



Lesley-Anne Ryder, an experienced CEO and chair who has worked in national and local government and the health and charity sectors, has been appointed the independent co-chair of the Response Group looking at two important reports on independence and safeguarding in the Church of England. These are from barrister Sarah Wilkinson and former IICSA (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse) chair Alexis Jay.

Lesley-Anne brings a proven track record in leading complex change management and restructure programmes involving safeguarding professionals and volunteers in diverse organisations and is an experienced leader, coach and mentor of senior teams. She has more than 20 years' experience of work supporting vulnerable adults and children and has played an active role in shaping Health and Social Care policy at a senior level in the NHS, worked on a Government department merger and continues with a range of charity work which has included being a supervisor for Cruse Bereavement Care and chair of a local charity.

An independent recruitment firm was responsible for the selection of candidates and Lesley-Anne was interviewed by members of the Response Group including meeting with survivor representatives. One of the key criteria for selection was a professional, external voice who had not previously worked with the national Church. She will start work this week.

Speaking on her appointment Lesley-Anne said: "I am delighted to bring both my experience of leadership and managing complex change in a variety of settings, along with my personal experience and qualifications in engaging and supporting those whose trauma and circumstances have in some way stopped them having a voice. I believe that I inspire confidence, commitment and focus for those that I am called to lead and support, and that this role provides a unique opportunity for me to use my skills to the full. I have chaired several multidisciplinary boards, and I look forward to working closely with Bishop Joanne and the whole of the Response Group. I am an active member of my local church and work to support vulnerable people in my local community".

The Church of England's lead safeguarding bishop and co-chair of Response Group, Joanne Grenfell, said: "I welcome this appointment and the wide-ranging professional experience Lesley-Anne will bring to this role. It is vital that we have an independent voice that can offer challenge and scrutiny while the work of the Response Group moves forward on these two important safeguarding reports."

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