

## Joint Safeguarding arrangements with the Church of England

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<b>Status of Paper</b>	Final
<b>Action Required</b>	Decision
<b>Draft Resolutions</b>	7/1. The Council approves the creation of the new Joint Safeguarding Working Group and the terms of reference stated.  7/2. The Council appoints the Methodist members of the Joint Safeguarding Working Group as listed in the report.

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	To improve and enhance joint safeguarding working
<b>Main Points</b>	The report proposes a smaller group with a tighter focus on active participation and working to take policies and good practice in safeguarding forward. It lists the proposed Methodist nomination to the group.  The proposed Terms of Reference will also be presented for adoption by the Church of England's House of Bishops.
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	The report is written in the context of a history of constructive working relationships with the Church of England on safeguarding matters and the wish to enhance these by providing clear and positive outcomes.
<b>Consultations</b>	Existing members of the Joint Safeguarding Liaison group; key individuals with responsibility for safeguarding in the Church of England and the Methodist Church including Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers and District Safeguarding Officers.

### Summary of Impact

<b>Wider Connexional</b>	Improved model of ecumenical working on safeguarding matters.
<b>External (eg ecumenical)</b>	Closer and enhanced joint working on safeguarding matters.

## Joint Safeguarding arrangements with the Church of England

1. The Church of England and the Methodist Church in Britain entered into a covenant commitment in November 2003 after conversations lasting several years. One of the expressions of this covenant is to develop joint safeguarding arrangements. These have been in place since that period, overseen by a Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group. After 11 years of joint working, the decision was taken by both the Chairs of the Joint Safeguarding Liaison Group to refocus and refresh the membership and the Terms of Reference of the group to ensure that it is continuing to work effectively on safeguarding through the covenant arrangements into the future. The group will be re-named the Joint Safeguarding Working Group (JSWG).
2. Following this review of the current arrangement the new JSWG will:
  - 2.1 Continue the joint approach through a group which will report to the governing bodies of both churches and assist the work of their staff safeguarding delivery teams.
  - 2.2 Ensure members of the JSWG are practitioners and experts who can advise on safeguarding issues and develop detailed policies and practices.
  - 2.3 Produce policy and practice guidance for Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers / District Safeguarding Officers.
  - 2.4 Be co-chaired by the Bishop of Durham and Revd Dr Liz Smith and their successors, and supported by the national safeguarding staff teams of the Church of England and Methodist Church.
- 3. Main Features and Terms of Reference of the New Joint Safeguarding Working Group**
  - 3.1 Continue the **joint** Church of England and Methodist Church approach.
  - 3.2 A **smaller** group representing both churches to enable more streamlined decision-making and detailed discussion on practical and operational safeguarding issues.
  - 3.3 Emphasis on practitioners and subject matter experts who can advise on technical issues and who can develop detailed policies. Overall governance and oversight of safeguarding delivery will be held by the governing bodies of the respective churches. For the Church of England this sits with the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops, as well as the Bishops in each diocese. For the Methodist Church this sits with the Methodist Conference and - where appropriate - the Methodist Council.
  - 3.4 The Joint Working Group will therefore focus on providing its expertise to develop and comment upon the formulation of **joint** safeguarding policies for approval by the governing groups of the Church of England and the Methodist Church. It will produce models of good practice for DSA/DSOs in the name of the Joint Working Group as and when required.
  - 3.5 Nominations made to the group will be processed centrally and selection of its members will ensure membership across a range of areas of expertise and regions. A key selection criterion will be that members of the Group must be in a position to help drive the delivery of policies and practices in their districts/dioceses.

3.6 The Joint Working Group to be supported by the national safeguarding staff teams of the Church of England and the Methodist Church.

3.7 The group will be chaired by the lead Anglican Bishop on safeguarding and a Methodist appointed by the Methodist Council.

#### **4. Terms of Reference for the Joint Safeguarding Working Group**

Reporting to the Church of England and the Methodist Church governing bodies the Joint Safeguarding Working Group will:

4.1 Enable a forum for subject matter experts and practitioners in safeguarding to track and monitor national safeguarding issues, ensuring that both churches' approach are consistent with legal requirements and best practice.

4.2 Have regard to the safeguarding delivery strategies of both churches in assisting with and advising on the development of policies and the delivery of safeguarding objectives at diocesan and district level.

4.3 Develop and advise on detailed safeguarding policy guidance for approval by both Churches.

4.4 Develop models of good practice and training for safeguarding advisers /officers in dioceses and districts.

4.5 Identify issues that require notification / escalation to the governing bodies.

4.6 Report back to the governing bodies on an annual basis or more regularly as required through the relevant national staff teams and co-Chairs.

4.7 Be responsible for delivery of joint Methodist/Church of England Annual Safeguarding Conference.

4.8 Have powers to set up task-and-finish working groups on specialist issues to report back to main Joint Working Group.

4.9 Be responsible for consultation with dioceses and districts on development of technical safeguarding policies and training through regular Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers/District Safeguarding Officers days and the regional group network and feeding these findings back to the Group and to safeguarding staff teams of both churches.

#### **5. Members**

5.1 Joint chairs as above.

5.2 Lead staff to be the National Safeguarding Advisers (Child & Adult Protection) for the Church of England & Methodist Church in Britain (or their interim cover(s) as necessary).

5.3 Eight Diocesan/District Safeguarding Advisers/Officers (DSOs/DSAs). Church of England (four) and Methodist Church (four).

5.4 Membership will ensure representation across England and a balance of members' specialist interest between children and young people and adults who are vulnerable.

- 5.5 Membership will be initially for three years with members' release being timed, with their agreement, to ensure continuity.
- 5.6 Representation from Scotland and Wales to be agreed by Chairs.
- 5.7 A survivor representative
- 5.8 Attendance as required from other stakeholders/advisers including the relevant insurer, and the Legal Offices of both churches if appropriate.
- 5.9 Quorum of five (excluding national safeguarding staff and chairs) required for decisions to be valid.
- 5.10 Additional support to be provided by staff of both churches as required.
- 5.11 A selection process took place through interested candidates from the existing JSLG and DSOs/ DSAs providing expressions of interest. The final selection aimed to provide a balance of geographic, gender and safeguarding specialism representation together with a mixture of existing experience and 'new blood'. The final selection was made by the joint chairs.
- 5.12 Those Methodist Church members proposed by the joint chairs are:
- Mr Tim Carter (existing member of the JSLG; member of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Advisory Panel)
  - The Revd Susan A Mclvor (DSO Nottingham and Derby, new member)
  - Mr Grahame Snelling (DSO Sheffield, new member)
  - The Revd K Alison McDonald (DSO York and Hull, existing member of the JSLG )
  - Mr Peter Ackerley ( representing Wales, DSO Wales)

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

- 7/1. The Council approves the creation of the new Joint Safeguarding Working Group and the terms of reference stated above.**
- 7/2. The Council appoints the following Methodist members of the Joint Safeguarding Working Group as follows:**
- Mr Tim Carter**
  - The Revd Susan A Mclvor**
  - Mr Grahame Snelling**
  - The Revd K Alison McDonald**
  - Mr Peter Ackerley**