

Delivering Change and Building Trust

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Update

- From Carol Lawrence, Project Implementation Director

This edition of the newsletter marks the halfway point in the project, which began in December 2020 shortly after the publication of both the Elliott and IICSA Reports. Much has been accomplished in that time and, although there is still much to be completed, the work remains on track and to time.

We have reached the 'quiet' period which comes in all projects, where the work is moving along but not quite at the point of any significant milestones. However, within the next two to three weeks there will be some milestones passed. The first of the workstreams will complete, the final workstreams will begin and there will be real movement in the recruitment for CSSA directors and the Chair. The closing date for applications is 18 March 2021 and the first long listing will take place shortly after.

The first draft of the business plans has been received for the CSSA, Religious Life Safeguarding Resource and the National Tribunal Service. These need some further work however the financial review workstream will begin shortly to consider both the plans themselves and also the cost allocation matrix. This workstream will explore all of the potential factors to be taken into account, and including the impact in particular on smaller Religious Life Groups.

And finally, please do feel free get in touch with me either through the website or by email. There was a problem for a short time with the email address which has now been resolved, and you can contact me through info@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)



Communications

The Implementation Plan made a commitment to a simple communication plan during the life of the project – to tell the story of the journey, set out the work as it happens and to ensure that there is the opportunity for comment. The newsletter has been well-received and is being disseminated widely. Providing an overview of what is happening is being well-received, particularly setting out the two-week workplan, and is the first step in demonstrating a commitment to transparency.

The website has a consistent flow of visitors, although there are peaks around the time of each newsletter. So far there have been more than 340 unique visitors, which is a good hit rate for a niche website which is not widely promoted. The majority of visitors are from around England and Wales, with a growing number from Scotland. There are visitors from Ireland, Italy, Belgium, New Zealand, Equador and the USA, showing the level of interest in what we are doing. .

Workstream Progress

- Dr Colette Limbrick

We have completed the parish resource templates ready to start the pilot – this will start during the next 2 weeks with a 4-week turnaround.

The Standards and Audit working group has met again to refine a draft paper which will be reported to the STTG by the end of March. The paper will set out a series of proposals to inform the CSSA and Board in setting up its audit function.

Within the next two weeks a new working group will be formulated to address a route-map for ending alignment and transferring to the religious life resource. The working group will include representatives from diocesan safeguarding offices and the religious. Also, a working group will be formulated to consider the role of the CSSA in complaints that have exhausted local processes.

Work will also commence on refining the proposal within the Independent Review Report for a case consultation mechanism.



Meetings with stakeholders

→ Carol Lawrence

Since the last newsletter I have had the pleasure of meeting with three stakeholder groups, namely a group from the Catholic Social Action network, Chairs of Safeguarding Commission and the Financial Secretaries Conference, which includes Chief Operating Officers in Dioceses.

The Chairs of Safeguarding Commissions and Financial Secretaries Conference were keen to discuss the feedback on the trustee documents, which will be issued this week. Financial Secretaries and COOs are also the secretary to trustees, so both groups were interested in the practical steps of transferring from Commissions to Sub-committees of Trustees. CSAN were interested in the project overall and keen to understand the impact that this may have on them and their Catholic members. The project was well received by all groups who are keen to support the ongoing work.

Religious Life Safeguarding Resource

- Fr David Smolira SJ

Once again, I was delighted with the high numbers of people attending the March Consultation meeting for Religious Leaders, Safeguarding Leads and Bursars, with over 220 people present. The main topic of discussion was the various possible models for delivery of the Religious Life Safeguarding Service. As we explored together the details of structure and governance it raised a number of very important questions and concerns. There were a large number of questions after the last session, which are still trickling through almost a week later, as people reflect on what they heard. There have also been many requests for the slides used, so that those not able to be present could still get a flavour of what was discussed, or for those present to share within their own Religious Life Group. By the time of publication, the slides, answers and video from the session should already be with you but if anyone would like a copy who hasn't received one please email SIP@jesuit.org.uk and Fiona Robb, our new administrative support person, will send them out.

On this point, Dani Wardman, the Safeguarding Advisor for the Conference of Religious, who has been helping me with this work will be taking maternity leave. Fiona, one of the administrative staff at the Jesuit Provincial Offices, will be holding the fort until Dani returns. Fiona is not a safeguarding specialist but is super-efficient at administration and will be a great help. I am sure that you will join me in sending Dani our very best wishes and prayers, and look forward to hearing the good news of the new baby's safe arrival before too long.



At the next consultation session on 13 April 2021, we will have some time to consider the National Tribunal Service and will take a look at what it is, how it will be structured and how it will serve the needs of victim/survivors and those in Religious Life. We hope to be joined by Dr Ed Morgan who can offer us answers to these questions and any more that you have in this rather complicated area. There will also be time at this meeting put aside for questions around some of the other elements of the new safeguarding structures.

Outside of these large meetings, work has been going on in the various working groups and streams, with Religious representation at all levels of the implementation project. We have begun, with the help of CSAS and CoR, to look at the statistics for Religious Congregations in England and Wales to try and specify a little more accurately the likely demands on the Religious Life Safeguarding Service and also to help develop as fair a funding system as possible, knowing that many Religious Congregations are much smaller and/or poorer than others. In order to get a more accurate picture we are putting together some questionnaires which we hope to send out in the next week or two. These questionnaires will be going to Congregational Leaders, Safeguarding Leads, Trustees, Safeguarding Co-ordinators and Congregation Members. We would ask that you take the time to fill them in as it will really help us to get a more and more accurate picture of the situation and of the needs of Religious.

Over the next two weeks we hope to be able to begin to look in detail at the financial modelling of the Religious Life Safeguarding Service and the wider safeguarding structures so we can start to have an idea about the overall cost of the new, unified safeguarding structure and how Religious can fairly contribute to its costs.

Photograph: CBCEW Marcin Mazur

National Tribunal Service FAQs – Which cases?

- Dr Edward Morgan

This document is second in a series of fact sheets; intended to give a general understanding of how the National Tribunal Service (The NTS) will contribute to the “One Church” commitment.

Misconduct?

Misconduct allegations are highly varied. Some arise from a failure to uphold standards of behaviour, or, accountability. Others may relate to relationship conflicts. There are also those of a welfare or safeguarding nature. Whatever, the detail of the allegation, they invariably prompt the need for an investigatory process, and, ultimately, a decision concerning the allegation itself. Within the Church, there are those considered by the secular law to be employees and those who are not (eg Bishops, Priests and members of Religious Institutes and Societies). For these, the investigatory and disciplinary procedures are determined by Canon Law. It is the intention that the NTS will serve as an important resource in the investigation and resolution of cases of this kind. It is not the intention that the NTS procedures will be confined to those cases involving matters of a safeguarding nature.

What happens now?

Where an allegation is received of a safeguarding nature, the Bishop or Religious Leader will seek advice and assistance from the local safeguarding team (i.e. the Diocesan Commission). Following measures addressing issues of immediate risk, an investigation may be initiated into the allegation itself. A similar process where there is no safeguarding issue identified. Any investigation will only be carried out once the state authorities' procedures have come to an end. At that stage, the Bishop or Religious Leader must consider whether there is the potential basis for disciplinary action. This may involve a decision to investigate the allegation further. This is undertaken locally. At the conclusion of the investigation, a decision will be made about what action, if any, is to follow. Dependent upon the subject matter of the allegation, this may result in referral to the Holy See, or, the commencement of a local procedure.

How might things change?

It is proposed that the NTS will work enhance these present arrangements by:

- The publication of rules of procedure and related procedural guidance;
- Maintaining a record of cases in which the Bishop or Religious Leader has received an allegation and the decision of the state agencies is awaited;
- Assisting the Bishop or Religious Leader to determine whether an investigatory process is required and recording both the decision and the reasons for it;
- Determine, in Canon Law, the substance and basis for the allegation by gathering evidence and, if appropriate, conduct investigations after statutory processes have come to an end;
- Maintaining a record of the evidence gathered in the investigation process and, where required compiling referral to the Holy See;
- Providing stakeholders with the opportunity and means of participation in investigatory and decision-making processes relating to the allegation;
- Through canonical Tribunals independently determine the substance of the allegation and, where it is upheld, the sanction or penalty to be imposed;
- The publication of outcomes upon its Database;
- Providing support for those required to investigate matters under Vos Estis Lux Mundi; and
- Serve as an existing structure to receive authority to receive cases delegated by the Holy See.

How does this support a One Church Approach?

These measures will contribute to transparency and consistency. Both will assist in the informed participation of all stakeholders.

If there is a question you would like to be included in the series of factsheets, please do get in touch, either through the website or by emailing info@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk.



Work Plan

In the last two weeks we said we would:	And we have:	In the next two weeks we will:
Continue the process of recruiting new directors for the CSSA	Worked with Saxon Bamfylde on the recruitment	Receive a long list of applicants once the closing date of 18 March 2021 has passed.
Collate the responses on the terms of reference for a trustee sub-committee and associated papers.	Collated the responses	Issue the documents.
Continue with TUPE of CSAS staff	This is continuing	Finalise arrangements for a 1 April 2021 transfer
Finalise template for gathering information on resources in parishes	Finalised the document	Issue the document for use in the pilot dioceses.
Share a survivor reference charter on engagement with survivors in shaping the safeguarding structures both now and in the future. Contributions have been sought from a number of those we are engaging with on a one to one or small group basis.	Considered further representations and comments.	Combine the additional representations into a final document.
Receive the first draft of forecasts on financial modelling for CSSA, NTS and RLSS	First draft was received	Begin the workstream(s) to consider financial arrangements to ensure that allocation models are fair and representative
Continue work on drafting the Rules of Procedure for the National Tribunal Service, and produce the next in the series of FAQs	Continued work.	Continue work, including extending the series of FAQs
Information and feedback from previous meetings build it into the information we will be sharing with all Religious at our large meeting on 5th March	We held the large meeting and explained the modelling that could be used.	We have encouraged feedback and this feedback will aid us in making decisions around the financial models
Produced a paper on standards and production of some principles for the audit framework.	Produced a paper of principles, however following feedback this required some further refinement.	Produce a paper of principles, to inform the CSSA.

New work in the next two weeks

Religious Life Workstream will seek to understand the make-up of Religious Congregations, size, gender etc and to build on the data held by CSAS and CoR. The the next two weeks questionnaires will be sent out to capture key information that will better inform our work and the overall service that will be delivered.

