

SAFEGUARDING RESTRUCTURING

Keeping you informed



THE ONE CHURCH APPROACH IN
ENGLAND AND WALES

The topic of the restructuring of safeguarding is still provoking a lot of comments and questions. The Restructuring Project Consultation and Communication group thought it might be helpful to try to deal with some of the queries that are still around by means of an FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions) column. There is not enough space in a single release to tackle them all so there will be more FAQ's in the next edition, due out in the New Year.

Q. The religious commissions have a long history of expertise in safeguarding. How can this be used, and how will their status, experience and responsibilities be respected and maintained under the new arrangements?

A. The new safeguarding commissions, whatever their future shape, will need to draw heavily on the knowledge and expertise of members of the current religious commissions to help them reach an understanding of safeguarding as it applies to religious. Those religious safeguarding coordinators already involved with current religious commissions will be offered an opportunity to contribute to the new ones. Their knowledge of religious life will help them to play a full part in the discussions and decisions of the new commission, whatever the safeguarding context may be.

Q. There is some feeling that under the new arrangements the religious will lose the safeguarding decision-making autonomy they presently have. To whom and how will the new commissions be answerable?

A. Neither the religious nor the diocese has REAL autonomy in safeguarding decision-making, each being bound by canon law and by the national safeguarding procedures of the Catholic Church. There are however differences in how religious and dioceses are accountable and these will remain under the new arrangements. The religious are and will be responsible to the trustees of the order and to the congregation leader and the dioceses to the bishop and diocesan trustees.

Q. The roles of the diocesan safeguarding "office" and the diocesan safeguarding commission, and the distinction between them, have no parallels within religious safeguarding. Can you clarify these?

A. Dioceses do vary, but generally the safeguarding office is where safeguarding issues and the procedures, processes and administration of safeguarding is dealt with. The commission is the body responsible for ensuring that discussion and decisions about casework take place and are carried out, for determining the approach to safeguarding, for further developing the culture of safeguarding and for recommending courses of action to the bishop.

Q. How is information about the progress of the restructuring project being passed on?

A. It is intended that with each issue of Safeguarding Matters, and every mailing by CoR to its members, the Safeguarding Restructuring mailing will be released containing an update on progress together with other useful information. In addition we use direct mail shots and meetings to provide information, the meetings scheduled for January/February and April 2012 being a case in point (see overleaf)

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Dates have been arranged for the regional meetings mentioned in the last update. To remind readers, the first series of half-day meetings are intended to address and respond to ongoing concerns about the restructuring, and the second two half-days to deal more with issues relating to how the restructuring plans are being implemented. Of course, both sets of meetings will also be intended to provide further information about the progress of the project.



Series 2 of Meetings

Friday 27th April 2012 in the North of England

Monday 30th April 2012 in the South of England



A reminder that the members of the group are happy to respond to queries or comments about the restructuring project. Please feel free to contact us. We are:

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