

## Jane Chevous

02:42

Thank you Synod for allowing me to bring the voice of survivors into the chamber. And I am mindful of those present and those watching. I'd like to thank the members of, the former members of the Independent Safeguarding Board and in particular Jasvinder and Steve, for doing what you asked them to do, to hold the church to account, publicly if needs be, for any failings which are preventing good safeguarding practice from happening, the mission statement on their website. As they are no longer able to fulfil this role I want to highlight a recent failing, one so disastrous that it's already been reported as a serious incident to the Charity Commission. After the interim chair was appointed to the ISB in March, survivors expressed their concern that there is a conflict of interest with the role of chair of the National Safeguarding Panel and that the appointment happened without due process. This resulted in 76 survivors refusing permission for their data to be shared with the interim chair. But the Council did not listen. At the Council meeting on the ninth of May, the three ISB members gave their views of the way forward and I was able to bring a survivor view that many had confidence in Jasvinder and Steve. Council stated that they remain committed to proper independent scrutiny in safeguarding and take very seriously the views of both the ISB and survivors. But the council did not listen. At 1203 on June the 21st they sacked the board with no risk management or Interim plan in place. At 1242 Steve Reeves emailed the council to advise "I am urging caution as powerfully as I can, the harm could be significant, and the announcement is not urgent". But the Council did not listen. For as we learned this weekend, getting the papers prepared for Synod was more important than the lives of survivors.

05:43

At 1217 that day, Jasvinder contacted me to share the devastating news. I felt like my whole world had crumbled around me. I trusted the ISB, I had hope. And now that hope had been snatched from me and trampled underfoot. At 1307, the NST emailed to inform me. I had already seen the media reports and had been contacting other survivors who were as stunned and shocked as I was. All ongoing independent reviews, were immediately paused with no support or interim arrangements in place. Survivors are still waiting to discover, as no ISB exists anymore, who is commissioning the reviews, who will sign off the reviewers reports, who will be responsible for ensuring the recommendations are implemented. The impact is not just on the 10 survivors with ongoing or pending reviews, and Mr. X with the completed review, waiting for his recommendations to be implemented. It affects all survivors watching, waiting, hoping for independent scrutiny and accountability. Many survivors have contacted me to say the church feels unsafe. In their words, what an absolute mess and carnage for everyone. How this could have happened with an appropriately regulated organisation. They've disbanded the only safety I have. My anxiety is through the roof, and I'm struggling to function on a day to day level. I haven't felt safe since the announcement. My trust in the institutional church is now completely shattered. It's not just trust. The most difficult part is the lack of care. How can the church be like this? The damage done is beyond words. For some, it will be the last straw and cause irreparable damage, not just to their relationship with the church, but in their lives, their well being and their faith. It's not just the impact of the reputational damage, the further trauma to victims. It's the wider church feeling complicit in this, which is a moral injury in itself. The safety of the church has been impacted directly now and for the future. If Council members say today, we are listening to survivors, and we are committed to full independence, you will understand me if I say I don't believe them.

09:16

In her report on Survivor experience, *Don't panic be pastoral*, Jasvinder quoted Archbishop Justin Welby "survivors must come first. The church has to get it right. There are no excuses for us getting it wrong". Council, I hope you will hang your heads in shame at those words, as you could not have got it more wrong. And survivors have paid the price. So far, survivors are asking where is

the accountability for this disaster? Who is going to resign? This is a safeguarding and governance failure. Which should be properly audited with accountability to Synod for what is needed to ensure it can never happen again. In my petition, which already has nearly 400 signatures, I conclude that Council has shown they are not fit to manage church safeguarding. It's time to take safeguarding out of their hands. We are calling on the Charity Commission to intervene and ensure that a truly independent body is set up that survivors can trust without interference from the church. Whatever happens now, it must not re-traumatise. There should be immediate care and support for the survivors with open cases and action to ensure they are completed. I believe the only workable and compassionate option is for Jasvinder and Steve to be asked to do this, because they already have the trust of survivors, the knowledge of the cases and they are the data holders. There must be fully independent scrutiny that the church cannot block or interfere with. This must be developed through an open and transparent process with survivors and some survivors want a suitable professional and fully independent body to be tasked with leading this process. And Council, please whatever you do, do not make a hasty announcement today. Don't re-traumatise us again. Survivors must be involved in plans for their reviews. This is not just about safeguarding. This is about love, care and the gospel, and survivor rights. I have not heard either of the Archbishops articulate their sadness about the lack of love, compassion or care with which this has been handled within the love of God. That saddens and angers me most and I want to turn my back on the church. Synod do not turn your back on survivors. Thank you.