

Delivering Change and Building Trust

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Update

- From Carol Lawrence, Project Implementation Director

I am delighted with the progress of the Implementation Plan, as the work continues to be completed as expected, according to the timeline given. This is due in no small part to all those giving of their time and energies to make this work.

This last week saw the launch of the search for the new Chair and non-executive directors of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, where we are being expertly advised and supported by Saxon Bamfylde. Details of the role can be found by clicking [here](#). So far there has been much interest in these roles, with the process likely to take around 10 weeks to complete. I should like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the appointment brief, as these contributions came from across the Church as well as from lay people and, most importantly, victims & survivors.

In this next month we will see many of the current workstreams come to a conclusion. However, there are still some significant areas of work to begin in a meaningful way, such as on finances and contractual arrangements. Work has started in that professional advisors are preparing reports and documents, and the coming weeks will see those being completed. I aware that these are areas which are of huge interest to Dioceses and Religious Life Groups and please be assured that we are working on these will due care.

And finally, please do feel free get in touch with me either through the website or by email info@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)

- Dr Colette Limbrick



National Catholic Safeguarding Commission

The NCSC held its final decommissioning meeting on 18 February 2021, after some thirteen years of working as an independent body within the framework of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The meeting was tinged with sadness, as it was the first meeting since the death of Chris Pearson, who had been Chair of the Commission for the last six years.

Chris was passionate about safeguarding, inspiring and dedicated to the work of the NCSC. He was instrumental in the Elliott Review being commissioned by the NCSC, and the members were delighted to be able to say that this has led to the work that is happening now.

The NCSC workplan and its associated documents have been handed to the Project Implementation Director, as part of the transition to the CSSA. The final piece of work for the NCSC will be to produce its report for 2020, which should be completed by the end of June this year.

The Survivor Advisory Panel was a sub-group of the NCSC and will transition to the CSSA.

Workstream Progress

The was a good level of feedback on the Trustee Sub-Committee documents, which closed on 19 February 2021. Currently responses are being collated and a summary document will be circulated in due course. The comments in the main were supportive, with constructive suggestions such as timelines and clarity over the ability to tailor the documents to meet the needs of individual charity trusts. All suggestions will be considered for inclusion in the final documents.

In other areas of work:

Standards and Audit Workstream has held a further meeting, and is currently in the process of producing a paper as its final output. Further details will follow in the next newsletter.

Parish resource audit tool In the next two weeks four of the dioceses contributing to this workstream will run a short pilot of the templates which will involve completion of an online survey. Feedback from the pilot will be used to inform the next stage.

National training framework Work has continued with further meetings taking place this month. It is due to complete and report by the end of March 2021



Religious Life Safeguarding Resource

- Fr David Smolira SJ

Progress continues at considerable speed! Following our meeting on 10 February 2021 and the engagement shown by Religious to understand and be a part of the current changes in safeguarding, we have been working hard to ensure we have something worthwhile to use as the basis of our next phase of consultation at our next meeting. This will be on 5 March 2021 with Religious Congregation Leaders, Provincial Bursars, Safeguarding Leads and Council members. The various groups assisting our work have been helping us to think through the different ways the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) could be structured, costed and contracted. It is this information we will be presenting to you, for your reactions at the meeting and afterwards by email.

In addition to this work, we now have broader Religious representation on all of the broader working streams that assist with the implementation plan working. They contribute to the development around various aspects of the project such as training, standards, audits and financial modelling.



Religious as well as the dioceses.

We have also started to turn our attention to the NTS and to see how this will impact on both clerical and non-clerical Religious. There is still much to understand and discuss from our side but we hope to be able to provide more details on how this service will operate and who it will serve soon.

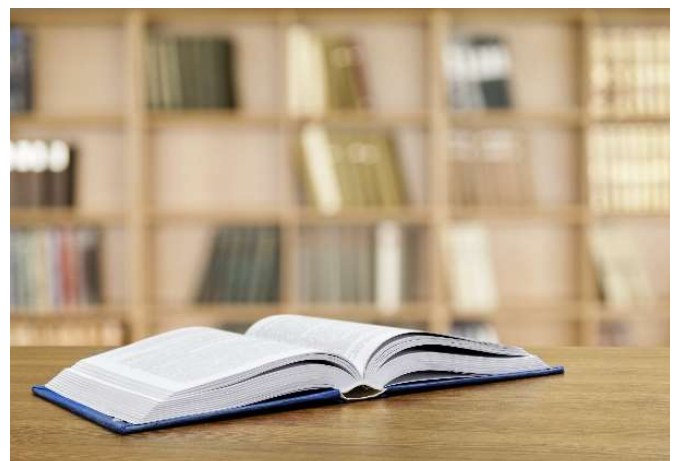
One more area of work that we are just beginning is to develop job descriptions for the key posts in the RLSS. It is essential that these reflect clearly what it is that is needed in this new structure for Religious safeguarding.

The Religious Working Group, Religious Leaders Group, CoR Safeguarding Committee and the Project Implementation Team continue to meet regularly to ensure that this work is appropriately focused on the needs of

National Tribunal Service

- Dr Edward Morgan

Echoing the words of Fr David Smolira SJ, I am pleased to report that steps are being formulated in order to ensure a shared understanding of the proposed work of the NTS and the resource it is intended to provide to both Dioceses and Religious Leaders. As part of this process, I have produced the first in a series of FAQs (see below). This provides a basic overview of how it is anticipated the NTS will contribute to developments in current and future practices. This is intended to be an initial overview only and subsequent editions will each cover different aspects of the work of the NTS and its relevance to Dioceses and Religious.



If there is a question you would like to be included, please do contact me at info@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk or through the website.

Work Plan

In the last two weeks we said we would:	And we have:	In the next two weeks we will:
Advertise and begin search and selection for directors of CSSA. The process will take about 12 weeks.	Advertising went live on Saxon Bamfylde website, 24 February 2021.	Continue the process, working with the agents.
Consult on terms of reference, a route map from safeguarding commissions to sub-committees as well as an explanatory overlay document.	Issued documents to Trustees, Chairs of Safeguarding Commissions, Co-ordinators and those with governance experience, across 16 Diocese and Religious Life Groups.	Collate the responses and produce a summary. Reflect any recommendations in the final wording, before issuing.
Commence TUPE of CSAS staff	Begun discussions	Continue with the work over the next four weeks of the process.
Create template for gathering information on resources in parishes	Created a template, in hard copy and on SurveyMonkey, which were then trialled by the working group.	Finalise these, subject to some amendments, ready for use in the pilot dioceses.
Create a survivor reference charter on engagement with survivors in shaping the safeguarding structures both now and in the future	Shared this with survivors. Contributions have been sought from a number of those we are engaging with on a one to one or small group basis.	The document will be completed.
Receive the first draft of forecasts on financial modelling	Provided additional information to facilitate the work. There have been some unavoidable delays and work is not yet complete.	Receive the first draft of forecasts
Work to continue on drafting the Rules of Procedure for the National Tribunal Service	Drafted of rules on evidence for vulnerable witnesses, which is close to completion.	Continue work, including producing the next in the series of FAQs
Working Group and Religious Leaders group meetings to continue, now that membership has been established and initial meetings held.	Held these meetings, the feedback from which has informed the work and thinking around various aspects of implementation	Take this information and build it into the information we will be sharing with all Religious at our large meeting on 5th March
Review of standards and production of some principles for the audit framework.	Held a further meeting which considered audit models.	Produce a paper of principles, to inform the CSSA.

National Tribunal Service FAQs - The Basics

Introduction

The Elliott Review recommended that separate organisations be set up to deal with safeguarding related concerns and governance within the Catholic Church in England and Wales. This includes ensuring that procedures are both **consistent** and **transparent**. These recommendations were approved by a panel of representatives and have been adopted by the CBCEW.

In his recent documents, Pope Francis has declared the need for a "One Church" approach. The Elliott review is intended to deliver that goal. Part of this relates to how we in the church investigate and respond to issues of potential misconduct and the role we have in contributing to a safe environment for all; especially those who are least able to protect themselves.

This short document is intended to give a general understanding of how the National Tribunal Service (The NTS) will contribute to this "One Church" aim.

What happens at the moment?

At present, many Religious Institutes and Religious Orders draw upon the services of a local Diocesan Commission to investigate matters of safeguarding concern. The safeguarding commission provides advice to the religious leader in order that he or she may make decisions in relation to members of their community. In the most serious of cases, the religious leader is required to report the concern to Rome and decisions may be taken by others.

How might things change?

The National Tribunal service is intended to support religious leaders and bishops in three main areas:

- **Education** - to communicate standards and procedures in canonical decision-making processes;
- **Investigation** - to investigate concerns as and when they arise.
- **Deciding cases** - providing the canonical expertise necessary to make decisions on cases where disciplinary proceedings have been considered appropriate.

In each of these areas, the intention is the Church in England & Wales will be able to draw upon the National Tribunal in each of these areas and in doing so, promote a One Church approach which is able to enjoy the confidence of all of those likely to be affected; whilst providing decisions which will be open and transparent.

Will my religious leader be excluded?

The short answer is: 'no'. By drawing upon the NTS, the religious leader is being supported in the exercise of their authority on behalf of the community they represent.

The investigatory role of the NTS will ensure that the religious leader is in a position to make informed evidence-based decisions. Similarly, where a decision has been made to proceed to disciplinary action, it will be a matter for the religious leader (whether alone or in conjunction with others) to identify the process to be followed. Thereafter, that decision will be implemented (as is the case now) by means of an independent canonically competent panel.

What about rights of members in Canon Law?

These arrangements will operate in full conformity with the Code of Canon Law. The purpose of the NTS is to ensure that those rights have the prospect of being realised and respected. Use of the NTS will provide the guarantee that the Code of Canon Law is given its due prominence and consistency of process.

Dr Edward Morgan
