

1.42 The appointment of Archbishop Connell in 1988 was a surprise. He was an academic with virtually no experience of parish work or of management of an organisation. He was aware that Fr [redacted] had a problem before he became Archbishop. He was immediately faced with the problems of Fr Carney and Fr Jovito*. The Commission has no doubt that he was stunned not by the fact but by the extent of the clerical child sexual abuse with which he had to deal. Bishop O'Mahony told the Commission that, of the three Archbishops he served as an auxiliary bishop, it seemed to him that Archbishop Connell was *"the most deeply affected by the harm of clerical sex abuse. He was also the most proactive in seeking improvement in the church management of the issue"*.

1.44 It is the responsibility of the Archbishop to make decisions. It is entirely appropriate to take account of professional advice but the weight to be given to that advice is a matter for the Archbishop to decide. In spite of his knowledge of the recidivist nature of abusers such as Fr [redacted], Fr Jovito* and Fr Carney, Archbishop Connell still allowed Fr Payne to continue in ministry when the complaint against him became known in 1991.