

PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 16th November 2011, 1.30pm at St Bede's Church, Popley Way, Popley, Basingstoke, Hants RG24 9DX

Present Lorna Duggan (Commission Chair) (LD), Angela McGrory (AMcG), Kate Burke (KB), Margaret Muncaster (MM), Fr David Sillince (Fr DS), Paul O'Driscoll (PO'D), Paul Neary (PN) & Soraya Ciccarone (Minutes)

In Attendance representing the Bishops Council – Rev Mgr John Nelson (JFN)

LD welcomed everyone to the Meeting and Father John led with a prayer

1) Apologies

All present

2) Minutes of Meeting held on 21st September 2011

The minutes were approved.

3) Matters Arising (not on Agenda)

None noted

4) DSC Report

4.2 COC's (Covenants of Care) – Now 34 to be reviewed following the meeting.

4.3 CRB – Re-Checks – To date we have had 42 completed CRB's for Clergy. A letter has gone out to all PP's so we expect to receive more soon.

4.4 Clergy Mop-Up Session – This session which was scheduled to take place on the 9th November in Chandlers Ford had to be postponed but will be rescheduled for the New Year.

4.5 Clergy Training Days – AMcG recommended that we have a Clergy Training Day on alternate years and asked the advice of the Commission.

JFN suggested that autumn is the best time of year and that the best time for the Clergy Mop-Up session would be at the end of February.

AMcG suggested a topic of the Theology of Safeguarding and to explain the protocol of managing an accused priest at the next session. In addition, highlighting the PP's responsibility to support their safeguarding reps.

JFN said that the title of the day should include, 'what happens if a PP is accused and that Fr Dominic Golding should be present for an input on Canon Law. It was agreed that this topic would generate interest and a better attendance.

4.6 Safeguarding Training & SafeSys/SafeSys 2 – AMcG reported that since January nearly a 1,000 people have undertaken Safeguarding training.

AMcG will meet with the training team in the New Year to discuss putting on refresher training for volunteers.

ACTION AMcG

4.7 Parents Protect – AMcG attended a course on this and has put a link on the Safeguarding website. This is an important area of work, however, given current resources this could be a piece of work that could be undertaken by reps or perhaps through the Catechists.

5) World Youth Day

JFN reported that Dave Hill and AMcG will be attending the next WYD in 2013 in Rio De Janeiro. Only a certain number are going to be allowed to attend and they will have to have attended all the pre-meetings. All those going will have to apply for a place and be balloted. No one under the age of 18 will be permitted to attend and there will be a maximum of 50.

6) Replacing Existing Reps

AMcG asked for advice as we have lost 19 reps so far this year. Recruiting reps is time intensive. Those that are leaving are a mix of longstanding ones and ones who are unable to complete the duties and realise this quickly.

AMcG reported that she meets with all potential reps and to explain the role and responsibilities. Subsequently there is a two hour training session. It is important that the reps should be active in their Parish/Community so that they know who everyone is and then it makes the role easier and more effective.

Suggested that the advert in the Parish Newsletter is more detailed and outlines the time commitment.

ACTION AMcG

7) Chairs Update

LD reported that she had attended the Regional Chairs meeting on 8th November. Only one other Commission chair was in attendance. Areas discussed included new structures and where Religious sit within the structure of Dioceses and the 'Mother House'. We have 17/18 within our Diocese. It is being proposed that Religious will have to align themselves with the Diocese in which they are located and would come under that Diocese's Safeguarding Commission. LD's main concern is that of accountability. This is being discussed by the Bishops' Conference.

JFN raised his concern that the Bishops may not be fully conversant with the implications of the change in structure. LD responded that our Bishop is aware of the difficulties in the proposed new structure.

'Towards Healing' protocol is being discussed at the next Bishops' Conference meeting.

8) The Baldwin Case – The high court judgement states that the clergy are not employed, however, the Bishop may be vicariously liable for his priests' actions. The Commission needs to advise the Bishop (Trustees) regarding a possible appeal. The Trustees will be discussing this matter at their meeting on 1st December 2011.

LD outlined that the issue is complicated and that there are legal issues and safeguarding ones, however, the role of the Commission is to advise the Bishop on safeguarding matters. JFN gave his view that the issues could not be separated and POD agreed.

Two members of the Commission advised against an appeal because of the harm it would do to victims in that it would re-traumatise them and also it will be a PR disaster with the Church being perceived as trying to avoid her responsibilities towards victims. This was the minority view with three members advising on an appeal because of the point of principle and that in the “long run” sorting out this matter may help more victims.

ACTION LD

9) Changes to the New Procedures

LD wanted to discuss about the link between the Commission and the Trustees. Some Dioceses have a link person for the Trustees and their Commission. JFN reported that some Trustees do not find the minutes helpful. AMcG added that SDM (Secretary to the Trustees) has requested to present George White’s report and the Commission’s action plan to evidence that we have good governance.

JFN advised that for the time-being the Commission should continue to go through the VG who attends the Commission meeting as there may be changes to the Trustees once the new Bishop takes office.

It was further discussed to have a summary paper for the Trustees from the Safeguarding Commission perhaps in place of the minutes (although minutes are part of the ToR).

LD added that we do need to keep on the agenda to meet with the new Bishop when he arrives.

10) Any Other Business

Commission’s ToR have been updated to reflect changes in national policies and procedures.

LD thanked everyone for attending and the Meeting ended at 3.55pm with a prayer led by Father David Sillince.

Dates of Meetings for 2012

Wednesday 18th January @ 1.30pm – St Bedes, Basingstoke

Wednesday 21st March @ 1.30pm – St Bedes, Basingstoke

Wednesday 23rd May @ 1.30pm – St Bedes, Basingstoke

Wednesday 11th July – @ 1.30pm St Bedes, Basingstoke

Wednesday 19th September @ 1.30pm – St Bedes, Basingstoke

Wednesday 14th November @ 1.30pm – St Bedes, Basingstoke