March 2020)
- Education Department Volunteer Role Description (undated)
- Education Visit Risk Assessment (June 2021)
- Excerpt from Annual Report (2020)
- Family Activity Days Risk Assessment (June 2021)
- Governance and Key Roles (2021)
- Help for Survivors (undated)
- Managing Risk – Staff Training Session (undated)
- Messy Church Volunteer Role Description (undated)
- Places of Welcome Sessions Risk Assessment (June 2021)
- Safeguarding Action Plan (June 2021)
- Safeguarding Committee Minutes (September 2020)
- Safeguarding Committee Minutes (December 2020)

- Safeguarding Committee Minutes (March 2021)
- Safeguarding Committee Remit (January 2020)
- Safeguarding Complaints and Whistleblowing – Diocese of Leeds (undated)
- Safeguarding Leaflet – Staff and Volunteers (undated)
- Safeguarding Officer Role Description (undated)
- Safeguarding Policy Statement – A Safer Church (Mar 2019)
- Safeguarding Process Flowchart – All Staff (December 2019)
- Safeguarding Self-Audit Summary (June 2021)
- Safeguarding SLA (October 2019)
- Serious Incident Reporting (undated)
- Staff Induction Script Booklet (undated)
- Whistleblowing Policy – Diocese of Leeds (February 2021)

### **Participation of organisation staff**

The auditors had conversations with:

- Assistant CSO
- Canon Precentor
- Chair of the Safeguarding Committee
- Choir Matron
- COO
- CSO
- The Dean
- Director of Education and Visitors
- Director of Music
- DSA
- Head Verger
- Tower Captain

### **What Records/ Files Were Examined?**

The auditors reviewed:

- Safeguarding training tracker
- DBS records
- Seven safeguarding case files
- Three recruitment and selection files



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