



## Seven Minute Briefing: Events in the parishes of Stowe and Maids Moreton

### Why have we had a learning review?

**In 2015 Peter Farquhar was murdered. His need for an emotionally close relationship had been exploited, and an intelligent, talented man was made vulnerable.** Peter was a member of his local church; his strong personal faith featured in

the abusive relationship, and his murderer also had roles within the church. There were many complexities in detecting the harm he had suffered, requiring considerable police work and the testimony of another adult to bring about a conviction following a trial in the Summer of 2019.

#### 1. The need for emotional intimacy is universal

We all need emotional intimacy in our relationships, whatever our age or sexuality. This need can be exploited to make any adult vulnerable. Churches should develop an inclusive culture that promotes care for each other and allows safeguarding

concerns to be expressed.

**Review theme:** *improving adult safeguarding awareness & prevention. Three recommendations that promote prevention, inclusivity and openness, particularly in the light of age and sexuality.*

#### 2. Volunteers must be supported and monitored

Churches rely heavily on volunteers in many different roles. Policies for safer practice in recruitment are already in place. Monitoring of volunteers is required so that processes and

practices are consistently delivered, and the development/support needs of volunteers are met.

**Review theme:** *improving recruitment, support and monitoring of volunteers and their activities. One recommendation to think about best practice and to look to other institutions for examples of best practice.*

#### 3. Screening of people exploring ordained ministry

The processes where people can train to become ministers in the Church of England could be strengthened by greater use of psychological testing and developing the assessment of a

candidate's relationships and emotional capability.

**Review theme:** *screening processes for applicants for discernment and ordination with three recommendations about assessment and psychological testing for applicants and to consider how greater transparency about applicants could facilitate people to express any concern.*

#### 4. Raising awareness and information sharing

The Diocese should review how it shares information, particularly when working with communities to reduce trauma. It should also raise awareness of the abuse and risks

highlighted in the report and incorporate some of the lessons into the Diocesan training strategy.

**Review theme:** *policies and procedures recommending reviewing protocols and applying learning.*

#### 5. Learning more about complex needs

We need to raise awareness and learn about how risk is made more complex by needs which affect the mental capacity that adults have to make decisions, or when carers hinder access to people. It is important to have difficult conversations with

people about their changing needs and with those who may be subject to harm.

**Review theme:** *improve awareness of complex needs and impact upon safeguarding across the Church of England. A recommendation to develop core skills training within the national safeguarding programme.*

#### 6. Supporting parishioners and clergy

The Diocese worked in new ways to promote the ability of local people and the Parish to recover from trauma, and the review encourages the Diocese to develop this work. We

must further develop our thinking about the well-being and resilience of clergy.

**Review theme:** *Parish support, with recommendations to develop a protocol for Parish support and to develop the support mechanisms for clergy.*

#### 7. Inclusivity is the key to a safer church

The report challenges every church and parishioner to be inclusive and open: evidenced by how church officers and volunteers give and receive feedback, and in looking out for

each other. Everyone has a part to play, and everyone can do more to help us become a safer church.

**Review theme:** *leadership; promoting and delivering the recommendations of the report within the Diocese and wider Church.*