

# Paper R

Safeguarding Advisory Group



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## Safeguarding Advisory Group



### Basic Information

<b>Contact name and email address</b>	Roberta Rominger roberta.rominger@urc.org.uk
<b>Action required</b>	Decision
<b>Draft resolution(s)</b>	<p><b>Mission Council confirms the appointment of a Safeguarding Advisory Group, to meet at least three times per year. Its membership would include the Safeguarding Officer, the Secretary for Children's and Youth Work, the Secretary for Ministries, the appropriate Deputy General Secretary, and up to three co-opted members with relevant experience.</b></p> <p><b>The Group's responsibilities will be as follows:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. to oversee the development of policy and the implementation of Good Practice across the Church in the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults in need of protection, making recommendations to Mission Council as appropriate;</b></li> <li><b>2. to ensure that Good Practice documents are published, circulated and updated as appropriate;</b></li> <li><b>3. to develop systems for monitoring local church and synod compliance with Good Practice, and to devise strategies for addressing identified weaknesses;</b></li> <li><b>4. to foster collaboration with ecumenical partners across the full range of safeguarding issues, including engagement in the development of public policy;</b></li> <li><b>5. specifically to work closely with the Baptist Union in the development of policy, the delivery of safeguarding education, and the support of synod/regional safeguarding officers;</b></li> <li><b>6. to oversee the service which the United Reformed Church receives from the Churches Agency for Safeguarding and other relevant agencies.</b></li> </ol>

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and aim(s)</b>	With the appointment of the United Reformed Church's first dedicated Safeguarding Officer, the possibilities offered by ecumenical collaboration, and the change of context represented by the new vetting and barring legislation, Mission Council is invited to approve new terms of reference for a newly constituted Safeguarding Advisory Group.
<b>Main points</b>	Membership and terms of reference of the Group
<b>Previous relevant documents</b>	Terms of reference 2004
<b>Consultation has taken place with...</b>	The documents of similar groups in partner churches have been considered.

### Summary of Impact

<b>Financial</b>	None – the Group has already been functioning for some time.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	Ecumenical interaction happens mainly through the Safeguarding Officer but the Group will encourage and support ecumenical collaboration on safeguarding issues.

# Safeguarding Advisory Group

## Terms of Reference

In January 2004 Mission Council established a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Reference Group with the following terms of reference:

- a) to maintain an overview of the policy offered to local churches with regard to Criminal Records Bureau disclosures and to make recommendations regarding the development of policy and practice, including the use of the Churches Agency for Safeguarding.
- b) to outline principles and monitor current practice in synods when responding to child protection concerns in support of local churches in their implementation of Good Practice.
- c) to establish and monitor a process which supports churches in response to the receipt of a blemished Disclosure for a local worker/volunteer.
- d) to ensure support for local churches during times of sensitive action regarding child protection.
- e) to monitor and advise on the training provision offered to relevant synod and Assembly-appointed staff regarding sensitive child protection issues.
- f) to advise the General Secretary and Secretary for Ministries in circumstances where blemished Disclosures are received concerning ministers, CRCWs and nationally-accredited lay preachers.
- g) to act as a reflecting group for Assembly-appointed staff with child protection responsibility.

The people appointed to serve on that first Group were a synod moderator, a church member with professional expertise as a child protection officer, a magistrate, the Children's Advocate, the Secretary for Youth Work, and the Deputy General Secretary.

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### Resolution

**Mission Council confirms the appointment of a Safeguarding Advisory Group, to meet at least three times per year. Its membership would include the Safeguarding Officer, the Secretary for Children's and Youth Work, the Secretary for Ministries, the appropriate Deputy General Secretary, and up to three co-opted members with relevant experience.**

**The Group's responsibilities will be as follows:**

- 1. to oversee the development of policy and the implementation of Good Practice across the Church in the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults in need of protection, making recommendations to Mission Council as appropriate;**
- 2. to ensure that Good Practice documents are published, circulated and updated as appropriate;**

3. to develop systems for monitoring local church and synod compliance with Good Practice, and to devise strategies for addressing identified weaknesses;
4. to foster collaboration with ecumenical partners across the full range of safeguarding issues, including engagement in the development of public policy;
5. specifically to work closely with the Baptist Union in the development of policy, the delivery of safeguarding education, and the support of synod/regional safeguarding officers;
6. to oversee the service which the United Reformed Church receives from the Churches Agency for Safeguarding and other relevant agencies.