

# Implementation Plan for the Elliott Review

Delivering change and building trust

December 2020

# Project Delivery

## Introduction

On Thursday 19th November, the Autumn 2020 Plenary Assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW), passed the following resolution: "It accepts fully the Recommendations of the Elliott Report and asks that an Implementation Group be created using members of the Review Steering Committee, to scope the way forward, without delay, so that effective positive change is made in our safeguarding structures and arrangements"

Soon after the Plenary Assembly, a Short-Term Task Group (STTG) was formed to draw up an implementation plan to enact and adopt the recommendations of the Elliott Review, to drive change and improvements to safeguarding across the Church in England and Wales. This report sets out the plan as well as the thought processes and methodology behind its construction.

The STTG comprised the original Review Panel of Ian Elliott, Fr John Poland, Sr Sarah Dobson, and Carol Lawrence, with Fr Damian Howard, Provincial of Jesuits, and Dr Colette Limbrick, Director of CSAS.

## Project Leadership Team and Oversight

To implement a plan, a project leadership team is required, and this was identified as one of the first priorities in putting together an effective plan, and a role description was drafted. Indeed, there was some concern and strength of feeling from STTG that in the absence of a strategy to identify who would lead delivery as well as a recruitment process for the appointment of the lead, it was difficult to prepare a deliverable plan.

Accordingly, the Strategy Group appointed Carol Lawrence as the Project Implementation Director to lead on the delivery of the Implementation Plan. Carol has been seconded to the Bishops Conference from Shrewsbury Diocese for two days per week for a six-month period. Carol is an experienced Financial Secretary who has worked in the Church for twelve years, including contributing extensively to national initiatives in this time.

Dr Colette Limbrick, as CSAS Director, will be working alongside Carol during the delivery of the project with a particular focus on the professional safeguarding aspects of the work. The establishment of the National Tribunal Service is an integral part of the recommendations and will require professional input from an appropriately qualified and experienced Canon Lawyer who also has experience in setting up structures in the secular world. The services of Dr Edward Morgan have been retained to carry out this work and work stream.

Initial meetings are taking place in December with ICLSAL as well as the Conference of Religious. It is anticipated that from this there will be a working party formed to look at the establishment of the new resource as a replacement for alignment. This working party will form part of the project leadership team, with a particular focus on the Religious Life (ICLSAL) resource.

The STTG has also recommended that the Steering Committee that was in place during the Review be reconstituted to comment on the implementation plan, to provide the same scrutiny and oversight of the drafting of the implementation plan by the STTG. The same scrutiny and oversight will also be needed

for the Implementation Group which will be required to take forward the implementation plan after this has been reviewed at an extraordinary Plenary Meeting of the CBCEW on Tuesday 12th January 2021.

## Formulating the plan

There are several practical elements to implementation, all of which need to be captured as part of the plan and were considered by STTG, namely:

- Timeline – this is a six-month project, and all work needs to be brought to completion in this time.
- Workstreams as an approach – this worked successfully during the Review, splitting the tasks into groups or streams of work which can be undertaken concurrently, with input from experienced and skilled individuals from across the Church and wider. During the Review, around forty people were involved in workstreams
- Stakeholder involvement – workstreams as an approach lends itself to being able to involve stakeholders in the development and implementation phase.
- Stakeholder engagement – not all stakeholders may wish or be able to take an active part in the work, however it is important that they are engaged and feel involved in this work. There are many groups of stakeholders to consider including victims and survivors, lay faithful in the parishes, clergy and religious, employees and officers of Dioceses and ICLSAL as well as civil society.
- Legal and professional requirements – much of the work will involve contracts, legal structures, and processes. Certain aspects such as the transfer and employment of staff and recruitment, cannot take place until the new structures exist .

The approach has been to capture all processes on a detailed Gantt chart, which groups the actions into workstreams, gives a timeframe for each one and can track completion of tasks. This gives a detailed control document to manage the project and ensure that it runs according to the agreed timeline. The Gantt chart shows who will be leading each area of work as well as how the tasks relate to the Elliott Report recommendations.

Initial stakeholder engagement has already shaped the timing and priority of tasks. For example, both safeguarding coordinators and Chairs of Commissions have indicated that they would appreciate early in the process information on the transition from Safeguarding Commissions to a Safeguarding Sub-Committee of trustees. The STTG has been responsive and programmed this work accordingly.

Key bodies affected such as NCSC have also been considered in the plan, with the Chair of NCSC Chris Pearson being most generous in his support of the transition. There are good communication channels, and this will facilitate and enable a smooth transition to the new arrangements.

Appendix 1 provides a summary of the work, as mapped in the Gantt chart, grouped across the three new safeguarding bodies, highlighting the work to be carried out during the life of the project. Whilst there is much to be done, there is a good foundation from the Review to build upon which will ensure that the project has a strong start. Much of the work is front loaded into the first three or four months of the project, meaning that there is scope if unexpected delays or developments occur.

## Workstreams

Using the approach of workstreams with skilled contributors taking part in each one, there will be a large team of people involved in the processes as there was in the review and it is expected that it would be in the same kind of numbers as before, of the order of forty people or thereabouts. The key will be

efficient organisation and record-keeping in which there will be support administratively from within CSAS's current staff.

Some external professional input will be required to prepare detailed business plans, appointment of Directors, advice on legal contracts and similar. The Strategy Group has agreed that funding can be made available for this work and fee quotes are currently being obtained.

A budget for the external input and all other costs of the project will be prepared in early January once fee quotes have been obtained.

# Building trust

The charts and practical elements of the work represent the 'nuts and bolts' processes, all of which are essential in ensuring the timely delivery of the project. However, there are other key parts of the transition which are essential in building trust, be this trust in the structures, trust in the processes of new working relationships, or trust in the will of the Church to be open, transparent, and accountable. By addressing concerns in key areas, building trust will follow even if it takes longer in some areas than others.

## Communication

There will be a simple, effective communication plan during the project implementation work, with the aim of keeping all stakeholders and the wider public informed.

Regular two weekly updates on progress will be given to stakeholders, on whether tasks have been achieved, any barriers and measures to overcome those, as well as setting out what is to be achieved in the coming two weeks. This will give stakeholders a running commentary on progress and will be a significant indicator that change is happening. There will be a website specifically for the change process where the plan in Appendix 1 can be included as well as the regular update bulletins.

There will also be a communications plan with the Catholic and secular media, whereby significant milestones are communicated through press releases and, where appropriate, well-planned press conferences. There is much good news to tell in reassuring the faithful, survivors and the wider world that the Catholic Church is serious in its commitment to transparent and accountable safeguarding.

## Survivor engagement

A strong theme from the Elliott Review is the wisdom of survivors in shaping the safeguarding structures of the Catholic Church. Over many years SAP has been a source of wisdom in its work as a sub-group of NCSC, and the current engagement with survivors on a one-to-one basis further enhances and strengthens this. The engagement will continue throughout this process to ensure that this important group are involved at each stage, as much as they are willing and able to so do.

## Engagement with Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL)

This has been a key strategy throughout the entire process of the Review and will continue now into the project implementation. There are already good relationships being built between the Project Implementation Director and CoR as well as with individual Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL). However, there is much to do in reaching aligned Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL), especially where there is anxiety over what the changes will mean for them and what action they will need to take. The need for effective engagement cannot be underestimated and will be a key feature over the coming months.

## Stakeholder concerns

There are two key themes arising out of engagement and discussions to date, both of which need to be carefully addressed.

## (1) Transparency

There is a common theme emerging in discussions with stakeholders (from within and without the Church) which is an absence of understanding of where accountability and transparency feature in the new structures. The key proposal in all of this is the shift from having a safeguarding advisory service, which could only ever advise, to a standards agency which is a voluntary regulator of all Dioceses and ICLSAL involved in safeguarding. This can be addressed through continued communication, and there is also an expectation that once the organisation is operational and the contractual arrangements have been formulated it will become clearer.

The major difference is that the Board of Directors of the CSSA will be drawn from a wide cross-section of society, most likely from outside of the Church, which will actively manage the operation and maintain oversight of CSSA. This is where the independence of oversight sits, rather than at the level of individual Safeguarding Commissions. It will be essential to ensure a robust and thorough recruitment process for these Board members, transparent and open to all those with appropriate skills. The support of a professional recruitment agency is being sought in this, adding to transparency.

## (2) Finance

Both Dioceses and Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL) alike have concerns about the funding of the new structures. When this process began in October 2019, no one could have foreseen the impact the current pandemic is having or will continue to have in the coming year and the effect on income and finances across the board. Having said that there is a remarkable willingness being shown to invest in robust safeguarding and often financial anxieties stem from a lack of knowledge. Comprehensive business plans are being commissioned and the financial information from this will be shared with Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL) and Dioceses alike.

As part of the financial plan, it may be that some external funding through donors or grant making bodies may help ease the transition or provide a cushion in the short term. This is something to be kept under review and consideration through the implementation phase

# Summary and Conclusion

The STTG has helped to form a comprehensive plan, and a robust project leadership team has been formed. This team is made up of the Project Implementation Director, the Director of CSAS, an eminent Canon lawyer plus Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL) working group representatives. The delivery of the plan will be monitored by the Steering Group, and strategy oversight will be provided by the Strategy Group, with stakeholder involvement through workstreams. Survivors will be engaged in a manner right for them, and there will be a regular flow of communication for the life of the project.

There is no doubt that this is a major project. However, with good planning, goodwill, and good professional, experienced leadership it is deliverable. The Project Implementation Director and the Leadership Team are confident in the plan and would recommend it to the Bishops Conference.

December 2020.

## Appendix 1 - Timeline of work

	<b>Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency</b>	<b>Religious Life Resource</b>	<b>National Tribunal Service</b>
<b>Within a month</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation phase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation phase</li> <li>• Engagement with CoR and other Religious Life (ICLSAL) groups</li> <li>• Formation of working group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation phase</li> </ul>
<b>Within two months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Limited Company</li> <li>• Preparation of business plans</li> <li>• Legal advice on TUPE and on contractual arrangements</li> <li>• Job descriptions in place for staff</li> <li>• Role descriptions for directors</li> <li>• External recruitment process started</li> <li>• Terms of reference for trustee sub-committee drafted</li> <li>• Route-map for transition to trustee sub-committee established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Limited Company</li> <li>• Preparation of business plans</li> <li>• Legal advice on TUPE and on contractual arrangements</li> <li>• Role descriptions for directors</li> <li>• Briefings for Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of legal structure</li> <li>• Preparation of business plans</li> <li>• Legal advice on TUPE and on contractual arrangements</li> <li>• Job descriptions in place for staff</li> <li>• Role descriptions for directors/oversight board members</li> <li>• Draft constitutional document prepared</li> </ul>
<b>Within three months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Soft' launch</li> <li>• Creation of juridic person</li> <li>• TUPE completed</li> <li>• Creation of template for gathering information on resources in parishes</li> <li>• Decommissioning of NCSC</li> <li>• Creation of reference group for survivors</li> <li>• Route map for transfer of SAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of training needs</li> <li>• Development of training plan</li> <li>• Completion of TUPE if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and procedure for operation completed</li> <li>• Presentation of documents to Holy See</li> <li>• Creation of juridic person</li> </ul>

<p><b>Within four months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of workstreams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Standards</li> <li>o Training</li> <li>o Audit</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts in place with Religious Life Groups (ICLSAL) and CSSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of staff completed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Within five months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of Directors completed</li> <li>• Contracts in place with Dioceses and ICLSAL including resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route map for migration from alignment to new resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>Within six months</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process for registration as Disclosure and Barring Service processing body completed</li> <li>• Fully operational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully operational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully operational subject to Canonical approvals</li> </ul>

