

CCPAS statement concerning Sir Roger Singleton's June 2018 report

On Friday 22nd June, the Church of England released a report titled: 'Report of the Independent Scrutiny Team into the Adequacy of the Church of England's Past Cases Review 2008-2009.' The report had been commissioned by the Archbishop's Council and was led by Sir Roger Singleton, former Chief Executive of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (now part of the Disclosure & Barring Service) and member of the Church of England's National Safeguarding Advisory Panel.

CCPAS are referred to in the report within the 'background' section (see page 9), where we are included amongst a list of other organisations (including NSPCC and The Lucy Faithful Foundation) whom the report states were consulted by the Church of England about the Past Cases Review (PCR) in May 2007. Point 11 within the report states:

'In the weeks following the Archbishop's interview [on the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme] the CSLG established a Past Cases Review Working Group (WG) to develop a protocol for the PCR. The protocol was to be based on best practice for reviewing historic cases and the WG drew on the experience of the (Roman) Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Adults, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Lucy Faithful Foundation and the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.'

This statement is inaccurate and somewhat misleading, as CCPAS in fact was a lone voice calling for the PCR to be undertaken and did not have any involvement in the development of protocol or methodology for the review as might be implied by the report. We are not aware of what CCPAS experience may have been drawn-upon as part of this process.

The involvement of CCPAS in the PCR was initiated by contact that had been made with our founder and former CEO, David Pearson by three survivors of child abuse within the Church of England, whose accounts had been receiving public attention at the time. They had approached Mr Pearson to voice their concerns about how they were being treated by the Church of England. As a representative of an independent organisation concerned about abuse within the Church, Mr Pearson felt a strong Christian and moral duty to speak up for them and call for lessons to be learned. Mr Pearson then wrote an open letter to Dr Rowan Williams (then Archbishop of Canterbury) urging him to undertake such a review.

Both Mr Pearson and Dr Williams subsequently appeared on BBC Radio 4's 'Today' programme on 25th May 2007, where a commitment was given to the PCR and an invitation was given to Mr Pearson to meet the Church of England's Central Safeguarding Liaison Group (CSLG), who would be charged with its completion.

Mr Pearson accepted the invitation to the group and attended a meeting where he was met with hostility for publicly challenging the Archbishop. Mr Pearson was then asked to leave the meeting, and nothing further was discussed with him.

To say the Church of England 'drew on the experience of ... the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service' is therefore misleading and inaccurate. The CSLG had not been prepared to consult constructively with CCPAS and those responsible for safeguarding centrally within the Church of England at the time maintained a hostile position towards CCPAS for some years following these events.

We are pleased to say that relations with the Church of England are very much stronger these days and indeed CCPAS undertakes a significant amount of work across the Church of England as an independent expert body and service provider.

Justin Humphreys, Chief Executive of CCPAS said: "We were concerned to read the inaccurate references to our involvement in the PCR within the Singleton Report, and again felt a moral duty to set the record straight on this matter. We have always maintained a strong independence from any church body or denomination and this remains the case today. This independence is what allows us to speak out when necessary and undertake the much-needed work that we do across the church community irrespective of tradition or denomination. Through this, we continue in our commitment to help create safer places for all."

[ends.]

Notes:

- **CCPAS** is the only independent Christian safeguarding charity in the UK.
- **CCPAS** works with a network of faith and non-faith based charities and organisation across the country, to help support, train and equip their workers and volunteers to effectively safeguard children and adults at risk.
- **CCPAS** works in partnership with government and statutory agencies, as well as leaders from across church denominations to embed best practise.

- **CCPAS** does this by providing professional advice, support, training and resources in all areas of safeguarding children and adults and for those affected by abuse.
- **CCPAS** is not affiliated to any single church denomination or tradition.
- **CCPAS** is a partner agency with CEOP (the Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre), members of the government National Working Group on Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief, and associate members of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

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