

WHISTLEBLOWING (PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE) POLICY

Chapter is committed to the highest possible standards of integrity and recognises that clergy, lay staff and volunteers are often the first to become aware of or identify serious concerns. When such concerns arise, barriers to coming forward could be in relation to misplaced loyalty to colleagues or the Church, or fear of harassment or victimisation.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the 'Act') protects staff who raise concerns from victimisation or harassment. In accordance with the Act, Chapter welcomes staff members who have serious concerns about any aspect of Chapter's work to come forward and voice those concerns, in confidence, to Chapter.

The Church of England, the Diocese of Ely and Chapter rely heavily upon the contribution of volunteers and recognise that they are in an important position to identify and report concerns. While voluntary roles are not included within the Act, Chapter encourages volunteers to use this process with the relevant principles of protection applied to them.

This policy is in place to ensure that an internal process is available to encourage and enable staff and volunteers to raise serious concerns which would not meet the criteria for a complaint in confidence and without fear of reprisals, to ensure that Chapter continues to provide the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

Principles

This policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All members of Chapter, staff and volunteers have the right to raise concerns about perceived unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- All members of Chapter and staff are responsible for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour, safeguarding concerns and any health and safety risks. We also invite volunteers to raise these matters.
- Chapter does not tolerate victimisation or harassment and will take action to protect Chapter members, staff and volunteers when they raise a concern in good faith.
- Chapter will endeavour to protect the identity of any individual who raises a whistleblowing concern and wishes to remain anonymous. However, in certain circumstances, such as any inquiry arising from the concern, the individual may be required to provide a signed statement. In certain circumstances, Chapter may have to disclose the identity of the individual without their consent, for example where there is risk to others involved. The reasons for this will be discussed with the individual.
- Chapter members, staff and volunteers who raise concerns will be given appropriate advice and support and kept informed in relation to the progress and outcome of any inquiries.
- Any malicious or vexatious allegations may lead to a disciplinary process for the individual concerned.

How to raise a concern

Chapter recognises the difficulties in raising a concern about the behaviour of a colleague. However, raising the concern at an early stage may protect others, prevent the problem getting worse, and prevent individuals themselves becoming implicated. Chapter members, staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns in cases where:

- the law may have been broken
- Chapter policies and procedures may have been breached
- there are concerns of a safeguarding nature

Special Note: Safeguarding

Chapter is committed to safeguarding the welfare and protection of children and adults at risk of harm. Concerns about the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm should be raised without delay to prevent any ongoing risk of harm.

If the individual who has a concern does not feel confident about reporting the matter to Chapter, they are encouraged to refer directly to Cambridgeshire County Council or Cambridgeshire Police.

Who to tell

Chapter members, staff and volunteers should raise concerns initially with any of the Cathedral's Safeguarding Officers (see below), their line manager or volunteer co-ordinator, or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of Safeguarding Officer (see below).

The following people have primary responsibility for Safeguarding matters:

Ely Cathedral

Canon Stephen Bourne	S.bourne@elycathedral.org	01353 660308
Chris Flatman	c.flatman@elycathedral.org	01353 660356
Canon Jessica Martin (Learning)	j.martin@elycathedral.org	01353 660304
Canon James Garrard (Music)	j.garrard@elycathedral.org	01353 660335
Canon Victoria Johnson (Chapter Lead)	v.johnson@elycathedral.org	01353 660302
Sarah Coakley/Claire Mills (Administration)	s.coakley@elycathedral.org compliance@elycathedral.org	01353 772135 01353 772135

Diocesan Office

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor

Rebecca Boswell	Rebecca.boswell@elydiocese.org	01353 652731
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Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

Sarah King	sarah.king@elydiocese.org	01353 652735
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How to report a concern

Chapter members, staff and volunteers may call, write to or arrange to meet with any of the above. In the case of a meeting, the individual raising the concern may wish to invite a supporter.

Written concerns should:

- identify that it is a whistleblowing disclosure;
- detail the background and history of the concerns;
- give names, dates and places (where possible); and
- note the reasons why the individual is particularly concerned about the situation.

What could happen?

This will be dependent upon the nature of the concern. The matter may be:

- investigated internally;
- referred to the Police and / or other statutory agencies;
- independently investigated;
- referred for consideration under the Clergy Discipline Measure; or
- a combination of the above.

Anonymous Allegations

Chapter encourages whistleblowers to identify themselves when reporting a concern. However any anonymous concerns will be investigated as far as reasonably possible based upon the information provided.

Or contact:

Cambridgeshire Children's Social Care - 0345 045 5203

MASH.C&F@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire Adult's Social Care – 0345 045 5202

Referral-centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire Police –dial 101 or 999 in an emergency

Independent, free, expert help and advice in relation to whistleblowing is also available from Public Concern at Work

0207 404 6609

<http://www.pcaaw.co.uk/>