



CHURCH OF IRELAND

THE GENERAL SYNOD

Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6 D06 CF67

Tel: (+3531) 4978422

Fax: (+3531) 4978821

Email: synod@rcbdub.org

DX 10010 Ranelagh

RE: CHARITY REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF GIRLS BRIGADE NI, BOYS BRIGADE NI (including parishes in Donegal) AND OTHER UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS NI

DATE: 29th March 2022

Dear Incumbent or member of the clergy responsible for parish,

To be circulated to treasurers & select vestries NI & Raphoe

Dear Members of Select Vestries,

Following a query raised by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) with the Church regarding governance in respect of Girls' Brigade NI Companies, I would like to remind select vestries of the governance requirements attaching to agreements signed between parishes and the Girls Brigade NI.

These agreements, which are signed up to on a parish by parish basis, commit the parish to treating the Girls Brigade Company as an integral part of parish life. This includes taking responsibility for insuring the activities of the company/branch, appointing leaders, incorporating the Company's financial report with the parish accounts prepared and submitted to CCNI every year, and taking responsibility for safeguarding matters (subject to the arrangements contained in the Joint Protocol on Safeguarding). The same responsibilities apply to Boys Brigade NI Companies in NI parishes and to those parishes in Raphoe that relate to the Boys Brigade NI (although reporting in this instance is to the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA)).

Many parishes have noted and addressed these responsibilities, but can I ask you to check and to make sure that all of these governance requirements are in place in your parish and that your annual reporting to CCNI is complete and fulfils the terms of the agreements entered into with the Girls' Brigade NI?

Because these agreements form the basis of governance arrangements for the Girls' Brigade companies, it is important that the select vestry is aware of the agreement and retains a copy of it with other important parish documents. Decisions regarding governance matters relating to this agreement should be recorded in the Select Vestry minutes.

Please note that governance of Girls Brigade NI (and Boys Brigade NI including Donegal) differs from arrangements covering Girl Guide Companies and branches of The Scout Association and the Girls Friendly Society, and Church Lads and Girls Brigade, which operate as separate, independent organisations and take responsibility for their own arrangements and governance, essentially using the parish premises as a meeting venue. They all report their branch accounts as part of a single return to the charity regulator.

Guidance on this matter has been updated and can be found on the finance section of Parish Resources on the Church of Ireland website. [Parish Resources - Church of Ireland - A Member of the Anglican Communion](#)

If you have any queries, please revert to me directly and have a copy of your agreement to hand. Please also remember that there is a joint protocol on safeguarding which deals specifically with relationships with the uniformed organisations in respect of safeguarding matters and any queries in respect of this should be addressed to the new Safeguarding Officer for NI, Ms Gillian Taylor – cponi@ireland.anglican.org (or for RI parishes, the Safeguarding Officer for RI, Mr Robert Dunne cpori@ireland.anglican.org).

Yours sincerely

Janet Maxwell, Head of Synod Services

Email - janet.maxwell@rcbdub.org