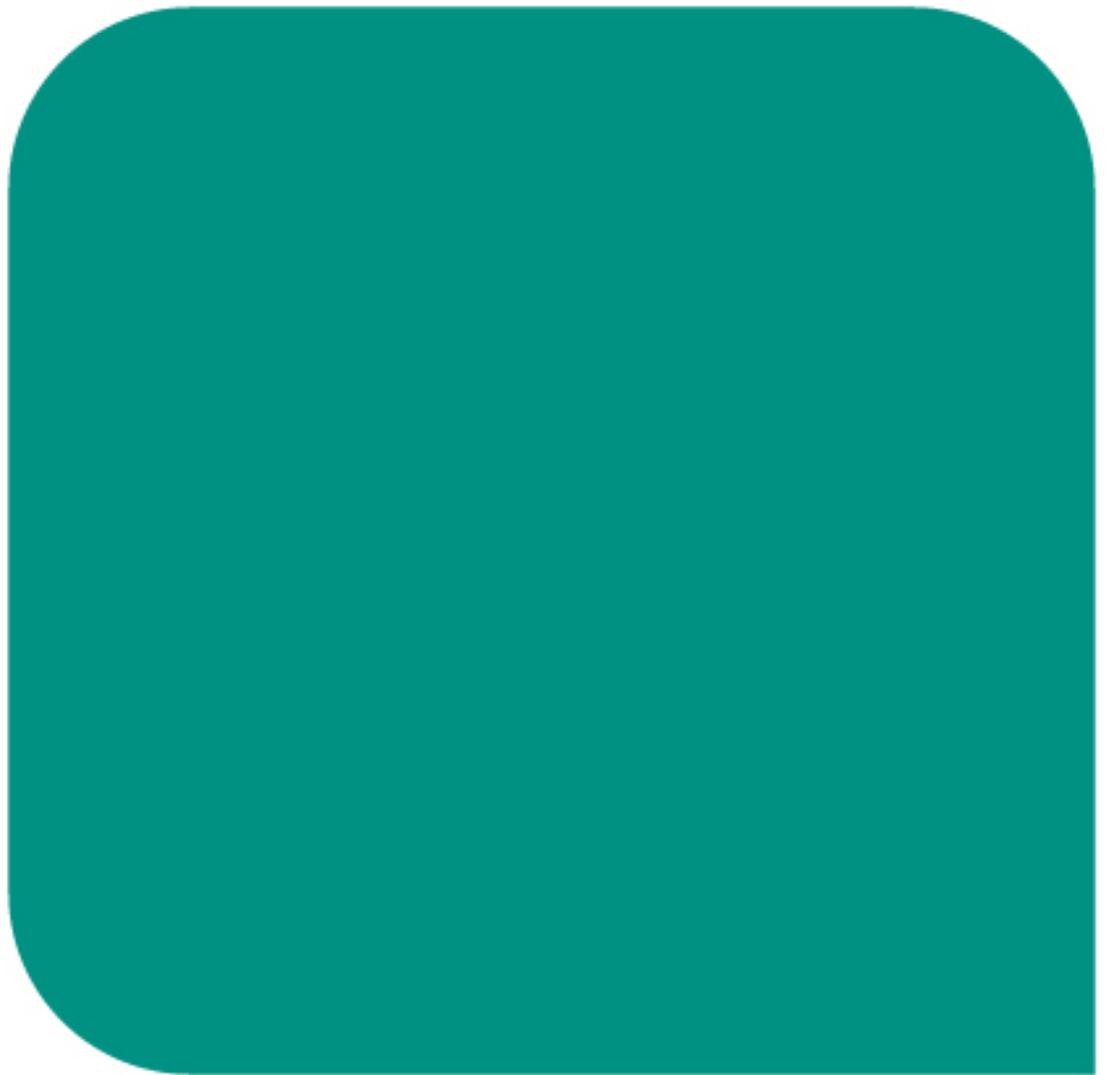




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# **Diocese of Southwark independent safeguarding audit (October 2016)**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CONTEXT

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has been commissioned to undertake an audit of the safeguarding arrangements of each diocese of the Church of England. The aim of these audits is to work together to understand the safeguarding journey of the diocese to date and to support the continuing improvements being made. Following pilot audits of four dioceses in 2015, an agreed audit model is being applied nationally during 2016 and 2017.

The audit of The Diocese of Southwark was carried out by Susan Ellery (the lead auditor for this diocese) and Hugh Constant on 11, 12 and 13 October 2016.

The audit process incorporated an examination of files and documents, along with meetings with key individuals and a focus group of parish representatives. Details of the process are provided in the appendix. The sheer size of the Diocese (see 1.2) placed some inevitable limitations on a three-day field audit, as the auditors could not meet as many senior clergy as would have been ideal, given that the Diocese has, for example, six archdeacons. However, diocesan officers (past and present) made sure that the auditors had a written narrative of the development of a coherent response to safeguarding issues, and this helped focus the audit in a very constructive way. In addition, the size of the safeguarding caseload meant that a smaller proportion of the total number of cases could be audited within the timeframe than might usually be the case.

This report was written by Susan Ellery with support from Hugh Constant and quality assurance provided by Edi Carmi, the auditing lead.

## 1.2 THE DIOCESE

The Diocese of Southwark was created in 1905. It covers the whole of London south of the Thames, and east Surrey. The Diocese encompasses urban, diverse boroughs and areas of the commuter belt which also includes some rural communities. There are 359 churches in 292 parishes and a total population of about 2.75 million. Forty-six thousand people are on the electoral rolls of the parishes.

The Diocese is divided into three episcopal areas (Croydon, Kingston and Woolwich), each of which has an area bishop (although Woolwich was vacant at the point of audit) and two archdeacons. The Bishop of Southwark is the diocesan bishop.

## 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is divided into:

- Introduction.
- An overview of the auditors' findings: what is working well, what needs to work better and a summary of the 'considerations' for the Diocese.

- The Findings of the audit [links have been made with the S. 11 (Children Act 2004) Church of England national audit form].
- Considerations for the Diocese are listed, where relevant, at the end of each finding
- An appendix sets out the review process.

## 2 OVERVIEW

This section provides the headline findings from the audit, in terms of what is working well and the areas for improvement. The detail behind these appraisals are in the Findings in section 3.

### 2.1 WHAT'S WORKING WELL?

The Diocese is fortunate in having previously had a very strong Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) who was later heavily involved in setting up the first national team and processes and, recently, in training senior clergy in the Church of England. As a result, Southwark has had a robust safeguarding response in place for about a decade. The current DSA is equally strong and was previously a senior safeguarding manager in London boroughs. She is able to span the operational tasks of casework and training but also has the experience of strategic planning and influencing at a high level.

Both the Bishop and the Diocesan Secretary voiced their commitment to safeguarding. An example of readiness to put commitment into action was seen in the response to the news that referrals went up by 65 per cent in 2015. Despite being outside the annual budget cycle, funding was found to respond to a business case for an extra post in March 2016 and an appointment was made in June.

The Bishop recognises his critical role in leading and facilitating the changing culture of safeguarding in the Diocese. At a more individual level, the Bishop talked about meeting with three survivors of abuse and of trying to make sure that such meetings met the needs of those survivors. He also knows he is the backstop for compliance, for example in taking a firm line about applicants for Permission to Officiate (PTO) and safeguarding training. The auditors noted that the Bishop spoke about being very firm with someone he has known personally and professionally for some 40 years; he did not allow himself to be swayed by fraternal feeling.

The DSA is line managed by the Deputy Diocesan Secretary (DDS) who is also a senior member of the clergy, having previously been an Archdeacon in the Diocese. The DDS reports to the Diocesan Secretary. The line management arrangements mean that the safeguarding team feels itself to be well placed within the structure and 'close to the centre of action'.

The Parish Focus Group was very vocal in its appreciation of the support provided by the safeguarding team on casework and the training. Quotes include, 'I never need to worry' and 'I couldn't fault them'. Training is 'outstanding' and 'leaves you wanting more'. The appreciation extended to the DBS officer and the Safeguarding Administrator.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team supports all the parishes in the Diocese. The Cathedral operates as another parish church, being an ancient parish church that was promoted to cathedral status. An 'extended' safeguarding service is delivered to the Cathedral involving casework support, advice and bespoke training for staff and volunteers, as well as to the Cathedral Education Centre.

The Diocese knows that it needs to move from a reactive position for safeguarding to a proactive one and has recognised that the DSA was over-stretched. In order to be able to deliver what is required (and been identified by the DSA), a second, full-time, assistant DSA has been appointed. The service now has the benefits of a multi-professional team consisting of a social work-qualified DSA, assisted by an ex police officer and a former senior teacher.

## **2.2 WHAT NEEDS TO WORK BETTER?**

The auditors recognised that the Southwark diocese is well advanced in its safeguarding awareness and service provision. The following outlines the areas where potential further improvements can be made, building on the sound basis already established. The details of these are provided in section 3.

The range of options available to meet the needs of survivors could usefully be extended. The auditors and diocesan staff talked about recruiting Authorised Listeners who are unconnected to the Church of England, or commissioning a service from another organisation, or funding the secondment of an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser.

Some parishes were seen to be slow to ring the DSA, for example, when a congregant was arrested for a safeguarding offence. The Focus Group asked for more on-going (rather than case-related) practical and emotional support for the Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs). The support given to PSOs could be strengthened and should result in an improved rate of timely referrals.

The Diocese needs a case management system.

The links between the DSA's professional supervisor and line manager could be formalised.

The working relationship with the Probation Service, especially in planning the release of offenders, needs to be stronger.

One Focus Group member asked for more bespoke training to fit the needs of a rapidly changing multi-cultural population.

The diocesan safeguarding policy and procedures, 'A Safe Church' needs to be updated, as it still bears the message from the previous Bishop.

## **2.3 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DIOCESE**

The term 'considerations' instead of recommendations is used in the SCIE Learning Together methodology. The reason for this is that it is important that each diocese decides exactly how to implement the improvements indicated; this is likely to be different from place to place. Some considerations will be around taking specific types of action, whilst others will be alerting the Diocese to develop its safeguarding planning in the future.

These considerations are to be found at the end of each of the sections in the Findings (see section 3). They are listed below for ease of reference, but the detail behind each of these is in the Findings section.

## **Consideration for the Diocese**

*Keep the total resource for safeguarding under active review in each budget cycle.*

*Consider how best to support PSOs on an ongoing basis.*

*Introduce a formal link between the DSA's external supervisor and line manager.*

*Transfer decisions made in supervision (with a summary of the reasons) to the case recording.*

*Review the purpose and functions of the SRG and its chair, in the light of the forthcoming change in national policy.*

*Change the episcopal endorsement of 'A Safe Church' to the current Bishop.*

*Consider whether, how and when the Diocese might move to using 'A Safe Church' alongside national policy and practice guidance.*

*Review the use of Type A Risk Assessments and safeguarding agreements and make sure that they are considered (on the case record) where a person is being investigated for a safeguarding concern or where there is no conviction but still cause for concern.*

*Ensure that it is clear who has signed a safeguarding agreement.*

*Consider whether the Diocese should be a co-signatory to safeguarding agreements.*

*Consider the introduction of a brief case closure summary.*

*Make contact at senior level with the London Probation Service to improve the involvement of the Diocese in pre-release planning for offenders who wish to attend church.*

*Commission or purchase a suitable case management system (this should be in consultation with the NST about any potential plans for a universal system).*

*To continue to monitor the success of the current training strategies to be able to meet safeguarding training needs and consider if additional strategies will be required to provide sufficient courses.*

*Include the safeguarding complaints policy and revise the whistleblowing policy for inclusion in the new edition of 'A Safe Church'.*

*Include contact detail in the policies and allow for written (by post or email) and verbal submissions.*

*Consider how the SRG can evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding at both individual and organisational levels.*

*Consider how the next parish self-audit can be used by the archdeacons in their monitoring of safeguarding in parishes.*

*Consider how to strengthen the Authorised Listener team and how to provide for people who want an independent listener who is not a church member.*

*Consider how best to provide long-term support, where needed, to survivors of abuse, using the views of survivors to inform the decision-making.*

*Consider a formal approach to the Probation Service to seek to establish an understanding or protocol for when the Diocese should be included in pre-release planning.*

## 3 FINDINGS

### 3.1 SAFEGUARDING MANAGEMENT

The Bishop delegates his lead for safeguarding to the Deputy Diocesan Secretary (DDS), who is also a senior member of the clergy and was previously an Archdeacon in the Diocese. This arrangement has been in place since the DDS was appointed 12 months ago and came about at the suggestion of the Bishop. The DDS said that the Diocesan Secretary saw the opportunity to enhance collaborative working between the laity and clergy at a senior level. The DDS holds both strategic and operational leads and reports to the Diocesan Secretary.

The governance of the Diocese is held by the Diocesan Council of Trustees (DCT), which incorporates the Diocesan Board of Finance, Bishop's Council, Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee, and Diocesan Parsonages Board, with co-terminus membership.

The DCT delegates day-to-day management and leadership of its activities to the Diocesan Secretary who is accountable directly to it and who meets with both the Senior Management Team (comprising departmental heads, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and Deputy Diocesan Secretary) and monthly with archdeacons.

In addition, more detailed oversight by the DCT is exercised through its two committees, the Policy and Finance Committee (PFC) as well as the Audit and Governance Committee (AGC). These committees each have distinct responsibilities for scrutiny and oversight; the PFC for resource spend and performance against objectives, and the AGC in its ongoing appraisal of risk, including safeguarding risks. Safeguarding reports have been made to both committees within the last 10 months.

The DDS saw the advantages of the new structure as putting greater emphasis on expecting a head of department to direct, with clear lines of accountability, rather than decisions being referred to committees.

The DDS is in attendance at the Diocesan Council of Trustees (Bishop's Council) and attends the Bishop's Staff meeting as and when necessary and/or requested. The DSA attends the Bishop's Staff meeting on an annual basis.

The Diocese benefits from the fact that both the Diocesan Secretary and the DSA transferred from very senior positions in the financial and public sector respectively. Both are very able to plan strategically and to implement change while maintaining business as usual, although the DSA has not yet had the opportunity to do so.

Links with the Cathedral are strong and probably helped by the facts that the Cathedral is also a parish church and is physically close to the Diocesan Office. Additionally, a number of key office holders within the Diocese are also Canons from the Cathedral. The auditors met with the Sub Dean (the Dean being absent on three months' sabbatical study) and the Comptroller (senior administrative lead).

The Comptroller is the safeguarding lead for the Cathedral. He said that the congregation at the Cathedral is predominantly working age and professional, and

generally engages with safeguarding issues, especially of children. However, the Cathedral is also a welcoming place for some vulnerable adults and has close links with St Mungo's, a charity for the homeless.

The Bishop talked about promoting a culture of safeguarding and the auditors heard evidence of a culture of inclusion of vulnerable individuals that depends upon an awareness of safeguarding from the Parish Focus Group and the Comptroller of the Cathedral. For example, a small number of homeless and/or vulnerable people are known to the vergers at the Cathedral, who look out for them.

The cases audited showed a good proportion concerned adults, including cases where a perpetrator was also considered as a vulnerable adult. Domestic abuse also featured in three of the cases seen. In 2015, 37 per cent of referrals related to children, 29 per cent to adults and 15 per cent to domestic abuse. All this suggests that the awareness of adult safeguarding is embedded in the culture.

One case audited was the result of a request by the Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands to the DSA for advice about a potential candidate, which suggested that safeguarding is embedded across the senior staff. The Diocesan Secretary has a clear vision of the organisation's values, a printed version of which is seen in every room at Diocesan Office, and she is highly supportive of safeguarding.

*(Reference: Part 1 of S.11 audit: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese. Also to part 2: The Bishop appoints a member of his senior staff to be the lead person for safeguarding.)*

### **3.2 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISER/S**

The DSA is a full-time, office-based and employed post. In addition, there are two assistant DSA posts. One post-holder, working three days a week, is an ex-police officer and leads on risk assessment and safeguarding agreements, known in the Diocese as worship agreements. The other is newly appointed, full-time, and an ex-deputy head teacher. This gives a total of 2.6 DSA posts supported by a full-time Safeguarding Administrator and a part-time DBS Administrator.

Given that the Diocese is larger than most, in terms of geographical size, population size and number of parishes, (and the area system reflects this), the total resource given to safeguarding may be sufficient for the foreseeable future. However, the Diocesan Secretary made it clear that should the referral rate and/or other safeguarding demands continue to rise, the funding would be found to appoint to another post or commission appropriately. She mentioned the funding of an external consultant to update the diocesan safeguarding policy as an example. The identified need to improve the offer made to survivors, mentioned in 2.2 above, may prove to be another such demand.

A further area of work that might benefit from greater attention is the ongoing support given to the voluntary Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs), in addition to the case-related support given during a safeguarding incident. Parish Focus Group members suggested a forum for PSOs. This might be used to exchange ideas, find solutions to problems, to keep updated in terms of policy and practice guidance and simply to meet other PSOs. It is possible that greater support to PSOs would result in fewer late referrals, discussed in 3.5 below. The PSO can also be the DSA's and ADSAs' eyes and ears on the ground, picking up potential issues at an early stage, as long

as they then have the confidence to pass them on. Possibilities might include support at deanery/archdeaconry level, e.g. informal support groups led by an assistant DSA, a closed Facebook group, and an annual Thank You event hosted by the Bishop.

At present, the DSA is responsible for casework and the strategic development of the service as well as delivering a share of training. She expects to delegate to the new assistant DSA in the near future. Overall, this was a team bedding down and finding ways to keep in touch given the size of the Diocese and the need to provide a physical presence in different diocesan offices. This working practice is important in terms of being a very visible DSA and sustaining links with all the parishes, but does bring a challenge for members of the safeguarding team. Regular telephone communications between team members enables the Assistant DSAs to remain in close contact with the DSA during the times they are located at different venues. The safeguarding team commendably ensures its availability to others across the Diocese through mobile phone provision seven days a week, including out-of-office-hours for urgent matters.

All the DSAs have job descriptions compatible with the national model. The safeguarding team benefits from having a range of professional experience between them including social work, policing and teaching:

- The DSA is a qualified social worker with a long career in local authorities, in frontline practice and senior management. Most recently, she managed safeguarding and quality assurance in merged London boroughs.
- The DSA holds no office in the Church.
- The ex-police officer assistant DSA was a detective inspector working mainly on child abuse investigations and first worked for the Diocese alongside his then employed role with the police.
- The second assistant DSA worked in primary schools, including as an acting head teacher; she talked about being the safeguarding lead in the school and deciding to specialise.

### **3.2.1 Management and supervision**

The DSA is line managed by the DDS and in turn manages and supervises the assistant DSAs. The DDS is a member of the Safeguarding Reference Group. He developed his experience and knowledge base in safeguarding as an incumbent in an inner city parish, as the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and as an archdeacon where he was heavily involved in safeguarding cases.

The DSA receives professional supervision every six to eight weeks from an independent social work consultant, funded by the Diocese, with the availability of phone contact in between. There is a written agreement which identifies the content of supervision covering both casework and systemic safeguarding issues in the Diocese, such as policy and procedures. It does not currently address the links between supervision, supervisor and the Diocese, such as how supervision decisions are entered into case records and the interface between the roles of supervisor and line management in the Diocese. The DSA was confident that there would be contact if the need arose; the auditors suggested a formal meeting,

perhaps twice a year, to include the supervisor contributing to the DSA's annual appraisal.

The noting of supervision decisions in case records is equally important in relation to the supervision of the Assistant DSAs by the DSA.

### **3.2.2 Links with senior clergy**

The DSA meets formally with the Bishop every three months and he is briefed on cases. She also meets formally every year with each area Bishop and the two area archdeacons, and has frequent conversations with the archdeacons and all the Bishops through the year.

*(References: Part 1 of S11 audit: Appoint a suitably qualified DSA, and provide financial, organisational and management support. The adviser must have full access to clergy files and other confidential material. Part 6: The DSA's role is clear in the job description and person specification. And The DSA has sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, including local policy development, casework, advice, liaison with statutory authorities, training, personal and professional development and professional registration. Part 8: The DSA should be given access to professional supervision to ensure their practice is reviewed and improves over time.)*

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Keep the total resource for safeguarding under active review in each budget cycle.*

*Consider how best to support PSOs on an ongoing basis.*

*Introduce a formal link between the DSA's external supervisor and line manager.*

*Transfer decisions made in supervision (with a summary of the reasons) to the case recording.*

## **3.3 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING REFERENCE GROUP**

### **3.3.1 The Chair**

The Safeguarding Reference Group (SRG) has an Independent Chair, an ex-Chief Inspector of Police who was previously a member of the group for about four years. His safeguarding knowledge comes from managing child abuse teams in south London. The Chair is paid an honorarium at a fixed amount irrespective of the number of hours worked.

In addition to chairing the SRG meetings themselves, he also chairs some core groups (see below 3.5). He does not meet with the Bishop but can contact him at any time. The involvement of the Chair in operational management needs consideration given the likely changing role of the SRG in new national policy (see Purpose and Function below).

### **3.3.2 Composition of Group**

Membership of the SRG comprises:

- Diocesan Bishop, or a member of his senior staff, appointed by him

- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA)
- Deputy Diocesan Secretary
- Diocesan Director of Communications and Resources
- Diocesan Director of the Board of Education
- lay and clergy representation from the Diocese; this includes at least one incumbent, and one Parish Safeguarding Officer. It also includes diocesan advisers whose roles impact on safeguarding, for instance in relation to disability
- three senior representatives from statutory agencies involved in safeguarding: representatives from the Metropolitan Police Service and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) attend regularly, but the representative of adult statutory services has been less successful in attending.

The Bishop does not attend, but one of the archdeacons does. The membership is a mix of strategic managers, the safeguarding team and people at parish level. The fact that all are equal members of the group was seen to be an advantage by a clergy representative, who commented that one can challenge the Archdeacon or the Bishop's representative when at a meeting. The membership certainly means that parishes are represented although the auditors wondered whether it lends itself to a more strategic approach to leading on improvement.

### **3.3.3 Purpose and function**

Meetings are four times a year. The minutes of meetings are clear and include roles as well as names of attendees.

There are Terms of Reference, revised earlier this year. The purpose of the Group is defined, broadly speaking, as to:

- promote good practice
- advise on priorities
- quality assure policy and practice
- enable feedback by users of the service and to constitute a Risk Assessment Panel.

The latter is a sub-group, actual or virtual, that advises whether or not to accept the findings and/or recommendations of risk assessments.

This sub-group, whilst consistent with current guidance, means that the SRG is involved in operational management, as opposed to a more strategic position and one of providing scrutiny of safeguarding practice. The current consultation draft of 'Promoting a Safer Church: The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults' (October 2016) no longer includes such provision. This reflects the changing role of the Diocesan Safeguarding Group over time. 'Protecting All God's Children' (2010) called this group the 'Diocesan Safeguarding Children Management Group' and it was perceived as part of management processes. The new consultation draft calls it 'The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel', recognising this is an advisory body, not part of day-to-day management. It may be that the function of the Risk Assessment Panel is of continuing value; if so,

it would be helpful to consider how this can be provided apart from the SRG, and as part of the diocesan safeguarding management structure.

The functioning of the SRG regarding quality assurance is discussed at 3.10 below. There was some confusion about the role of the Group in setting policy as one member told the auditors that this is what the main function of SRG is, whereas the Terms of Reference give an advisory role.

Members of the Group acknowledged that learning from young people and from survivors is an area that is difficult but needs to be explored further.

Reporting from the SRG to diocesan senior management meetings is via the Deputy Diocesan Secretary and the DSA who presents her annual report to the two committees that make up the Diocesan Council of Trustees (see 3.1). The Independent Chair also attends the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee at which safeguarding risk is discussed. The Independent Chair might also report on the business of the SRG at the same time.

The new policy 'Promoting a Safer Church: The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults' should provide a suitable framework for the review of the Terms of Reference and consider how best the SRG can hold the Diocese to account for safeguarding. This could include setting priorities each year, tracking progress and tackling challenges. A formal business or work plan that becomes part of the business of the Safeguarding Reference Group might help the team move to the proactive task of strengthening systems.

*(Reference: part 1 of S.11 audit: Provide a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese. Also to part 2: The Bishop appoints a member of his senior staff to be the lead person for safeguarding.)*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Review the purpose and functions of the SRG and its Chair, in the light of the forthcoming change in national policy.*

## **3.4 GUIDANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Diocese of Southwark has had its own safeguarding policy, 'A Safe Church', for many years and much of its content predated and contributed to subsequent national policy and practice guidance. It is available in hard copy and online.

The current version was completed in 2008 and revised in 2010 so is now quite out of date. The auditors saw a draft revision that is awaiting national policy and practice guidance due later this year. The auditors questioned why the Diocese continues to produce its own policy now that national policy is available. To a large extent, the Parish Focus Group answered this question. Several members talked about using and valuing 'A Safe Church', and about how they need a hard copy in a shared space so that anyone can refer to it. People were familiar with 'A Safe Church' and had a high level of confidence in it.

Much of the content of 'A Safe Church' is parish-level material, such as templates for hiring out premises, and need to continue to be published. The auditors were concerned that the new edition might duplicate national policy and practice guidance, and perhaps parishes should become accustomed to using a slimmer 'tool kit'

version of 'A Safe Church' alongside national material. However, such a move would probably depend on a higher level of ongoing support (outside the support given on a casework basis) to PSOs than has been feasible so far.

There was no evidence that the DSA is compromised by working to a dated set of policies. For example, core groups have been initiated in serious cases relating to church officers and a Type B Risk Assessment was seen for a voluntary church officer.

At present, 'A Safe Church' is endorsed by the previous Bishop who retired in 2011. The Diocese accepted that this oversight should be put right now, and not wait for the new version.

*(Reference: Part 1 of the S. 11 audit: Ensure the Diocesan Synod adopts the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies, together with any additional diocesan procedures and good practice guidelines.)*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Change the episcopal endorsement of 'A Safe Church' to the current Bishop.*

*Consider whether, how and when the Diocese might move to using 'A Safe Church' alongside national policy and practice guidance.*

## **3.5 CASEWORK**

### **3.5.1 Quality of risk assessment and safeguarding contracts**

Overall, the quality of casework seen was both high and thorough.

The DSA's professional expertise is clearly valued by her clerical colleagues. For example, she had been consulted about safeguarding issues regarding the selection of a candidate for ordination and had reported to the Bishop.

The auditors saw evidence of a very appropriate challenge by the DSA to a local authority about a case where children were arguably suffering significant harm.

Also, evidence was seen of support to a vicar who was asked to provide a witness statement in a domestic abuse case. Overall, several cases demonstrated the willingness of the DSA to 'go the extra mile' and to be imaginative in making sure that safeguarding is promoted.

At the time of audit, the Diocese held 35 safeguarding agreements so the four risk assessments and two agreements audited form a very small proportion of the whole. The ex-police officer assistant DSA leads on risk assessment and safeguarding agreements. The Type A risk management plan is in use and Type B had also been used on two cases contained in the audit sample.

Particular strengths were identified with respect to risk assessment:

- Recognition of complexity of a risk assessment case and consequent holding of a review after a month, and having a mechanism for bringing forward the formal annual review if necessary

- Good management of meeting with an offender, so that they were unable to minimise their offence
- Commendable initiation of a Type B Risk Assessment, following the police deciding on no further action and a multi-agency strategy meeting agreeing the concerns were unsubstantiated (the assessment was completed by a DSA from neighbouring a diocese with scrutiny by a Risk Assessment Panel).

Areas for further development of risk assessment practice:

- Consistent following up with archdeacons any challenges arising in the risk assessment
- Identify at outset the need for the next formal review to be earlier
- Consistent audit trail of decision-making around the need or not for a risk assessment and safeguarding agreement
- Consider the DSA or ADSA signing safeguarding agreements, along with the parish and the subject, as this might be argued to have more weight
- Have names written in capitals on agreements in addition to signatures, so it is always possible to identify the participants
- As well as suspending an individual from a formal role (following an allegation), it is important to consider the need for a safeguarding agreement to cover attendance at church during the investigation and assessment period.

The casework audit demonstrated that the Probation service had not involved the Diocese in the pre-release planning for an offender who was intending to attend a specific church. The auditors were given to understand that this is not an isolated incident (see 3.13) and represents a wider problem with engaging with a statutory service which is in a considerable state of flux.

The auditors were left unsure that risk assessments and safeguarding agreements are routinely used without a conviction but where a person is subject of a safeguarding concern.

The review of safeguarding agreements is tracked manually by the Assistant DSA but the electronic database currently in use has no means to flag up approaching reviews automatically.

*(Reference: Part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide access to a risk assessment service so the Bishop and others can evaluate and manage any risk posed by individuals or activities within the Church.)*

### **3.5.2 Quality of response to allegations**

The initial response to allegations was generally seen to be quick and the Parish Focus Group confirmed that, if people have to leave a message, the DSA responds quickly. Evidence was seen of the DSA working late in the evening and at weekends to maintain this. However, there was one case, which is recent, where the referral came in during half-term and it took more than a month to convene a core group. Although there were complicating factors, this seemed a long time.

The team has been under intense pressure with a 65 per cent rise in referrals in 2015 which followed a smaller increase in 2014. One member of the Focus Group

said that, while time is always swiftly given to 'extreme cases', she had sometimes been aware that the team was juggling priorities and understood why her case was taking longer. A small proportion of the cases seemed to have fizzled out without formal closure and/or were closed without a record of reasons for closure.

To put this into perspective, the team (of 1.6 people) received 155 new referrals in 2015, 15 of which were about members of the clergy, and made or maintained 35 safeguarding agreements.

Twenty-four cases were audited, with varying levels of involvement. Eight cases involved vulnerable adults as victims, perpetrators or both. Six cases were recent referrals about historic abuse, four actual or alleged perpetrators were clergy, one an organist and one case involved several adult choir members. Three cases involved domestic abuse.

There was appropriate information sharing on all cases except possibly one where the local authority, which was arguably not responding well to a serious situation, was asked to share information about a family with another denomination. However, the DSA's reasonable expectation was that the children would be made subject to Child Protection Plans within which such information could be shared.

The Diocese has considerable experience of running core groups (see 7.7 – 7.28 of Responding Well to Serious Situations Relating to Church Officers, June 2015)<sup>1</sup>. Core groups in Southwark are chaired by either the Archdeacon of Croydon (who is also a member of SRG), or the Deputy Diocesan Secretary (also a member of SRG and the line manager of the DSA) or the Independent Chair of the SRG. The auditors were concerned about the potential for a conflict of interest for the Independent Chair as he is also tasked with investigating complaints about safeguarding and could thus be asked to investigate a complaint about a case he has been involved in. It might be better to have a plan for such a circumstance before it happens (see also discussion in 3.3 relating to the role of the SRG and its chair).

The Archdeacon of Croydon said that an area archdeacon is always involved in a core group but not the area bishop as they will provide the pastoral support to the subject of concern, if a member of clergy.

All the outcomes seen were appropriate and/or usually the DSA had tried hard to ensure a good outcome. There was attention to detail, as in the case referred to above (the Type B assessment) and in another case where a youth leader who had sent inappropriate texts has been given six hours of individual safeguarding training by a consultant. The DSA is clearly supported when she wants to bring added resource to a case. She also spoke freely of deciding when to refer to the DBS, indicating that she makes the safeguarding decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the Core Group is defined as ensuring that: Church of England policies and practice guidance are followed, there is collaboration between and support for the Diocese and the parish, and there is reference to any other church community with which the alleged abuser is associated.

### 3.5.2.1 *Multi-agency working*

The auditors saw a high quality of multi-agency work across the Diocese, particularly in the historic abuse cases. There was appropriate engagement with Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs), including a challenge to one who thought that the Church should monitor an offender daily. Liaison with the Metropolitan Police is generally good, and helped by the fact that both the Independent Chair of the SRG and an assistant DSA are ex-police officers and said that they could navigate their way through the system. Liaison with Surrey Police seemed to be less consistent but not for want of effort by the DSA and team. The current failure of the probation service to include the DSA in pre-release planning was noted in 2.2.

The request for feedback from statutory agencies produced three responses, all from the police:

- One officer, who always liaises about safeguarding agreements for sex offenders, said, 'Outcomes are always good, sensible solutions found and agreed, but the admin side of completing and receiving "behaviour contracts" can be a bit hit and miss. Clearly the department is very busy and it can take some time for a callback and action being taken – but overall the service is good and the understanding of safeguarding issues is excellent.'
- The second officer is in the paedophile unit and worked with the DSA on a very challenging case. He commented, 'It was clear during [the] process that a robust safeguarding policy was in place. Early liaison was easily established and communication was maintained well. A good working relationship was built and it was easy to share information with the safeguarding adviser or obtain information as necessary. When the process was complete, a review of procedures was carried out by an independent figure and I was invited to attend this. It was clear that any lessons that were available to be learned as a result of this case were learned. However, throughout the entire process I felt the systems and processes were robust enough to make this effective throughout.' The auditors read the independent review of this case.
- The third officer, in the Sapphire team, investigating serious sexual assaults, described a very positive and open relationship with the safeguarding team (both DSA and an assistant DSA), the provision of pertinent information, appropriate two-way communication and information sharing.

The LADO who sits on the SRG saw clear reciprocal benefits from his working relationship with the DSA (and with the Roman Catholic equivalent). He said that referrals from less organised or well established churches were increasing and implied that he found access to information useful. He had organised for the DSA to talk to the London LADO Network Meeting that again had two-way benefits.

### 3.5.2.2 *Recording systems*

An electronic recording system has been in use for several years but is acknowledged to be inadequate in terms of capability to flag up forthcoming reviews, link cases, etc. The Diocese has a high proportion of people who move in or out (London having a more transient population than many areas) and it would be useful

to be able to trace a person who is subject to a safeguarding agreement and has disappeared.

Within the limitations of the system, records are well kept with a front sheet that uses national guidelines. Only one case had the auditors confused about who was who among professionals. The story was straightforward to follow on all the records seen.

Only three named members of the diocesan IT team have access to the recording system as well as the four team members, the DSA, the two assistant DSAs and Safeguarding Administrator.

### 3.5.2.3 *Any other issues arising in casework?*

An issue remarked upon by the DSA in her annual report and by the Diocesan Secretary was the large amount of time given last year to a Subject Access Request.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Review the use of Type A Risk Assessments and safeguarding agreements and make sure that they are considered (on the case record) where a person is being investigated for a safeguarding concern or where there is no conviction but still cause for concern.*

*Ensure that it is clear who has signed a safeguarding agreement.*

*Consider whether the Diocese should be a co-signatory to safeguarding agreements.*

*Consider the introduction of a brief case closure summary.*

*Make contact at senior level with the London Probation Service to improve the involvement of the Diocese in pre-release planning for offenders who wish to attend church.*

*Commission or purchase a suitable case management system (this should be in consultation with the NST about any potential plans for a universal system – see also 3.15).*

## **3.6 TRAINING**

### **3.6.1 Delivery**

The Diocese contributed to the formulation of the national training framework and, as a result, the framework is well embedded. The training team delivers C1 (Foundation), C2 (Leadership) and C3 (Foundation and Leadership), plus courses on Domestic Abuse, Supporting People with Mental Health Needs, a Safeguarding Refresher, Safeguarding for Premises Managers and Hall Bookers, Safeguarding for Administrators and a course on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In addition, there are closed courses delivered to specific groups such as curates in their first year of ministry.

The DSA and assistant DSAs deliver training, supported by a small team of voluntary trainers. The course on Mental Health, for example, is delivered by an incumbent

who was previously a mental health professional and manager. The course on the Sacrament of Reconciliation (i.e. the place of confession) is delivered by the DSA and the Dean of the Cathedral.

In the 15 months before December 2015, 1,343 people attended one of 64 training courses held at venues across the Diocese. Twenty-five of these courses were at parish or deanery level. The training task is, however, huge. The diocesan self-audit for 2015 shows that 54 per cent of the licensed clergy had received safeguarding training in the last three years, and a little under 50 per cent of those with Permission to Officiate (PTO), lay readers and lay officers. This demonstrates that even more training is needed.

The Diocese has now (following the introduction of the new Learning and Development Practice Guidance) targeted all clergy, those with PTO and chaplains who haven't attended the required training, or whose training is due to be refreshed after three years. This has proved successful with bookings increased. The training programme is emailed or posted out to all clergy, readers, pastoral workers, church wardens and parish safeguarding officers once a year. There are also email reminders about places available on courses which target particular groups of church officers if bookings have been low for a particular course. The training programme is also included in all our training materials.

The DSA's annual review for 2015 notes that, 'Evaluations completed by participants continued to be overwhelmingly positive, specifically with regard to the use of case study materials and the opportunities to share experiences and good practice from local settings. The Diocese was involved in piloting national safeguarding training materials during 2015 which specifically centred on the SG6 course aimed at clergy, readers and SPAs (Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries). Senior staff training was delivered in June 2015 in conjunction with the National Safeguarding Team'.

The Parish Focus Group was enthusiastic about training, with one member saying that she always wished that a training session was longer. The parish-based training was much appreciated although one person wanted different scenarios as volunteers in her church are now doing repeat training. One incumbent wanted training on how to discuss domestic abuse when preparing people for marriage. A lay person asked for more bespoke training to fit the needs of a rapidly changing multi-cultural population, e.g. on cultural attitudes to child rearing and the implications for safeguarding.

The DSA and her team are convinced of the value of delivering as much of the training as they can themselves as it is their main opportunity to make contact with a wide range of people from across the Diocese and to have a direct influence on parish responses to safeguarding issues.

The auditors were given a comprehensive diocesan training strategy 2016–17. The strategy notes that, 'Training will be focused on building healthy communities with a culture of safety, in which the wellbeing of all is ensured and nurtured. Modules reflect the national requirements across all dioceses for ensuring healthy safeguarding practice, responding well to victims and survivors of abuse in the church context. They emphasise the need to work in cooperation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and with statutory agencies, in all safeguarding matters'.

Appendix one of the strategy sets out who needs what training and how often. A table of training on offer states what each course is about and who should attend. The training strategy is updated annually and sent to clergy, readers, pastoral workers, church wardens and PSOs so those who need training should be aware.

The Bishop confirmed that the continuation of PTO for retired clergy is dependent on the completion of safeguarding training, and gave two excellent recent examples of firmness on the subject.

The Safeguarding Administrator deals with the practical aspects of organising training and keeps records of who was trained, in what and when.

*(Reference: part 1 of S.11 audit: Select and train those who are to hold the Bishop's Licence in safeguarding matters. Provide training on safeguarding matters to parishes, the Cathedral, other clergy, diocesan organisations, including religious communities and those who hold the Bishop's Licence. And to part 8: Those working closely with children, young people and adults experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect ...have safeguarding in their induction and are trained and have their training refreshed every three years.)*

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*To continue to monitor the success of the current training strategies to be able to meet safeguarding training needs and consider if additional strategies will be required to provide sufficient courses.*

### **3.7 SAFE RECRUITMENT OF CLERGY, LAY OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Six clergy blue files were provided, two from each area. All had evidence of recruitment within the last three years and of an up-to-date DBS and a Confidential Declaration. Five had references (three) on file including a personal reference, although on one file the references were in a loose pocket.

One file contained a sealed envelope labelled CDM No Further Action. As it was unclear whether or not the CDM related to safeguarding, it was not opened but it might make sense to make a note on the envelope of whether or not the CDM was a safeguarding issue.

The blue files (where available in the Diocese) of clergy who were subject to safeguarding allegations in the case records audited were checked for evidence of linkage. It was present on all three blue files but not in a consistent way.

The recruitment files for six diocesan posts were seen, five of whom are laity and one clergy. Evidence of Safer Recruitment was present but inconsistent. One post in particular showed one reference only.

*(Reference: part 7 of S.11 audit: The Diocesan Secretary has implemented arrangements in line with the House of Bishops' policy on Safer Recruitment 2015. And to part 1: Keep a record of clergy and church officers that will enable a prompt response to bona fide enquiries...where there have been safeguarding concerns, these should be clearly indicated on file.)*

### **3.8 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)**

Following a review of the DBS system in 2014, arrangements for online DBS checks using an independent provider (APCS) were piloted in early 2015. By December 2015, 182 parishes had been set up so that they could use the system online. By the end of 2015, 1,005 applications had been made online out of a total of 2,502 for the year.

At the point of audit, the online DBS system was not a contentious issue in the parishes represented at the Focus Group and the consensus was that it had speeded checks up. Eighty-five per cent of parishes are now online.

Through a specialist helpline, APCS has been able to provide support directly to named officers in parishes as well as to key staff in the Diocese. Where necessary, it has escalated those checks which are subject to delay, although some issues remain in relation to a small number of checks delayed with individual police forces. In particular, the Metropolitan and Thames Valley Police services has backlogs (see also 3.15).

A member of the Parish Focus Group showed some confusion about whether every volunteer should have a DBS check, or just a proportion of volunteers. One parish priest in the Focus Group, who is based in a south London borough that has a rapidly changing population, spoke about occasional difficulties in obtaining a DBS check for volunteers whose immigration status is unconfirmed. By contrast, others spoke about the occasional refusal to have a DBS check by someone who has been volunteering for many years.

Twenty-eight referrals (18 per cent of all new cases) in 2015 were for blemished DBS checks (i.e. checks that show up a conviction of any kind).

Consideration of a barring referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service takes place through the diocesan core group as part of responding to serious safeguarding concerns relating to a church officer (National Practice Guidance section 13.8–13.10).

In the past four years there has been one referral for barring made by the DSA to the DBS. This referral was made in September 2014 and related to a member of clergy. The auditors were surprised that there was no clergy disciplinary action taken in this case and perhaps the thinking around this might have been better joined up at that time.

Prior to September 2012, a number of cases were referred by the Diocese to the then Independent Safeguarding Authority.

In August 2016, the subject of one case was referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service by the DSA in another diocese because the Bishop of that diocese had withdrawn the subject's PTO. The Diocese of Southwark provided information to support the application.

### **3.9 COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING**

There are two policies for complaints and whistleblowing on the diocesan website.

The policy for complaining about safeguarding policies and procedures, or about a member of the safeguarding team is found at the very end of the safeguarding webpage.

The policy is brief. It allows only for written complaints to the Independent Chair of SRG who will investigate with two other members of the SRG and report to the Bishop who makes the decision about the outcome. No timescales are given and there is no limitation made as to who may complain: this brings a risk of complaints being made by people who were not involved at first hand (perhaps friends or relatives). Complaints should, of course, be allowed on behalf of a child or an adult who lacks mental capacity.

If one types 'Safeguarding Complaints' into the search engine, one reaches a different complaints policy that is part of 'A Safe Church'. This is a policy at parish level and the complainant is encouraged to contact the DSA, if a complaint cannot be settled informally. Where a clergy person is the subject of a complaint, the reader is asked to contact the archdeacon or area bishop, but no address or phone number is provided.

It would make sense for the revised edition of 'A Safe Church' to include both policies and for the diocesan search engine to be updated.

The whistleblowing policy explains what whistleblowing is, makes reference to The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which gives workers legal protection and states that parish volunteers should be afforded the same protection. The policy tells the whistleblower to decide who to tell, '...for instance your incumbent, the Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, your Archdeacon'. It would be reassuring for a whistleblower if the policy goes on to say that all of the above people have a duty to make sure that any concerns reported are duly investigated..

*Reference: part 1 of S. 11 audit: Provide a complaints procedure which can be used by those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues. Also part 4: There is an easily accessible complaints procedure including reference to the Clergy Disciplinary Measures and whistleblowing procedures.*

### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Include the safeguarding complaints policy and revise the whistleblowing policy for inclusion in the new edition of 'A Safe Church'.*

*Include contact detail in the policies and allow for written (by post or email) and verbal submissions.*

## **3.10 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES**

The Terms of Reference for the SRG give it a strong mandate for quality assurance. Three of the five stated purposes of the SRG relate to qualitative or quantitative review:

- To promote good practice in management of safeguarding children and adults who may be vulnerable in the Diocese

- To have a key quality assurance role in the review, scrutiny and advising on diocesan safeguarding policy, procedures and practice and implications for implementation, taking account of changes in the law or national policy, and in Church of England policies and procedures
- To enable feedback from those using the safeguarding service to be considered with relevant changes being incorporated into future practice (including survivors of abuse, children and young people, those against whom concerns have been raised and parish officers)

The auditors met with the Independent Chair of SRG and three members. They talked about spending time reviewing anonymised complex cases and offering the DSA time to reflect as well as critical challenge. The last learning review brought up the issue of support to the core group and resulted in a second chair being used in some very challenging cases.

The auditors asked the members of SRG how they know they are making a difference in safeguarding? The answers were: the general awareness of safeguarding in the pews compared to five years ago, the improved resourcing of safeguarding, the higher profile of safeguarding and responding to consultations sent out by the national team. This would suggest that quality assurance would benefit from a more strategic approach. A safeguarding business plan could set out how the Group will monitor business as usual and set priorities for the quality assurance of particular aspects of safeguarding. The annual report presented by the DSA already contains the core of a plan.

The auditors read an executive summary of a learning review, written by an external consultant, after the sad death of a priest subject to safeguarding allegations. This case, and two more where a person under investigation has ended their own life, had clearly led to much discussion about how better to support people (the alleged offender, their family and the congregation) during a period when an allegation cannot be discussed or the outcome of an inquest is awaited.

In terms of auditing safeguarding in the parishes, the parish self-audit has made a useful start. It was completed in 2013 and 2014 with a plan to reintroduce it soon. Members of the Parish Focus Group were generally positive about the self-audits. It was 'scary' the first time and 'difficult to use' but most people completed it as a group and found the exercise useful. It 'forces you to look at holes' and 'gives you authority' as action has to be taken. The self-audits were reported to the Parochial Church Council who hold the legal responsibility.

The DSA shared that there was not a lot of analysis of the two self-audits beyond the number of parishes which completed it and the number of red/amber/green ratings given when PSOs were asked to rate their parish. In 2014, 77 per cent of parishes submitted their audit, a small increase on 75 per cent in 2013, and 21 per cent had not submitted an audit in either 2013 or 2014. The next self-audit will use Survey Monkey so that analysis of the results can be facilitated. There will then be scope for the archdeacons to use data about parishes that are failing to submit a self-audit or score themselves poorly.

### 3.11 MONITORING OF SAFEGUARDING IN PARISHES AS PART OF ARCHDEACONS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The auditors were able to talk with one of the six archdeacons, who is also a member of SRG. He said that the archdeacons work together to make sure that monitoring is consistent across the Diocese.

The Archdeacons visit each parish every three years and the area dean visits the other two years, to talk to the churchwardens. These visits are called Inspections in Southwark and monitor a range of policies at a fairly basic level.

The Articles of Enquiry are sent to each parish every year, and a safeguarding question, set by the DSA, is usually included. The Archdeacon said that they try to ensure that the safeguarding question cannot be given as a yes/no answer.

The Archdeacon referred to the parish self-audit (see 3.10) and confirmed that the intention is for the safeguarding team to refer concerns on to the archdeacon, where merited. He said that, at present, occasionally an incumbent resists safeguarding training and he will write a letter. The potential for insurance to be invalidated if specific people are not trained, including the incumbent, usually brings about a change of attitude.

The Archdeacon had not yet had to use the threat of the Clergy Disciplinary Measure to secure compliance in safeguarding. This may change when a better level of baseline information is available through the parish audit. The auditors noted that some PSOs in the Parish Focus Group felt anxious that neighbouring parishes did not seem to be as aware of potential safeguarding issues as they should be which suggests that there may still be gaps.

The Archdeacon, who knows the Diocese well, also spoke about noticing whether the church safeguarding policy is up to date and displayed when he visits churches. Sometimes he picks up concerns; for example, he recognised an organist who had been dismissed elsewhere several years earlier and referred the matter to the DSA. There were no safeguarding issues but the organist was considered to be a potential vulnerable adult.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider how the next parish self-audit can be used by the archdeacons in their monitoring of safeguarding in parishes.*

### 3.12 RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

An Authorised Listener service was set up in 2013. This Southwark diocesan service (or if the person lives out of the Diocese, an alternative provided in their home locality), has been used 20 times, by survivors and by the subject of concern and their family members. Originally, there was a team of five Listeners, three ordained and two lay, but the lay Listeners have, unfortunately, ceased (in one case) or have very limited availability (in the other). The DSA said that, although an Authorised Listener is always offered, it is often not taken up. She felt that the title requires explanation to those who are offered a Listener, so they understand what is actually being offered.

The DSA was aware that the team would benefit from being strengthened as, in practice, one Authorised Listener is taking on most of the work.

The auditors saw evidence on case files that the Diocese is open to funding and/or identifying counselling but the route to funding seemed quite lengthy. One survivor accessed counselling via her GP before the Diocese had made an offer. This may have worked well but equally this survivor may have benefitted more from a counsellor who had a deep knowledge of the Anglican faith and, in particular, reconciliation and forgiveness.

In addition to resources for children and vulnerable adults, a number of people in the Diocese showed an awareness of the need to improve resources available to survivors, people close to them and parishes that have been significantly affected by a safeguarding issue (usually a past or current member of the clergy or a prominent church officer). The Archdeacon talked about how long-term care is stretched and how the DSA role finishes but psychological issues often continue. The DSA was very aware of a history of victims and survivors feeling that the Church had not met their needs. She is considering the commissioning of services and funding the secondment of an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser, for local services, but raised the need for this to be addressed nationally.

#### **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider how to strengthen the Authorised Listener team and how to provide for people who want an independent listener who is not a Church member.*

*Consider how best to provide long-term support, where needed, to survivors of abuse, using the views of survivors to inform the decision-making (see also 3.15).*

### **3.13 INFORMATION SHARING**

The auditors had no sense that information sharing within the Diocese and with the DSA is ever a problem. Information sharing and joint working across dioceses was also very good, whether the other diocese was close by or far away.

The auditors did not see information sharing with other faith organisations, and questioned the lack of sharing in one case that is referred to in 3.5 above.

Given that the Diocese covers 12 London boroughs and east Surrey (Surrey being a shire county) information sharing may be a challenge, but in practice has not been a major issue. The professional relationships that are possible with one or two local authorities are not possible. Information sharing with the Metropolitan Police seems to be well established (see 3.5 again).

The auditors reviewed one case in which Probation had not involved the Diocese in the pre-release planning for an offender who was intending to attend a specific church. The auditors were given to understand that this was not an isolated incident (see 3.5).

## **Considerations for the Diocese**

*Consider a formal approach to the Probation Service to seek to establish an understanding or protocol for when the Diocese should be included in pre-release planning.*

### **3.14 ANYTHING ELSE?**

The auditors wondered whether the 58 chaplains in the Diocese (in schools, hospitals, universities and prisons) presented any challenges in terms of safeguarding, given that the Diocese does not appoint or manage them, although as licensed clergy, chaplains will have a Ministerial Development Review. The Bishop acknowledged that a chaplaincy can offer greater freedom to develop a role than an incumbency. The freedom brings the potential for higher risk behaviour in terms of safeguarding but the Diocese strives to manage and reduce such risk. For example, in 2014 the blue files of all chaplains in educational settings were reviewed by the DSA and Bishop's Chaplain as part of a programme of learning from a safeguarding matter.

The response in Southwark is to try whenever possible to become part of the appointment process and to vet candidates at that stage. The Bishop commented that having six archdeacons gives the capacity to do this and usually it is successful.

### **3.15 LINKS WITH NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

The previous DSA had a close working relationship with the (then) National Safeguarding Adviser, and took over the role on an interim basis before the arrival of the current post-holder.

Generally the links with the National Safeguarding Team remain strong. As new personnel have joined the NST, some have spent time in Southwark as part of their induction getting to understand 'a day in the life of a DSA'. Southwark training courses have been made available to administrative staff within the National Team and the Diocese is regularly represented at national DSA events. Southwark's Director of Communications has been very involved in the writing of the safeguarding communications protocols now in use across the country.

The Dean of Southwark has been central to the work on Safeguarding and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with support from the DSA. Southwark takes an active role in contributing to consultations and feeding back local learning for the refreshing and updating of policy and practice guidance.

The DSA provided safeguarding adviser cover at Lambeth Palace at the request of the National Safeguarding Adviser for an extended period during 2015.

There have been some discussions between the Diocese and the NST in relation to a number of cases and those have included some challenge and difference of view in relation to roles, responsibilities and boundaries of various parties with regards to one case.

The DSA has experienced the National Team as being supportive on a professional level and the relationship continues to evolve. The DSA was recently invited to be part of the preliminary discussions with the NST and SCIE on a project seeking to capture the experiences of victims and survivors of abuse in church settings, complementing the audit programme.

### **3.16 NATIONAL SYSTEMIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

The Diocese raised three issues that were thought to have wider applicability for the NST:

- The need for a national case management system to facilitate information sharing.
- Is Southwark's experience in relation to delays in obtaining a DBS due to backlogs in particular police services (of up to 60 days), replicated elsewhere in the country? If so, is there any role for the NST in being able to help expedite matters?
- The need for the provision of specialist and/or longer-term support for victims, than is currently routinely available.

## **APPENDIX: REVIEW PROCESS**

### **DATA COLLECTION**

#### **Information provided to auditors**

The following documents were sent to the auditors:

- A statistical profile of the Diocese
- An account of the development of safeguarding in the Diocese between 1995 and 2013 by the previous DSA
- An account of safeguarding since 2014 by the current DSA
- An explanation of local safeguarding structures and arrangements
- Statement on behalf of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education
- Church of England safeguarding audits 2014 and 2015
- Annual reviews by the DSA for 2013, 2014 and 2015
- Southwark Diocese safeguarding training
- Master Training Strategy 2016–17
- Diocesan Training programme with Co-Workers 2016-17
- Observations of Past Case Review 2009
- CCPAS Deceased Clergy File Review Letter to DSA 2015
- Executive Summary of a case review 2015
- Role Description for Independent Chair of Safeguarding Reference Group (SRG)
- SRG minutes 21.01.16, 21.04.16, 15.09.16
- Terms of Reference for Safeguarding Reference Group
- Local Procedures, Policies and Guidance
- Risk Assessment Panel
- Complaints Policy
- Senior Staff Protocol
- Authorised Listeners
- Job description for DSA
- Job description for assistant DSA(s)
- Safeguarding newsletters January 2016 and September 2016.

#### **Participation of members of the Diocese**

The following people took part in formal conversations with the auditors:

- the Bishop of Southwark
- the Diocesan Secretary
- the Archdeacon of Croydon
- the Deputy Diocesan Secretary
- the DSA and the two assistant DSAs
- the Independent Chair of the SRG and three members of SRG

- The Sub Dean and the Comptroller of Southwark Cathedral

In addition the auditors met with a Parish Focus Group comprising:

- a Rector and Area Dean
- an Assistant (non stipendiary) priest
- two Parish Safeguarding Officers
- a Children and Families Worker
- a Safeguarding Administrator (at parish level)
- a Southwark Pastoral Assistant

### **The audit: what records / files were examined?**

The auditors examined:

- six clergy personnel files (blue files) and six personnel files for lay and/or diocesan posts to review Safer Recruitment
- three further blue files to check linkage with past or present safeguarding concerns
- twenty-four case records, all of cases that had been worked on within the last three years.

### **Limitations of audit**

The sheer size of the Diocese (see 1.2) placed some inevitable limitations on a three-day field audit, as the auditors could not meet as proportionately large a sample of senior clergy as would have been ideal. However, diocesan officers (past and present) made sure that the auditors had a written narrative of the development of a coherent response to safeguarding issues, and this helped focus the audit in a very constructive way. In addition, the size of the safeguarding caseload meant that a smaller proportion of the total number of cases could be audited within the timeframe that might usually be the case.