

## **WESTMINSTER ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN TRUSTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **WRCDT SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE**

#### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this Committee of the Trustee is to support, assist and advise the Diocesan Trustee in discharging its duties in safeguarding, in accordance with the Trustee's legal and regulatory duties, Trust Deed, Canon Law of the Catholic Church and Charity Commission guidance, and to operate within the standards, policies and procedures of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency and in particular to ensure compliance with the eight national safeguarding standards. The Committee will make a regular report to be shared at each meeting of the Directors of the Trustee. In turn the Directors of the Trustee will feed back comments (if appropriate) and, if required, will direct the Committee to consider safeguarding matters where the Directors of the Trustee require additional information, explanations or guidance.

#### **2. Chair and composition of Committee**

The Committee is chaired by a Director of the Trustee. There shall be at least 8 members and no more than 12 members and it must include two or more Directors of the Trustee (including the Chair) as members.

The members of the Committee shall be drawn from a variety of backgrounds, ensuring that the membership has the appropriate combination of skills, experience and knowledge to effectively discharge their duties as a Committee.

The diocesan Head of Safeguarding will be expected to attend meetings of the Committee to advise and support members, and therefore the Trustee, but will not be a member of the Committee.

After consulting with the Archbishop, the Chair will ensure that representatives from other agencies such as the Police, Probation Service, Local Authority, healthcare or others are invited to attend meetings, or advise the Committee, as required.

These representatives are present in an advisory capacity only, to provide professional commentary on the work of the Committee and do not have the rights or responsibilities of members. This means that in the event of a decision being made by vote, the representatives do not take part in the voting, and are not responsible for decisions made at meetings as they can only act in an advisory and not executive capacity.

All who attend meetings of the Committee will be bound by confidentiality and must comply with all applicable data protection laws and regulations and with the Charity's policies including those on Health and Safety.

### **3. Recruitment and Appointment**

Appointment of members is made by the Archbishop and the Charity's procedures for safer recruitment will apply. This will include, but is not limited to, being conditional upon a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS Check)) in relation to criminal and child protection matters for members. Continued membership of the Committee is conditional on satisfactory periodic updated DBS checks.

All members must also complete the Charity's induction processes and all required training.

### **4. Term of office**

Each member of the Committee shall serve for a period of 3 years and shall serve no more than 3 consecutive terms. The Chair shall normally serve as a member of the Committee for at least a year before initial appointment, and if the Chair is appointed in his/her final term of office as a member, he/she may serve one further term of office.

A member's term of office may end due to the completion of 3 terms of office (which will be an automatic termination), resignation in accordance with the organisation's usual procedures, or by removal from office by the Archbishop in accordance with the Trust Deed. The decision of the Archbishop shall be final.

### **5. Duties and responsibilities**

The Committee may create such sub-committees as are necessary in order to discharge its responsibilities, which are to advise the Trustee on:

#### **5.1 Planning:**

- i. The effectiveness of measures to ensure compliance with the safeguarding requirements of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, both diocesan and national.
- ii. Mechanisms to ensure the further development of the Culture of Safeguarding in the Diocese.
- iii. The development and publication of the Safeguarding Service Strategic Plan and its annual review.

#### **5.2 Strategy for:**

- i. Further developing mechanisms for the support of victims and survivors.
- ii. Mechanisms for seeking, supporting and learning from the engagement of those harmed by abuse through contact with the diocese.
- iii. Facilitating the working relationships between those with major responsibilities for safeguarding in the diocese.
- iv. Proposals and processes for the support of all those against whom allegations or about whom concerns are raised.

- v. The maintenance and improvement of engagement with key stakeholders including parents/guardians, children/young people, clergy and religious, employees, volunteers, relevant organisations in the community and the CSSA and National Tribunal Service.
- v. How best to improve and maintain the safeguarding culture within the Diocese.
- vi. Communicating information about individual roles and responsibilities so that there is understanding of how each role contributes to the operation of the best possible safeguarding arrangements.
- vii. Promoting the organisation's strong commitment to safeguarding, compliance with the eight national standards and other key safeguarding messages, throughout the Church body, using various communication channels.
- viii. Ensuring accountability through ongoing monitoring of compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures (including day to day operational compliance at parish level).

### **5.3 Performance through evaluation of data:**

- i. Evaluation of safeguarding performance information. This will be derived from data provided by the Safeguarding Service to the Committee on a quarterly basis (as a minimum, this is to include information on compliance with the key performance indicators in the Safeguarding Strategic Plan, DBS checks, on attendance at mandatory training by all categories of personnel who are required to do such training, on compliance with reporting to statutory authorities in accordance with national safeguarding policy and procedure, keeping those who report abuse and those against whom allegations are made informed about progress, on the creation and management of safeguarding plans, and on any gaps in service delivery due to resource or other deficits).
- ii. The outcome of mechanisms established to secure feedback on their experience of the Safeguarding Service, from both those who report abuse and those who are the subject of such reports.
- iii. Reports received from CSSA on audit and performance, including developing and monitoring an action plan to respond to any area where improvement or enhancement is required.

### **5.4 Training:**

- i. Advice on the development of a diocesan Safeguarding Training Strategy.
- ii. Identification and monitoring of the safeguarding training and development needs for all roles working directly with children and adults at risk, and the provision of training to address these needs.
- iii. Compliance with any national training requirements, in particular mechanisms to deal with any situation where there is evidence of individual failure to comply within the diocese.

- iv. Monitoring of the effectiveness of processes for the incorporation in training of lessons learned by the Safeguarding Service.
- v. Identification of opportunities to collaborate and share learning with others.

#### **5.5 Risk:**

- i. The identification of risks to beneficiaries, or anyone else connected with the Charity, as a result of safeguarding related matters, and the necessity to report to the Charity Commission, where appropriate and in accordance with national and diocesan procedures.
- ii. The extent of compliance with procedures for the inclusion of safeguarding matters on the risk register.
- iii. The effectiveness of mechanisms for the mitigation and management of all risks which are identified.
- iv. The nature of learning arising from reviews of cases and serious incidents.
- v. The provision of advice by the Committee, as requested by the Safeguarding Service, where concerns arise of possible increases in the risk of non-compliance with safeguarding procedures in a parish or other groups (including non-diocesan groups who use diocesan premises).
- vi. Monitoring risks arising from non-compliance with legitimately imposed administrative measures or canonical penalties and advising on further necessary action.

#### **5.6 The effectiveness of case handling**

The effectiveness of risk assessment processes for blemished DBS Disclosures and the provision of advice to the Safeguarding Service in decision making consequential upon the receipt of a blemished DBS report.

- i. The receipt and processing, according to national and diocesan policy, of all new cases.
- ii. The effectiveness of the ongoing processing of complex high-profile cases.
- iii. Responses provided to Safeguarding Service recommendations about temporary removal from office and the necessity for and content of safeguarding plans.
- iv. The effectiveness of decision making in the handling of all safeguarding matters.
- v. Support proposed for those who have reported concerns and those against whom concerns have been raised in accordance with diocesan financial requirements.
- vi. The approval of all case closures following the conclusion of any lessons learned exercise in any case.
- vii. The need formally to seek advice from the CSSA.

- viii. Resourcing for the Safeguarding Services and for parishes, within the constraints and parameters of the overall Diocesan budget.
- ix. The necessity for and response to requests for advice about Canon Law issues.

**6. Reporting**

The Committee will formally report to the Trustees at each Trustee meeting and at such other times as urgent matters arise. The Committee will also receive and act upon recommendations or instructions from the full trustee body.

**7. Matters reserved to the Trustee**


Certain matters will be reserved to the Trustee and not delegated to the Committee, namely:

- i. Serious incident reporting, as the scope of matters requiring reporting is much wider than safeguarding matters. However, the Committee will play its role as prescribed in the diocesan policy on Serious Incident Reporting.
- ii. Approval of new diocesan policies and procedures.
- iii. Financial budgets, which will be approved by the Trustee. However, the Committee may be asked to take part in the overall budget setting processes and procedures.
- iv. Service provision complaints (in line with the Diocesan policy).
- v. Liaison with insurers/solicitors regarding claims.

**8. Administration**

The Committee shall meet at least 4 times, if not more, per year in accordance with the Trust Deed and minutes of the meeting shall be recorded. At each meeting there shall be a declaration of Conflicts of Interest (where any arise) and a register of these shall be maintained.

The Committee shall maintain a risk register for risks associated with safeguarding in the Charity. This shall be regularly reviewed and updated, and will form part of the overall risk register for the Charity.



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**Approved by the WRCDT Board**  
**14 March 2025**