In an attempt to try and add clarity and understanding to issues around DBS checks, and to answer recent questions raised in circuits, I thought that I would send out the following message with links to relevant documents and policy.

Across the country the role that the DSO plays in relation to DBS checks varies. Some will only deal with the notified blemishes, and carry out the DBS check for the Chair of District. Others will carry out DBS checks for all ministers. In an attempt to clarify the position and responsibility that the DSO in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has towards DBS, I have spoken with Revd Simon Clarke and we have agreed that in future the following with be the responsibility for DBS checks throughout the District -

1. DSO will verify the DBS checks for Superintendents and will handle any notified DBS blemish across the district.
2. Superintendents will verify their circuit ministers’ DBS checks
3. It is for circuits to determine who will verify DBS checks for all lay staff, local preachers, etc.

**Why we need DBS Checks**

As part of creating a safer place we need to ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent. Part of that is carrying out DBS checks for people working or volunteering in a Methodist Church setting primarily with children and adults who may be vulnerable.

The below is a link to the District website that contains all relevant documents and Methodist Policy for carrying out DBS Checks. It also has a copy of document SD/4 – Declaration for members of Church Bodies, this should be completed by office holders/members of church bodies.

Link to district website: <https://www.cornwallmethodists.org.uk/safeguarding>

Link to DBS documents: <https://www.cornwallmethodists.org.uk/dbs-documents>

**Simplified explanation of process to carry out DBS check**

Step one –

Completion of a Role Profile/ job description that will indicate that there is a need for a DBS check to be carried out (page 8 and 13 of policy will assist in this process).

Step two –

**DBS Renewal** - Completion of Confidential Declaration Form for renewals of DBS checks

*or*

**New DBS Check** – Completion of Confidential Declaration Form (CSD/1 or CSD/2)

This part of the process gives the applicant the opportunity to disclose any information that might be disclosed through the DBS process. If information is disclosed at this point the DSO should be apprised. Any information provided will be kept secure as this is a confidential process.

Step three –

1. If it has been identified through the role profile/job description process that a DBS Check is necessary then the applicant should not start work/volunteering until the completion of this process.
2. The Verifier can be a number of people in the circuit – Supt, safeguarding Officers, administration or those that the Supt feels needs the responsibility to carry out the role of verifier.
3. The Verifier should add the applicant to the DDC system (guidelines are available at page 19 of policy). This should include the check of relevant documents and submission of the application.

Blemished DBS

DDC will inform the Connexional Safeguarding Team if the DBS application is not clear, who in turn will apprise the minister and DSO. The DSO will then get a copy of the DBS Certificate and an account from the applicant explaining the information that has been disclosed through the DBS process. The Connexional Safeguarding Team/Panel will then make the decision as to risk and if the applicant can take up the post/role that they have applied for.

Record Keeping

It is the individual’s responsibility to ensure the renewal of any DBS check is carried out within the five-year deadline. *However, the Circuit/Church/Safeguarding Officer/admin should keep a record of all criminal records checks carried out within the Circuit and this will identify when the deadline is approaching.*

I am happy to assist and advise in this process where needed.