

## **Bishops' Conference of Scotland**

### **Revised remit for the Independent Review Group established by BCOS to monitor the response of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland to the recommendations of the McLellan Report on Safeguarding.**

#### **Introduction**

The Independent Review Group (IRG) was established by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland as part of its commitment to implement in full the recommendations of the McLellan review of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. In paragraph 6.5 the McLellan Commission stated:

- *The Commission is also of the view that public credibility would be enhanced if the Church invited an appropriate, independent party to monitor and audit the progress of implementation.*

Accordingly in December 2016 the Bishops invited Helen Liddell, Baroness of Coatdyke, to convene an autonomous group to scrutinise their implementation action plan. The group met for the first time in May 2017. The group members serve at the invitation of Baroness Liddell.

#### **Chair and membership**

The chair of the Independent Review Group is appointed by the BCOS. The term will be 4 years with a possible review annually if requested by either party. A term may be repeated once.

Membership shall be drawn from those with professional experience in safeguarding, the law and organisational review. Others may be added or associated with the work of the IRG. Either BCOS or the Chair may nominate members and appointment shall require the agreement of both parties.

A term shall last four years but, in the first instance, some members may be asked to extend their term by two years to allow overlap of membership in subsequent iterations. A term may be repeated once.

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### **Remit of the IRG**

1. The IRG will review the results of the audits carried out annually in each diocese and religious congregation, and collated by the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service (SCSS), in order to monitor the implementation of 'In God's Image' as approved by the Bishops in March 2018.
2. Additionally the IRG will commission an external audit of progress in implementing 'In God's Image' in two dioceses per year (for four years) in order to identify strengths, good practice to be shared and areas needing further improvement.
3. All analysis, conduct and review of audits undertaken by the IRG will be under their authority and governed by a Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the IRG and BCOS. The Memorandum of Understanding establishes that the IRG may freely discuss with any member of SCSS matters arising from any audit and both SCSS and the BCOS General Secretariat will provide full cooperation with the IRG.
4. On the basis of their analysis of all audits the IRG will provide evaluative comment, advice and recommendations to BCOS on the progress which is being made, in the dioceses and in the work of the SCSS, in meeting the standards set out in the Church's Safeguarding policy document, 'In God's Image'.
5. Additionally the IRG will provide a report to BCOS, normally annually, on progress towards fulfilling each of the McLellan recommendations and, in so doing, contribute to the tri-annual review of 'In God's Image'.
6. The IRG will not examine individual allegations or cases and will refer any concerns which are brought to their attention to the relevant diocese, SCSS or BCOS as appropriate.
7. The IRG will be available to participate in discussions and correspondence to ensure its activities are transparent and fully understood.
8. The IRG will keep in regular contact with the BCOS General Secretariat to exchange information and updates on relevant developments.