Martin Sewell
Speech prepared for delivery on Tuesday morning at the start of Item 511
'That the Safeguarding Practice Reviews Code of Practice be approved.'

Thank you for calling me chair

I propose that this item of business be adjourned to the next Synod.

Under SO 34

My reasons can be expressed in just over 800 words

This business is irrelevant to survivors, we might as well go home early. If ***only*** there had been something really pressing to discuss that we could have used to fill the time but we haven't - so let's go home proud that our leaders prioritised the debating of electronic service records over survivor desperation.

This paper is only relevant to the Church leadership, which wants a PR tick so that it can pretend that the leopard has changed its spots.
Yet any survivor watching the proceedings over the past few days will have long decided that it has plainly been " business as usual" for the Old School culture

But by us refusing to co-operate in passing this piece of business, disabling them from conducting internal reviews from which incidentally - as Bishop Pete Broadbent reminded us - they never learn, by refusing to play ball we can signal to the press that some of us are saying " No more of this ". Not in my name.

I, and many of you, are tired of being treated the way we have been: some have been talking about a motion of no confidence in Archbishops Council and the Secretary General ; many of us are tired of the pride, the unctious hand wringing and the timetabling and procedural victories against transparency and accountability.

So lets resist and push back

We have before us a lengthy 75 page document and with all due respect, in the light of all that has been going on, I suspect few members have closely examined it and fewer still have reconsidered it through the lens of experience.

The one man we might confidently have trusted to have done the work - Gavin Drake - has just resigned from Synod in disgust, to prioritise self care after all the procedural shenanigans which he and we have endured here in York. Significant integrity just left the building.

We are in crisis - not a safeguarding crisis but an absence of integrity crisis.

To be debating this paper, pretending the current Church leadership is fit to do this work, will be like washing the decks of the Titanic whilst it sinks beneath the waves.

Remember in February when I tried to get a debate on safeguarding to head off this trouble and the Archbishops sat on their hands?

I waited for the bus marked with the destination "proper scrutiny of Safeguarding'. to come along and five months later four turned up together. What have they looked like?

We have had

- The presentation over the ISB , with all that has been revealed during Q&As- that was a disaster
- The Following Motion seeking external help to reconstitute a new ISB - which Archbishop Stephen had said he wanted but which mysteriously could only be slotted into a period of "timed business " where is was guaranteed to have no time so that " oh dear - we cannot discuss this now - how disappointing - we tried"
- We did do something sensible on the Redress Scheme
- But now we are left with this review of reviews which is irrelevant but we can use productively for, by passing this adjournment motion by a simple majority we can do the useful vital work of signalling our utter discontent.

This all comes on top of the mystery of how my two questions 40 and 41 seeking news of the complaint brought ***by*** Dr Percy came to be altered

The only questions ever changed at General Synod were those about a complaint alleging malpractice by senior clergy, church lawyers and Church PR. Hmmmm

Signal with me that we are deeply discontent.

Do you remember a couple of days ago we heard Dr Harrison praying in aid of Archbishops Councils behaviour the words of Survivor Solicitor Richard Scorer.

Dr Harrison I know Richard Scorer
Richard Scorer is a friend of mine
Richard Scorer is not fan of the way you and your colleagues on Archbishop's Council behave

Indeed!

He has already indicated on behalf of the Soul Survivor complainants he represents that they will follow Matt Ineson's example and refuse to co-operate with the kind of self regulated reviews on offer here

If we let this paper through in its present form at the very best we shall have the farce of more expensive incomplete reviews without survivor input - Hamlet without the Prince.

So lets not play ball

Let us examine this paper properly-but later when the dust of yesterday has settled and we can then give it the scrutiny it deserves.

Meanwhile I am offering your the only opportunity you have to say to the Archbishops Council and the Secretary General - we are deeply deeply suspicious of you in the light of your conduct - our eyes are open - we are no longer the supine fools you have taken us for.

I move this motion for an adjournment