

Charity Commission case exposes failures at British Pakistani Christians Limited

The Charity Commission has criticised the trustees of [British Pakistani Christians Limited \(BPCA\)](#) for failing to ensure proper safeguarding measures were in place at the charity, and for their poor oversight of the charity's governance. The regulator has cautioned the trustees to take steps to improve the charity's governance and management.

BPCA has broad charitable objects, and in practice, supports community groups and individuals on issues such as debt, forced marriage and poverty in Redbridge, London and works overseas.

The regulator opened a case into the charity in 2020 after concerns were raised about a safeguarding incident linked to the charity overseas. The Commission investigated the trustees' response to the incident and found failures in its immediate handling as well as a general lack of adequate safeguarding policies and procedures.

The regulator also identified wider governance concerns, including a lack of robust financial controls in relation to its overseas operations and confusion amongst the trustees about the aims and activities of the charity.

In February 2021, the Commission issued the charity with an Official Warning directing its trustees to take action to address these failures.

The Commission recently assessed the charity's progress in addressing the measures set out in the warning, finding improvements around the charity's safeguarding policies, training of trustees and staff and in its overseas operations.

The regulator has now issued further formal advice to the trustees, requiring them to address outstanding concerns around the charity's handling of conflicts of interest. The Commission has now closed its case.

Tracy Howarth, Assistant Director of Casework, said:

Everyone who comes into contact with a charity has a right to feel safe. Trustees must make safeguarding a governance priority, ensuring that the charity protects people from harm, and responds promptly and effectively when things do go wrong. Unfortunately, that hasn't always been the case at BPCA. We found the charity's trustees lacked sufficient oversight and expertise to protect people who came into contact with the charity.

I am pleased that our firm action in this case has resulted in clear improvements in the charity's approach to safeguarding. We

now expect the trustees to address outstanding issues, and ensure the charity's governance improves into the future.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The Charity Commission does not investigate criminal matters, which are for the police and other agencies. The Commission's remit in relation to safeguarding is explained in its [safeguarding strategy](#), published on GOV.UK.