

**CORE GROUP MEETING – Name**
*DATE and TIME*
**Venue:** online or in person

**AGENDA**
**Participants:**

| Name | Role | Initials |
|------|------|----------|
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Every safeguarding concern or allegation involving a church officer should be managed by a defined core group, convened for the specific situation.

The purpose of the core group is to oversee and manage the response to a safeguarding concern or allegation in line with House of Bishops' policy and practice guidance, ensuring that the rights of the victim/survivor and the respondent to a fair and thorough investigation can be preserved (see Appendix 1 below).

|   | Item  | Outcome                     | Responsible  |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Introductions   |                             | <i>Chair</i> |
| 2 | Statement of Confidentiality  |                             | <i>Chair</i> |
| 3 | Questions on previously circulated summary report   | <i>Discussion</i>           | <i>ASA</i>   |
| 4 | Identify risks  |                             |              |
| 5 | Mitigation of risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Action</li> <li>○ Owner</li> <li>○ Date for completion</li> </ul>   | <i>Discussion, Decision</i> | <i>All</i>   |
| 6 | Support for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Victim/Survivor</li> <li>○ Victim/survivor's family</li> <li>○ Respondent</li> <li>○ Respondent's family</li> </ul>            |                             |              |
| 7 | Other actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Action</li> <li>○ Owner</li> <li>○ Date for completion</li> </ul>   | <i>Discussion, Decision</i> |              |
| 8 | Other considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discipline</li> <li>○ Communication with other parties/information sharing</li> <li>○ GDPR considerations</li> </ul> | <i>Discussion, Decision</i> | <i>All</i>   |

|   |  |  |     |
|---|--|--|-----|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Referral to Disclosure and Barring Service</li> <li>○ Referral to Charity Commission</li> </ul> |  |     |
| 9 | AOB  |  | All |
| 9 | Date of next meeting   |  |     |

## APPENDIX 1

The purpose of the core group is to oversee and manage the response to a safeguarding concern or allegation in line with [House of Bishops' policy and practice guidance: responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers](#), ensuring that the rights of the victim/survivor and the respondent to a fair and thorough investigation can be preserved.

Every safeguarding concern or allegation involving a church officer should be managed by a defined core group, convened for the specific situation (see section 3.1 of the guidance).

The core group is responsible for:

- Ensuring that information is shared with the statutory agencies;
- Ensuring the DSA is working with the statutory agencies;
- Having due consideration to the advice of the DSA/s in all matters related to safeguarding;
- Considering whether other church officers and/or bodies should be informed of the situation, and invited to join the core group;
- Keeping the diocesan secretary/chief executive informed whenever there is a potential of financial, regulatory or reputational impact, where there is a significant risk that requires management/mitigation/monitoring or if the case involves an employee of the diocese;
- Deciding when an Internal Church Investigation (see section 3.3) should be carried out;
- Determining when the respondent should be informed and what they should be told in relation to the concern or allegation where the statutory agencies are not involved;
- The arrangements required for managing the respondent in relation to their role, having full regard to the views of the statutory agencies;
- Ensuring how the victim/survivor and/or their family can best be supported by advising the DSA (on behalf of the bishop);
- Ensuring how the respondent and/or their family can best be supported by advising the DSA (on behalf of the bishop);
- Offering advice to the bishop via the DSA on support and pastoral care for parish officers managing the process;
- Ensuring how the needs of a parish, cathedral or other church community in which the respondent is or has served can best be met;
- Setting and maintaining boundaries of information sharing and confidentiality, including when information can be shared with the Police, the insurance company, the Charity Commission, the Local Authority Designated Officer<sup>23</sup>, and the National Safeguarding Team;
- Agreeing statements to the press and the congregation;
- Ensuring accurate information is kept and shared securely where appropriate and in accordance with data protection legislation;
- Ensuring risk assessments are carried out during and following the outcome of the allegation, this includes:
  - agreeing the terms of reference, with the DSA, for the risk assessment in relation to non-clergy assessments;
  - commissioning, with the DSA, the risk assessment in relation to non-clergy assessments;
  - accepting the risk assessment in relation to non-clergy assessments;
  - ensuring that recommendations are followed in relation to non-clergy assessments;
- Undertake a lessons learnt review at the end of the process (see section 9 of the guidance).

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<sup>23</sup> The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

In addition, if the case involves members of clergy, the core group is responsible for:

- Assisting the DSA to advise the bishop<sup>24</sup> when the respondent should be informed and what they should be told in relation to the concern or allegation where the statutory agencies are not involved;
- Assisting the DSA to advise the bishop of the arrangements required for managing the respondent in relation to their role, having full regard to the views of the statutory agencies;
- Assisting the DSA to advise the bishop in setting and maintaining boundaries of information sharing and confidentiality, including when information can be shared with the Police, the insurance company, the Charity Commission, the Local Authority Designated Officer<sup>25</sup>, and the National Safeguarding Team;
- Assisting the DSA to advise the bishop on statements to the press and the congregation;
- Assisting the DSA to advise the bishop when to undertake a lessons learnt review at the end of the process (see section 9 of the practice guidance).

**In relation to clergy risk assessment (and management), the DSA will ensure their advice and recommendations are ratified by the core group. The DSA will then share these with the bishop in accordance with the Safeguarding (Clergy Risk Assessment) Regulations 2016.**

**The core group acts as the DSA's 'critical friend' in the response to, assessment and management of safeguarding concerns or allegations relating to clergy.**

The Core Group will create a written record of its decisions and recommendations. These documents should include information on any previous allegations that have been made against the individual concerned. These records should be passed to the DSA who will store them in the case file.

Where the advice of the DSA is not taken a full record of the reasons must be kept. Should there be any disagreement between the core group and the DSA concerns should be escalated to the chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel or, where the DSAP are unable to resolve the dispute, to the NST for a final decision.

If the respondent is a senior member of the clergy or an individual with a high national profile, the case will be managed by a NST core group in conjunction with the diocese. If the case involves complex inter-diocesan issues the NST will act to coordinate local casework.

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<sup>24</sup> This may be the Archbishop or their representative if it is a national Core Group.

<sup>25</sup> The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child, or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

CONFIDENTIAL