



Historic Cases Review of Roy Cotton and Colin Pritchard

I have been asked by the Bishop of Chichester to look at the cases of two priests serving in the diocese who were the subject of historic child abuse allegations. I have also been asked to make my own recommendations about the current child protection policy and process in the Diocese. My terms of reference are in an appendix to my review.

I have had some difficulty in assessing the reliability of recollected information and have found a lack of detailed record keeping which may lead to some inaccuracies in my account of events. I shall refer only to those facts which I consider relevant to my task of review.

1 Background information

During the period with which we are concerned, 1997-2008, Bishop Eric Kemp was Bishop of Chichester (EC) until his retirement in 2001 when Bishop John Hind became Bishop of Chichester (JC). Bishop Wallace Benn was and remains Bishop of Lewes, (WB). Archdeacon Nicholas Reade, now Bishop of Blackburn (NR), was Archdeacon of Lewes & Hastings until January 2004. Archdeacon Philip Jones has been Archdeacon of Lewes & Hastings since 2005.

Janet Hind (JH) was Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, (CPA) for the Dioceses of Chichester and Guildford from 1997 until April 2001 when she relinquished her Chichester post while remaining CPA for Guildford until November 2010. Tony Sellwood (TS) gave some cover and JH continued to help with policy and training until the appointment of TS full time in May 2002. He died in a tragic road accident in January 2007. Between January and September 2007 the duties of CPA/ Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) were shared between JH at Guildford who gave advice on policy and training and Stephen Barber at Oxford who assumed responsibility for any current cases. From September 2007 until December 2010, Shirley Hosgood (SH) was DSA.

I shall take the priests separately and look first at the case of Roy Cotton.

2 Roy Cotton (RC).

Roy Cotton was born on the 10th April 1929.

2.1 Conviction

On the 15th February 1954, while an ordinand in training for the priesthood, he was convicted at the Abingdon Magistrates Court of an indecent assault on a child. He was 25 and a first offender and was put on probation for a year. The exact offence is not

clear nor the age of the child. He was dismissed from theological college and no longer considered as a candidate for holy orders. A letter from the Scout headquarters on 24th October 1968 referred to his 1954 offence as an indecent assault on a young boy. At that time the Scout record showed that he was “a person who may have no further connection whatsoever with the Movement.”

2.2 Unsubstantiated allegations in 1966

In May 1966 at a preparatory school in Berkshire there appear to have been allegations made by boys at the school. He was dismissed and it is not clear whether this was as a result of the 1954 conviction or the allegations or both. The Bishop of Portsmouth asked the headmaster whether there was any information about which he should be informed but received no reply. There appear to have been no further steps taken to investigate the 1966 allegations.

2.3 Ordination and Ministry

Despite his conviction and after considerable correspondence about his suitability, he was readmitted to theological training and was eventually ordained in December 1966. In 1966 RC was at theological college with Colin Pritchard, (CP see below). RC served as a

priest for several years in the Diocese of Portsmouth. In January 1969 the Scouts Committee decided that he could be granted a Leader Permit.

2.4 Diocese of Chichester

On the 4th May 1971 the then Bishop of Chichester in a letter consulted the Bishop of Portsmouth (BpP) about the suitability of RC for the parish of Harting. BpP replied on 5th May 1971 that he could 'wholeheartedly commend him'.

BpP referred to the conviction in 1954 as

'indecent exposure in front of boys' and 'I am clear in my own mind that Roy was more sinned against than sinning – there has been no sign of trouble whatsoever'.

BpP also wrote to the patron of the parish of Harting that

'the charge against him in 1953 has, I believe, been proved a false one. He pleaded guilty at the time to spare the boys concerned having to appear in court. There has been no breath of suspicion of trouble since'.

There is no evidence to support the BpP's view of the 1954 conviction but it must have given a misleading impression of RC to the Bishop of Chichester. The 1954 conviction was recorded in the RC's Blue File which was held at the Bishop's Palace in Chichester.

RC was appointed to Harting in June 1971 and served there until 1974 when he was appointed priest in charge at Eastbourne, St Andrew and then from 1976 until 1984 he was the Vicar. From 1984 until January 1999 he was Rector of Brede with Udimore.

2.5 Arrest by police

On 1st December 1997 RC was arrested at the rectory by the Sussex Police and taken to Hastings police station where he was charged with sexually abusing minors between 1976 and 1983. The minors referred to were PJ and his brother B (to whom I shall refer below). RC was released on police bail. In the note by JH in the 'Day Book' she referred to discussions with a police officer about allegations made by two boys about indecency while on holiday with RC 15 years before, while he was Vicar of Eastbourne, St Andrew.

WB was aware of the arrest of RC in December 1997 and was concerned about the allegations. NR told me that he was aware of the police investigation. He had a conversation with RC and asked him "Have you ever been in trouble before?"

RC's reply was that a complaint had been made about him sitting on the stool playing the organ with his flies undone and this had led to his ordination being postponed. A boy, probably a choirboy, was assisting him at the time. He said that the Bishop concerned had been very sympathetic but felt his ordination should be delayed. He did

not inform NR that he had been convicted in 1954. NR told WB about the organ stool incident. WB had two discussions with RC and, according to WB, grilled him. RC said that there was a complaint made against him but it was a false accusation. There was no substance in the accusation otherwise he would never have been ordained. WB told me that RC did not inform him of his conviction in 1954. WB also told me that he believed RC to be a villain.

When JH was informed of the arrest of RC she agreed with WB that RC should have no contact with children while the investigation took place. As far as she knew RC agreed with WB to give that undertaking. NR remembers that this occurred when RC had his cameras removed by the police and a telephone conversation with RC in which RC referred to the restriction.

Both WB and NR told me that the situation of RC was discussed at senior staff meetings. I was told by WB that at a senior staff meeting on the 22nd January 1998 he discussed his concerns with EC. He asked EC to see RC. He also told me that he was eager to find something wrong with RC and pushed him into retirement. On the 29th October 1998 RC informed WB by letter of his intention to resign from 31st January 1999.

Between his arrest in December 1997 and his retirement in January 1999 RC continued as Rector of Brede with Udimore.

RC resigned at end January 1999 and was at the time, according to NR, very ill. He spent some time in hospital in Hastings and NR visited him there. He moved to a nursing home for a while and until his death he remained in poor health.

On the file there is a letter written on 8th March 1999 by NR to JH informing her that the police had concluded their investigation and were not taking any further action. JH told me that she did not receive a letter from NR but was informed by WB in a telephone call that there was to be no further action.

On the 13th March 1999 a police officer wrote to PJ advising that the Crown Prosecution Service had decided not to proceed further with his allegations against RC and CP (see below). PJ was told that the record of this investigation and the statements made by him and his brother would be kept on file. The police indicated that this information would be invaluable to them if either of these men try to involve themselves with children in the future. There appears to have been no record in any Diocesan or child protection file of the decision of the CPS not to prosecute.

The Sussex Police told me that, since these were historic child abuse investigations which were not proceeded with, at that time it was police practice to destroy the files after three years.

2.6 Permission to Officiate (PTO)

On 2nd November 1998 EC wrote to RC in reply to a letter of 28th October from RC and accepted RC's resignation. In the letter he said 'As regards permission to officiate in the future, if you are going to remain resident in the Lewes area, it would be best to get it from the Bishop of Lewes, otherwise from the Bishop of Horsham or myself according to where you are intending to retire to'.

On the 28th October 1998 RC also wrote to WB indicating his intention to resign from 31st January 1999. In it he wrote 'I trust that I shall be granted a licence to officiate generally in the diocese when needs demand'. In his acknowledgement on the 2nd November WB wrote 'As regards the Licence to officiate when you have retired, I would be grateful if you would apply for this when you have retired and have a new address. I shall be very happy to grant you this.'

On 10th May 1999 RC wrote again to WB requesting a PTO which was issued by WB on 17th May 1999. According to WB, EC told him to grant RC a PTO. The excerpt from EC's letter set out above makes it clear to me that EC did not tell WB to grant a PTO but that he assumed a PTO would be granted to RC. At the time EC appears to have been the only person in the Diocese with access to the Blue File and the opportunity to know about RC's conviction in 1954.

According to WB, in addition to being told by EC to grant RC a PTO, the police investigation was closed; there was no evidence against RC and no reason not to grant a PTO. A further reason relied upon by WB not to be concerned about the granting of the PTO was the continued ill health of RC and his lack of contact with children. The purpose of the PTO was, according to WB and supported by NR, to permit him to celebrate communion in the nursing home where he was then living.

JH told me that she was not aware that the PTO was granted to RC. She was told by WB that RC was to retire and that was a good outcome. If any impression was given it was that RC would no longer be in ministry.

In September 2000 there was an article in a magazine 'People in Eastbourne' identifying RC as a sexual abuser and detailing allegations against him.

On the 3rd April 2001 WB wrote to RC asking him to complete a Confidential Declaration Form. In his reply on the 10th May 2001 RC notified WB (for the first time) of his conviction in 1954. He also included his arrest in 1997 and the decision of the CPS not to prosecute. According to WB the form and the information was sent to the Bishop's Palace at Chichester by his PA. They do not however seem to have been received at the Palace or, if received, were not processed. I was told by WB that there was, at the time,

a degree of administrative chaos at the Palace. The DOH POCALS return on 29th May 2001 did not include RC's name on either of the then Child Protection lists.

Between May 1999 and September 2006, there is no evidence that RC officiated anywhere other than in the nursing home where he lived at one stage of his retirement.

Roy Cotton died in September 2006.

3 The Victims

3.1 PJ and B

PJ and his brother B were the children who were at the centre of the allegations of sexual abuse investigated by the Sussex police in 1997 and 1998. PJ went to the police in the autumn of 1996 to inform them of the abuse by RC of him and his brother. The abuse of PJ began by grooming him when he was about 8 progressing to the most serious abuse from the age of 10 (1976) and continued until he was 19.

On the 6th June 2002 PJ sent an email to WB which included a copy of the Eastbourne article identifying RC as an abusing priest. PJ also sent 12 page account of the abuse suffered by him. It included the police enquiry in 1997/8 and PJ's disappointment at the CPS dropping the case. It also identified PJ's brother, B, as a victim. He referred to another local man (G) who said he had been abused by RC. PJ wanted to know what the

Church had done about it and felt the Church should have investigated. WB told me that he discussed the email and his response with TS on the telephone and replied by email to PJ expressing concern and giving advice that the other local man should go to the police.

On the 30th June 2005 PJ again emailed WB and acknowledged the letter he had received. He held the Church partly responsible in that it had a duty of care towards children in the choir. He also expressed his concern at the Church allowing RC to take large groups of children abroad on holiday. WB asked TS to draft a reply. TS wrote to WB and referred to another young man C (see below) and said that there were very similar narratives concerning RC. Although, as I set out above, TS had been informed by WB of the earlier correspondence between PJ and WB, TS did not seem to have linked the allegations made by C with those made by PJ in 2002.

On the 11th July 2005 WB wrote to PJ encouraging him to discuss his case with the police and offering a discussion as to how best to provide PJ with appropriate support and assistance for the future. WB did not receive a reply from PJ until an email on the 3rd May 2007 with thanks and apologies and reiterating his view about the responsibility of the Church. In the meantime both RC and TS had died. In August 2008 WB and SH had a meeting with PJ at which WB apologised to PJ.

3.2 C

Early in 2003 C made an unannounced visit to WB to talk about abuse he suffered from RC. WB got in touch with TS, who met C in February 2003. He waited until the police had interviewed C sometime earlier in February. According to an email from TS to WB on the 28th February 2003, the police told C that they would not be pursuing the matter with RC as they were of the view that he was too ill and too vulnerable to be interviewed and 'the public don't like people to be hounded when they are so ill'.

In the email TS said that he had spoken to the police who indicated to him that the CPS did not like following up historical cases with people who were seriously ill. He added that C was disappointed by this. He, TS, was as well. At the interview he offered to arrange counselling to be paid by the Diocese. TS then wrote to C but the letter appears to have been misaddressed and not to have been received by C.

When I interviewed the Sussex Police, I was told that they had no record that C was a victim of abuse by RC and presumably no record of the interview they had with C in February 2003. The Northants Police later got in touch with C and they put him in touch with PJ.

3.3 D

D wrote a blog setting out in detail the abuse he suffered from RC. This blog was read by PJ who sent an email to WB in December 2007 with information about the blog. D emailed SH on the 5th February 2008 informing her that he was a victim of abuse by RC. SH passed that information to the Northants Police.

There were other victims of RC and also of CP (see below) who have subsequently come forward, including E and F. The Sussex Police had no record of D or, I assume, E or F. The only information I have about G is that he was reported by PJ to WB as a victim. According to PJ the Northants Police also got in touch with G.

4 Comments on approach of Diocese and Police to RC

4.1 RC's move to Chichester

With a conviction for an indecent assault on a child in 1954, there was undoubtedly a serious question mark as to RC's suitability to be ordained in 1966. It is very surprising that he should have been permitted to enter the ministry. But it was long before he came to the Diocese and the details of his ordination are not relevant to my terms of reference. When RC was appointed in 1971 to a parish in the Diocese of Chichester, the then Bishop of Chichester was, it appears, the only person in a position to know about his conviction although the patron of Harting was aware of an allegation. No-one else

had, at that time, access to the Blue File. RC had however, by then been officiating as a priest since 1967 and BpC had received from BpP a misleading account of the circumstances of RC's conviction in 1954. In 1971 there was no national child protection policy in place. It is, therefore, not surprising that no risk assessment was considered when RC moved to the Diocese of Chichester.

4.2 1997 Arrest

During the police investigation of RC between 1997-9 it is surprising that EC did not appear to have checked on his history in the Blue File. If he had done so he would have seen the record of the 1954 conviction which was a highly relevant factor. Instead it would appear that EC (who, of course, was not Bishop in 1971) either was not aware of the 1954 conviction or had overlooked it. The information about the conviction was not given by EC to WB nor to the CPA. The CPA discussed the allegations with a police officer of the Sussex Police who also did not appear to know about the 1954 conviction.

In my view, EC should have checked the Blue File and with the knowledge of the conviction should have taken the 1997 allegations very seriously. Although the 1995 House of Bishops' guidance and the 1997 Diocesan guidance did not deal specifically with the procedure to follow when the allegations of historic child abuse were made by an adult against a priest, according to the procedure laid down for current allegations of

child abuse, there should have been immediate consultation at the highest level in the Diocese as to whether RC should be suspended or conditions placed on his ministry. The CPA should have consulted the Bishop and agreed a plan of action. Where there were allegations of historic abuse, children remained potentially at risk. I was told by NR that in the churches of Brede and Udimore there was an almost total absence of children and it was considered that the potential risk was very small. PJ however pointed out to me that it was very easy, as in his case and the cases of other known victims, to move them in and out of a parish. Although there was a perhaps naïve belief in the lack of risk, nonetheless, knowledge of the 1954 conviction placed the position of RC in a different and more serious dimension. In my view RC should have been suspended immediately while the police investigated. At the very least there should have been consideration as to whether stringent conditions should be openly placed upon his ministry. Today suspension would be, I hope, inevitable. There was a failure to lead from the top.

There is one other issue which arises from the period 1998/9, that is to say whether any of the senior clergy had knowledge of the 1954 conviction. It is clear that EC had the opportunity to find out from the Blue File kept at the Palace and accessible to him and few others. It is probable that he did not check and did not know about it. NR knew of the incident with the choir boy at the organ but not of the conviction. WB was clear in his interview with me that he had no knowledge of the 1954 conviction until RC filled up the forms in 2001. PJ however told me that at a meeting he had with WB and SH on the

26th August 2008 WB said that NR had told him 1998 or 1999 about the 1954 conviction. PJ appears to have tape-recorded the 26th August meeting and I have a partial transcript in which WB said "I had a long conversation with my Archdeacon at the time, Nicholas Reid (Reade).....

When I had that conversation with Nicholas he told me out of the conversation (to SH).. I haven't told you this before .. it has only just come back to my memory .. he told me out of those conversations that he.. that there had been a previous conviction, way back in the 70s (50s). Which I did not know about"

. And later in the conversation

"and when Nicholas told me that which had come out of the conversation with Roy, I was horrified and all the more determined that we were going to actually get him into retirement which is what we did, because we thought it was the safest thing that could be done."

NR told me that, if he had known about the conviction, "I would have advised Bishop Wallace that we had somebody with a serious history, and we should therefore view his present situation in that light."

I consider it is most unlikely that either WB or NR did have knowledge of the 1954 conviction because, in my view, it was almost certain that the fact of the conviction would have been brought up at senior staff meetings when the position of RC was discussed. Since WB considered RC to be a villain, the knowledge of the conviction, would, it seems to me, have spurred him on to urge EC to take action to suspend RC or suspend him himself.

In this partial transcript of the tape (I have a copy of the tape) WB gave PJ incorrect information on the 26th August. WB told me that he should have said 'accusation' or 'incident' and not conviction. He also told me that by 2008 he had known about and thought about the conviction for 7 years and had become muddled. He also said that, if he had known about the conviction he would have taken action against RC.

After the 26th August meeting PJ wrote a letter thanking WB for the meeting and saying that his criticisms of the Church and Diocese were not aimed at WB. He did not raise any concerns at that time. At a later stage, PJ has been critical of WB for his failure to act on the knowledge of the conviction and his granting a PTO to RC after, as he said, he had pressured RC into retirement. I deal below with the grant of the PTO. It was, however, unfortunate that WB used the word 'conviction' at the August meeting because it has given PJ an erroneous impression of the facts and a belief that WB should have acted upon the knowledge of the 1954 conviction in 1998/9. That erroneous impression has to

a great extent coloured the picture of those events for PJ. It has undoubtedly added to the stress suffered by PJ who was not only the victim of appalling treatment at the hands of one priest but now believes that he was not given a true account by the Bishop.

4.3 Police/CPS decision not to proceed

After the end of the police investigation, it is unsurprising that the Diocese, which had not suspended RC in 1997, did not take any steps of its own in 1999 to establish the degree of risk that RC might then pose to children. Sussex Police did not raise any continuing concerns. RC had retired before the investigation was concluded and was in poor health. I refer to the points I made in the paragraph above in relation to the Diocesan guidance and RC should have been suspended while a risk assessment was carried out or at least open conditions placed on his ministry. The fact that, because of his continuing ill health, RC was unlikely to be a danger to children was not a good reason not to make clear the limits upon his right to continue his ministry. There were at least two reasons for this. One was the need for a message to the Diocese that child abuse, including historic abuse, was to be treated seriously. Further the victims, particularly PJ and B, needed to be reassured that their allegations of abuse were treated seriously. I recognise, of course, that the importance of a risk assessment in a

case of historic abuse allegations and the other procedures now in place were not well understood in 1999.

4.4. Permission to Officiate

The grant of a PTO followed the assumption in the Diocese that there was no evidence against RC and therefore no reason not to grant one. EC continued to be the only person with the opportunity to remind himself of the 1954 conviction and his letter to RC of 2nd November 1998 showed that he assumed a PTO would be granted. Clearly it should not have been granted by WB or, if granted, with stringent conditions. I repeat what I have written above. It would have been preferable if WB, since he believed that RC was a villain, had refused to grant a PTO and left it to EC to grant one. I do however recognise that, apart from the police investigation, now closed, there were no other circumstances to bar the granting of a PTO and it is understandable why it was granted by WB. It was also unwise of EC and of WB to write their letters of 2nd November 1998 before the police had completed their investigation and WB's letter was supportive of the grant of a PTO. It is unfortunate that WB failed to tell JH, as CPA, that he had granted a PTO to RC.

In 2001 WB was told by RC of his 1954 conviction. RC had lied to his Bishop and I would have expected WB to be seriously concerned about it but he had retired, was ill and in a nursing home and it was believed that he could do no harm. WB told me that, after

discussion with NR, they felt it was unnecessary to stop RC taking Eucharist in the nursing home where he was resident but imposed stringent conditions. That was an inadequate step to deal with this serious situation which should have dealt with more robustly and openly by immediate suspension. The stringent conditions, however, probably provided at the time a sufficient safeguard to meet the potential risk.

WB considered him to be a villain and in a recent email to me wrote

'If I had known (in 1999) of a conviction it would have been game, set and match'.

It was equally true in 2001 and RC should have had his PTO suspended for the important messages that step would have given. It is also unfortunate that the Blue File was not checked in 2003 when C contacted the Diocese.

4.5 Working Together/Lack of Communication

There are several strands of lack of communication JH was initially told by WB about the arrest of RC and she then spoke to the police but it does appear that JH was not generally kept in the picture or consulted by WB or by EC. JH told me that WB did communicate with her but their working together was undeveloped at that early stage. It would therefore be unjust to criticise the lack of a close working relationship at that time. These events took place before there was a child protection group or any child protection meetings set up in the Diocese and there was no formal procedure for

communication by the clergy with the CPA throughout this period. In JH's view the main deficiency was the lack of Multi-Agency Strategy meetings for the management of individual cases which would have guaranteed joint decision making and clear communication of information between church, police and social services and she referred to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2002. It was unfortunate that there was no access by the CPA to the Blue File until 2004 and then only with the consent of the Diocesan Bishop until 2008.

WB clearly got on very well with TS and he told me that TS was proactive in building relationships within the Diocese. It appears that TS was regularly in touch with WB by email and by telephone and involved him in the period of meetings with PJ and C. WB asked TS to draft a letter to C. WB told me that he did tell TS about RC's 1954 conviction and that TS had access to all the information about RC held by him. It was unfortunate that WB who had been in touch with PJ and with C did not himself remember the similarities in their accounts.

Looking back to 2002 from the perspective of 2011, the 1954 conviction was a very important piece of evidence in the police investigation and the approach of the Diocese to the allegations of abuse. But in the period 1996 to his death in 2006, the Sussex Police either did not have it on their database or had not taken the effort to check RC against the database. TS did, according to his 28th February 2003 email, get in touch

with the police about the allegations made by C, but the police had decided not to take any action. In the light of that email, it does not appear to me that the knowledge by the police of the 1954 conviction would have made any difference to their decision not to proceed against a seriously ill man, too vulnerable to be interviewed. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Diocese did not appear to consider the 1954 conviction to be significant. The Northants Police investigation was primarily concerned with CP, a much younger man than RC. It is impossible to say now whether, if RC had lived, in view of his ill health he would have been prosecuted with CP, but the CPS view of RC in 2003 might well have been the same in 2008.

WB did not give SH a copy of the email from PJ in December 2007 about D or tell her about it. On the 22nd June 2009 PJ telephoned SH and was angry that he had had to notify the police about D when SH should have done so. PJ forwarded to SH the email he had sent to WB in December 2007. JC had also seen the blog. SH suggested, and I agree with her, that it would have been helpful if the blog had been provided to the police since E might have been a relevant witness in CP's trial. WB told me that he assumed the police did know because he understood PJ to be in touch with the police.

I would expect communication with the police generally to be through the CPA rather than by a member of the clergy. I shall, however, be setting out in my recommendations that direct communication by a member of the clergy to the police is

essential where there is important information about a potential criminal investigation in the Diocese.

4.6 Written records.

There was no record of the arrest of RC nor the investigation by the police nor of the CPS decision in 1999 not to proceed in the Blue File and no information about RC from his arrival in the Diocese in 1971 until his retirement letter of 28th October 1998. The Blue File was not open to the CPA until 2004 with leave and 2008 without leave. There was a note in the Day Book of the discussion between JH and the Sussex police in December 1997. According to WB, RC's declaration form and DOH form were sent to the Palace in May 2001 but as I have said above, they may not have been received but if received they were not placed in RC's file. The relevant events in the career of RC do not appear to have been recorded in the Blue File nor recorded in a systematic fashion by CPAs nor in WB's file. There are numerous indications that in general record keeping in respect of RC was patchy and very inadequate.

5 Sussex Police

The 1954 conviction of RC either was not on the police database or was not checked by the Sussex Police. This was a serious oversight by the police and no doubt led the police

and the CPS not to give the account by PJ the degree of credibility it deserved. In the letter to PJ of 13th March 1999 a police officer indicated that the record of the investigation and the statements of the brothers would be kept on file. When C went to the police, three years before the death of RC, the previous file of the investigation into RC had by then been destroyed in accordance with police practice at that time. Having decided to take no action with regard to C's allegations, it seems clear that the Sussex Police did not retain a record of their interview with him. Their approach to allegations of historic abuse appears at that time to have been superficial. In my view their failure to find out about RC's 1954 conviction which would have been likely to set alarm bells ringing within the Diocese, was a major contribution to the failure to deal properly with RC immediately after his arrest in 1997.

The Sussex Police told me that at that time it was not their practice to discuss cases with anyone who was not one of the authorised agencies, such as social services. The position of a Diocesan Child Protection Adviser was not recognised as such by the police. They did not at that time form part of any child protection group within the Diocese. It was not part of their practice to advise the Diocese about any risk they might perceive to continue in relation to any accused person whom they had ceased to investigate. I understand from JH that the police did not give the names of victims to the Diocese and they were only identified by their approach to WB. There was no general channel of communication initiated by the Sussex Police with the CPA or any of the clergy in the

Diocese. That was an unfortunate state of affairs and was partially responsible for the failure to exchange significant information about RC. D/S Edmund Hick was involved in the case in 1998 but did not know about the 1954 conviction until SH told him in 2007. From about 2004 according to D/S Hick, he was from time to time consulted by TS and gradually played a part in the new child protection arrangements and became a member of an emerging child protection group in the Diocese. After his retirement from the police he has been, and continues to be, employed by Sussex Police as co-ordinator of child protection with the Diocese and is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Group. This now provides a vastly improved relationship and information sharing between the Sussex Police and the Diocese. I am told by the Sussex Police that they now treat allegations of historic child abuse with great care. I have also seen their excellent Procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children.

6 Colin Pritchard

I turn now to Colin Pritchard(CP)

He was born 4th May 1944

6.1 Ordination

In 1966 he attended the same theological college as RC

He was ordained priest on the 11th June 1970 and served in several parishes in the Midlands. In 1977-80 he was assistant curate at Duston; 1980-1989 he was Vicar of St Andrew, Wellingborough.

6.2 Diocese of Chichester

In 1989 CP moved to the Diocese of Chichester and from 1989 to 2001 was Rector of Sedlescombe. In 2001 he became Vicar of St Barnabas, Bexhill and chaplain to East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust 2001 to 2007. Unlike RC, CP had no previous history of committing child abuse.

6.3 Arrest by Sussex police in 1997

In 1996 when PJ was interviewed by the police he made allegations of abuse against CP as well as RC. He told me that the Sussex Police arrested CP as well as RC in December 1997 and he had a letter from the police in January 1998 about the arrests. But the (incomplete) records of the Sussex Police show that CP was arrested in late 1998 or early 1999. On the 21st December 1998 JH recorded in the 'Day Book' that she had had a telephone call from a police officer asking for the address and telephone number of CP about a possible offence which was not so serious as RC. She contacted WB. After arrest CP was released on police bail.

On the 11th February 99 the police at Hailsham wrote to CP, informing him that he need not answer to the police bail on the 15th February as the police were taking no further action. On the 15th February 1999 CP wrote to JH enclosing the letter from the police and saying that he had discussed the matter with WB and NR.

On the 18th May 2006 CP completed the Confidential Disclosure Form and included in it the details of police enquiry in 1997/8.

On the 4th October 2006 he was signed off for 3 months on the grounds of stress. He retired on the 16th January 2007.

6.4 Arrest by Northants Police

On the 27th September 2006 the Northants Police arrested CP at the Vicarage, St Barnabas and released him on police bail. They arranged a voluntary interview for the 2nd October. The Northants Police informed the Sussex Police of the arrest and were informed of the previous allegations against CP and RC. A member of the Sussex Police contacted TS on the 27th or 28th September to inform him of the arrest. TS made notes that he had a telephone call from Northants Police notifying him of CP's arrest regarding an alleged child offence in Wellingborough in the 1980s.

Early in 2007 JH, standing as CPA after the tragic and unexpected death of TS in January 2007, read the Diocesan file about CP and picked up an answer phone message on TS's telephone from a police officer. She got in touch with WB who told her that CP was worshipping at Christ Church, St Leonards but was not involved in ministry there or any work with children. She then got in touch with Northants police and read both Blue Files. She told the officer in charge, about the previous investigation by the Sussex Police and that RC had also been investigated. She also gave details of the person who made the allegations, that is to say PJ. A police officer went to the Bishop's Palace at Chichester and read the Blue Files and then got in touch with potential witnesses. He identified 5 or 6 victims of RC and 2 in particular who had been abused by RC and CP in

the vicarages in Wellingborough and Eastbourne. Later WB's secretary told her CP had been given a PTO. WB told me he did not have a conversation with JH about a PTO for CP before its issue. After helping immediately after the death of TS, JH ceased to deal with individual cases but continued to help with training and policy until SH was appointed

On the 16th January 2007 CP retired and applied for a PTO and on the 1st February 07 a PTO was issued by WB to CP.

On the 5th July 2007 the PA to WB sent the PTO documents to JH, with apologies for sending them late. In the letter the PA said that the PTO documents had been found in a separate PTO file. According to JH, she had previously been informed by WB that CP was not working with children nor had taken on any ministerial role at Christ Church, St Leonards. Both JC and she were satisfied that, as CP had no access to children, it was not necessary to suspend the PTO or to impose conditions. The Vicar of Christ Church, St Leonards was informed of the situation. JH also told me that had she been aware that a PTO was to be granted she would not have approved.

When WB was reminded that he had granted a PTO to CP, he discussed it with JC and JH. He told me that he was not instructed to withdraw the PTO but to restrict it. He

immediately telephoned the Curate of the parish, the Rev Timothy Tregunno, and asked for written confirmation. He had an email reply on the 15th July 2007 that it was “the policy of Christ Church, St Leonards that an adult should not be on their own with a child.... I am the only member of the clergy involved with youth work at Christ Church as is the Curate’s lot.”

On the 6th September 2007, on the appointment of Shirley Hosgood (SH) as CPA, there was a handover meeting with JH. CP was identified as remaining under police investigation and on police bail. SH advised WB by telephone on the 12th September to suspend CP from priestly duties which SH told me that WB readily agreed to do with immediate effect. WB spoke to CP the same day and placed him on temporary suspension pending the outcome of the police investigation and confirmed it by a letter written the same day. His secretary informed SH the following day. SH informed WB of CP’s appearance at Northampton Police Station on the 5th October 2007 and WB accepted that CP needed to remain on suspension pending the outcome of the criminal proceedings and that his level of involvement in church activities needed to be formalised in a written agreement (Covenant of Care).

On the 28th July 2008 at Northampton Crown Court CP was charged with conspiring with RC to carry out acts of indecent assault on 3 named boys under age of 16. This count was not proceeded with. CP pleaded guilty to 4 counts of indecent assault on a child

and 3 counts of gross indecency on a child. The offences were committed between 1979 and 1983 and involved two victims aged between 12 and 15. He was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment on each count to run concurrently. PJ and F were the two victims on the indictment and were ready to give evidence if the trial had proceeded.

On the 27th August 2008 JC wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury requesting that CP's name be included on the Archbishop's list and that he be prohibited for life from exercising any priestly ministry.

7 Comments on approach of Diocese and Police to Colin Pritchard

There had been nothing remarkable in CP's behaviour either in Northamptonshire or in Chichester Diocese to raise any cause for concern. Unlike RC he had not been previously convicted of a sexual offence. CP suffered a serious injury in a road accident in the late 1980s which appears to have had an unspecified effect on his behaviour.

7.1 1998/9 Arrest by Sussex police

CP was, according to the Sussex Police, investigated by them for only a short period, 2 to 3 months at most. This is unlikely to be correct since PJ in three long interviews in 1996 and 1997 implicated CP with RC. The Sussex Police have no record of these interviews or that they arrested CP in 1997. They informed him in 1999 that they were taking no

further action against him. His position was similar to that of RC above. Although JH should, in principle, have considered arranging a risk assessment of CP and should have discussed it with either EC or WB, CP in his letter to JH said that that he had discussed his position with WB and NR. NR, however, has no recollection of any specific conversation with CP about his situation. As I have already set out in the case of RC, a risk assessment of a historic abuse case where the police were no longer investigating was not specifically flagged up in the 1995 Bishops' guidance nor in JH's Diocesan guidance. The correct procedure was not followed and it is not surprising that no steps were taken in 1999 to assess CP. He continued to minister as a priest until October 2006 when he was signed off for 3 months and then retired in January 2007.

7.2 Sussex Police

The Sussex Police had incomplete and inaccurate information about CP. Since they, according to PJ, had interviewed PJ three times in 1996/7 and had informed him that they had arrested both RC and CP, the request by a police officer to JH in late 1998 asking for details of CP's whereabouts is difficult to understand. The comments I made in the case of RC apply to the police position with regard to CP.

7.3 2006 Arrest by Northants Police

TS was the first official in the Diocese to know about the arrest of CP. He died soon after he received that information but left a hand written note of his conversation with the Northants Police. JH, covering some of TS duties after his death was in touch herself with the Northants police; read the Diocesan file and, according to her, discussed the position of CP with WB. She learnt that CP had or was about to retire and had not been granted a PTO. JH acted entirely correctly within the child protection guidance.

Northants Police kept the CPA informed as to the progress of the investigation and acted entirely appropriately towards the Diocese.

7.4. Permission to Officiate (PTO)

It is clear that the PTO should not have been granted to CP on 1st February 2007. WB told me that he had no recollection of granting the PTO to CP. It appears to have been granted by an administrative error for which WB, rightly, took responsibility. This error does however reveal a lack of proper control and negligence in the Area Bishop's office and by WB personally in granting a PTO to a priest who was for the second time the subject of a police investigation into child abuse. I am relieved to learn that all PTOs have now to be issued personally by the Diocesan Bishop.

7.5 Lack of Communication and written records.

The inappropriate grant of the PTO to CP was compounded by the failure of WB's PA to send the relevant documents to JH until 15th July 2007. SH was critical of JH for taking no action when she received the documents in July 2007. SH was also concerned that not enough consideration to suspend CP before September 2007 when she became DSA. SH is entirely right to be critical of the grant of the PTO, and the failure to send the PTO documents to the Palace before July 2007. The position of CP and the likelihood that he might be a risk to children was considered by JC, JH and WB after the grant of the PTO was known to them and there was a check with the parish on potential risk to children. But having been granted in error in February, the PTO should have been suspended when the facts became known. There was by 2007 updated guidance on the management of historic abuse; CP was under active investigation by the Northants Police and the right message to the Diocese and the victims was not being given. In this case the investigation led to CP's conviction. Although the gap of 5 months between the grant of the PTO and consideration of the propriety of CP continuing his ministry is a matter of concern, fortunately the child protection policy of the parish where he lived largely reduced the risk of misbehaviour by CP.

7.6 Support for Victims of RC and CP

Although there were at least 7 victims of abuse by RC and 3 identified as abused by CP, only 3 were directly in communication with the Diocese during the period with which I am concerned, PJ, B and C. I interviewed PJ who gave a clear and detailed account of the abuse he suffered from both RC and CP. The abuse from RC lasted for over 10 years and the initial grooming began when he was first in the choir as a child of 7 or 8. The abuse from RC took place in the vicarage; on a number of foreign holidays, at a retreat and in the vicarage in Wellingborough when CP was vicar. RC and PJ regularly shared a bed on these visits. He suffered serious abuse from CP on one occasion.

PJ also gave a clear account of his treatment by members of the Diocese. He made the telling point that he felt they saw him as a problem rather than a victim. He found it difficult to understand and hurtful that WB believed his account of the abuse suffered from RC but not that suffered from CP. WB told me that he was initially taken in by CP but, as can be seen from his email correspondence with PJ, that he never disbelieved PJ and fully accepted PJ's account of his abuse from CP. WB also told me that he never saw PJ as a problem.

PJ made sensible recommendations some of which I am incorporating into my own recommendations.

SH, as CPA, has been concerned by and critical of the response of the Diocese to these 2 victims. SH pointed out that the first letter from WB to PJ in 2002 did not make a formal acknowledgement of the abuse which had occurred nor did it include a direct offer of help by the Diocese to PJ or to B. The subsequent letter from WB on the 11th July 2005, which had been drafted by TS included both the points set out above. I consider that an offer of direct support should have been made to PJ and B when it was first disclosed to WB in 2002. PJ told me that he was not offered any support until he asked for it. TS did however offer support and counselling to C. After the arrival of SH in September 2007, in consultation with the Diocesan Bishop, she arranged considerable support for the victims who came forward and arranged counselling and therapy for several victims paid for by the Diocese initially by way of the Bishop's Discretionary Fund. Although help had previously been offered by TS, I think it would be fair to say that SH transformed the Diocese approach to the need to give to adult victims of child abuse practical help and support to help them recover from the damaging after effects of the abuse they had suffered. The known victims of both RC and CP have now received support from the Diocese. Subsequent communications between members of the Diocese staff and victims have been subject to legal restrictions. JC on the 18th February 2011 sent a full letter of apology, on behalf of the Diocese, to PJ and his brother.

SH attended a meeting with WB and PJ on 26th August 2008. At that meeting she was concerned that WB told PJ that he had forced RC into retirement and she believed that could not be true because WB had subsequently awarded RC with a PTO. She felt that WB had not given PJ a true account. This was a misunderstanding of the facts since I am satisfied that the WB did genuinely wish RC to retire as soon as possible and did urge him to do so. PJ is also very critical of WB for the grant of the PTO. Having seen the support from EC in his letter of 2nd November 1998, set out above, I am less critical of WB's grant of a PTO to RC.

Note on definitions

In my conclusions and recommendations below, the phrase 'senior clergy' includes Bishops.

References to safeguarding of children include safeguarding vulnerable adults (although in this review it does not arise)

8 Conclusions

The allegations which were disclosed to the Sussex Police and to the Diocese by victims between 1996 and 2010 were all made by male adults who had been abused by priests of the Diocese many, many years before. None was more recent than about 1984. This was historic child abuse and it is not at all unusual for adults to tell of the abuse they suffered as children long after the abuse took place as the draft "Responding Well" Policy 2011 from the House of Bishops recognises. In 1996, when the first adult victim, PJ, went to the Sussex Police, neither the Police nor the Diocese was well equipped to deal with the consequences of the abuse clearly suffered by PJ. The first policy document on child protection from the House of Bishops in 1995 and the second one in 1999 did not refer to historic allegations of abuse. It was not until 2004 that the House of Bishops 3rd edition "Protecting all God's children" specifically but briefly referred to the procedure for dealing with historic abuse at page 35. The 2010 4th edition at pages 37 -38 sets out far more comprehensive advice to the Dioceses.

In my Review of the two priests, Roy Cotton and Colin Pritchard, I have already set out my concerns about a number of issues and this is a brief summary of the most important ones.

There was across the Diocese (and probably in many other Dioceses), a lack of understanding of the seriousness of historic child abuse. Senior clergy, including Bishops, were slow to act on the information available to them and to assess potential risk to children in the Diocese. Although a Child Protection Adviser had been in post since 1997, the senior clergy were slow to recognise the importance of his/her position in safeguarding children in the Diocese. There was for much of the time, inadequate communication from the senior clergy to the Child Protection Advisers about allegations of historic abuse made by victims. Two of the Child Protection Advisers were on some occasions unaware of potential child protection issues with which they should have dealt if the information had been available to them. Until 2004, there was no access by the Child Protection Adviser to the Blue File held at the Bishop's Palace and until 2008 only with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop. There was seriously inadequate record keeping of important events affecting clergy ministering in the Diocese and existing records were not checked. There was also, in the early stages, a failure to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse by victims and to give them adequate and timely support. Victims have been given much better support during the last 4 or 5 years.

The Sussex Police were also slow to recognise the significance of historic child abuse and did not take the disclosures of victims in their area sufficiently seriously. Their record keeping was deficient and, although at least 2 victims of the same abuser gave similar accounts, there was no connection made by the Police to the similarities. I am concerned that the Police and it appears, the CPS, took the view that Roy Cotton should not be further investigated after the second victim approached them because of his ill-health and because the CPS would not wish to prosecute. There are, I believe, at least 10 victims of this priest and the failure of the police to discover that he had been convicted of a sexual offence on a boy in 1954 led them to treat the disclosures of 2 of his victims with an unfortunate lack of seriousness. This had the effect that the victims were not able to see justice take its course.

By 2004 an officer from the Sussex Police was, I was told, regularly in touch with the CPA of the Diocese, but the Diocesan Safeguarding Group which included a representative from the Police was not fully in place and active until towards the end of 2010. The Police are now applying the excellent Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures which include the requirement that 'historical allegations should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns'.

The 2009 Diocesan Guidelines on safeguarding procedures and good practice are excellent and the Safeguarding Group, with a strong chairman who is a former senior police officer, now has suitable terms of reference. There is an excellent new Diocesan Secretary and a new Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser has just been appointed. Considerable strides have been made within the Diocese to understand the importance of child protection procedures. It is now necessary to implement those procedures and good practice across the Diocese at every level, from Bishop to curate, and to embed them into the culture of the clergy and the laity.

9 Recommendations

I support and endorse the current policy and the procedures of the House of Bishops and of the Diocese and shall not set them out in my recommendations.

The two priorities in historic abuse cases are

- The protection of children in the Diocese
- Support for adult victims of abuse suffered as a child.

9.1 Allegations of historic child abuse should be responded to in the same way as current allegations of child abuse.

9.2 It must be clearly understood that the decision of the police not to pursue an investigation or not to investigate at all or of the CPS not to prosecute does not relieve

the Diocese of its duty to assess, on the civil standard of proof, any potential risk to children in the Diocese and to act appropriately.

9.3 The alleged abuser, if a priest or retired priest with a PTO, should, almost always, be suspended temporarily from his or her ministry pending both the police and/or the Diocesan investigation. A similar response should be put in place for lay employees or people in voluntary roles within the church.

9.4 It should be made clear to all priests and retired priests with PTOs in the Diocese that, if an allegation of abuse including historic abuse, is made, he/she will have to be suspended temporarily as part of the diocesan safeguarding policy, even if the allegations turn out eventually to be groundless. In those rare cases where suspension may not be necessary this decision should only be made by senior clergy in consultation with the DSA / Safeguarding Group.

9.5 The senior clergy and diocesan secretary should evidence leadership in their commitment to the principles of safeguarding; should recognise the importance of the roles of the DSA and the Safeguarding Group and support them financially, through inclusion in appropriate diocesan communications, and through attendance at the group.

9.6 The senior clergy should consult the DSA and the Safeguarding Group and agree the best way to implement the management of historic allegations of abuse both in general policy and in individual cases.

9.7 The advice of the Safeguarding Group, supported by the DSA, should be treated seriously and, generally, be accepted by the senior clergy.

9.8 If the advice of the Safeguarding Group is not accepted by the senior clergy in relation to allegations made against a priest in the Diocese, written reasons should be given and recorded in the Blue File.

9.9 The clergy throughout the Diocese at every level and lay leaders should have regular training in the recognition and understanding of the management of historic abuse allegations and in understanding the effect of historic abuse on the victims as well as current child protection issues.

9.10 The clergy at every level and lay leaders should communicate directly with the DSA where issues of historic abuse and/or child protection arise in relation to any member of the church community including clergy.

9.11 If information is received by a priest or lay leader about abuse which might affect safeguarding of children, the Sussex Police as well as the DSA should be immediately informed.

9.12 In cases which might affect the safeguarding of children or other cases which are being investigated by the statutory agencies the priest or lay leader should not wait for a request before disclosing any relevant information.

9.13 There should be careful and meticulous record keeping both of issues of safeguarding and general personnel matters. All relevant information should be kept in

two files, the Blue File held at the Palace and the Safeguarding File held by the DSA with cross-referencing of important information held in one of the two files.

9.14 Every grant of a PTO or recommendation within the Diocese should be preceded by a careful check of the Blue File and the Safeguarding File and all other information available from senior clergy in the Diocese.

9.15 Every giving a 'safe to receive'(otherwise 'Clergy Current Status letter') to another Diocese or a recommendation should be preceded by a careful check of the Blue File and the Safeguarding File and all other information available from senior clergy in the Diocese.

9.16 Adult victims disclosing abuse as a child should be treated with respect and compassion; their allegations treated seriously; they should not be seen as accusers or as problems and they should be kept informed of the progress of any investigation.

9.17 Victims should be offered counselling and support and, where appropriate, funding for therapy. There should be no automatic time limit on engagement with any individual victim, since the impact of childhood abuse can be lifelong.

9.18 Letters to individual victims should be addressed and signed personally and, where appropriate, apologies should be made to the victims.

9.19 All risk assessments of clergy should be undertaken by an authoritative and skilled professional body, mirroring the arrangements put in place by the Independent Safeguarding Agency.

9.20 It would be helpful to clergy and lay workers in the parishes if a two sided laminated note of the main points of the Diocesan procedures could be provided to them for easy reference. This should include what to do when an allegation is made, reference to standards of proof, and how to ensure an audit trail.

9.21 In a situation where the assessment of allegations against a priest reveals a serious risk to children in a Diocese, even though the priest has not been prosecuted or even where he/she has been acquitted, urgent consideration should be given of referral to ISA and whether it would be possible to follow the CDM to achieve permanent removal of that priest from the ministry.

Elizabeth Butler-Sloss

19th May 2011

Appendix 1

My terms of reference are

The Reviewer is requested to consider the written documentation supplied and to interview all those whom she considers appropriate to enable her to fulfil her role with a view to advising the Bishop of Chichester in relation to the matters set out below:-

1. The evidential value of the information collated both by Shirley Hosgood the current Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and Mr. Roger Meekings (the reviewing of this for the Historic Cases Review) and used by him in the preparation of his report of May 2009.
2. The extent to which the conclusions reached and recommendations made by Roger Meekings were reasonable given the evidence at his disposal.
3. The extent to which subsequent events, details of which have been provided to her, might usefully provide evidence in support of his recommendations.
4. The extent to which victims of abuse have been provided at all relevant times with an appropriate level of support and the extent to which those who have the management of allegations of abuse have themselves been provided at all relevant times with an

appropriate level of support and monitoring by those in the Diocese with responsibilities in that regard.

5. What further or alternative recommendations she considers would be appropriate to ensure that the Diocese addresses the need to secure the highest standards of safeguarding within the scope of the Diocesan policy including the role of the recently re-constituted Safeguarding Group.

Appendix 2

In carrying out my reviews I have spoken to in interview, on the telephone, by email and by letter:-

The Bishop of Chichester

The Bishop of Blackburn (formerly Archdeacon Nicholas Reade)

The Bishop of Lewes

Archdeacon Philip Jones

Canon Ian Gibson

Janet Hind, former Child Protection Adviser, Chichester

Shirley Hosgood, former Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Chichester

Hilary May, member Safeguarding Group, Chichester

Keith Akerman, Chairman of the Diocesan Safeguarding Group

Angela Sibson, Diocesan Secretary

Edmund Hick, Sussex Police representative on Safeguarding Group

Two members of the Sussex Police

Northants Police

PJ, victim

Elizabeth Hall, National Safeguarding Adviser, Church House

Anne Lawrence, MACSAS

I am very grateful to all of them for their help.

Latest Addendum to my Review

After I completed my Review in May 2011, I learnt that some information which I had set out about the period after the grant of the PTO to RC on 17th May 1999 was incorrect. I very much regret those inaccuracies and felt it that I should set out the evidence I received about the period between the retirement of RC in January 1999 and his death in 2006.

1. At page 6 of my Review I wrote

“RC resigned at the end January 1999 and was at the time, according to NR, very ill. He spent some time in hospital in Hastings and NR visited him there. He moved to a nursing home for a while and until his death he remained in poor health.”

2. At page 9 I wrote

“Between May 1999 and September 2006, there is no evidence that RC officiated anywhere other than in the nursing home where he lived at one stage of his retirement.”

3. I also wrote at page 8

“A further reason relied upon by WB not to be concerned about the granting of the PTO was the continued ill health of RC and his lack of contact with children. The purpose of the PTO was, according to WB and supported by NR, to permit him to celebrate communion in the nursing home where he was then living.”

Statements 1 and 2 above were based on the information given to me by NR and WB.

Statement 3 was based on the information given to me by NR and not by WB.

I set out below the evidence I received from NR and WB.

NR originally told me that RC did not use his PTO because he went into hospital. He also told me that RC was told not to work with children. Subsequently NR wrote to me on the 14th February 2011

“I certainly understood that the PTO was on the condition that if ever Roy became well enough he would only be able to celebrate the Eucharist at home or in Colin Pritchard’s church, which I think was the parish in which he bought his retirement home.I never heard of Roy exercising any priestly ministry after he came out of hospital.”

He also wrote of the

“serious restriction to his PTO seemed a wise precaution which would ensure Roy would not be ministering either to young people or unsupervised.”

In an email on the 6th May 2011 he wrote

“I could not be certain RC spent all his retirement time in a nursing home. I thought he had a house in Sedlescombe. I know he applied to enter St Barnabas College, Lingfield but was not accepted because he needed a high level of nursing care.....I feel sure that when +W granted PTO to RC it was again made clear that there was to be no contact with young people. But at that time he had passed beyond any active ministry and, as your report states, +W was giving him permission to celebrate Mass in what was thought to be possibly his closing months, though he did go on to live as a very sick man for a few more years. In my time I was never aware of Roy taking any services in a public place...”

The evidence I received from WB was as follows.

In a letter to Philip Johnson on the 11th July 2005 he wrote

“With regard to Roy Cotton, the current circumstances are that the last I heard he was very ill indeed and being cared for in a home. There is no question whatsoever of him having any further ministry.”

In an email to me from WB on 22nd October 2010 he wrote

“Though Roy Cotton was given PTO in May 2001 (previously I had been instructed by Bishop Eric to give him PTO) to the best of my knowledge it was only to be used to say Mass in the nursing home where he was a resident. No children were ever involved.”

At a meeting with me on the 16th December 2010 WB said

“NR informed WB that RC wanted to use the PTO to say Mass in a nursing home.

Between 2001 and 2006 RC was always in a nursing home as he was unwell.”

In an email to me on the 16th May 2011 WB wrote in relation to his knowledge in 2001 of RC’s conviction

“I was initially minded to withdraw the PTO completely but in discussion with NR he thought it was unnecessary to stop RC taking the Eucharist in the nursing home where he was resident. We therefore added stringent conditions limited PTO to this function alone.”

In an email dated 7th November 2011 (after publication of my Review) WB said “ In May 1999 RC applied for and was granted PTO.....my understanding at the time was that RC was and would be taking services in local churches.”

Although I do not have a note or recall that WB had told me that RC had a parish

involvement after his retirement and was taking services in a number of churches, WB

has now informed me that he knew that RC was being paid for taking services. WB had

previously sent me a copy of a letter written by RC to him on 10th May 1999, prior to grant of the PTO on 17th May 1999, a letter to which I referred in my Review. In that letter RC wrote of taking services without a licence to officiate.

WB reminded me that he” did immediately take action after the conviction was known about in 2001. Having consulted NR he instructed him to visit RC to tell him his permission to officiate publicly had been withdrawn. ...He could only administer communion within his residential care home and nowhere else. This was a specific limitation on the PTO and effectively withdrew it except for occasional services in the home.” WB told me that RC could not thereafter carry out any public ministry.

As I learnt after I completed my Review, this restriction upon the PTO was not observed by RC.

At the time of writing my report I had not received any evidence that RC had held services outside the retirement home after 17th May 1999, the date of the grant of the PTO, and I did not receive any evidence about RC’s activities in any parish after that date. As I said above, I have now been informed that RC carried out a number of services in several parishes. The facts, I am now told, are as follows

Chronology regarding Roy Cotton post-retirement.

1) Cotton retired on the 31st January 1999. He applied for and received PTO in May of that year. He moved to Sedlescombe shortly after retirement, although the exact date of that move is not known.

2) Cotton took the following services in 1999:

- *Ninfield & Hooe – 28 services*
- *Christ Church St Leonards – 23 services*
- *St George's, Brede – 8 services*
- *Sedlescombe – 19 services*
- *Whatlington – 5 services*

3) Cotton took the following services in 2000:

- *9 services: 3 in Jan., 1 each in March & April, 3 in August and 1 Sept. (unsure of location – believed to be Sedlescombe)*

4) The events of 2001 are produced in more detail below:

- *Service taken in Sedlescombe in February*
- *Service taken in Sedlescombe in March*
- *May: Cotton written to from Bishop Wallace's office requesting that he fill in a confidential declaration form. Letter sent to his home address in Sedlescombe.*
- *May: Cotton replies declaring the 1954 conviction. Letter sent from his home address in Sedlescombe.*
- *September: Cotton took two services at Whatlington and one in Sedlescombe.*

5) Cotton took a wedding in February 2002 in Sedlescombe.

6) Between 2001 and 2003, Cotton spent some periods in hospital, dates unknown. They were apparently for a few weeks at a time. But he remained resident in Sedlescombe. He was increasingly ill over this period.

7) Cotton went into the nursing home in Sept '03. He had been in hospital for a few weeks before that. He was reluctant to go in at this point, but was persuaded by Colin

Pritchard and another friend. His stay in hospital prior to going to the home was no more than a few weeks, according to Pritchard.

8) He remained in the nursing home until his death in 2006. His health deteriorated further, necessitating an amputation of a leg at some point shortly before his death.

I very much regret that I accepted the information I was given and did not make further inquiries. Having said that, I am entirely satisfied that, with the knowledge I now have of the use by RC of the PTO granted to him, I would not have made any changes either to my conclusions or my recommendations.

I note that the evidence now available about the use by RC of the PTO was also not available to Roger Meekings when he wrote his Review.

Elizabeth Butler-Sloss

Saturday, 28 January 2012