

Independent Oversight of Safeguarding

Welcome for Professor Alexis Jay

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have welcomed the announcement today that Professor Alexis Jay, the former chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, IICSA, has agreed to develop proposals for a fully independent structure to provide scrutiny of safeguarding in the Church of England. She will be supported by the former secretary to IICSA, John O'Brien.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell, said: "We are very pleased that Professor Jay has agreed to take on this vital role to ensure we move quickly towards objective, independent, credible and resilient oversight of safeguarding in the Church of England. This work will be entirely in their hands and fully external and independent; we will welcome the scrutiny and challenge that rightly comes with that.

"As Archbishops we pledged to work as quickly as we can to get independent oversight of safeguarding back on track. We continue to reflect on recent events and this development is an important part of our safeguarding work with victims and survivors, children and vulnerable adults, as we make the Church a safer place for all.

"This proposal was discussed in depth at this week's Archbishops' Council and there was collective agreement about this being an important next step in the work on independent scrutiny.

"We have asked Professor Jay to give us independent and rigorous recommendations for achieving this urgent and vital outcome. "

Further information

The Archbishops along with the lead safeguarding bishop, have asked for a report on the Future Safeguarding Programme by the end of the year. This is most likely to take the form of an options appraisal, but with a direct recommendation as to a preferred model for the new body. The authors – Alexis Jay and John O'Brien - will publish their report. The Archbishops' Council, House of Bishops and General Synod will all be invited to consider the final report and debate the recommendations, with decision-making belonging to the appropriate bodies. They then propose to consult the same individuals about implementing the chosen model so that the establishment of the body is accomplished with the same degree of independence.

Terms of Reference:

- To provide options and recommendations for forming an independent safeguarding scrutiny body for the Church of England
- To make any recommendations for how further independence of safeguarding might be achieved
- To make any other recommendations that are necessary or appropriate.

They have been asked to consult widely with stakeholders both inside and outside the church. Media enquiries relating to Professor Jay's statement press@crestadvisory.com / +44 (0) 7900 992481