

## Safeguarding Committee: Review of Terms of Reference

<b>Contact Name and Details</b>	The Revd Alison F Tomlin, Chair of the Committee Alison.Tomlin@methodist.org.uk
<b>Action Required</b>	Decision
<b>Resolutions</b>	54/1. The Council receives the report.  54/2. The Council adopts the proposals for amending the terms of reference for the Safeguarding Committee (paragraph 3.3), and directs that the necessary amendments to Standing Order 232 are prepared for presentation to the Conference.

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	The outcome of a review of the terms of reference of the Safeguarding Committee, as directed by resolution 22/3 of the 2017 Conference.
<b>Main Points</b>	Introduction The Safeguarding Committee The Review Membership of the Committee The Chair of the Committee
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	<i>Courage, Cost and Hope</i> , the report of the Past Cases Review Report of the Past Cases Review Implementation Group to the 2017 Conference (2017 Conference Agenda, Item 22)
<b>Consultations</b>	Safeguarding Committee

### Summary of Impact

<b>Standing Orders</b>	Standing Order 232
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## Safeguarding Committee: Review of Terms of Reference

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Further to the report of the Past Cases Review (*Courage, Cost and Hope*, 2015), the Past Cases Review Implementation Group advised the Council and the Conference in matters relating to the implementation of the recommendations made by the Review. The 2017 Conference directed the Council to review the terms of reference and membership of the Safeguarding Committee with the aim of ensuring that the Committee is best placed to support the on-going work of ensuring a safer Church for all. (Resolution 22/3, 2017 Conference)

This followed up on one of the concluding paragraphs in the report of the Past Cases Review Implementation Group that suggested that, as the work of the Implementation Group was concluded, the Safeguarding Committee should be charged with monitoring progress:

*The Implementation Group suggests that the Safeguarding Committee should now be the body charged with monitoring the progress made by the senior leadership of the Church in enabling the contribution of the whole Church to making us a safer space. The Implementation Group suggests that at this point of transition and development in the task of safeguarding, it would be helpful to review the terms of reference and the current membership of the Safeguarding Committee; to ensure it is best placed to take up this role of thinking strategically and proactively about our safeguarding practice and upholding our commitment to continue to listen and learn as a Church. (paragraph 3.2, report 22 to the 2017 Conference)*

### 2.0 The Safeguarding Committee

- 2.1 The Safeguarding Committee was formerly the Safeguarding Advisory Panel and, after a review, was renamed with amended terms of reference in 2015.
- 2.2 Standing Order 232 sets out the role and responsibilities of the Committee.

### 3.0 The Review

- 3.1 The current Safeguarding Committee gives directions and offers guidance in situations relating to safeguarding concerns and procedures (SO 236) and risk assessments (SO 237).
- 3.2 The Committee has conducted a review, taking into account the recommendations of the Past Cases Review and the work of the Implementation Group. The Committee has identified a need to include a clearer focus on advocacy and to become more pro-active, enabling strategic thinking to take place. The membership of the Committee will need to develop in order to accommodate this new focus.
- 3.3 The Committee proposes that the following terms of reference are added to the existing ones, in order to fulfil the gaps which have been identified in the Committee's terms of reference:
1. To address the strategic direction of safeguarding within the church with a focus on promoting effective safeguarding practice and upholding a commitment to continue to listen and learn as a church
  2. To oversee effective safe recruitment and implementation of safer space training programmes
  3. To identify any further work that should be undertaken in relation to the recommendations from the Past Cases Review
  4. To develop relationships with statutory agencies to further understanding and joint working in respect of safeguarding matters
  5. To continue to develop effective working relationships with sister churches in order to work together where practicable

6. To make recommendations to the Methodist Council on any matters relevant to achieving the above.

#### **4.0 Membership of the Committee**

- 4.1 The current membership of the Safeguarding Committee comprises a chair and up to eighteen other persons, including:
  - (i) at least ten people with experience in safeguarding matters and the consideration of disclosures, and
  - (ii) at least five people who, by virtue of seniority, experience or office held, will in the judgment of the council command wide respect.
- 4.2 Those who serve on the Committee under head (ii) are usually former District Chairs, Presidents or Vice-Presidents, and those who serve under head (i) are members of the Methodist Church who have a professional knowledge or experience of safeguarding matters.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the Committee's membership should be broadened to take account of a wider focus in safeguarding work, particularly in the area of vulnerable adults and to provide an independent voice from the professional world of safeguarding.
- 4.4 The proposals are summarised as follows:
  1. 'Senior persons' will have similar criteria as for the Committee's chair (as set out below). They will be members of the Methodist Church and understand its operations and processes.
  2. There will be a six year term of office for committee members.
  3. When the committee is at full strength there will be enough members to operate safeguarding panels across the year (made up of a minimum of three members).
  4. The age balance in the committee membership will be borne in mind when appointing new members.
  5. Greater scrutiny into the work of the committee will be provided by two advisory persons from external bodies (ie Action for Children and Methodist Homes) to assist the committee in ensuring greater quality assurance in its work and ensure consistency in standards. These persons will not be members of the Committee.
  6. A small advisory group of six persons from external bodies will meet twice a year, to assist the Methodist Church in assessing its safeguarding work.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the appointment process mirrors that for the Committee Chair (as set out in section 5 below).

#### **5.0 The Chair of the Committee**

- 5.1 The following are the main criteria required of the chair:
  - In-depth knowledge, professionalism and confidence in dealing with people within the church
  - Awareness of the strategy of the wider church
  - Quality of leadership and experience in chairing committees
  - Confidence in relating to the different church bodies
  - Experience across church processes, especially in relation to stationing
  - Experience of pastoral supervision and use of external supervision
  - Ability to present the Committee's Report to the Methodist Council and the Conference
  - Willingness to attend the Methodist Council when requested
  - Experience of committees, and with leverage in Methodism
  - Ability to inspire confidence from the secretariat and the Safeguarding Committee
  - Ability to work flexibly with a commitment to average 4/5 days per month
  - Experience of media exposure

- 5.2 It is hoped that the Chair will have had some prior experience of the committee , and that the term of office of the chair is four years. It is proposed that the Chair should work with a deputy chair and that the Chair and Deputy Chair should share the chairing of appeal panels.
- 5.3 An advertisement for the role of the Chair was circulated to District Chairs and District Safeguarding Officers, and expressions of interest were considered by the Secretary of the Conference, the Chair of the Committee and the Safeguarding Adviser. A name is brought to the Council for appointment (and details can be found in the Nominations and Appointments paper).
- 5.4 Consideration was given as to whether this post needs to be independent of the Methodist Church. However, at this stage in the church's life it is felt that the critique of the church's safeguarding work can be provided through the inclusion of two advisory seats on the committee (as set out above).

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

**54/1. The Council receives the report.**

**54/2. The Council adopts the proposals for amending the terms of reference for the Safeguarding Committee (paragraph 3.3), and directs that the necessary amendments to Standing Order 232 are prepared for presentation to the Conference.**