

# Blackburn Cathedral Response to Lessons Learnt Review of October 2022



**BLACKBURN  
CATHEDRAL**

The Bishop of Blackburn and The Chapter of Blackburn Cathedral are very grateful to the Independent Reviewer for their uncompromising work which aims decisively “to improve safeguarding practices for the future” across Blackburn Diocese and at Blackburn Cathedral.

That such a review should ever have become necessary is the source of enormous regret, sadness, shame and repentance for us. To each and every individual who has contributed to the review, in anyway whatsoever, we express our warm heartfelt appreciation and we apologise sincerely and unreservedly for the pain and anxiety caused to many by the prolonged time it has taken to undertake and conclude the review of immensely regrettable past failings.

Moving forward, we are committed to continue making changes and improvements in the following areas.

## **1. Whistleblowers and survivors**

We are committed to being more proactive and transparent in our dealings with whistleblowers and survivors. Specifically, we will in future ensure they feel safe, supported, listened to and updated about outcomes, actions and lessons learned.

## **2. Chapter governance**

In early 2024 Blackburn Cathedral will become a charity regulated by The Charity Commission. In preparation we have strengthened our governance structures, policies and processes, including those related to safeguarding. This has included new Terms of Reference for our Safeguarding Management Group and enhanced due diligence relating to the recruitment of trustees, staff and volunteers.

## **3. Cultural change**

Within the above revised governance framework, the Cathedral will ensure that future safeguarding issues with which it has any connection are dealt with effectively and promptly; respectful to and with care of all persons affected, in the context of a Cathedral where only the highest standards of behaviour are acceptable.

## **4. Working with the wider church**

Accepting that we cannot make some of the changes we would like to on our own, we will work more pro-actively, urgently and determinedly with the national Church of England, and with the local diocese of Blackburn, on critically important matters such as improving clergy & staff discipline, employment law & policies and safeguarding case management.

## **5. Working with external agencies**

In order to improve future safeguarding actions, we will invest in building partnerships with relevant statutory bodies and other organisations on whose collaboration we depend.

The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as The Nolan Principles) apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder. In our determination to improve governance and increase transparency we are committed, as The Blackburn Cathedral Chapter, to adhere to all of them. They are: Selflessness; Integrity; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Honesty; Leadership.

Finally, acknowledging past failures but resolving they should never be repeated in the future, it is our sincerest desire and prayer that the actions we have and are taking will make our cathedral church not only a safer place for all, but also a place where the good news about Jesus Christ can be proclaimed with joy and integrity to the benefit of all who visit Blackburn Cathedral and to the praise of His Name.