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Diocese of Dunkeld independent safeguarding audit (June 2022)



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Completed in Great Britain in June 2022
by the Social Care Institute for Excellence

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Written by Jane Bee and Jane Scott with Sheila Fish

Social Care Institute for Excellence

83 Baker Street
London W1U 6AG
Tel. 020 7766 7400

www.scie.org.uk



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1 Introduction

1.1 THE AUDIT

1.1.1 The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) was commissioned to undertake an audit of the safeguarding arrangements of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dunkeld. Audits for the Dioceses of Galloway, Motherwell and Aberdeen and the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh, and Glasgow, have already been completed.

1.1.2 The aim of the audit was to work with the Diocese to support safeguarding improvements by identifying how well safeguarding is working, identifying where there might be weaknesses and exploring the rationale for both strengths and weaknesses found.

1.1.3 The audit has used SCIE's established methodology Learning Together which has been used through a three-year programme of Church of England Diocesan Audits. While some of the areas explored differ slightly, the methodology remains the same. The audit was completed by Jane Bee and Jane Scott in June 2022, with quality assurance provided by SCIE through Sheila Fish, Senior Research Analyst.

1.1.4 The audit process involved interviews, written contributions, a survey and documentary analysis. This included seven conversations with key clergy and lay staff involved in safeguarding within the Diocese and 23 survey returns from parishes, a documentary analysis of six case files, policies and procedures for safeguarding and minutes of meetings. Details of the process are provided in the Appendix.

1.1.5 As part of the audit process, the Diocese of Dunkeld sought to involve survivors of abuse who had received a service from the Diocese. Auditors spoke to six survivors, whose views are included as *contributors* within the report.

1.1.6 The audit was designed to be proportionate. Auditors aimed to cover enough breadth and depth to gain an insight into safeguarding within the Diocese, recognising that within the timescales available that this was not wholly comprehensive.

1.1.7 Input from parishes was via a survey rather than the traditional focus groups due to distance and continuing Covid19 pandemic concerns. There were no other known limitations to this audit.

1.2 THE DIOCESE

1.2.1 The Diocese of Dunkeld comprises 34 parishes (which include an additional 10 mass centres) of 65,000 Catholics from a total population of 580,000 (11.2%). These are served by 29 Priests, eight Monastic Religious and six Permanent Deacons. In area, the Diocese is 8,495 square kilometres (3,280 square miles). It is thought that the Diocese was constituted as far back as the middle of the ninth century.

1.2.2 Dunkeld is one of the suffragan sees in the archiepiscopal province of St Andrews and Edinburgh, and includes the counties of Perth, Angus, Clackmannan, Kinross and the northern part of Fife.

1.2.3 The Diocese is led by Bishop Stephen Robson. The Diocese cathedral is dedicated to St Andrew and is located in Dundee, which is the largest centre of the

population.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE

1.3.1 The Bishop takes ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the Diocese of Dunkeld. Supporting him in this task is a team comprising the Vicar General, the Chancellor and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA). In Dunkeld the Bishop does not delegate safeguarding to any other Diocesan officer, but in practice, the DSA leads on all aspects of safeguarding in conjunction with the Bishop and the independent chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG), who is a part-time volunteer. The DSA is also the Assistant Chancellor and line managed by the Chancellor.

1.3.2 The DSAG supports the work of the safeguarding team and is made up of individuals with specific safeguarding experience and is organised and attended by the DSA and independent chair.

1.3.3 Where there is an allegation or safeguarding concern raised, the independent chair of the DSAG convenes a Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT) meeting in conjunction with the DSA to assess risk and make recommendations to the Bishop, who is not a member of the DRAMT.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

1.4.1 This report is divided into:

- Introduction
- The findings that the audit presented – by theme
- Questions for the Diocese to consider, listed where relevant at the end of each Finding.
- Conclusions of the auditors' findings: what is working well and areas where future development might be considered.

1.4.2 An appendix sets out the audit process and any limitations to this audit. Each substantive section begins with a generic introduction. This is followed by a description of what the auditors learnt about arrangements and practice in the Diocese followed by their analysis of the strengths and systemic vulnerabilities identified. The description is value neutral. In the analysis the auditors make assessments of the safeguarding arrangements and practice they learnt about. SCIE methodology does not conclude findings with recommendations. Instead for each theme, the report provides the Diocese with questions to consider in relation to the findings. This approach is part of the SCIE Learning Together methodology and requires those with local knowledge and responsibility for progressing improvement work to have a key role in deciding what to do in order to address the findings and to be responsible for their decisions. This methodology also helps to encourage local ownership of the work required in order to improve safeguarding.

2 Findings

2.1 SAFEGUARDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

2.1.1 Safeguarding leadership within the Diocese falls ultimately to the Bishop of Dunkeld, who is responsible for leadership on all aspects of life within the Diocese. Safeguarding leadership takes various forms, with different people or groups taking different roles. The key areas considered by the audit were on aspects of leadership including spiritual/theological, strategic and operational leadership, and how this was defined and understood. How these roles are understood and how they fit together can be determinative in how well led the safeguarding function is.

SPIRITUAL / THEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP FOR SAFEGUARDING

Introduction

2.1.2 McLellan wrote of the need for 'a clear account of the theological principles which underpin safeguarding' (p 215, para 3.24). The Commission emphasised the importance and the urgency of the task in setting out a compelling and coherent theology of safeguarding for the Catholic Church in Scotland. Recommendation 3.110 addressed this specifically: '*The relative absence of theological insight in the 'Awareness and Safety' manual must be replaced with a clear explanation of the task of safeguarding as a Christian privilege with a firm theological foundation*' (paragraph 3.78).

2.1.3 It is for the Bishop, Vicar General, Vicars Episcopal, Chancellor and Deans to help Parish Priests, congregations and others around the Diocese to understand that safeguarding is intrinsic to the Catholic faith and therefore a priority. This aspect of the leadership role is the foundation for the culture of the Church and is critical in terms of making it a safer place for children and vulnerable adults.

Description

2.1.4 The Bishop of Dunkeld is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the Diocese, which includes a responsibility for safeguarding. The Bishop clearly articulated his vision for a theology of safeguarding that is integral to the culture of the Church. The Bishop advised that the Church must be a safe place for all involved, it must also support those who have caused harm, which is a difficult balance to achieve.

2.1.5 The Bishop reflected that he felt there was now a better understanding of safeguarding being central to the Catholic faith and that the Catholic Church has a specific anthropology of humanity that forms the basis of human dignity. For Christians, this makes safeguarding implicit. In Dunkeld, there is a safeguarding statement from the Bishop read out by Parish Priests in each Parish. This is also placed on the parish notice boards. The Bishop preaches on the subject of safeguarding, human nature and moral responsibility, describing its importance.

2.1.6 In Dunkeld, the Bishop does not formally delegate his responsibility for safeguarding to a Vicar General or Vicar Episcopal. The Bishop reflected that placing a Priest in charge of safeguarding was not as effective as him working directly with the DSA. He acknowledged that responsibility rests with the Bishop for ensuring that the integral nature of safeguarding through a theological lens is understood. The Bishop

also acknowledged that effective safeguarding was dependent on the extent to which processes were embedded locally.

2.1.7 Auditors heard that the Diocese works to the headline: *'All are welcome here, no one is judged, all are in need of care and support'*. This was described as linking well with safeguarding. The Church must respond appropriately in terms of its pastoral response to all survivors of abuse, including those abused by the Church and in communities more generally.

2.1.8 Auditors heard that the liturgical calendar outlines that the Church in Scotland holds a Day of Prayer for those suffering from abuse on the first Friday after Ash Wednesday and this had been communicated through all parishes. Some senior clergy felt that this emphasis on the safeguarding statement during Lent could happen more throughout the year.

2.1.9 As Dunkeld is a small Diocese of 29 Priests and eight Monastic Religious, the auditors heard that, contrary to other dioceses, the Bishop invites all Parish Priests to be members of the Priest's Council, providing the opportunity for three three-day residentials a year. The Council is described as a 'mutuality', with the Bishop very much among the Priests who act as an advisory body. Priests who participated in the audit felt they have a voice within the wider Diocese. The DSA also regularly updates the Bishops' Council on safeguarding. The Bishop felt that this had aided a cultural and theological shift towards safeguarding being central within the parishes.

2.1.10 The Diocese of Dunkeld includes a number of clergy from abroad. The Bishop described an awareness of the importance of pastoral care and safeguarding and felt that being part of the Priests' Council was a helpful and important way to ensure that all those working within the Catholic community saw that safeguarding was intrinsic to the mission of the Church.

Analysis

2.1.11 The auditors reflected that the Bishop's understanding of the theological aspect to safeguarding, and his commitment to prioritising safeguarding and becoming involved in the work of the Diocese is good. He clearly articulated the need for safeguarding to be core to the Catholic mission. The Bishop reflected on developments in safeguarding recently in wider society and within the Diocese and parishes. Auditors heard that he is visible within the parishes and communicates well. Of the survey respondents, 95% (n=23) reported that communication between the Diocese and parishes was good.

2.1.12 This articulation and commitment from the Bishop are a crucial part of setting the context and tone for the work of the Diocesan safeguarding team within the Diocese and local parishes. The extent to which the importance and centrality of safeguarding is understood across the entire Diocese is difficult to measure but auditors heard about consistent messages from the Bishop and his team, an ongoing training programme for the clergy and laity, which has been well received, and the implementation of safe recruitment procedures. An understanding of why this is important and a willingness to take it forward were also evident in discussions with all audit participants. Of those who participated in the survey, 96% stated that communication of the importance of safeguarding within the Church was either good or average. *Contributors* to the audit also gave examples of where they had been able to contact the Bishop directly when required. There was an acknowledgement from a range of people including the Bishop that the commitment to the theology of safeguarding across the Diocese was less

developed in some areas and not always equally promoted by all parishes.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How could the Bishop's message that safeguarding is part of the Catholic mission and life be more overtly articulated across the deaneries and parishes?
- How can the Diocese ensure that all parishes understand the centrality of safeguarding to the Catholic mission?
- How might the Diocese better understand the extent of a consistent message across all parishes?

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR SAFEGUARDING

Introduction

2.1.13 Strategic and operational leadership are commonly considered essential aspects of the leadership and governance of organisations. Strategic leadership develops the vision and mission, the strategies, systems and structures for achieving that vision and overall accountability. Operational leadership delivers the vision and mission on a day-to-day basis. Roles and forums for strategic leadership and governance exist in dioceses to cover a range of areas and activities, for example Bishops'/Archbishops' Councils. It is useful therefore to consider how strategic leadership is provided for safeguarding in the context of these forums.

2.1.14 IGLv2 reaffirms the Bishop's role in terms of local safeguarding arrangements and at paragraph 6.2.1 continues:

'The bishop is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding arrangements within his diocese are properly embedded within a culture of care. Above all, in his manner of reaching out and responding to survivors, the bishop must provide a powerful example of humility, Christian love and compassion. In appointing competent, qualified, and experienced individuals to key safeguarding posts, he will ensure that the strategic planning and organisation of safeguarding are secure and well regulated.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 67)

2.1.15 Furthermore, IGLv2 now speaks to "Church leaders showing personal commitment to, and strategic planning of, safeguarding (p 74). It is easier for organisations to be clear of progress and improvements if the objectives and actions to take are set out in a strategic plan. For the dioceses, a work plan would set out how the safeguarding service will be developed and who will lead on the different aspects of achieving the plan. Although not outlined IGLv2, governance of the delivery of this plan

would logically sit within the local governance arrangements of each diocese. Setting out the goals of the service and tracking progress against them enhances accountability and should assist operational leadership by identifying barriers to development that need to be addressed.

Description

2.1.16 The Bishop of Dunkeld has two Vicars General and four Vicars Episcopal but retains the responsibility for safeguarding and has not delegated this responsibility. Much of the strategic safeguarding work in the Diocese sits within the remit of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Team Group (DSAG). The Diocese has a Safeguarding Action Plan (2021), which looks in detail at how the strategic responsibilities under the eight Standards within IGLv2 are to be developed. This work sits with the DSAG, whose members have each taken responsibility for one of the eight Standards in order to develop the future work of the Diocese.

2.1.17 There was a consistent message that the Bishop works hard to demonstrate good leadership across the Diocese, he has an open-door policy and wishes to be easily approachable, especially for matters of safeguarding. The Bishop visits each parish annually and meets with all Parish Priests as part of the Priests' Council.

2.1.18 The Diocese of Dunkeld is unusual in that the diocese is the trustee and the trustees are Directors of the nominee company, who oversee decisions within the Diocese. Members are comprised: the Bishop (chair), both Vicars General, two Canons and one laity member. Two Directors in addition to the Bishop are members of the DSAG, which ensures a safeguarding link and oversight. The DSA, as Assistant Chancellor, also attends Directors' meetings and reports to the nominees on safeguarding. The DSA's reports are discussed, and questions raised. The Directors meet four times a year. Meetings and responses are minuted.

2.1.19 The Bishop is supported by the Council of Priests, which acts as an advisory body for the Bishop and meets three times a year. As mentioned, its membership includes all Parish Priests within the Diocese.

2.1.20 Auditors saw evidence of good and regular communication between the DSA and the Bishop who, in effect, form the safeguarding team with advice from the independent chair of the DSAG.

Analysis

2.1.21 In terms of strategic leadership within the Diocese, there is much work already in progress. The Diocese has a Safeguarding Action Plan which is detailed, but auditors reflected that this now requires linking into the Diocesan strategic vision. At present the plan is amended annually but could be developed into a broader Safeguarding Strategic Plan to include issues such as safeguarding continuity and forward planning of issues which sit outside the eight standards in IGLv2.

2.1.22 The Diocese, through Dunkeld Care Ltd, owns and manages a residential care home, meaning that Directors are regularly called to consider safeguarding issues in relation to the wider work of the Diocese. The Directors now also receive quarterly safeguarding updates from the DSA, which is good practice. The result is that safeguarding is firmly rooted in the discussions of the Directors. The addition of the Bishop being a Director while also retaining the strategic lead for safeguarding means

that strategic oversight for safeguarding is strong.

2.1.23 The Bishop articulated his concerns that the Church monitors itself on matters of safeguarding and it would be preferable if the Church was accountable to an external agency for all safeguarding matters. In the absence of external scrutiny, however, the auditors reflected that while there are good lines of communication between the nominees, the DSAG and those carrying out strategic safeguarding work, lines of accountability between the three different strategic strands could be clarified.

2.1.24 The Priests' Council provides an advantageous forum for discussing safeguarding with all parishes and developing greater consistency in approaches and practice locally. Safeguarding at strategic level is discussed at each Council meeting and the DSA addresses the Council regularly.

2.1.25 The DSAG has a clear remit for strategic oversight and is chaired by an individual independent of the Diocesan safeguarding structures and from a different faith. There is continuity of both knowledge and reporting structure as the same independent chair also chairs the Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT). This means that learning from issues raised at the DRAMT can be absorbed seamlessly into the Safeguarding Action Plan.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might strategic oversight of safeguarding specifically be strengthened by the provision of clear lines of accountability between the trustees, the DSAG and the safeguarding team?
- Is there an appetite for extending the Safeguarding Action Plan to provide a Strategic Safeguarding Plan, drawing in wider strategic issues across the Diocese, and, if so, how will this be done?

OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF SAFEGUARDING

Introduction

2.1.26 Senior clergy leadership and management of the operational work of safeguarding is needed to provide oversight of safeguarding in a diocese, including identifying any barriers to implementation that need tackling. It is also needed for accountability purposes, particularly when the safeguarding service is delivered through collaboration between clerics, staff and laity. Operational leadership and management by the clergy can be seen as providing a strong link to the strategic leadership of senior clergy and ultimately the Bishop. It is distinct from an operational decision-making responsibility.

2.1.27 There are inherent challenges to clergy, as non-specialists in safeguarding, fulfilling the operational leadership and oversight of safeguarding, given it is a specialist function. However, leaving the centralised operations of safeguarding in a diocese without any clergy-led governance and oversight would also weaken the safety of

safeguarding arrangements.

Description

2.1.28 Daily operational leadership for safeguarding in Dunkeld remains formally with the Bishop, but, in practice, is delegated to the DSA, who works closely with the Bishop on a daily basis and with the independent chair of the DSAG. The Bishop is clearly part of the decision-making processes and there is a collegiate approach to safeguarding work.

2.1.29 The DSA advised that the previous Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service had provided advice and support and assisted in quality assuring operational safeguarding casework. The service is being replaced with the newly formed Safeguarding Standards Agency and it is not yet clear how or whether such a role will be taken forward with the new agency.

2.1.30 In between DSAG meetings, the DSA and the Bishop meet or speak about safeguarding on an almost daily basis. This close working arrangement has meant there is no requirement for the smaller operational group seen in other larger dioceses.

2.1.31 The DSA is highly thought of by those who have contact with him. Of those who contributed to the survey, 100% (n=23) stated that the safeguarding support they received from the Diocesan Office was good and there was a high level of confidence in the DSA's ability to provide assistance.

2.1.32 There are clear links between the DRAMT and the DSAG and learning from operational discussions at the DRAMT has effectively informed the Safeguarding Action Plan without a breach of confidentiality. There is, however, no arrangement in place should a disagreement regarding the calling of a DRAMT or the recommendations falling from the DRAMT arise. The Diocese is aware of this issue and has identified it within its action plan. This is further discussed under section 2.4 below.

2.1.33 Issues of operational safeguarding are delineated from complaints such as conduct issues or bullying behaviour, which require addressing but do not necessarily meet the criteria for safeguarding. In these circumstances, concerns began as safeguarding, but were taken forward through human resources (HR) processes via an external HR company.

Analysis

2.1.34 The DSA is clear about the importance of his operational role. He is visible and proactive and takes his operational duties seriously. Auditors witnessed a strong sense of teamwork operating at Diocesan level and this was also reported from parishes.

2.1.35 There were *contributors* who were unaware of the role or identity of the DSA, however. Auditors reflected that the DSA's role might be better publicised, particularly in relation to casework and information sharing in order to further promote confidence.

2.1.36 The delineation of safeguarding issues from matters of conduct within the workplace was particularly helpful and that a clear process was in place to deal with such matters was useful and important. Some *contributors*, however, were unaware of this arrangement and reported a lack of process for issues of bullying or the misuse of power. This is further explored in section 2.9.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Diocese ensure the role and identity of the DSA is better publicised and understood by congregants within the parishes?
- How might the confidentiality arrangements for work undertaken by the DSA be more clearly articulated?

2.2 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR

Introduction

2.2.1 The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor along with the DSAG and DRAMT remain key to the infrastructure as set out in IGlV2, to advise and assist the Bishop to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.

2.2.2 The role is summarised at paragraph 6.2.2 in IGlV2:

‘The role of the diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) is to advise and assist the bishop in meeting his safeguarding responsibilities. These include endeavouring to protect children and vulnerable adults in their contact with Church personnel, in Church activities, and on Church property.’

(Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 68)

2.2.3 IGlV2 continues that the DSA is responsible for:

- *‘co-ordinating efforts to raise awareness of safeguarding within parish communities, including the training of PSCs [Parish Safeguarding Coordinators], the recruiting of diocesan safeguarding trainers and the safeguarding training of diocesan clergy’*
- *advising ‘the bishop on good practice in responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse’*
- *‘collaborating closely, not only within their diocesan teams, but with safeguarding colleagues across the country, as well as with the statutory authorities’*
- *‘promoting national safeguarding standards and demonstrating compliance with them’, as ‘the main link between the diocese and the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency’.*

(Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 68)

2.2.4 Membership of the DSAG must include the DSA (paragraph 6.2.3) and, in relation to the DRAMT (paragraph 6.2.7) in the absence of any allegations for any significant period of time, the DSA should support the DRAMT by providing some scenarios of the types of allegations that might arise. In this way they will be able to practise their skills and develop their understanding of the complex situations that might

arise at any time.

2.2.5 It is recommended that an appropriately qualified and experienced layperson should undertake the DSA role.

Description

RESOURCING AND RELATIVE ROLES

2.2.6 The DSA in Dunkeld has been in this paid and full-time post for three years. He describes the role as both operational in terms of casework and as the day-to-day management of strategic safeguarding in terms of having an overview of safeguarding across the Diocese via the DSAG. The DSA is a member of the DSAG and the DRAMT. He attends the Directors' meeting as the DSA but also, in his role as Assistant Chancellor, ensuring updates from operational work are communicated so that both learning and strategic planning can be developed further.

2.2.7 The DSA deals with all queries in relation to safeguarding and links with Parish Safeguarding Coordinators (PSCs) when safeguarding issues are raised locally. Auditors heard that he is visible to PSCs, who value his support and advice. While well known in the parishes, there were some *contributors* who were unaware of the DSA and his role within the Diocese. Some *contributors* were also unaware of the delegation of safeguarding work to the DSA, which raised a concern for them about the confidentiality of information sharing (see section 2.8).

2.2.8 The DSA meets regularly with the other DSAs across Scotland to discuss national policies, procedures and tools. He finds these groups helpful. Information regarding the new Safeguarding Standards Agency is also discussed. The hope is to standardise the DSA role and ensure parity across all the dioceses of Scotland, although processes may be adapted locally for each individual diocese.

RESOURCES

2.2.9 During the COVID-19 pandemic, the DSA worked mainly from home but in usual times, he is based in the Diocesan Office and is provided with the required office resources for the role. Cover arrangements for the role are through the Chancellor.

2.2.10 The DSA does not have any formal administrative support, although arrangements have been made for informal, part-time support at present.

QUALIFICATIONS

2.2.11 The DSA is a qualified social worker, who has worked predominantly with adult services. He has longstanding experience in safeguarding and multi-agency working.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

2.2.12 There are no known conflicts of interest for the DSA in this role.

LINE MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS

2.2.13 The DSA receives employment-based supervision from the Chancellor and professional and casework supervision from the DSAG chair. The arrangements for casework supervision and the working relationship between the chair and the DSA are further explored in section 2.3.

Analysis

2.2.14 The DSA brings a high level of expertise to the role. His experience as a social worker and past experience of safeguarding ensures a good fit for the role and has ensured an excellent level of both operational and strategic work.

2.2.15 The DSA works closely with the chair of the DSAG, the Chancellor and the Bishop, and auditors saw an open culture and open-door policy for those wanting to contact the Diocese regarding safeguarding. Links with PSCs and Safeguarding Trainers were evident and described by survey participants as strong.

2.2.16 Auditors felt that the role of the DSA in Dunkeld works well. The role being paid and well respected by those in senior management shows a commitment from the Diocese to safeguarding. Administrative support has so far been provided by a volunteer which is helpful but perhaps not sustainable.

2.2.17 It is difficult to keep the role of the DSA from growing beyond what is described within IGLv2 because of the nature of the work. There is a possibility that the role will grow beyond capacity and auditors felt that the role is in need of regular review to ensure sustainability, including the requirement for administrative support.

2.2.18 Auditors felt that two aspects of the professional relationship between the DSA and the DSAG chair needed teasing out. First, a more formal process for disagreements between the DSA and the DSAG chair in terms of calling a DRAMT would be useful. Second, the DSA receiving professional and casework supervision from the independent chair of the DSAG could be a conflict of interest for the chair. The auditors welcomed that professional casework supervision was in place and appreciated that the relationship between the DSA and the DSAG worked well at present. This, however, is based on relationships between the current individuals rather than a systemic approach. The auditors reflected that it might be difficult for a DSA to disagree or challenge an independent chair on issues, while also in receipt of supervision, and it could blur the boundaries of the DSAG chair's independence.

2.2.19 Despite the DSA being well known and supportive to PSCs in the parishes, there were some *contributors* who were unaware of his role and responsibilities. Several were concerned that the names of some individuals, who had shared confidential information with the Bishop, were later shared with the DSA. This raised broader concerns about how the need to share confidential information is communicated to those raising concerns.

2.2.20 The safeguarding team were clear that names and information had not been shared more widely, but this raised a wider issue about how and when consent was sought and managed for sharing information with the DSA when a Bishop, Vicar General or Vicar Episcopal had the responsibility for safeguarding arrangements for the delegation of operational safeguarding duties such as casework have yet to filter down to all those within parishes and to those who no longer attend Church. Clearer information about giving and managing consent and regarding the role and duties of the DSA is needed.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How can the Diocese ensure the sustainability of the role of the DSA and monitor the growth of the role?
- How might the Diocese better provide professional supervision for the DSA role with formal links to line management?
- How can the Diocese promote the role of the DSA within the parishes, ensuring congregants and those currently outside of the Church are clear on the role's responsibility for operational safeguarding, including casework?

2.3 DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING GROUP/TEAM (DSAG/DSAT)

Introduction

2.3.1 The DSAG, along with the DRAMT and the DSA, is a core part of the safeguarding infrastructure, whose function it is to support the Bishop in his responsibilities for safeguarding.

2.3.2 In IGIv2, the role and membership of the DSAG is set out in paragraph 6.2.3:

'The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG) should consist of people with relevant experience and skills, appointed by the bishop to support the DSA and to ensure diocesan-wide adherence to the safeguarding standards to which the bishop is co-signatory. Their responsibilities should also include analysis of the annual safeguarding audits, the formulation of the diocesan safeguarding action plan and the planning of relevant safeguarding training for clergy, religious, PSCs and volunteers. Membership of DSAG must include the DSA. Its work may be enhanced by the involvement of representatives of relevant diocesan groups – e.g., Pilgrimage leaders, SPRED [Special Religious Development], Youth Office, and religious congregations – for whom safeguarding is particularly significant.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 68)

2.3.3 Paragraphs 8.3.1 to 8.3.3 of IGIv2 set out the DSAG monitoring role and consider the implications of the results of the parish audit for training, support and further improvements. This analysis and reflection, together with recommendations emerging from any independent reviews of safeguarding practice, should enable the DSAG to prepare a Safeguarding Action Plan that will address the areas of improvement required within the diocese over the subsequent year. The actions planned should be measurable and achievable, and be sharply focused on the intended outcomes of each action.

Description

2.3.4 In line with IGIv2, the Diocese of Dunkeld has a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG). The DSAG is independently chaired by a volunteer with a social work background, who is not from the Catholic faith and who brings an external view with professional challenge. The group is attended by the DSA with representation from a wide remit of attendees drawn from various professional backgrounds including education, social work and Canon Law.

2.3.5 The DSAG has a written outline of roles and responsibilities for those who attend, divided into the Standards from IGIv2, from which it draws its terms of reference.

2.3.6 Auditors were provided with minutes from the DSAG, which demonstrated a good range of subjects discussed, and the Diocese has in place an overarching Safeguarding Action Plan, which is updated annually. This year it covers aspects such as risk assessments for group activities, training for Parish Priests and information technology (IT) and social media development. The DSAG has sought leadership from within its representation for championing each of the eight Standards within IGIv2 to progress the

development plan.

2.3.7 In Dunkeld, the chair of the DSAG also provides the professional and casework supervision for the DSA. This takes the form of monthly meetings to discuss casework and workload. The DSA shares concerns only when advice is required, and cases are anonymised for both the person raising the concern and the person the allegation is related to.

2.3.8 The DSAG has been responsive to learning, and auditors heard that following a challenge that the Diocesan safeguarding team were all male, the DSAG chair had sought to recruit female members with relevant professional backgrounds.

2.3.9 Auditors met with the chair and two members of the DSAG who are also members of the DRAMT (see section 2.4) and felt that the Diocese was dealing well with safeguarding and starting to plan for the future.

2.3.10 Support for survivors of abuse forms part of the Safeguarding Action Plan overseen by the DSAG. The introduction of the new Safeguarding Standards Agency with a Survivors' Panel had raised some questions from DSAG members regarding independence, but was broadly welcomed. Auditors heard, from members of the DSAG, that the Diocese of Dunkeld would welcome a consistency across Scotland in managing allegations of abuse, perhaps with dioceses working together to ensure this.

Analysis

2.3.11 The current chair has been a member of the DSAG for six years and became the independent chair a year ago. The chair has broadened both the remit and the membership of the DSAG and reorganised the group to draw on those with relevant experience.

2.3.12 It could be seen from the documents reviewed as part of the audit, that the operation and focus of the DSAG had improved more recently. The auditors judged that the DSAG is now working well. Meetings are regular and well attended and the group provides effective oversight of a wide remit of safeguarding issues within the Diocese. The independent chair brings with him a background of experience in social work and encourages a culture of challenge and action.

2.3.13 The DSAG membership had been extended to address concerns of a gender imbalance and a need to broaden its skills and knowledge, but it does not yet include representatives from the more diverse cultures found across Dunkeld.

2.3.14 The remit of the DSAG covers all aspects within IGIv2. This includes the review of training for volunteers, best-practice protocols for managing disclosures and oversight of Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVGs). In addition, the DSAG has overseen the writing of new policies and clear practice guidance for parishes on subjects where the DSAG has seen the most concerns – for example, risk assessments for activities.

2.3.15 The Bishop is a member of the DSAG and part of decision-making on safeguarding matters and ensuring compliance on safeguarding within the Diocese. The work of the DSAG has a clearly strategic remit, which is based on identified need within the Diocese of Dunkeld and responding to IGIv2, and includes scrutiny and challenge. Links with the parishes are via the DSA who acts as a conduit between the DSAG and PSCs, providing the operational leadership required. Minutes reflect the strategic nature

of the DSAG.

2.3.16 Support for survivors is an area identified for further strategic development. There is little outreach for those requiring support, or who might consider disclosing if they felt safe to do so. Instead, the Diocese relies on a survivor coming forward. The auditors welcomed the actions already taken from learning – for example, inclusion of professional female members of the DSAG, and reflected that the new national Survivors Panel might be helpful in exploring further any local development work.

2.3.17 The Diocesan Safeguarding Action Plan is strategic and comprehensive, providing a good basis from which the DSAG is able to prioritise, however, it only spans one year. Auditors reflected that having a two or five-year strategic plan might enable broader strategic thinking and planning by the DSAG, particularly as some roles are changing in the next 12–24 months.

2.3.18 Finally, as discussed earlier, the auditors felt that the current arrangement for the independent chair of the DSAG to supervise the DSA might bring with it a blurring of professional boundaries. In addition, it will serve over time, to reduce the independent nature of the role of DSAG chair which auditors reflected has been a strength.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Safeguarding Action Plan be further developed into a broader Strategic Diocesan Safeguarding Plan spanning a longer length of time?
- Strategically, what needs to be in place to better support survivors of abuse?
- Where should the boundaries lie between strategic oversight and operational effectiveness for the independent chair of the DSAG?
- How might the DSAG become more diverse in nature?

2.4 DIOCESAN RISK ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT TEAM (DRAMT)

Introduction

2.4.1 IGIv2 sets out that the Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT), along with the DSAG and the DSA, is a core part of the safeguarding infrastructure, whose function it is to support the Bishop in his responsibilities for safeguarding.

2.4.2 In IGIv2 paragraph 6.2.4, it states that:

‘Members of the diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT) are appointed by the bishop to assist him, within the strict limits of the law, in the management of individual cases where allegations have been made against a diocesan cleric, employee or

volunteer. This team's advice and recommendations should assist the bishop to come to decisions about how to proceed, in accordance with both civil and canon law, in response to reported allegations and concerns. The DRAMT should comprise a small number of individuals with relevant expertise, including those with experience of working in the legal profession, in canon law, in healthcare, social work and the Police. Its composition should be mixed, in numbers of ordained and lay members, and in their gender.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 68)

2.4.3 The detail of the DRAMT outlined in IGlV2 does not address the previously identified potential conflicts of interest. These hinge on the advisory nature of the DRAMT. The DRAMT gives advice and recommendations, but decision-making authority remains with the Bishop/Archbishop. This means he is making decisions about the clergy, employees or volunteers for whom he also has pastoral responsibilities. The relationship between a volunteer and Bishop may be more distant, but Bishops appoint and ordain Priests, make decisions about many aspects of their lives and have the responsibility for their pastoral care, including when they have safeguarding allegations made against them (see Standard 5 of IGlV2). This makes it essential that there are clear processes for identifying and dealing with disagreements where they emerge between the DRAMT and Bishop/Archbishop so they can be resolved swiftly and transparently.

Description

2.4.4 The Diocese of Dunkeld has a small DRAMT consisting of the same independent chair as the DSAG, the DSA and four members of the DSAG. Meetings are called when required by the independent chair of the DSAG, who also chairs the DRAMT. Those with relevant expertise from the DSAG are called upon to widen attendance at the DRAMT as required, depending on the presenting issues.

2.4.5 DRAMT members described a steep learning curve to ensure a robust process and consistency of working. Risk is referred to the DRAMT where things are unclear and where risk requires formalising. Auditors heard that any allegations against a Priest would be referred to the DRAMT.

2.4.6 The DRAMT does not have a formal terms of reference other than those cited in IGlV2. Until recently, the Bishop was a member of the DRAMT, but the independent chair and DSAG felt that this was a conflict of interest and the Bishop agreed he should not be part of decision-making regarding those for whom he retains a pastoral responsibility. The DRAMT makes recommendations directly to the Bishop via the DSA and independent chair.

2.4.7 The DRAMT has yet to meet in its current form because there have been no cases to consider. Auditors heard that this made it difficult to make plans regarding risk. Members of the DRAMT, however, are part of the management of safeguarding agreements, including how these are fed back to the parish so that they are managed effectively.

2.4.8 There are currently no arrangements in place should the DSA or a member of the DRAMT disagree with a decision not to call a DRAMT. Meetings can only be called by the independent chair. There are also no arrangements in place should the Bishop

disagree with recommendations made to him by the DRAMT.

Analysis

2.4.9 Membership and arrangements for the DRAMT are in place as are reviews of those on safeguarding agreements such as Welfare Monitoring Plans¹ and Safe Worship Plans. The remit of the DRAMT is clear to its members and has a secure role in Diocesan decision-making. The ability to co-opt DSAG members onto the DRAMT when a different level of expertise is required is a strength. However, because the DRAMT is small, auditors judged that it would be useful to engage a small group of pre-identified professionals from backgrounds not represented on the DSAG, from which to draw at short notice when required.

2.4.10 The DRAMT has not met recently or under its current chairing arrangements. All reflected that while the process is clear, the practical arrangements are less so. Hypothetical or anonymised cases to run through the DRAMT might be useful and would be in line with IGIv2.

2.4.11 Thresholds for calling a DRAMT require a level of clarity, which is currently lacking, and this has been identified as part of the action plan in order to ensure the consistency DRAMT members are striving for. Terms of reference for the DRAMT could be amended to include a clear referral process and thresholds or criteria for calling a DRAMT meeting in relation to individual cases.

2.4.12 Welfare Monitoring Plans for those stepping away from ministry for various reasons are managed solely by the Bishop and currently there is no system for oversight by the DRAMT or for advice from those on the DRAMT where a Welfare Monitoring Plan might not be proceeding as planned. As with cases, the use of anonymised or hypothetical welfare monitoring plans would provide an opportunity for the DRAMT to explore and discuss issues, and to plan for the management of Welfare Monitoring Plans.

2.4.13 The current DSA and the independent chair of the DRAMT have a good working relationship and backgrounds that prepare them well for challenge. The DRAMT process is dependent upon such good relationships, but also needs clarity for the management of disagreement and how to escalate concerns if necessary. Similarly, there is no provision within processes should the Bishop disagree with or fail to accept recommendations from the DRAMT. The Bishop advised that, in practice, he would never disregard the recommendations of the DRAMT, but auditors judged that this was also dependent on developed relationships rather than process.

¹ Welfare Monitoring Plans were previously known as Covenants of Care

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- Should consideration be given to the DRAMT having an oversight role of Welfare Monitoring Plans currently managed by the Bishop?
- Should the DRAMT have a referral process and terms of reference, tailored to the Diocese but based on IGlV2?
- How might the Diocese formally broaden the pool of expertise from which it can draw DRAMT membership?
- How might the Diocese test the capacity and effectiveness of the DRAMT using adapted cases?
- How can the Diocese mitigate against any disagreement between the DRAMT members, the DSA and the independent chair and the DRAMT and the Bishop as a contingency, including plans for escalation if required?

2.5 LINKS WITH THE SCOTTISH CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

Introduction

2.5.1 In early 2021, the National Coordinator for the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service (SCSS) left their post and the Bishops' Conference of Scotland took the opportunity to review the role of the national safeguarding service in line with the revisions to IGlV2

2.5.2 The recent publication of IGlV2 has stated that: *'At the time of publication, the Bishops' Conference of Scotland have decided to replace SCSS with the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA)'* (Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 72). The role of this new agency will be:

- *'to develop and promote the "culture of care" that should be the hallmark of the Church's safeguarding efforts*
 - *to be informed by those who have been harmed by abuse*
 - *to provide strategic leadership and direction in safeguarding to all components of the Church in Scotland*
 - *to promote and regulate consistent compliance with safeguarding standards through the provision of training, the development of common resources and other forms of support*
 - *to develop the culture of an annual improvement cycle involving audits, analysis, planning, training and sharing of good practice*
 - *to commission or undertake independent scrutiny of safeguarding practice in all jurisdictions*
 - *to report on the outcomes of audits and reviews in transparent ways*
 - *to co-ordinate a safeguarding complaints system that is transparent.'*
- (Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 72)

Description

2.5.3 The DSA and chair of the DSAG reported good links with the National Safeguarding Coordinator who had previously been part of the SCSS. Auditors saw one previous DRAMT case, which the National Safeguarding Coordinator reviewed to provide a better service.

2.5.4 One issue to emerge from discussions with the *contributors* was concerns about the independence of the newly formed Safeguarding Standards Agency. *Contributors* recognised that there was an independent chair and that of the eight Directors, four would be appointed by the chair, however, the other four Directors would be identified through the Diocese and the Archdiocese.

Analysis

2.5.5 The role of the new agency is set out in IGlv2. Advertisements for board members have been published and the Bishop was clear on progress and accountability for the new agency. But it is not yet in place and clarity is needed on the focus and content of training resources and the extent to which the agency will be independent of the Church in terms of the complaints process.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Diocese take forward ideas for a different model and structure with the SCSSA and the Bishops' Conference of Scotland?

2.6 GUIDANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

2.6.1 A working group of DSAs developed a set of templates for essential policies and procedures that should be in place within each diocese and archdiocese for each of the Standards within IGlv2.

Description

2.6.2 Dunkeld Diocese has several comprehensive policies in place, which are in line with those set out within IGlv2. The DSA and the DSAG have favoured the production of policies alongside practical guidance for PSCs – for example, a comprehensive risk assessment policy that also includes why this is necessary, what ensures a good risk assessment and a practical template that includes instructions. A similar method for safe recruitment has been adopted.

2.6.3 The Diocese of Dunkeld has a section on its website dedicated to safeguarding, including an online link to IGlv2 and advice for those wishing to raise concerns or seek support. The safeguarding webpage is comprehensive and includes links to the Code of Conduct for Clergy and Religious, the Raphael Counselling Service, the reporting form for concerns and allegations, survivor support contacts and a comprehensive list of additional support contacts, helpfully split across local authority areas covered by the

Diocese.

2.6.4 Auditors saw plans as part of the Safeguarding Action Plan to develop the IT and social media policies, which are now completed, and the best-practice protocols for dealing with disclosures as well as the protocol for mandatory reporting.

2.6.5 All policies fall under the remit of the DSAG, as do the exemplars, which the eight DSAs in Scotland wrote in response to IGIv2.

Analysis

2.6.6 The Diocese of Dunkeld has in place a suite of policies, procedures and guidance that are well written and comprehensive. Those included within IGIv2 that have not yet been reviewed form part of the Safeguarding Action Plan under the remit of the DSAG.

2.6.7 Auditors judged policies and procedures to be good. However, some policies and procedures, such as the ones covering the calling of meetings and decision-making of the DRAMT, would be improved with the inclusion of protocol to be followed should disagreement occur, including where and how to escalate such concerns.

2.6.8 Auditors reflected that although information relating to the change of DSAG membership had been communicated widely there is no information or guidance on how to contact would be made with those should a survivor prefer to speak to a female.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How does the DSAG ensure that the impact on safeguarding of the new policies and procedures which include comprehensive guidance is known?
- Which of the current policies, procedures and guidance require the addition of information relating to the broadening of membership of the DSAG and how to contact female members if preferred?

2.7 COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING

Introduction

2.7.1 A complaints process is required so that anyone who has contact with a diocese about safeguarding knows how to complain should they feel that they need to. A strong policy is clear about who complaints should be made to, and how they can be escalated if necessary. Positive features include an independent element, and clarity that raising a safeguarding concern, and making a complaint about a safeguarding service, are two distinct things. The outcome of complaints enables an organisation to learn from those who have had to use their service, enabling them to make any necessary changes or

improvements.

2.7.2 Whistleblowing and complaints procedures can be part of a general complaints procedure, but it is important that the process for making a complaint about a safeguarding response or service is clear and is different from sharing safeguarding concerns or allegations.

2.7.3 While ‘complaints’ or ‘whistleblowing’ did not feature within *In God’s Image*, IGlV2 now sets out at 8.6.4:

‘In collaboration with dioceses and religious institutes, the SCSSA will co-ordinate a national policy on a tiered process of responding to a complaint about how a safeguarding allegation has been handled in any jurisdiction. Anyone wishing to make such a complaint will be able to do so, either to the original diocese/religious institute which handled the allegation or directly to SCSSA. The process will include, as a final stage, a case review managed by an independent party.’

(Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 89)

Description

2.7.4 The Diocese of Dunkeld has a safeguarding complaints policy in place, which is dated 2021 but is not published on the Diocesan website. The policy is comprehensive and outlines mandatory reporting procedures. It does not cover the Religious, who auditors heard have their own complaints policy, neither does it cover complaints that pre-date the policy.

2.7.5 Dunkeld has a whistleblowing policy in place, but a search on the Diocese of Dunkeld’s website for complaints or whistleblowing does not elicit any results.

Analysis

2.7.6 Auditors judged the complaints policy to be good, but it is not searchable on the Diocesan website. They questioned where complaints pre-dating the 2021 policy should be directed.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- What are the barriers to disseminating the complaints and whistleblowing policies of the Diocese, ensuring they are also publicised online?
- How can the Diocese ensure that complaints pre-dating the current policy are heard and managed?

2.8 CASEWORK

Introduction

2.8.1 In order to manage concerns well and respond to allegations, there must be a system in place that clearly defines escalation for seeking advice regarding concerns and reports of abuse. There should be effective and clear recordings of issues and incidents, which are kept securely and are compliant with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. Integral to managing concerns well is the requirement to work jointly with statutory agencies and to debrief and reflect on any areas of weakness in order to improve practice.

2.8.2 The auditors looked at a range of casework material that the Diocese identified as related to safeguarding. These included general enquiries dealt with by the DSA.

2.8.3 The auditors focused on recording systems, the quality of response to allegations, information sharing, risk assessments and safeguarding agreements. For this section description and analysis are presented together for each sub-section.

RECORDING SYSTEMS

Description

2.8.4 Case files are mostly electronic but there are some that are also in paper form. All are held by the DSA, and paper files are kept locked in the DSA's office. New cases are provided with a case number, have a chronology and are recorded on a Microsoft Access database for ease of tracking.

2.8.5 Dunkeld will be using the new Catholic Church of Scotland case file system when this is launched.

2.8.6 Dunkeld had few cases within the timescale of the audit. However, the auditors received a small number of case files showing a range of safeguarding allegations and concerns managed by the Diocese. Case files showed supportive and sensitive handling, with pastoral support. All those making allegations or raising concerns are provided with an offer of support and an opportunity to talk through what has happened with the Bishop. Auditors saw evidence of the Bishop using various forms of contact with concerned parishioners, including home visits. Responses were swift.

Analysis

2.8.7 Safeguarding case files were very well presented and well organised, with a comprehensive chronology. Files contained both contemporaneous notes and written notes of the case, communications and decision-making, which were easy to follow. There was good communication between the DSA and the Bishop.

2.8.8 Auditors saw evidence of a file including cases that were in their infancy or had not progressed. These were cases about which the DSA was keeping a 'watching brief'. However, some of these included significant work by the DSA and had an outcome. From an administrative point of view, it would be useful to consider when a case moves from being a potential piece of safeguarding work to one which is, in its own right, a

casefile, reflecting the amount of work undertaken by the safeguarding team

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Diocese better reach out to those requiring support?
- How can the amount of work being carried out by the safeguarding team be reflected administratively in the filing system?

QUALITY OF RESPONSE TO CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS AND INFORMATION SHARING

Description

2.8.9 Auditors saw evidence of how allegations are managed within the Diocese. The Bishop is confident in the ability of most Parish Priests to manage such concerns, but also open to the fact that not all have the ability to do so well.

2.8.10 The Church's mandatory reporting policy means that disclosures of harm or abuse, past or present, are reported to Police Scotland. Auditors saw careful consideration of any current risk of harm, for example where an individual had made a disclosure that was not 'formal', where there was no current risk and where the individual preferred not to contact the Police.

2.8.11 Allegations are managed by the Diocese through the DRAMT process, although in its current form, this group has not yet met to discuss a concern. The DSA, who sits on the DRAMT, feeds back to the parish regarding the management of allegations. Recently the Diocese revised the allegation form and best-practice protocols for dealing with disclosures as identified in its Safeguarding Action Plan.

2.8.12 Two issues were raised by *Contributors* in relation to the Church's response and sharing of information. The first was the Church's wider response to parishioners with a family member who has been accused or convicted of abuse. Family members are often shattered and also traumatised. It is during these times they need a compassionate response from the Church and their Parish Priest. The auditors heard that the support at parish level is not always as it should be, with those most in need left unsupported or even unable to attend Church. In one case, the Bishop was aware that the Parish Priest found this aspect of his role very difficult.

2.8.13 The second was how information shared in confidence with the Bishop was shared. Auditors heard that not all within parishes were aware of the DSA or the Bishop's arrangement to delegate safeguarding work to him. This caused concern for some *contributors* about the confidentiality of their information (this is explored further in section 2.9).

Analysis

2.8.14 The support from the Bishop and the DSA to those making allegations is evident, although as previously mentioned the safeguarding team could be more proactive and overt in reaching out. The support and direction for Parish Priests who might struggle to

support individuals are less so.

2.8.15 There are plans in place to make good use of those with relevant expertise from the DSAG who are seconded onto the DRAMT for clarity of thinking, although this has not yet happened for the DRAMT in its current form. The DRAMT has and will continue to make decisions and recommendations regarding risk assessment, in line within *In God's Image*.

2.8.16 In other dioceses, some participants and *contributors* have raised concerns about how the process of reporting to Police Scotland is managed with survivors in relation to non-recent abuse where there is no immediate risk to children or vulnerable adults. Adult survivors often need time to reflect on the issues they have raised and to speak with family and friends. Historically in Dunkeld, the Diocese had made a judgement not to report where the disclosure was not formal, where there was no current risk and the individual did not wish to proceed. Following the introduction of the mandatory reporting policy, the Diocese took the decision to report any previously unreported cases to the Police through the Public Protection Unit (PPU), with the agreement that they may refer cases where only the respondent is named. Auditors judged this to be good practice although reflected that it might prompt further discussion through the Bishops' Conference of Scotland around mandatory reporting.

2.8.17 Auditors reflected that there are pockets where the desire to protect the Church over the individual remains pervasive and while the Diocese has been clear that this is not the way forward, this might be an area where the Diocese could offer a clearer message in individual cases. The safeguarding team could be proactive in reaching out to Parish Priests, who find this aspect of their role difficult, otherwise parishioners will continue to feel isolated and pushed away by the Church.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- What is required on an individual case basis to support Parish Priests in supporting others?
- How can the individual knowledge of Parish Priests be linked to the management of allegations in a way that assists those who are vulnerable?
- Who would need to be part of discussions about how the Diocese can best respect the wishes of adults who come forward to disclose abuse, including those who do not give consent to share, in the context of the Church's mandatory reporting?

RISK ASSESSMENTS AND SAFEGUARDING AGREEMENTS

Introduction

2.8.18 *In God's Image* sets out that the DRAMT, along with the DSAG and the DSA, is a core part of the safeguarding infrastructure, whose function it is to support the Bishop in his responsibilities for safeguarding.

2.8.19 In paragraph 6.2.4, IGlv2 states that:

'Members of the Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT) are appointed by the bishop to assist him, within the strict limits of the law, in the management of individual cases where allegations have been made against a diocesan cleric, employee or volunteer. This team's advice and recommendations should assist the bishop to come to decisions about how to proceed, in accordance with both civil and canon law, in response to reported allegations and concerns. The DRAMT should comprise a small number of individuals with relevant expertise, including those with experience of working in the legal profession, in canon law, in healthcare, social work and the Police. Its composition should be mixed, in numbers of ordained and lay members, and in their gender.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 68)

2.8.20 The detail of the DRAMT outlined in the document does not address the previously identified potential conflicts of interest. These hinge on the advisory nature of the DRAMT. The DRAMT gives advice and recommendations, but decision-making authority remains with the Bishop/Archbishop. This means he is making decisions about the clergy, employees or volunteers for whom he also has pastoral responsibilities. The relationship between a volunteer and Bishop may be more distant, but Bishops appoint and ordain Priests, make decisions about many aspects of their lives and have the responsibility for their pastoral care, including when they have safeguarding allegations made against them (see Standard 5). This makes it essential that there are clear processes for identifying and dealing with disagreements where they emerge between the DRAMT and Bishop/Archbishop so they can be resolved swiftly and transparently.

Description

2.8.21 Processes for the assessment of risk have been developed via the DRAMT and consistent formats for assessing and identifying risk and recording recommendations are in place but have yet to be practised for the DRAMT in its current form.

2.8.22 Auditors saw evidence of the management and monitoring of Safe Worship Plans and heard evidence of DRAMT members being appropriately involved, with clear safe plans in place. There are no current safeguarding agreements for those within the Diocese about whom there were concerns.

2.8.23 IGlv2 changes the role of the support Priest to a support person. While Dunkeld does not have in place a pool of support persons, there are now two trained support persons within the Diocese, with the skills and understanding needed to work with perpetrators and risk. The DSA felt that his experience in working with adults at risk would help the Diocese work through how best to provide support. The DSA is also a member of the DSA network from all eight dioceses across Scotland and has been part

of the support work developed regarding working with perpetrators.

Analysis

2.8.24 DRAMT members are appropriately called upon to monitor Safe Worship Plans and plans are in place under the new DRAMT for meetings to be called as required to assess and manage any ongoing risk. Where the parish have concerns, these will be referred back to the DRAMT for further risk assessment.

2.8.25 Members of the DRAMT have a broad knowledge of risk assessment and working with risk, but what is needed is a greater knowledge of risk in relation to the implications of psychological assessments and the management of offenders in order to provide confidence to challenge the conclusion of risk assessments when required. As mentioned in section 2.4, the DRAMT intends to co-opt individuals from the DSAG or externally when this is required and the need for known and agreed individuals from which to draw should be a priority and form part of the terms of reference for the DRAMT. Auditors felt that it would be useful for the DRAMT to discuss the type of training or advice all members might require when dealing with offenders, who can be manipulative.

2.8.26 The Diocese has two trained support persons in place to support those who have had allegations made against them at present. The Diocese should continue to upskill and add to this pool of people so that a small group of trained supporters especially able to focus on the behaviour of perpetrators is in place and able to support.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How can the Diocese increase its confidence in the management of those who pose a risk of harm?
- What is needed to ensure high-quality support, including challenge when required, for those who have an allegation made against them?

2.9 SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

Introduction

2.9.1 Standard 4 of IGIv2 relates to providing care and support for survivors:

'We provide a compassionate response to survivors of abuse when they disclose their experiences and we offer them support, advice, care and compassion.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 43)

2.9.2 An important part of the audit was to seek the views of survivors, as well as those working in the Diocese.

Description

2.9.3 Currently, the DSA in Dunkeld is not in contact with any survivors across the Diocese, although some are known to him. Any survivor who does come forward and

make themselves known, either through a parish setting through the Parish Priest or the Parish Safeguarding Coordinators (PSCs), or directly to the Diocesan Office, are offered a conversation with the Bishop.

2.9.4 Support for survivors of abuse takes the form of counselling, offered via the Raphael Counselling Service. At times, the Bishop has offered alternative counselling where this has better suited need. Auditors heard that the Bishop has approached the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to request a re-evaluation of the service offered, ensuring that there is the option for face-to-face counselling.

2.9.5 At a parish level, allegations concerning clergy and those in Church office have been low in number, but the DSA and the Bishop were clear that they are not complacent and work has been undertaken to develop the approach of the Diocese in working with survivors. Support is mainly offered through 10 sessions of counselling through the Raphael Counselling Service, although auditors heard from the Bishop that he would prefer to be able to offer a wider range of counselling. There was an understanding from the Bishop of the trauma experienced by individuals no matter when the abuse or sexual assault took place.

2.9.6 Auditors heard from some *contributors* that often they had moved away from where abuse had happened. On approaching the Diocese, they found they were referred back to the diocese where the abuse happened. *Contributors* described the initial step of seeking support as being difficult and to be immediately referred elsewhere caused more trauma. In addition, the meetings or counselling offered were often through the original diocese to which the individual had been referred and were often some distance from their home. *Contributors* overwhelmingly wanted a response that was survivor focused and enabled them to be part of the decision-making regarding their own healing and the provision of support.

2.9.7 There was a conflict in terms of the role of the DSA being located within the Church and some *contributors* advised that they needed an independent route to support. The Bishop of Dunkeld agreed with this view and expressed his concern that the Diocese is asked to balance support for those posing a risk and support for those who have suffered. The Bishop described this as a weakness within the Church's current safeguarding arrangements and cited it as the reason for him feeling that safeguarding would be better placed externally to the Church.

2.9.8 As heard elsewhere, the development of the approach to survivors needs to be taken forward operationally and strategically by individual dioceses and nationally through the Bishop's Conference of Scotland. Some of these issues are broader than Dunkeld alone.

2.9.9 For example, many *contributors* and participants expressed the need for an apology when they come forward and felt that the Church was discouraged from doing this in case this in some way admitted liability for their abuse. They felt that the culture and attitude of the Church remain encouraging of a power imbalance, which continues to allow abuse to happen. Several described a real need to speak to other survivors about their experiences and described having felt isolated for a long time.

2.9.10 All *contributors* spoke of the need for a public apology from the Catholic Church in Scotland for the hurt and damage caused over several decades. While this has been done by Bishop Tartaglia, it was not heard by all *contributors*. *Contributors* talked about the 'non-apology' – 'sorry to hear that this has happened to you' – becoming prevalent,

which appeared to distance the Catholic Church from the event.

2.9.11 *Contributors* stated that the Catholic Church needs to move from a defensive stance to a more proactive and self-challenging position, similar to that of other large organisations that have had to respond to similar issues and allegations. Auditors heard that where an allegation is made that might not amount to safeguarding but where real harm has been caused, akin to bullying or the abuse of power by a member of the clergy or Church officer, the process to follow is unclear. They felt that this often went unheeded and those responsible remained unchallenged. As mentioned earlier, however, the Diocese does have an agreed route to HR advice for such instances.

2.9.12 Several *contributors* were aware of the annual Day of Prayer for survivors, which is held on the first Friday following Ash Wednesday and was being publicised at the time of this audit. Auditors heard that while this was appreciated, its timing was also questioned. There are parishes where Mass is not usually held on a Friday and *contributors* questioned why such a Mass should not be held on a Sunday. In particular, auditors heard concerns about the timing of the Day of Prayer for survivors being held during Lent, a time of penitence, suggesting that they had something for which to be penitent.

2.9.13 Some, but not all, *contributors* described compassion being at the heart of the Diocese' response and in particular had received a compassionate initial response from the Bishop, finding him easy to contact and ready to listen. However, all felt that the Bishop's response needed to be supported by letters read out in Mass and perhaps public discussion. Auditors heard that many had not been aware of the audit and survey through their parish and they felt this reflected the reluctance of some Priests to become involved in safeguarding.

2.9.14 Many *contributors* raised the damage that abuse had caused to their religious belief and ability to attend Mass or receive Holy Communion. Some had moved away from their faith completely and others had struggled with attending Mass, particularly alone. All spoke of challenges of finding the right support in the form of counselling and felt that, in the main, the Church and therefore the Diocese had only one offer, which did not meet their needs. Several participants agreed with this and felt that working with survivors using a person-centred approach to support would be more effective, including, where requested, using services with no connection to the Church.

2.9.15 The Bishop felt that this was within his gift and auditors did see evidence of considered offers of support. However, these were often through providers known to the Diocese rather than sought out through a collaborative approach with the individual requiring support, many of whom had a clear idea of what would assist them.

2.9.16 Some *contributors* talked of a variable response from local Parish Priests, some of whom had caused what was described as "*emotional and psychological abuse, which was all consuming*" and added to the trauma already experienced. *Contributors* also felt that to both the Catholic Church and the Diocese, the term 'abuse' meant sexual abuse. Some *contributors* described the emotional and psychological abuse they had experienced as being greater and yet the Church did not seem to recognise this to the same extent as sexual abuse.

2.9.17 Some *contributors* were unaware of the role of the DSA and felt that they had spoken to the Bishop in good faith, not realising that their information would then be shared with the DSA. This had caused concerns and made them question how their

data was being held and whether it had been shared elsewhere.

Analysis

2.9.18 The Diocese continues to work with survivors who come forward regardless of the timeframe. Offers of support and the take-up of the Raphael Counselling Service were evident in case files.

2.9.19 Auditors felt that survivors who do come forward for support are offered a timely and compassionate response, but that this is mainly within the current agreed Church offer. *Contributors* felt that, for them, this had not been what they needed, yet some had felt compelled to accept it because to refuse would seem ungrateful, and others described what they felt as a pressure to accept it. As found in several other dioceses, a more focused approach is lacking where survivors feel able to discuss the support they need and how best to provide this.

2.9.20 *Contributors* described being offered a conversation with the Bishop, which they appreciated, but felt that a written offer to speak to the Bishop is not the same as the Bishop or the DSA contacting the individual. Auditors reflected that much casework relies on people coming forward rather than the Diocese reaching out to them.

2.9.21 The responses of Parish Priests to those already suffering were not consistent across the Diocese. Many *contributors* felt unable to speak to their Parish Priest or unable to challenge their reaction. In particular, *contributors* felt that challenge was discouraged at the parish level and that Parish Priests surrounded themselves with those who made the environment comfortable for the Priest, or who shared his views. For *contributors*, this added to their trauma and increased their feelings of isolation.

2.9.22 While there are few current cases in the Diocese of Dunkeld, auditors reflected that survivors of non-recent abuse are in need of support. The Diocese responds to those who come forward, but a more proactive mechanism to reach out to those still suffering and to any survivors of abuse who have not yet come forward is now required. In order for this to be successful, a consistent message is required at the parish level.

2.9.23 The McLellan Commission's (2015) report mentions all types of abuse, but mainly details sexual abuse. This is reflected in the *contributors'* concerns regarding support for emotional abuse either caused due to poor handling of their original abuse, or when emotional or psychological abuse by those within the Church was the main concern. *Contributors* felt that a more compassionate response was required for those suffering emotional abuse, which they described as often being overridden by a forgiveness of those who do not manage people well.

2.9.24 *Contributors* felt the new Safeguarding Standards Agency's remit for a Survivors' Panel could be mirrored at Diocesan level and would provide real learning for the Diocese. This is broader than the Diocese of Dunkeld but with the Safeguarding

Standards Agency in its infancy, it might be timely to discuss it.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How can the Diocese work with the Bishops' Conference of Scotland and the new Safeguarding Standards Agency to ensure the accountability of individual dioceses to work with Parish Priests, including the routes for managing bullying behaviour or abuse of the position of trust by clergy and Church staff?
- How might the Diocese, perhaps through theological leadership and dissemination of this through the deaneries and parishes, more proactively reach out to survivors who have not yet come forward, as well as those who continue to suffer?
- How can the Diocese include survivors who do not wish to have contact with the Church?
- What are the barriers to the Diocese supporting the needs of survivors where they now live?
- How might the Diocese support the need for survivors to speak to and support each other?

2.10 SAFE RECRUITMENT OF CLERGY, LAY OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

2.10.1 The mandatory safe recruitment process in the Catholic Church in Scotland is central to ensuring that everyone, including volunteers, is safe to work with children and vulnerable adults. IGlv2 specifies the DSAG as having an operational function around the organisation of PVG applications and the monitoring of ongoing membership of the scheme across the dioceses.

2.10.2 Standard 2 of IGlv2 states at paragraph 2.1: *'We require all Church personnel and volunteers to be safely recruited to their roles, following the relevant statutory and Church requirements'* (Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 15) and continues at paragraph 2.1.1:

'Our mandatory safe recruitment process is central to ensuring that everyone – when working in, or training for, ministry as an ordained or religious, or working as a Church employee or volunteer – has passed through appropriate checks and assessments of their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.'

(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2021, p 24)

Description

2.10.3 The management of safe recruitment processes in Dunkeld falls to the DSA in his capacity as Assistant Chancellor. The DSA has developed an automated online process for Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVGs) in which all application forms are checked, references are requested and received and the applicant's identity is checked. The DSA arranges the PVG and, when returned, this generates a request for safeguarding training via the Volunteer Training Coordinator. No volunteers begin in role until they complete safeguarding training, confirmation of which generates their approval letter, signed by the DSA on behalf of the Bishop.

2.10.4 The DSA described relying on PSCs within the parishes to ensure that volunteers do not start in role until training is completed and the approval letter is received, but he had no reason to believe that this was not the case.

2.10.5 The DSA is the countersignatory for PVGs within the Diocese. There is a newly developed protocol for blemished PVGs, which are raised with the DRAMT via the independent chair. The DSA advised that while all blemishes are made known to the chair, not all would proceed to a DRAMT meeting, for example, for lesser driving offences. The chair and the DSA would decide whether the individual could proceed based on the role applied for. Where risk is deemed too serious for an individual to take up a post, the individual, PSC and the Parish Priest are informed, but details of the blemish are not shared. The individual has the right to appeal the decision of the DRAMT.

2.10.6 Safe recruitment records, including PVGs, are recorded on the Diocesan recruitment database, which is in line with that used in other dioceses and developed within Dumfries and Galloway. The database can be interrogated to extract data in a number of ways and is also used to record training.

Analysis

2.10.7 Auditors saw evidence that policies within IGLv2 for safe recruitment are being applied. All new staff and volunteers receive a letter from the Bishop, but signed by the DSA, and do not start in post until this time.

2.10.8 The new recruitment and training database is working well and, coupled with the electronic system set up by the DSA, the auditors found the safe recruitment system to be good. The DSA was confident that those in roles across the Diocese had a PVG in place and felt that this aspect of his role was manageable, but was assisted greatly by the role of the Volunteer Training Coordinator, without whom the DSA role would perhaps be more difficult.

2.10.9 Recruitment and the management of PVGs are discussed at DSAG, which takes strategic oversight for the system, including the responsibility of the DRAMT to look at any concerns raised.

2.10.10 Links between the DSA and parishes are good, with the DSA visiting the parishes regularly and proactively taking the opportunity to speak to Priests as a group when they meet as the Priests' Council. The responsibility for the PSCs to make sure that safe recruitment processes have been completed locally needs strengthening to ensure that volunteers are not beginning in role prior to the checks being completed and to ensure that practice is consistent across all parishes.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Diocese ensure improved links on safe recruitment with the PSCs at parish level?
- What more permanent support might be provided to the DSA for safe recruitment processes?

2.11 TRAINING

Introduction

2.11.1 Prior to the introduction of *In God's Image* in 2018 (Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2018), training was not mandatory before volunteering or taking up a role within a parish. But *In God's Image* clarified the importance of training and IGLv2 continues that mandatory safeguarding training is required by the Church to enable those involved in working with children and vulnerable adults to be well equipped to understand, manage and reduce risk and to create safe environments. There is a basic level of expertise that all those involved in this work must acquire, and this must be supplemented by participation in further training, within agreed timeframes, to deepen expertise, skills and knowledge specific to roles. This training must be provided within a framework of nationally agreed safeguarding training established by the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA) in collaboration with key stakeholders.

2.11.2 Safeguarding Induction Training Part 1 must be completed by all who will be working in a regulated role prior to assuming any role in the Church involving children or vulnerable adults and applies to seminary applicants, those accepted for the propaedeutic period and those entering any formation programme provided by religious institutes. Within 18 months, each person must also complete Safeguarding Induction Training Part 2.

2.11.3 Further training opportunities should be offered to clergy, religious, Church employees and volunteers in the context of support or update meetings, courses and conferences. These training opportunities should be shaped in response to needs identified through the processes of evaluation and audit.

2.11.4 In addition to the training provided locally, IGLv2 also sets out that a Safeguarding Training Advisory Group will be established by the SCSSA, in collaboration with key stakeholders. This group will be expected to support the development of a framework of nationally agreed safeguarding training to meet specific training needs identified by various groups – Bishops, clergy, religious, employees and volunteers.

Description

2.11.5 The Diocese of Dunkeld has a team of four trainers, including the DSA, who reported that maintaining a level of training with this small number of trainers has proved difficult. All volunteers are required to undertake Part 1 safeguarding training. Part 2 of the training was introduced just prior to the first COVID-19 lockdown so its

rollout has been delayed.

2.11.6 The Diocese has an established online training availability, but the DSA felt that the appetite for training had been lost across the Diocese and that not all those requiring training are familiar with, or in possession of, the IT required to support it. The Diocese tracks training using the bespoke database.

2.11.7 Although new volunteers have completed training and this is accurately recorded at parish and Diocesan level, the DSA felt it likely that there are existing volunteers within the Diocese who have not yet completed the required training. Work is in progress to ensure Part 1 training has been completed by all. Strategically the Diocese is aware of this, and it forms part of the ongoing Safeguarding Action Plan. The Diocesan database shows the number of training courses completed, the date, who carried out the training and the level. Each PSC is regularly updated on volunteers in their parish who have received an approval letter and completed the safe recruitment process previously (prior to when letters were provided) and who might have gaps in their training records. Those with no training are fast tracked but the DSA advised that the pandemic and resulting lockdowns had greatly reduced the Diocese' ability to close these gaps. It is therefore possible that there are a number of volunteers for whom completed training is not recorded, however, it is equally possible that there are a number of volunteers in role who are not safeguarding trained.

2.11.8 Parish Priests and PSCs are aware that a volunteer must not be employed in any regulated activity until they are issued with their approval letter from the Bishop, signed by the DSA. This DSA felt that this is working well for newly recruited volunteers, but for those already in role and carrying out training retrospectively, there was less confidence.

2.11.9 The DSA felt that the training material provided by the SCSSA is of a good standard, regularly refreshed and provides an opportunity for reflection using relevant case studies. In the audit survey, 87% of those who responded felt that the training they had received for their role was good, with the remaining 13% feeling that it was average. However, senior clergy felt that there are some gaps in training material, particularly where there are issues of division within a parish regarding allegations.

Analysis

2.11.10 Timeliness of training for new volunteers is good across the Diocese, with volunteers undertaking their first training before being approved to carry out their role. There remains a concern, however, that the number of volunteers already in place who might not yet be trained is unknown. Tracking the training back through parishes over time is a difficult task and one which needs to be undertaken in conjunction with PSCs.

2.11.11 Where initial training is offered and not taken up, trainers and parishes notify the DSA. For new volunteers, an approval letter would not be issued, meaning the individual could not start in role; however, for volunteers already on role, there is no process in place should training be refused, other than encouragement from the DSA and PSCs. The DSA is reluctant to reach a point where a volunteer is removed from role for not completing training, but auditors reflected that this may become a requirement.

2.11.12 Currently, there is no needs analysis for training within the Diocese for Parish Priests and PSCs and this was identified within the Diocesan audit for the Bishops' Conference for Scotland although the parish risk assessments provide training

requirements for the future. Additional areas of training highlighted by both *contributors* and participants as potentially useful include: materials to assist in managing any divisions within parishes, perhaps where some within the parish believe an allegation or support a concern raised and others do not; and support for Parish Priests around listening and the attitude with which a person is heard. A training needs analysis would be a useful next step.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- What are the barriers to a clear oversight of training for volunteers and how might the DSAG improve strategic oversight of this to minimise risk?
- How can the Diocese ensure the successful rollout of Part 2 safeguarding training and refresher training and begin thinking about additional training needs?

2.12 HOW THE DIOCESE PROVIDES SAFEGUARDING SUPPORT TO PARISHES

Introduction

2.12.1 In a centralised diocesan structure of safeguarding, support from the diocese to parishes is key to safe and reliable safeguarding. Diocesan safeguarding is, in significant ways, only as good as its weakest parish.

Description

2.12.2 The DSA and the Bishop provide safeguarding support to the parishes, but in the main this falls to the DSA, who visits parishes regularly and offers support both in person and by telephone.

2.12.3 Each parish has a laptop, which can be made available to the PSC by the Parish Priest if required. It remains within the parish. Each PSC has their own 'dunkelldioocese.org.uk' email address, which can be accessed from their personal computers. This email remains with the parish. The DSA has spent time visiting PSCs to ensure IT provision and understanding. In addition, the Dunkelld safeguarding web page includes a password-protected login for PSCs where all policies and safeguarding information relating to parishes can be found. Under 'resources' there is a useful extended safeguarding page of all publications regarding safeguarding over the last two years.

2.12.4 Auditors heard that communication and support from the Diocese for parishes are good. Those PSCs who participated in the survey stated that they felt supported but missed being brought together annually for networking and training updates, which had been postponed because of the pandemic. The DSA advised that there are plans in place to restart these learning and networking opportunities this year.

2.12.5 The DSA also advised that while providing face-to-face support for PSCs through

the four deaneries was planned, in practice, meetings have remained online, which has been useful for some PSCs but not easy to access for others. Meeting face to face is difficult geographically but auditors heard that the DSA felt an annual conference for PSCs would be useful.

2.12.6 The DSAG meets four times a year and after each meeting the DSA provides information and a follow-up meeting for PSCs. Auditors heard that parishes regularly relay safeguarding messages via the PSCs and this is a useful forum.

2.12.7 Some areas of the Diocese are remote and can feel isolated. During their seminary training, Priests are encouraged to engage with a spiritual director or support group, which is regarded as useful and the Bishop felt this should continue. The Bishop also encourages an open relationship with Priests, who are free to contact him directly.

Analysis

2.12.8 Auditors witnessed a strong sense of team working between those in the Diocese and that this provided a good level of support to the parishes. The COVID-19 pandemic and the geographical spread of the Diocese makes face-to-face contact more difficult but the DSA has worked hard to overcome this and is well known by Parish Priests and PSCs.

2.12.9 There are only four trainers working across the Diocese, one of whom is the DSA. While the Diocese is small in numbers, it is not small geographically and training rollout has proved difficult. The DSA’s additional links with Parish Priests through the Priests’ Council have helped to mitigate this; however, further work is required to support the work of PSCs to provide training records for their existing volunteers in order to ensure a safe workforce and that good strategic oversight of training is in place.

2.12.10 The Diocese has provided good IT links and support to PSCs with the provision of supported laptops and IT support, the secure web pages and the additional provision of useful information within the website. Policies and procedures are being written with PSCs in mind to encourage a real understanding of the issues, coupled with practical advice and templates to assist.

<p>Questions for the Diocese to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How might the Diocese prioritise safeguarding support to PSCs from whom training information is required?• What are the barriers to re-introducing face-to-face PSC meetings or the annual conference in order to support parishes?• How might the capacity for training across the Diocese be increased?

2.13 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Introduction

2.13.1 A safe organisation needs constant feedback loops about what is going well and where there are difficulties in relation to safeguarding, and this should drive ongoing cycles of learning and improvement. Robust quality assurance enables an organisation to understand its strengths and weaknesses. Potential sources of data are numerous,

including independent scrutiny. Quality assurance needs to be strategic and systematic to support accountability and shed light on how well things are working and where there are gaps or concerns.

2.13.2 There are a range of mechanisms that can support this:

- professional supervision of the DSA (see section 2.2)
- scrutiny by the DSAG (see section 2.3)
- routinely benchmarking the Diocese against other dioceses within and outside Scotland
- identifying lessons learnt from other dioceses and feeding these into planning the work of the Diocese
- obtaining abuse survivor 'customer' feedback
- obtaining routine PSC 'customer' feedback
- having a complaints procedure about the safeguarding service (see section 2.7)
- conducting independent 'lessons learnt' reviews of cases where things seem to have gone wrong or there are concerns.

2.13.3 Standard 8 of IGIv2 sets out an expectation that each diocese will oversee effective planning processes to monitor, review, self-evaluate and report on local safeguarding practices. The Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA) will be tasked with arranging independent reviews of the compliance of all jurisdictions with safeguarding standards.

Description

2.13.4 The Diocese requests safeguarding audit responses from the parishes annually, which are collated by the DSA. Responses are monitored and themes or concerns discussed by the DSAG form part of the Safeguarding Action Plan if required. Information from the DSAG is passed to Parish Priests and PSC meetings in order to hear their views and provide a quality assurance loop.

2.13.5 The DSA provides a written report to each nominee meeting where safeguarding is a standing agenda item. Auditors heard that there is a reasonable overlap and level of challenge between the Directors' meeting and the DSAG through the Bishop who chairs the Directors' meeting, one of the Vicars General, the Chancellor and a member of the DSAG (who also is a Director) who attend both meetings. The DSA also attends Directors' meetings in his role as the Assistant Chancellor.

2.13.6 The DSA is part of the larger group of DSAs working across all eight Scottish dioceses. The DSA recognises the strength in this group and is able to contact DSAs from other dioceses to request advice on specialist situations and to share good practice. The DSA felt that this has been particularly reassuring because he is now the only male DSA.

Analysis

2.13.7 Quality assurance within the Diocese is focused mainly on the parish audits, which have been helpful, and there is evidence that themes from the audits are fed into

the DSAG for consideration.

2.13.8 Quality assurance loops are in place between the DSAG and the Directors' meetings where safeguarding is also discussed. In addition, the Priests' Council involving all Parish Priests from across the Diocese enables regular contact with Priests regarding safeguarding and an opportunity for the DSA and the Bishop to communicate with them regarding strategic direction and to hear their views.

2.13.9 The Safeguarding Action Plan and the identification of individual members of the DSAG to take forward the safeguarding standards of *In God's Image* are in place, but auditors felt that strategic quality assurance could be strengthened with a quality assurance framework beyond this, to usefully form part of any strategic planning and feedback loops. Part of this could include case-file audits, the inclusion of survivor feedback and the collation of regular feedback from PSCs.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How could the Safeguarding Action Plan be usefully progressed to form the basis of a Strategic Safeguarding Plan and quality assurance framework for the Diocese?
- How might the views and perspectives of survivors be sought and incorporated into quality assurance?
- How satisfied is the Diocese that the current model of parish audits elicits the most effective return of information?

2.14 CULTURE

Introduction

2.14.1 The most critical aspect of safeguarding relates to the culture within any organisation. In a diocesan context, that can mean, for example, the extent to which priority is placed on safeguarding individuals as opposed to the reputation of the Church, or the ability of all members of the Church to think the unthinkable about friends and colleagues. Any diocese should strive for an open, learning culture where safeguarding is 'everybody's business' and a shared responsibility, albeit supported by experts, and which encourages people to highlight any concerns about how things are working in order that they can be addressed.

2.14.2 An open learning culture starts from the assumption that maintaining adequate vigilance is difficult, proactively seeks feedback on how safeguarding is operating and encourages people to highlight any concerns about how things are working in order that they can be addressed.

2.14.3 Culture within a diocese is crucial to effective safeguarding as is the priority given to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults over the protection of the reputation of

the Church. A safe culture also relies on the knowledge and understanding of all within the diocese to react to allegations and disclosures of abuse even when these might be about those they know and admire. Crucially, a safe culture requires trust in the organisation's leadership and in fair and transparent systems and processes.

Description

2.14.4 The safeguarding culture of Dunkeld is led by the Bishop both theologically and strategically. Clergy described safeguarding culture and knowledge within the Diocese as having totally transformed over recent times. Priests understand the safeguarding implications of their role and are much clearer on the rationale behind the processes they must follow regarding PVGs, risk assessments and ensuring their own safety when working with individuals or groups. Auditors heard that this has been assisted by a shift in thinking culturally regarding safeguarding and that parents and families now have an expectation that safeguarding measures will be in place. Senior clergy advised that they have not come across volunteers unwilling to go through the PVG process in order to undertake their role. Safeguarding was described as "*part of life now*".

2.14.5 The Bishop and the DSA were confident that PSCs and Parish Priests know the safeguarding procedures and would refer those making disclosures or allegations appropriately. At an operational level, safeguarding forms a regular part of discussions with all Parish Priests, and the DSA has ensured, via training, meetings during priests' council and visits to the parishes, that the Diocese cannot be complacent.

2.14.6 The geographical span of the small staff resource available to the Diocese of Dunkeld provides additional challenges to a safeguarding culture. Despite this, parishes who completed the survey felt that they received good safeguarding support and that the message regarding safeguarding is filtering through to each parish.

Analysis

2.14.7 Safeguarding across the Diocese of Dunkeld is underpinned by dedicated volunteers who provide safeguarding knowledge and promote training. It has also meant that there is confidence in the Diocesan safeguarding team within the parishes and this is supported by the survey responses.

2.14.8 The auditors felt that the Diocese has a clear idea of its own strengths and weaknesses and that there is robust challenge in place from the DSAG. Strengths and weaknesses within safeguarding culture have been identified and there is a willingness and commitment from those who took part in the audit to improve safeguarding within all aspects of Diocesan life.

2.14.9 *In God's Image* is embedded within the DSAG and work is underway to draw out more detailed actions and plans to further embed this in the culture of the Diocese. What is now needed is a longer-term and forward-looking strategic plan for safeguarding, to include aspects such as training plans, a training needs analysis and the development of support for survivors.

2.14.10 Support for survivors of abuse is in place but the current culture relies on survivors coming forward and, in general, lacks a bespoke offer to those requiring support. A more outward-reaching culture is now needed, with ongoing bespoke support for those within the Diocese who are still suffering.

2.14.11 Training, recruitment and other structures of the DSAG and the DRAMT are in place and form part of the safeguarding culture across the whole Diocese,

embedded at all levels, with the exception of training records for existing volunteers. This consistent approach helps to challenge perspectives and thinking, and inconsistencies across parishes.

2.14.12 The Bishop's open-door policy and good communication between the Diocesan team are a strength within Dunkeld and have been appreciated by all, including many survivors. Improvements in safeguarding practice by the DSA and the Bishop are evident, with welcome communication and support for the parishes.

Questions for the Diocese to consider

- How might the Diocese identify areas where safeguarding culture is less well embedded and spread good practice where it is?
- How can progress in the development of culture form part of Diocesan strategic planning and be quality assured - how will the Diocese be confident that things are improving?
- In what ways could survivors of abuse be invited to support the development of safeguarding culture?

3 Conclusion

3.1.1 The DSA, the Bishop and the DSAG chair provide strong leadership for safeguarding, which has been recognised by the parishes. The Standards within *In God's Image* and the recently published revised version are either in place or under development and there is a strong sense of ownership for safeguarding by the Diocese as a whole. Challenge and quality assurance loops are in place, although they could be strengthened.

3.1.2 The DSAG and the DRAMT are strong and ensure risk management and safeguarding oversight. The independent chair has been able to influence ways of working and professionalise processes. This independence is important and is a strength and might be unduly compromised by a supervisory role of the DSA.

3.1.3 There is a lack of formal process for disagreements arising from Diocesan work, particularly around the calling of a DRAMT and decisions made at the DRAMT. A process for managing disagreements or conflicts of interest is required, including escalation where a conflict cannot be resolved.

3.1.4 The current DSA has brought much to the role and worked hard to promote safeguarding and provide access to good-quality advice. He is supported by an ongoing handover from the previous DSA who remains as Chancellor. Understanding of the DSA role is not comprehensive across the parishes, with some parishioners not clear on how safeguarding information is shared between the Bishop and the DSA.

3.1.5 Volunteers who take up roles such as trainers, PSCs and other parish volunteer roles are valued and supported. The work of the DSA to embed records, undertake safe recruitment and provide support for the parishes is commendable. Assurance that all volunteers have undertaken safeguarding training at the relevant level and the provision of refresher training are now a priority.

3.1.6 The Safeguarding Action Plan is comprehensive and is a good foundation for strategic thinking. Focus is now needed on the further consolidation of strategic oversight for safeguarding as part of a longer-term Strategic Safeguarding Plan, which would sit well within the current DSAG framework.

3.1.7 The Diocese should also consider how best to show a more proactive response to survivors of abuse, in particular how to reach out to those who might not have come forward, to work with them in terms of what they might need and also to ensure their voices are heard within policy and strategic planning. The work of the new Safeguarding Standards Agency will assist with this.

3.1.8 Quality assurance should be developed into a broader framework that might form part of the Strategic Safeguarding Plan. This would provide information regarding any pockets of practice that fall below that expected and help to inform any training needs analysis.

4 Appendix: The audit process

4.1 DATA COLLECTION

Information provided to the auditors

In advance of and during the auditors' site visit, the Diocese of Dunkeld provided them with the following

- DSAG roles and responsibilities
- DSAG minutes
- DSAG Safeguarding Office Report 2021
- DRAMT minutes
- Diocesan context and local safeguarding structure and arrangements
- a self-assessment of safeguarding
- policy and procedures relating to safeguarding
- Safeguarding Action Plan
- Safeguarding Complaints Policy
- Diocesan Safeguarding Audit 2020
- Parish Risk Assessment
- Parish Risk Assessment for Activities and Places guidance
- Parish Risk Register template
- a checklist for responding to allegations
- Protecting Vulnerable Group (PVG) database information and PVG templates
- safe recruitment procedures
- Diocesan Whistleblowing Policy.

Participation of members of the Diocese

Between 22 and 24 February 2022, the auditors conducted an onsite visit to the Diocese and had conversations with:

- the Bishop of Dunkeld
- the Vicar General
- the DSA
- the independent chair of the DSAG and the DRAMT
- the Diocesan Chancellor
- two members of the DRAMT
- representatives from the parishes (via the survey)
- a number of *contributors*.

Records/files that the auditors looked at

Auditors looked at:

- a number of randomly selected case files
- examples of inquiries handled within the Diocese from 2016.

4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE AUDIT

It is possible that some survivors of abuse who have no further contact with the Church and who have not approached survivor support organisations would not have been made aware of the audit. We also recognise that those with strong negative or positive views are more likely to come forward than those with broadly neutral views.

5 References

Bishops' Conference of Scotland (2018) *In God's Image*. Airdrie: Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

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McLellan Commission (2015) *A Review of the Current Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Practice within the Catholic Church in Scotland* (The McLellan Report). Glasgow: APS Group Scotland. Available at: https://www.bcos.org.uk/Portals/0/McLellan/363924_WEB.pdf



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Social Care Institute for Excellence

83 Baker Street
London W1U 6AG
tel 020 7766 7400

www.scie.org.uk