

THIS IS THE THIRD (AND FINAL) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW GROUP (IRG) MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MCLELLAN REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SCOTLAND.

PREFACE BY THE CHAIR

The Independent Review Group (IRG) came into being as a result of the report of the McLellan Commission into safeguarding policy, procedures and practice within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. The Group had a four-year remit which is now coming to an end and, in this last Annual Report, we concentrate on what comes next to protect children and vulnerable adults in the Church.

Appointed by the Bishops Conference of Scotland (BCoS) the members of the Group are grateful for the cooperation of BCoS and its willingness to listen and to act. One major feature of the Group's work was the commissioning of independent audits by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) of the safeguarding practice in the eight dioceses, the first time such detailed and external scrutiny of church institutions has been done in Scotland. To date, four of the dioceses have been audited and received their audit reports, the remaining four will be completed within the next eighteen months. Such action took courage and determination on the part of BCoS and it also showed that issues around abuse are not historic. Not only is there a need to ensure every allegation of abuse is investigated thoroughly, objectively and with compassion, but it is also important to remember that the challenge of maintaining safe practice is about the here and now, demonstrating that lessons from the past have been learned and acted upon. Every aspect of our society must be alert to the potential risk of abuse and act to secure effective and focused activities with a clear safeguarding perspective.

Creating a 'one church' approach to safeguarding is essential. Sharing good practice, resources and, even at times, autonomy is essential. Building on the progress of recent years BCoS's commitment to creating an independent safeguarding service provides an additional layer of support and does so in a way that does not undermine the long-established autonomy of the Bishops in their individual Dioceses. Supplementing diocesan capacity with a professional, independent structure of safeguarding, underpinned by training and monitoring, can ensure that the most vulnerable in our society get the protection they deserve. This is a lesson learned around the world and we are very grateful to those in other countries who gave us the benefit of their experience.

The publication of the second iteration of "In God's Image" (IGI 2) was a significant move forward for the Church and the next step must be to align the BCoS agenda with the implementation of the revised IGI at all levels. Leadership in this is vital, a leadership that is inclusive, outward-looking, focused, rigorous, and constantly reviewing practice.

We cannot stress too strongly how important rigorous independence is. It is the way to secure credibility and confidence in the Church's safeguarding structures. This requires autonomy to employ specialists, commission audits and provide training, advice, challenge and support. The new service should be seen to provide independent oversight that is not subject to any pressure from those who may have undue influence. The core purpose needs to be agreed policy, best practice and clear procedures which, when implemented, have a demonstrable impact. The new service requires a governance structure to fulfill this function.

The IRG's focus has been on the Dioceses and its relationship with the religious organisations is more embryonic, largely because they all have widely varying structures. We are, however, greatly encouraged by the determination of those who have approached us to seek the same rigorous approach to their organisations as we have with the Dioceses, it will be a task passed on to our successors.

In this report you will see an outline of what the Church is developing as the IRG's successor, the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA). The Group has made the point that, to ensure credibility, the Agency must engage with survivors, it must insist that safeguarding is at the heart of the Church's operation and it is imperative that it is independent.

At various stages, the IRG's work has been informed by those who have suffered abuse. The Group could not investigate cases of abuse, that was beyond its remit, but the Group's knowledge was vastly improved by hearing the stories of those who have come forward to report abuse, and also by those who felt they could not report what had happened to them. All of their experiences are a reminder of how critical this perspective is and they have the Group's thanks. The IRG has also been approached by representatives of those who have been wrongly accused and it emphasizes the need for their voices also being heard.

The work of the IRG has been possible because of the dedication, hard work and professionalism of the six members (see Appendix 1) who are, themselves, distinguished professionals in the field of safeguarding and in inspection. They gave of their time and knowledge unstintingly, quite often at a time when they faced onerous demands from their other commitments. These last four years have been a learning experience for me, and I cannot express too strongly my admiration for my colleagues, and that of the Group's dedicated secretary, who has held the mechanics of the whole operation together. I cannot thank them enough.

HELEN LIDDELL
CHAIR

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 The four-year term of the Independent Review Group (IRG) is coming to an end. There is recognition across the Church of the need to build on what has been achieved to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The IRG acknowledges that much has been done to improve arrangements for safeguarding since the publication of the McLellan Commission report in 2015 but it is clear that more remains to be done. Appendix 2 lists the main actions undertaken by the IRG to date and their impact, and the issues that will be the focus of the Group's activity during the transition to the Church's new safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.1.2 The IRG is firmly of the view that the work being undertaken within the Church to radically restructure its safeguarding arrangements requires a 'one church' approach, built on best international practice and supported by independent oversight.
- 1.1.3 This final IRG report, therefore, goes beyond summarising the actions taken by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland in meeting the individual recommendations of the McLellan Report. While it recognises the improvements made, it identifies ongoing and future challenges, which includes possible routes forward.
- 1.1.4 Common themes across all IRG reports include the need to put survivors of abuse within the Church at the centre of the process and to learn from their experiences as well as ensuring that anyone with concerns feels safe and supported in coming forward. Engaging with survivors is a challenging but critical business and a range of ways and means needs to be explored in order to achieve this, for example, by drawing on evidence about participation and co-production from the field of social work and social care. In addition, a core function of the IRG has been to assist the church in evaluating the quality and impact of its safeguarding arrangements in response to McLellan. This has been achieved through promoting self-evaluation, supplemented by external independent scrutiny.
- 1.1.5 It is only through measuring the impact of the Church's plans and actions at the Bishops' Conference of Scotland (BCoS), parish, diocesan and religious organisation level that best practice will be identified and shared, as well as priorities for improvement identified.

1.2. Improvements to safeguarding

- 1.2.1 Over the last four years a number of very important and innovative structural improvements have been made by the Church. This included the early recognition that safeguarding involved not only children and young people but also vulnerable adults. The publication of 'In God's Image' (IGI) in 2018 provided a set of standards

against which the quality of safeguarding could be measured. This has helped promote consistency of practice while allowing autonomy of delivery at a local level.

1.2.2 A revised set of standards has now been finalised by the Church and the link between diocesan annual audits and action planning has also improved. However, this is still mainly focused on input and processes rather than measurable improvements. It is recognised that the impact of COVID 19 has made it more difficult to measure the impact of many of these plans but it is important that every effort is made to do so.

1.2.3 The Church has responded to the IRG's recommendations to ensure a 'one church' approach through its plan to establish a Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (SCSSA). The BCoS has also accepted the recommendation that any evaluation of quality safeguarding should be measured against a set of key principles as well as through the revised IGI standards.

1.2.4 These principles are:

- the need to ensure consistency,
- the need to develop capacity,
- the need to define accountability and
- the need to establish sustainability
- the need to measure quality outcomes through independent monitoring and evaluation.

The challenge going forward will be to establish safeguarding structures and outcomes that fully comply with both the standards and the organisational principles.

1.2.5 External monitoring has already been supported through the IRG evaluating the annual diocesan audits and action plans, scrutinising planning priorities, working with individual dioceses and holding consultative meetings with survivors, religious organisations and experts from within and beyond Scotland. In addition, the IRG has monitored international developments as well as analysing UK and international reports on safeguarding.

1.2.6 The IRG would like to thank all who have contributed their time and expertise in assisting the evaluation of the quality of safeguarding arrangements within the Church and beyond. This work has assisted the IRG in providing a range of recommendations to the BCoS through annual and thematic reports and through direct discussion with Church leaders.

1.2.7 In addition, the commissioning by the IRG of the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), funded by the BCOS, to carry out independent audits of each of the eight dioceses across Scotland has provided direct support at a local level. The aim of this process is to identify and share knowledge about what works and what is new; to support the dioceses in delivering planning through putting knowledge into practice

and to help to develop the Church's capacity to influence the direction of future practice and policy.

- 1.2.8 To date, four dioceses (St Andrews and Edinburgh, Galloway, Aberdeen and Motherwell) have been evaluated with the audit reports being published. It is the intention to complete the remaining four within the next eighteen months and the IRG would encourage a similar approach being taken to evaluate the quality of safeguarding within the religious organisations.
- 1.2.9 IRG and SCIE reports have identified the need for the Church to continue to develop strategic and theological leadership, which in turn impacts on the quality of governance. There is evidence of a positive sharing of the audit process and the recommendations emerging from it across dioceses and it is hoped that when the SCIE cycle of audits is completed, the information gained will support strategic analysis as well as an overview of strengths and development needs. This should inform practice and bespoke training programmes.
- 1.2.10 There is evidence of raised awareness of the need for safeguarding across all areas of the Church but this is still not fully consistent or of the same quality. Ongoing cultural change and full compliance with the agreed principles and standards will be key to ensuring that safeguarding is consistently central to all aspects of Church life.
- 1.2.11 Emphasising culture change is, of course, regularly part of the prescribed remedy. A clear purpose, quality relationships and shared values of an organisation and, crucially, behaviours at all times consistent with the identified and agreed purpose and values are essential. Culture, however, is not in isolation the cause of an organisation's ills nor is "culture change" the remedy. Culture is neither a destination nor an outcome. Culture change is what you are left with after the implementation of the necessary changes following review and organisational redesign. Culture is not a fix but the core part of how an organisation behaves not just towards and with its clients, but also with wider stakeholders such as the families and communities whom the organisation serves and with all its staff.
- 1.2.12 The Church has made significant progress in complying with agreed safeguarding standards but there remains the issue that motivation remains extrinsic and reactive. More requires to be done to ensure that the full range of Church activity involving children, young people or vulnerable adults has safe practice at its intrinsic heart. The IRG recognises that all members of the Church have suffered as a consequence of the reputational damage caused by past abuse. Restoring credibility is a work in progress and the need to remain outward-looking, inclusive and with safeguarding a core part of all values and practice cannot be ignored.

2 PROGRESS IN MEETING THE MCLELLAN COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Support for survivors of abuse must be an absolute priority for the Catholic Church in Scotland in the field of safeguarding.
 - 2.1.1 The Church has made progress in addressing the charge made by the McLellan Commission that support for survivors of abuse had not been a priority for the Church. Support for survivors of abuse and seeking the healing of survivors was a strong policy objective as well as being central to the faith proclaimed by the Church. Yet, much work is still required in this area if the Church is to ensure that survivor experiences and perspectives are integrated into the development of safeguarding work and that this perspective is suitably represented on decision-making bodies. It is recognised that obtaining this invaluable perspective is difficult and sensitive work, particularly as the experience of each survivor is uniquely personal.
 - 2.1.2 There is a greater understanding and awareness of the centrality of safeguarding to the Catholic faith, as evidenced by Pope Francis's Motu Proprio on abuse and expectations of the Church. This includes wider discussion on safeguarding within church life as well as an increased focus on safeguarding as part of the Church's training. In addition, consideration is being given by the BCoS on how best to identify and consult with survivors.
 - 2.1.3 There are examples of Bishops increasingly reaching out to parishes and known survivors, but there remain inconsistencies in ensuring clear policy statements on access and support for survivors as well as identifying independent persons to whom survivors can turn for information and advice.
 - 2.1.4 The Church should be mindful that members of its own clergy may have suffered abuse within the Church and its approach to safeguarding should ensure that arrangements are made to provide appropriate support where this is required.
- 2.2 The policy and practice manual "Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities" should be completely revised or rewritten.
 - 2.2.1 The Church has met this recommendation through its publication of In God's Image (IGI) and the establishment of a set of standards, ratified by the Bishops and religious organisations, through which they can be held accountable. The revision of the IGI standards is further evidence of a recognition that constant review and improvements are required to ensure that standards fully meet changing requirements. This can only be achieved through the ongoing evaluation of the compliance with and the impact of these standards.

- 2.2.2 The Church should ensure that the revised IGI standards are measurable, clear and applicable to the clergy and all other members of the Church. Standards should contain technical specifications or other precise criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline or definition. In addition, the focus on the standards should avoid evaluating processes but focus on the quality and impact of practice.
- 2.2.3 It is essential that all key indicators and evidence of compliance are sufficiently clear. At present, there is an inadequate link between the IGI standards and the principles agreed by the BCoS. The Church should continue to link both to ensure comprehensive coverage and that the agreed rules and guidelines are fit for purpose and that standards are met.
- 2.3 Effectiveness and improvement must be measured at every level of safeguarding in the Church.
- 2.3.1 McLellan identified that independent and rigorous evaluation of the quality of the Church's safeguarding arrangements was the only way to escape from the suspicion of "cover-up" and secrecy. The Commission acknowledged the difficulty in promoting collective decision-making while balancing the autonomy of both Bishops and religious organisations. However, the Report stressed the need for a transparent and open system to measure the effectiveness and improvement in terms of quality as well as quantity.
- 2.3.2 The IRG is clear that a 'one church' approach is not at odds with the role of individual Bishops or religious organisations. Collective responsibility is already underpinned throughout the Church through the Bishops and religious organisations signing up to comply fully with the standards contained within IGI. Both the BCoS and other religious leaders have noted the benefits gained from the creation of the IRG and, in turn, the input of SCIE in both challenging and supporting safeguarding arrangements has been equally beneficial.
- 2.3.3 It is imperative in our view that the establishment of an independent arm to lead and support consistent and effective safeguarding across the Church would be to the benefit of all. It would ensure an appropriate balance between acknowledging the autonomy of individual dioceses and religious groups while keeping children, young people and those who are vulnerable safe.
- 2.3.4 The IRG's view is that three components are essential to ensure a reliable safeguarding system. The first is full commitment to and compliance with the standards and principles. This will only be achieved through rigorous internal and independent external monitoring. The second is developing the capacity to deliver safeguarding safely and consistently across all areas of Church life taking local

circumstances into account. The third is rigorous internal audit arrangements supported by independent, external quality assurance.

- 2.3.5 The commitment to establish the SCSSA has the potential to meet these requirements. The IRG fully supports this initiative and made it clear to the BCoS that the realisation of the key principles agreed by the Church required the formation of an independent oversight body responsible for the management of the SCSSA. The IRG is pleased that the BCoS has determined that the new body, containing appropriate expertise, will be a company limited by guarantee.
- 2.3.6 In developing both the SCSSA and its appropriate oversight body, the IRG is of the view that it should be tailored to the needs of the Catholic Church in Scotland. In designing an appropriate model, the IRG encourages the Church to continue the dialogue with the National Board for Safeguarding Children (NBSCCCI) established by the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland and the proposed Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in England.
- 2.3.7 The IRG believes that there is much to be gained through this dialogue particularly as all three have been innovative in designing aspects of their arrangements for safeguarding which will complement future developments. The IRG benefited greatly from the first-hand experience gained from the input of Teresa Devlin, CEO of the NBSCCCI.
- 2.3.8 The IRG recognises that the SCSSA will take time to be properly established but it is imperative that any interim arrangement is short term and that the SCSSA is fully independent, including having appropriate funding to support its work. The IRG welcomes the intention of BCoS to recruit a director for the SCSSA who is full-time and accountable to the oversight body. There is, however, further work required on the national structure and its relationship through shared services with other Church functions.
- 2.3.9 There may be some initial hesitation within dioceses and religious organisations regarding a 'one church' approach and it needs to be emphasised that the transparent oversight of a single professional independent body will not only aid accountability but will also reduce pressure on Bishops and the religious provincials.
- 2.4 A consistent approach to safeguarding is essential: consistent across different parts of Scotland and consistent across different parts of the Church.
- 2.4.1 The McLellan report emphasised that the restoration of credibility was a priority, particularly as much damage had been done to survivors and to the general congregations across the parishes and dioceses of Scotland. The commission

identified the need to address any barriers that legal and structural differences between Dioceses and religious congregations may have in restricting consistency.

- 2.4.2 A priority for the Church was to ensure that survivors of abuse and those accused of abuse must be treated consistently in every part of the country. The report identified that not only should justice be done but it must be seen to be done.
- 2.4.3 Consideration is currently being given by the BCoS to establishing meaningful consultation with and input from survivors. It is challenging and complex to ensure that appropriate representation is achieved while respecting the privacy of those involved.
- 2.4.4 The Church is considering the approach recommended by Ian Elliot in his report on the Catholic Church's Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements in England and Wales, published in 2020. This emphasises that the Church has much to learn from the views and participation in policy development of those who have experienced abuse. The IRG would like to record its thanks to Ian for his insight and helpful advice in helping to support the thinking of both the IRG and the BCoS on the way forward.
- 2.4.5 Representation and scrutiny should be supported through contributions from reflective and self-evaluating clergy, professionals and lay contributors. This should include regularly gathering the views of the wider Church community and beyond. The church should embrace the principles of co-design and work with church members (including victims and those who support victims) as partners in the design and development of policy and practice.
- 2.4.6 The concept of subsidiarity is central to any revised system. It will ensure scrutiny across all aspects of the Church while continuing to emphasise that decisions continue to be taken at the most local practical level. There is a growing recognition across the Church that effective safeguarding requires shared resources and expertise. Therefore, any model needs to continue to develop the ability of local structures to evaluate and, where required, address issues of concern. It is also necessary that an independent overview is a key component of final arbitration.
- 2.4.7 Whichever model is chosen, it should ensure that the involvement of both clerical and lay contributors is valued and contributes to the work of the Church in full knowledge of the range of church activities, ensuring that provision is safe and loving in environments and premises that are fit for purpose.
- 2.5 Justice must be done, and must be seen to be done, for those who have been abused and for those against whom allegations of abuse are made.

- 2.5.1 Central to any future developments is the focus on seeing those who have been subject to abuse as having the wisdom and insight to act as critical friends rather than being seen solely as victims. Church leaders recognise that individuals who have been abused have the right to feel that, when they raise concerns, the Church responds proactively in supporting their needs and that swift and appropriate action is taken to ensure that justice is achieved.
- 2.5.2 There is evidence of a more coherent approach emerging within the Church, led by diocesan advisors, to identify and support those who have been abused. However, despite some innovative practice, there remain inconsistencies. The response that abuse is historical is widely recognised as being redundant and should be avoided altogether.
- 2.5.3 The Church has a range of systems for identifying and reporting abuse, such as the Motu Proprio. Recognising the credibility of an allegation is crucial, as is respecting the rights of the complainant. This is, however, not the same as accepting the truth of the subjective description. It is, therefore, important that procedures are balanced, transparent and seen to be functioning effectively. Any revised structure needs to emphasise credibility and respect but recognise the need for conclusions based on the balance of probability and sufficiently flexible to reflect local diocesan structures.
- 2.5.4 Consistency has improved, supported by an increasingly collective commitment to IGI. Detailed implementation can be non-compulsory in recognition of the Bishops' autonomy, provided that there remains a commitment to rigorous independent quality assurance. Any model must focus on ensuring safeguarding provision and support for children, young people and those who are vulnerable.
- 2.5.5 The composition of the future structure should contain suitable expertise in evaluation and professional safeguarding, with an appropriate balance of religious as well as independent appointments. This does not necessarily require significant additional resources; it is recognised that associated costs should be minimised but be appropriate to the scale of the work involved.
- 2.5.6 The IRG benefited from the considerable insight provided through contact with those who have been abused within the Church. In a similar vein, groups or individuals who raise concerns must be taken seriously and be encouraged to come forward.
- 2.5.7 The Church recognises that work on a whistleblowing and complaints procedure requires to be established. The approach should be based on established good practice and should ensure confidentiality for those providing information. Similarly, the Church is at an early stage of exploring a tribunal system for allegations against clergy and other Church members. Whichever model evolves, the crucial element is to ensure consistency while complying fully with both Scots and Canon law.

- 2.6 The priority of undertaking regular high-quality training and continuous professional development in safeguarding must be understood and accepted by all those involved in safeguarding at every level.
- 2.6.1 The McLellan report identified that regular high-quality training and continuous professional development in safeguarding were priorities. Full participation was seen as being an essential component. To this end, annual diocesan audits have provided helpful information on the numbers attending training which has led to more focused monitoring. However, as yet, there remain issues over both full participation and appropriate depth of training relative to role, including by the clergy.
- 2.6.2 The introduction of IGI reinforced the requirement for all members of the Church to take responsibility for safeguarding. The Church's audit processes emphasise this role at parish and diocesan levels. Revised and enhanced monitoring through national and diocesan structures are also helping to ensure greater accountability. The second iteration of IGI should build on the growing emphasis being placed on using the standards to ensure consistency and quality of practice at all levels of the Church.
- 2.6.3 The introduction of the standards has resulted in more specific and relevant awareness training at both a national, diocesan and religious organisation level. There remains the potential to use the diocesan and religious organisation audits and action planning structures to identify gaps in compliance with the standards and link this more directly with specific training needs.
- 2.6.4 The IRG welcomes the developing input of diocesan advisers into identifying training priorities. It would be beneficial if this collaboration was widened to reflect the needs of the clergy and religious organisations. The greater the collaboration, particularly when underpinned by analysis of need and sharing of best practice, the more that training opportunities will be beneficial and focused. As this develops, the IRG would welcome tailored training based on audit and review as well as continuing the requirement for induction and familiarisation training linked to IGI and the standards
- 2.6.5 The Church must ensure that its policies and practice with regard to survivors is of paramount importance. To this end, greater emphasis should be placed on informal training such as disseminating the Church's commitment to safeguarding and to the standards and principles at parish and religious level. This should go beyond awareness raising to reinforce the commitment and responsibility of all members of the Church. Similarly, regular updates on the improvements made to safeguarding should also feature, informed by evidenced-based analysis to help ensure consistently high-quality outcomes.

- 2.7 The Commission required that the Church set out a theology of safeguarding
- 2.7.1 The Report stressed the need for a coherent and compelling theology of safeguarding and it recognised that, even when all of its recommendations had been accepted and acted on, the Church would still not have done enough to demonstrate the centrality of safeguarding in its life and work. This can only be achieved when safeguarding is at the heart of the Church’s administration, its worship and its theology.
- 2.7.2 Despite clear improvements in this area there remains the need for focused leadership to support a consistent approach to setting out the goals of the Church while providing a coherent overview of all action taken within each diocese and across religious organisations within a theological context and to track the progress being made.
- 2.7.3 Increased input is required to ensure a suitably rigorous leadership oversight through evaluating the effectiveness of roles and responsibilities in this area. The creation of a SCSSA provides an opportunity to ensure that best practice is shared in this area as well as providing an overview of the effectiveness of any action taken to ensure that there is full and consistent commitment to the paramountcy of safeguarding.

3. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1 IRG’s work has been contingent upon the McLellan Commission’s report and implementation of its recommendations. However, it is now six years since the McLellan Commission (August 2015) published its report. Over this time understanding of safeguarding issues has evolved and with it policy and practice responses. The following are key issues that the Church needs to consider going forward.

3.2. Changing Regulatory Position from Charity Regulators

- 3.2.1 The Charity Commission in England’s most recent guidance widens the scope of how safeguarding is defined. The revised definition moves beyond protecting children and adults at risk and includes a requirement to also protect staff and volunteers. With organisations requiring to have clear policies in place to prevent bullying and harassment and to support whistleblowing. In addition clear protocols are now in place that require significant safeguarding events to be formally reported as “serious Incidents”.

The Scottish Charity regulator OSCR doesn’t have the same level of enforcement powers as its English equivalent. However there has been an acceptance of the need to protect all people (including staff and volunteers) who come in contact with a charity

from harm. In addition significant safeguarding events should be flagged as “notifiable events”. As a result registered Scottish charities (including the Church and its associated charitable activities) are now under an increased regulatory burden. As such there is a clear expectation that effective policies and procedures should be in place and where charitable status is held a willingness to be externally accountable.

3.3 Mandatory Reporting

- 3.3.1 Other emergent themes the Church needs to consider include the issue of peer to peer abuse (between children or adults) within all its institutions and the potential for mandatory reporting to come into force once the Independent Inquiry into Childhood Sexual Abuse in England publishes its final report in 2022.
- 3.3.2 To continue to drive practice forward the BCoS and the new safeguarding agency need to be outward looking bodies, engaged in the international conversation about learning from past events and using this knowledge to continue to redefine good practice. Learning from the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and IICSA provide a detailed exploration of organisational failures and the harm that can be caused.
- 3.3.3 More importantly however, these enquiries also set out what needs to change culturally and point to how practice needs to evolve to keep people safe in future. The BCoS need to embrace the lessons of these enquiries and not see their output as the documentation historic failings.

3.4 Working with Survivors

- 3.4.1 The issue of work with survivors (lay and clerical) and supporters of survivors remains a difficult area for the church. Fear of traumatising (or re-traumatising) victims of abuse/survivors and/or having to deal with uncomfortable facts can create a degree of paralysis. However, where victims have been actively engaged and supported sensitively, there are clear signs that they wish to play an active part in the change process.
- 3.4.2 Participation and co-design are now key concepts being embraced across the voluntary and public sectors to influence policy and practice. The new safeguarding agency needs to consider how co-design can be an active part of practice going forward. The issue of focusing solely on people who have self-identified as being a victim of abuse is perhaps the issue that the church needs to reflect on most carefully.
- 3.4.3 Welcoming a wider variety of people into the conversation, e.g. those who haven’t been identified as having suffered abuse, those who have supported abuse survivors

and those who care passionately about driving safeguarding practice forward, potentially opens the door to a more nuanced forward-looking conversation rather than the current deadlock.

- 3.4.4 The BCoS should see the current challenges as real and important opportunities for the Church to demonstrate its commitment to the centrality of safeguarding going forward. Encouraging outreach to national fora as a means to seeking out best practice is to see this as a process and not an event. Safeguarding is a perpetual challenge to the Church, as it is to all institutions, and there is opportunity for the BCoS to engage actively in this area as a fundamental part of the Church's mission and not as an added burden.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Leadership

- The BCoS should develop its theology of safeguarding.
- There should be direct reference in audit and improvement plans to the importance of safeguarding to the fundamental work of the Church.
- Safeguarding should be an integral part of every aspect of life in the Church, beyond the need for compliance.

4.2 In God's Image 2

- In implementing the eight standards it is important that each is clearly measurable. This objective will be supported through enhanced illustration of the standards containing technical specifications or other precise criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline or definition.
- The focus of the document needs to be on the quality and impact of practice rather than process.

4.3 Key Principles

In applying the Church's principles on safeguarding the following should be considered

- Consistency - This can only be achieved through a binding commitment to the standards and using the experience gained to support a 'one church' approach.
- Transparency - Safe practice requires a commitment to being open to changing safeguarding practice in light of rigorous self-evaluation.
- Capacity - Capacity building is essential if the Church's safeguarding systems are to be inclusive and participative. This can be achieved through an appropriate balance of building on intrinsic strengths as well as complying with extrinsic audits and expertise.
- Accountability and Consent - If the SCSSA is expected to regulate compliance with safeguarding standards rather than merely advise, all jurisdictions (diocese, religious organisations etc.) must commit to consent to all directives about non compliance.
- Authority - This will only be effective when there is clarity and consistency on the allocation of responsibility with the emphasis being on evaluating the impact of the actions taken against agreed standards. The impact on the vulnerable must be paramount and, when there are issues over compliance, then both support as well as challenge is required through responsive leadership aimed at addressing concerns through enhancing the capacity of those involved.

- Sustainability - This will only occur when procedures stand the test of time and not when action is only taken in response to a crisis.
- Independence - This is an essential requirement of any new structure to ensure objective monitoring and reporting that is seen to put the interests and welfare of the vulnerable first.

4.4 Audit and Review

- The BCoS should use self-evaluation and external moderation reports and linked evidence to create a more strategic overview of developing strengths and areas for improvement.
- In turn, this information should assist in identifying more targeted training and sharing of best practice as well as helping to set measurable targets for improvement.
- Gaps in diocesan and religious audits regarding awareness of IGI and the application of both the standards and key principles should be explored at a strategic level and this information used to target improvement.
- The emphasis on the auditing and review of parish, diocesan and religious activity should move from measuring process to measuring the quality and impact of their safeguarding improvement objectives through increasingly using evaluative evidence drawn from both internal and external sources.

4.5 SCSSA

- The members of the SCSSA should possess appropriate expertise in evaluation and professional safeguarding.
- SCSSA should have appropriate funding to support capacity building at a local level as well as commissioning targeted external independent evaluation when required.
- The BCoS should build on the ‘critical friend’ approach established by the IRG in relation to both diocesan and religious audits as well as support following external independent review through promoting the clear national authority of the new SCSSA.
- An operational delivery framework should be established, reinforcing that the dioceses and religious organisations retain the authority and responsibility for the day-to-day organisation and administration of safeguarding.
- In turn, the SCSSA should scrutinise the quality of safeguarding, provide an input to the BCoS on strategic leadership and use evidence-based analysis to design and deliver training in consultation with those responsible for safeguarding across all aspects of church life.

4.6 Learning Network

- Support should be available at national level which is credible, accepted and well-resourced in order that local progress in developing safeguarding capacity can be promoted and sustained.
- The involvement of diocesan safeguarding advisers in helping to design training and safeguarding development resources should continue to be encouraged. This will ensure that capacity building and collective responsibility are supported.
- The policy statements in each diocese on access and support for survivors should be reviewed to ensure that they maximise communication and engagement.
- A learning network should be established among diocesan representatives with responsibility for providing advice and information to survivors and consideration given to creating shared national resources.
- Diocesan improvement plans should include a survivor perspective.

4.7 Fairness and Justice

- The IRG welcomes the decision taken by the BCoS to develop a stepped approach to the Church's procedures. A further review should be undertaken regarding consideration of the balance of probability following an allegation ensuring the needs of the complainant are foremost while balancing the range of interests involved.

The main recommendations of the McLellan Commission are listed in Appendix 3.

APPENDIX 1

MEMBERSHIP OF THE IRG

Helen Liddell (Baroness Liddell of Coatdyke) Chair, is a former Member of Parliament and Secretary of State for Scotland. She is a member of the House of Lords.

Bartolomeo Biagini is an educational consultant. He was formerly a lead HM inspector of education with responsibility for inclusion across all sectors of education and was involved in child protection inspections. He also held senior leadership posts within education authorities in Scotland, including a deputy director post as head of learning communities within South Lanarkshire Council.

Gordon Jeyes OBE was the UK's first Director of Children's Services and was the first Chief Executive of Ireland's Child and Family Agency (Tusla). He is chair of the audit and risk committee for the Legal Aid Board in Ireland and chairs the National Children's Hospital (Ireland) Community Benefit Group.

Lisa Markham is a safeguarding practitioner with wide experience including work in criminal justice settings and within the Church in the Diocese of Hallam, Sheffield.

Roisin McGoldrick is a former member of the McLellan Commission. She is a registered social worker and is currently employed as a teaching fellow in the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Strathclyde University.

Lesleyann Russell is Compliance and Risk Manager for BBC Children in Need, specialising in safeguarding in the third sector and media production.

Donald Urquhart is the National Safeguarding Adviser to the Scottish Episcopal Church with considerable experience of public protection and safeguarding in both Scotland and England. He is a retired police officer and has worked as both a lead officer and an independent chair of child protection committees in Scotland.

APPENDIX 2

| Context | Date | Outcome | Impact |
|---|-----------|---|---|
| Remit to form an independent safeguarding group | 2017 | Chair appointed IRG established by the BCOS to assist the church in meeting the recommendations of the McLellan report | Membership of broad/balanced range of expertise to ensure independent scrutiny and support for safeguarding. |
| Criteria for IRG/BCOS Independent scrutiny and support | 2017 | Protocol agreed on overview of church safeguarding arrangements Agreed criteria for analysis of diocesan annual audits and to publish evaluative reports on the BCOS website | 2017-2021 The church has revised and improved its annual safeguarding audit arrangements informing more focused action planning and evaluation at BCOS and diocesan level. |
| Mapping overview of church safeguarding arrangements Memorandum of Understanding | 2017 | Additional priority actions and remits agreed. Clarity of roles/responsibilities/accountability refined and agreed | 2017-2021 Meeting key clergy, including diocesan/other church organisations/wider stakeholders, including survivors of abuse. International safeguarding developments monitored and evaluated. External expertise identified and contributed to IRG strategic thinking/action. |
| Annual and thematic reports produced to help self-evaluation and strategic planning at all levels of the Church | 2017-2021 | Published reports on the BCOS website | Informed practice at national and individual diocesan/religious congregation level including supporting the identification of national safeguarding training priorities. Contributed to IGI Vrs1 and 2 |

| Context | Date | Outcome | Impact |
|---|--------------|---|--|
| Consultation | 2018-2021 | Consulting with and supporting Diocesan safeguarding teams. Developing a shared understanding. IRG reps have visited five DSAG meetings. | Programme of IRG visits to Diocesan safeguarding groups agreed and actioned from 2020. Ongoing contact has supported shared understanding. |
| Outreach | 2019 | Glasgow outreach event achieved. Remaining events unable to proceed due to COVID 19 restrictions. | First event: Informed discussion at IRG meeting in 2/2020. Action: Identify strategies for ongoing consultation with Dioceses and in developing strategic thinking. |
| IRG commission SCIE independent | 2018-2022 | Programme of SCIE audits of the 8 Dioceses across Scotland agreed with BCOS. BCOS funding the audit and fully support the audit programme. Four Diocesan audits completed/ available on the BCOS website. Remaining four commissioned and ongoing. | Galloway and St Andrew's and Edinburgh have revised and improved structures and priorities for action. Aberdeen and Motherwell developing action plans resulting from published audits. Greater awareness raised supporting a positive culture of self-evaluation across all Church areas. |
| IRG support post SCIE audits | 2020 ongoing | Six monthly action planning meetings agreed to support Dioceses in taking forward SCIE audit review suggestions. | Positive engagement with phase 1 SCIE leading to focused action planning. Support for phase 2 developing. Overall support constrained by COVID-19. |
| National Office restructuring and design of IGI | 2018-21 | Supporting BCOS in monitoring the progress being made in carrying out these reviews. Providing the BCOS with thematic reports linked to the above. | Contribute to strategic direction of a revised national safeguarding structure. Evaluating the quality and impact of the revised structures at national level. Informing IGI1 and IGI2. |

| Context | Date | Outcome | Impact |
|--|--------------|--|--|
| Religious congregations (RCSC) and Conference of Religious in Scotland Safeguarding Commission (CRSSC) | 2020 | Discussion of the role of these organisations and their safeguarding responsibilities. | Clarify roles and responsibilities. Ensure effective engagement and communication with religious organisations in Scotland. |
| Restructuring of Safeguarding within the Church/ Succession management post IRG | 2020 ongoing | Contribute to the ongoing review of safeguarding arrangements within the Church. | Ensuring continuity of safeguarding building on the work of the IRG through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - membership of a short-life working group chaired by Bishop Toal to design a revised national safeguarding structure - agreeing a programme to assist the BCOS in the effective design and delivery of the agreed SCSSA structure - continuing to monitor and support the work of SCIE in completing the cycle of diocesan audits - continuing to evaluate diocesan annual safeguarding audits and post SCIE diocesan action plans to support measurable impact |

Appendix 3

Principal recommendations of the McLellan Commission

1. Support for the survivors of abuse must be an absolute priority for the Catholic Church in Scotland in the field of safeguarding.
2. The “Awareness and Safety” manual should be completely revised or rewritten.
3. There must be some external scrutiny and independence in the safeguarding policies and practices of the Catholic Church in Scotland.
- 4 Effectiveness and improvement must be measured at every level of safeguarding in the Church.
- 5 A consistent approach to safeguarding is essential: consistent across different parts of Scotland and consistent across different parts of the Church.
- 6 Justice must be done, and justice must be seen to be done, for those who have been abused and for those against whom allegations of abuse are made.
- 7 The priority of undertaking regular high-quality training and continuous professional development in safeguarding must be understood and accepted by all those involved in safeguarding at every level.
- 8 The Catholic Church in Scotland must set out a theology of safeguarding which is coherent and compelling.