

<b>17 February 2016</b>		<b>ITEM: 5</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Conference</b>		
<b>A New Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2017/2022</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> – Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning and Skills		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> - Director of Children’s Services		
<b>This report is</b> Public		

## **Executive Summary**

At the last meeting of Thurrock SACRE, it was resolved that an Agreed Syllabus Conference would be convened on the next scheduled date for SACRE; Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016. At this meeting the conference would consider a proposal to adopt the RE Today model syllabus for recommendation to Thurrock Council.

### **1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:**

**That SACRE:**

#### **1.1 Convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference**

**That the Agreed Syllabus Conference:**

#### **1.2 Vote on the proposal to adopt the RE Today Model Syllabus**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

**Every LA is required to establish and support an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC)**

An ASC must:

- produce and recommend to the LA an agreed syllabus for RE which is educationally sound and meets legal requirements

- with any sub-committee it may appoint,<sup>1</sup> meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality<sup>2</sup>
- unanimously recommend a syllabus for adoption by the LA (each committee having a single vote) - there are provisions for the Secretary of State to become involved where an ASC is not unanimous<sup>3</sup>
- include on any sub-committee at least one member of each of its constituent committees.

An ASC may specify what must be taught through the locally agreed syllabus. In recommending a syllabus the ASC may not specify the amount of curriculum time that must be allocated to RE by schools, but they may provide an estimate of how much time their syllabus would require, to help schools to plan their timetable.

### Membership of an ASC

An ASC is required to be made up of four committees<sup>4</sup>

- Committee A – Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- Committee B - the Church of England
- Committee C - teacher associations
- Committee D - the LA.

There is no legal provision for an ASC to include co-opted members, but it can seek the advice it considers appropriate from those it considers appropriate, to inform the development of effective RE provision in its area.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

SACRE made a request at the last meeting that the adviser consult with teachers over the proposal to adopt the RE Today Agreed Syllabus. Four responses were received to this consultation. These are reported in Appendix 1

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 Having considered a number of different options for the new Agreed Syllabus, the consensus, supported by a sample of teachers and a governor, is that the RE Today model syllabus is the best option for Thurrock

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996

<sup>2</sup> Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304

<sup>3</sup> Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996

<sup>4</sup> Section 390(2) Education Act 1996; Schedule 31, para 4, Education Act 1996

## **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 Not applicable

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 Not applicable

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Shaj Sivadasan**  
**Financial Implications**

The schools are responsible for meeting any costs associated with implementing changes to the curriculum, and these will have to be met from their existing Individual Schools Budgets.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
**Education Lawyer**

This report asks SACRE to convene the conference as required by law. Details of the statutory framework are referenced as foot notes.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
**Community Development & Equalities  
Manager**

The implications of this report are that raising standards in religious education in Thurrock will help students to gain more understanding of the religion or belief of people in the local and national community and therefore improve community cohesion.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- Not applicable

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Not applicable

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Responses to consultation on Model Syllabus proposal

**Report Author:**

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