



diocese
of limerick
our catholic community

Safeguarding Governance

Created August 2017

Revised February 2018

Revised August 2019



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**The Diocese actively promotes the
welfare of children and vulnerable persons
and encourages their participation in the
life of the Church**

Governance – What is it?

Governance in respect of safeguarding refers to the organisational arrangements and processes by which the Diocese ensures that:

- **It meets its responsibilities to promote the welfare and safety of children (and vulnerable persons) in all their involvements with the Diocese, Parishes and Pastoral Programmes**
- **It complies with the Policy and Standards of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (N.B.S.C.C.C.I) to which it has committed itself**
- **Appropriate supports and services are maintained for all persons affected by abuse including complainants and respondents.**

NBSCCCI National Case Management Service

The Diocese maintains membership of the National Case Management Service of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

This membership enables the Bishop to secure case management advice from the service and/or from the C.E.O. of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

In 2016 the NBSCCCI developed 7 Safeguarding Standards which underlines a 'one-Church' approach across all constituent Church bodies.

Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016

What is a Standard?

A standard is the level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding. Each standard is self-contained and is supported by indicators. It is the standard that provides the framework for action. Audits of compliance will be undertaken against the seven standards and the relevant indicators that apply to the Church body.



Safeguarding Governance Arrangements in the Diocese of Limerick

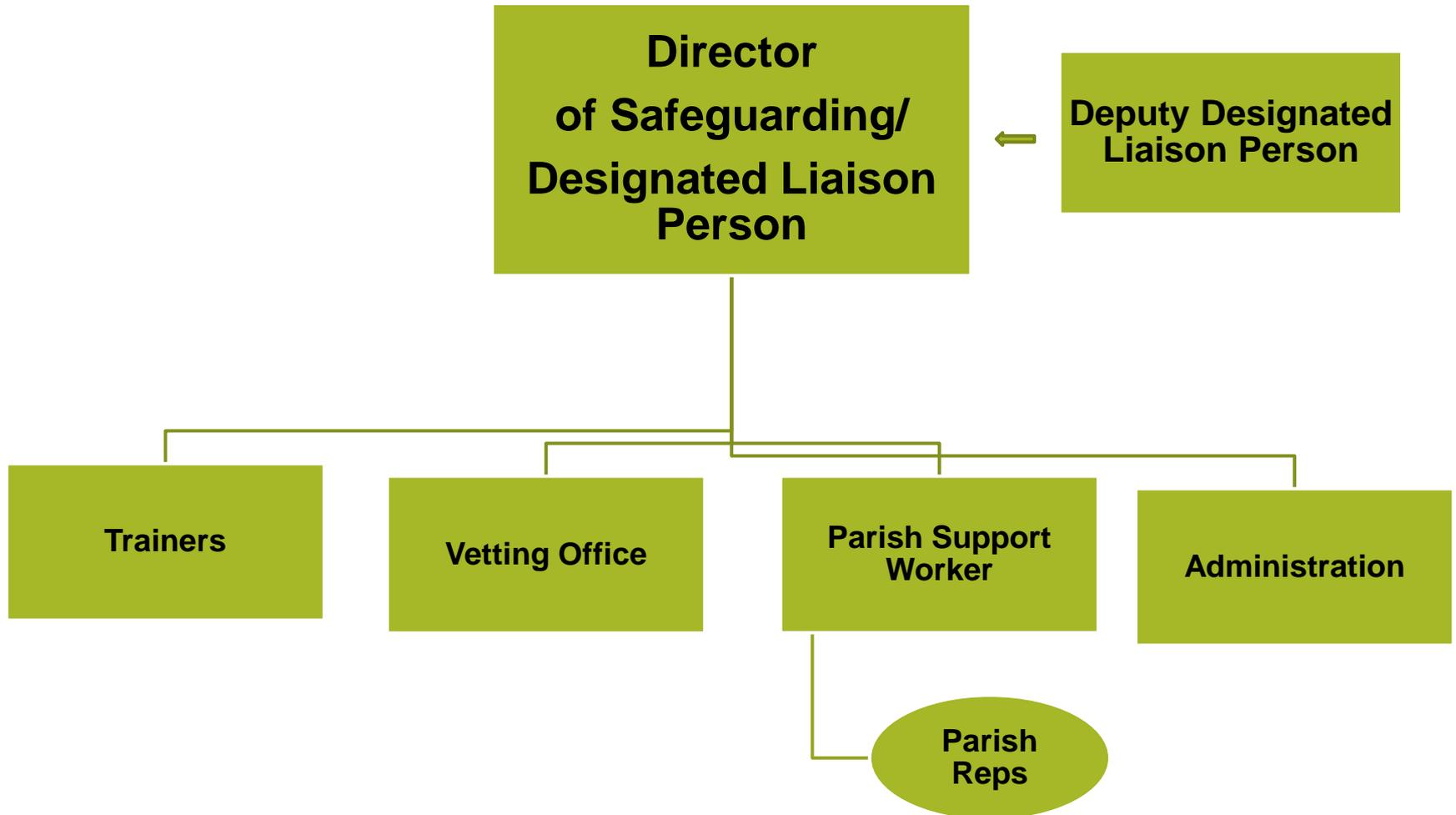
The Bishop has overall responsibility, appoints people and approves processes to ensure an appropriate Safeguarding Service is maintained.

To support him to meet these responsibilities the Bishop has appointed a Director of Safeguarding and set up four Committees.

Safeguarding Governance Arrangements in the Diocese of Limerick

The Director of Safeguarding has responsibility for the operation of the service and is the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person. A Priest of the Diocese is the Deputy DLP.

Safeguarding Service



Children First Act 2015 - Compliance

- **Relevant Person for Child Safeguarding Statement:**

Ger Crowley, Director of Safeguarding, Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

☎T: 087 3233564 / 061 350000 E: ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org

- **Child Safeguarding Statement:**

Completed - 19th February 2018

Published on Diocesan Safeguarding website

<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/>

- **Reporting:**

All Priests and Pastoral Care Workers are Mandated Persons under this legislation. It is the policy of the Limerick Diocese that Mandated Persons will make joint reports to Tusla with the Designated liaison Person

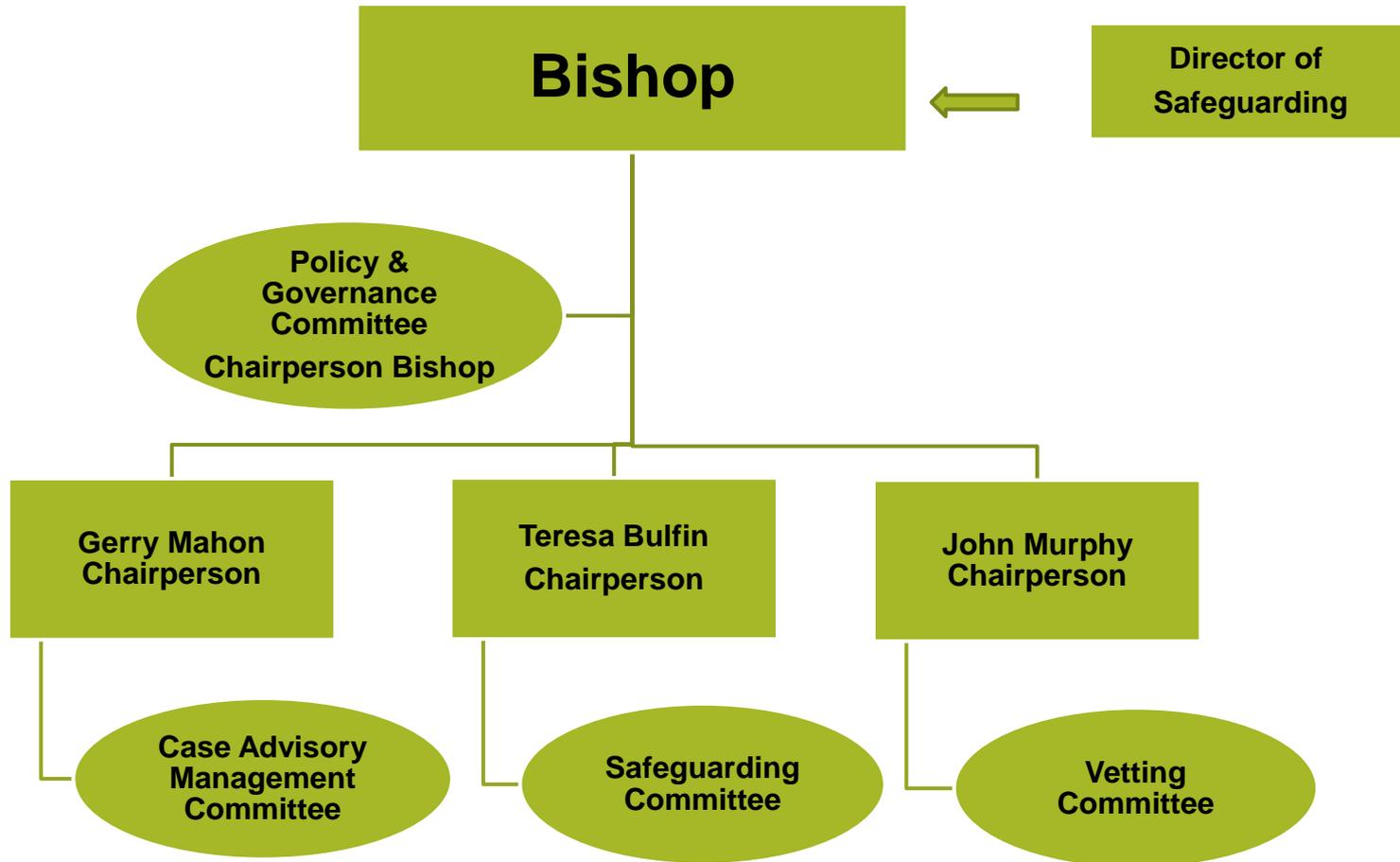
The DLP will keep a record of all Mandated Reports and provide an overview of activity annually to the Safeguarding Committee

Safeguarding Governance Arrangements in the Diocese of Limerick

Four Committees operating within the Diocese:

- **Policy and Governance Committee that meets annually or more frequently if required - All 7 Standards**
- **Case Management Advisory Committee that meets as required - Standard 2, 3 and 4**
- **Safeguarding Committee that meets six times annually –Standard 1, 5, 6 and 7**
- **Vetting Committee that meets six times annually – Standard 1**

Governance Chart



Policy and Governance Committee

This committee is the senior forum within the Diocese which advises the Bishop on safeguarding in all church activities.

The committee is appointed by the Bishop and meets annually or otherwise as the Bishop may decide.

Chair: Bishop

The committee considers and advises on:

- **Matters of policy and practice**
- **Reports of committees and working groups as may be appropriate**
- **Any other matter which the Bishop considers appropriate.**

Membership: The chairs of the three committees operating within the Diocese are members of the committee and such other persons as the Bishop may appoint from time to time.

Advisory Panel -

Case Management Children & Vulnerable Persons

The Diocese of Limerick has developed a safeguarding service and governance arrangements to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices promote, as far as possible, the welfare of children and vulnerable persons in all their involvement in the life of the Church.

A critical part of the safeguarding arrangements is the Case Management Advisory Panel

The Panel is appointed by the Bishop to provide independent and expert advice to the Bishop on all aspects of the responsibilities and needs which arise regarding complaints and concerns of abuse by priests and other Diocesan personnel.

Historically the Advisory Panel advised on situations involving children. In this respect, the Diocese has committed itself to comply with the Safeguarding Standards of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. In July 2019, at the request of the Bishop, the Advisory Panel agreed to extending its role to include concerns or complaints involving vulnerable persons. This arose in the context of Norms issued by Pope Francis which provide a new definition of vulnerable persons.

A Vulnerable Person is

‘any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want to otherwise resist the offence’. *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, (7 May 2019), Art. 1, s.2. b.

The Diocesan Secretary will act as Secretary to the Advisory Panel

Advisory Panel -

Case Management Children & Vulnerable Persons

The members should have no other role or relationship with any person whose situation is being considered by the Advisory Panel and will maintain confidentiality in respect of information received.

Any member who has any concern of any nature regarding the activity of the Advisory Panel is encouraged to raise this with the Chairperson who will consider with the Bishop.

In advising the Bishop, the Advisory Panel will have regard to the Safeguarding Policy of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It will also support the principles that the welfare of children and vulnerable persons must be paramount with due regard to the rights of all persons.

The Advisory Panel will be provided with anonymised information regarding the cases in respect of which advice is sought and may seek any further anonymised information it considers necessary to inform its consideration and advice

The Advisory Panel will specifically consider the:

- Complaint and available information as to credibility**
- Responsibilities and needs arising in respect of the complainant(s) and other persons affected such as family members**
- Needs and rights of the respondent and his family**
- Needs of the Parish/Community**
- Need for professional assessment**

The advice of the Advisory Panel will be recorded in the relevant case file as well as in the minutes of the meeting.

Advisory Panel -

Case Management Children & Vulnerable Persons

The Advisory Panel will have no executive or managerial responsibility which remains with the Bishop and persons appointed by him.

The Advisory Panel will be independently chaired and the members will be appointed by the Bishop on the basis of their professional expertise and experience.

Chair: Mr. Jerry Mahon

The members will include a:

- **Canon Lawyer**
- **Civil Lawyer**
- **Priest**
- **Parent**
- **Professional Social Worker or Psychologist with safeguarding experience**

The D.L.P. for the Diocese will attend meetings of the Advisory Panel

Safeguarding Committee

Under the overall direction of the Bishop the Safeguarding Committee plays a critical role in relation to Standard 7 (Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards) of the Safeguarding Children Policy & Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

The committee consists of a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve members appointed by the Bishop.

Chair: Ms. Teresa Bulfin

The role of the Safeguarding Committee is to:

- **Develop a three-year child safeguarding plan.**
 - Review progress of implementation of the Diocesan Safeguarding Plan and advise and support any necessary actions**
 - Report, through the Chair, to the Bishop on the Diocesan Safeguarding Plan and on its implementation.**
- **Co-ordinate local safeguarding representatives (LSRs)**
- **Co-ordinate activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training**
- **Ensure the annual audit, including correlation of records for training related-activities**
- **Ensure the completion of training needs assessments across the various safeguarding roles in the Diocese**
- **Ensure, with the Bishop, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place**
- **Uphold the Seven Safeguarding Standards in practice and behaviour.**

Historically the safeguarding committee only dealt with issues regarding of children. During 2019, the committee agree that from January 2020 it will expand its role to include vulnerable person. Its specific plan in respect of vulnerable person will be developed in early 2020. This will note the new safeguarding norms established by Pope Francis in June 2019.

Vetting Committee

The committee advises the Diocesan Vetting Service on policy, procedures and cases as per NBSCCCI Guidance and Legislation.

The committee is appointed by the Bishop and meets six times annually or as required.

Chair: Mr John Murphy

Governance & Policy Committee

Membership

**Bishop Leahy
(Chairperson)**

**Gerry Mahon
Teresa Bulfin
John Murphy**



Case Management Advisory Committee

Membership

**Gerry Mahon
(Chairperson)**

**Canon lawyer
Civil lawyer
Priest
Parents**

**Professional
psychologist/
social worker**
**Secretary: general
manager/ diocesan
secretary**



Safeguarding Committee

Membership

**Teresa Bulfin
(Chairperson)
John Murphy
Fr. Chris O'Donnell
Chris Sheridan
Fr. Sean Harmon
Pat Brosnan
Noelle Dunworth
Eileen Irwin
Patricia O'Rourke**

**Aoife Walsh
Terry Boyle
Catherine Kelly**



Vetting Committee

Membership

**John Murphy
(Chairperson)**

Ger Crowley

**(Liaison Person)
Finola Downes
Jemma O'Shea**

The Chairperson may at any time communicate any concerns in respect of compliance with the Standards to the Bishop.

- ▲ Mr. Ger Crowley, the Director of Safeguarding is available to support and/or advise the committees as may be appropriate
- ◆ Ms Catherine Kelly, General Manager/Diocesan Secretary attends committee meetings in an ex-officio capacity

Governance Role of the Safeguarding Committee in relation to each of the 7 Standards

Standard	Role of Safeguarding Committee
Standard 1	<p>To ensure that Diocese meets its responsibilities to provide an environment for children, which is safe.</p> <p>To ensure the Annual Parish Audit is undertaken and reviewed.</p>
Standard 2	<p>To ensure that appropriate child care procedures are in place, communicated and made available by the Diocese</p>
Standard 3	<p>On an annual basis the Chair obtains assurance that the following arrangements are in place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Panel of trained Complainant Support Person 2. Counselling Services
Standard 4	<p>On an annual basis the Chair obtains assurance that the following arrangements are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel of trained Priest Advisors
Standard 5	<p>To ensure that Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role by the Diocese</p>
Standard 6	<p>To ensure that the Diocese meets its responsibility to appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message</p>
Standard 7	<p>To ensure that the Diocese develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the Safeguarding standards within the Diocese</p>

Complaints

Any complaint about abuse or any matter of concern regarding interaction with children or vulnerable people by any priest or Church personal should be directed to the Director of Safeguarding at:

Email: ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org or

Tel: 061 350000 Mobile: 087 3233564

Any person who wishes to make a complaint regarding the safeguarding service may address this to – Bishop Brandon Leahy at:

Email: (bishop@limerickdiocese.org or Tel: 061 350000 or to:

Very Rev Tony Mullins (Vicar General c/o Limerick Diocesan Centre, St. Munchin, Corbally, Limerick. Tel: 061 350000