

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education**

Date: **1 February 2012**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

TITLE: TAKING RE FORWARD IN BROMLEY

Contact Officer: Penny Smith-Orr, RE Adviser
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Chief Officer: Gillian Pearson, Director of Children and Young People Services

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The Chair and the RE Consultant have met with Beverley Johnston, Head of Education Commissioning and Business Services to discuss the development plan for Bromley SACRE for the next 15 months. A draft development plan has been prepared for members to discuss at the meeting. The discussions will be based on how the proposed development plan for Bromley will impact on the teaching and learning of RE in the borough. The priority of a SACRE is to monitor RE and CW in schools and support schools in the provision of excellent RE.
- 1.2 Over the previous year SACRE has discussed the need for a review of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus, which was launched five years ago, and a review of the 2004 handbook used in primary schools. This needs to be decided on as the law dictates that a review must take place every five years.
- 1.3 It is expected that the budget for SACRE for the financial year 2012-13 will be reported at the meeting. Depending on the budget implications and members discussion some other aspects of the plan may have to be given a lesser priority.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Members to consider the role of SACRE, NASACRE document attached (Annex 1), and decide on the priorities for Bromley SACRE in the coming year.
- 2.2 A decision to be made on the review of the syllabus.

Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Nil.
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NASACRE

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT FOR SACREs

1. As part of their responsibilities to ensure high quality RE and collective worship for all pupils the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to establish a SACRE and an agreed syllabus conference (ASC), and also has statutory responsibilities in supporting both bodies
2. 'The LA's duty to convene a conference or to establish a SACRE implies providing sufficient funds for these bodies to perform their duties.' ERA 1988 s11 (1)
3. 'Sufficient funding' for the SACRE may vary depending on factors such as the size and faith diversity of different LAs but should not be less than:
 - Clerking support for 3-6 SACRE meetings per year,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for 3-6 SACRE meetings per year,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for preparation and publication of the SACRE annual report.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that the agreed syllabus is reviewed every five years. The LA is responsible for providing satisfactory funding for this task, including writing, consulting, publishing and providing necessary training. In addition, the SACRE has the power, rarely used, to require the LA to review its agreed syllabus within the five year period as stated in ERA 1988 s11 (7).

4. Sufficient funding for the ASC within a five year cycle may vary for reasons similar to those leading to variation in funding of SACREs in different LAs but should not be less than:
 - Clerking support for 3-6 ASC meetings,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for the 3-6 ASC meetings,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for reviewing the agreed syllabus, and preparing, and publishing the reviewed syllabus and disseminating it across the LA schools. 5-10 days within a five year cycle.
5. The statutory duty is reaffirmed in the *Religious Education guidance in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010* which states, "An LA should fund and support a SACRE and an ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them effectively to carry out their function."

6. In addition to these central statutory duties an effective SACRE should

- Monitor standards and achievement in RE in the LA through agreed school visits and analysis of appropriate data including external examination results,
- Have a clear, realistic development plan which raises both the profile of, and achievement in RE,
- Enrich the quality of RE through specific projects e.g. raising boy's attainment,
- Build strong and positive partnerships with schools, colleges and universities, local faith and belief communities and keep informed of key national developments in RE,
- Provide effective support on the effective teaching of RE including planning, methods and resources.

All of these require that a specialist RE professional is in place; is well informed and qualified and has the capacity to manage these actions with the SACRE.

7. As with members of school governing bodies, some provision should be made for the induction, training and development of SACRE members and for expenses to attend meetings.

KEY QUESTION FOR LAs

- Does the professional, administrative and financial support for SACRE enable it to carry out its duties effectively and improve learning and achievement in RE?

KEY QUESTION FOR SACREs

- How does the work of SACRE improve learning and achievement in RE?

APPENDIX A

TASKS OF THE SACRE CLERK

- Arrange, attend and clerk meetings of the SACRE;
- Produce and circulate minutes and agenda in a timely manner in accordance with the Council's standard format;
- Arrange, attend and clerk meetings of the ASC during the review period;
- Ensure that all papers from working parties or consultants are circulated to the ASC members in advance of meetings;
- Advise on dates of meetings; particularly in relation to religious holidays or other council meetings which may clash and affect quoracy;
- Arrange venues for meetings of both the SACRE and ASC;
- Liaise with the relevant personnel to establish when necessary good relationships;
- Organise and if necessary transport equipment (e.g. ICT, digital projector) to meetings;
- Organise catering for the meeting with due sensitivity towards the religious sensibilities of the particular faith communities;
- Remind and if necessary chase members/other attendees about reports for meetings and circulation deadlines;
- Circulate additional papers or conference invitations from relevant bodies;
- Alert the Chair and RE Professional Adviser/Consultant to any communications from relevant bodies;
- Ensure that regular communications are circulated to members;
- Working with the Chair, the local RE Professional Adviser/Consultant and other SACRE Officers, produce reports to the Mayor and Cabinet e.g. when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required;
- Work closely as a team member with the Chair, the local RE Professional Adviser/Consultant and other SACRE Officers (this includes regular phone contact, e-mail, and agenda planning meetings);

- Be the first point of contact for SACRE members, faith community members, members of the public and officers of NASACRE and other relevant bodies;
- Respond to enquiries alerting the Chair and RE Professional Adviser/Consultant when necessary;
- Maintain the SACRE (and ASC) membership list, keeping it up to date, chasing members whose attendance is poor and identifying any membership issues for the attention of the Chair;
- Contact the nominating bodies for each interest group represented on the SACRE when membership lapses and arrange for replacements;
- Contribute information for the Annual Report of SACRE (e.g. membership and attendance details);
- Assist in the production, publication and distribution of the Annual Report;
- Issue Welcome/Induction Packs for new members and ensure that new members have sufficient information to prepare them for their first meeting;
- Maintaining a filing system (electronic and paper) of relevant and up to date information;
- Liaise with other LA departments and keep the Chair, the local RE Professional /Adviser and other SACRE Officers informed of any LA initiatives which may be relevant to the work of the SACRE;
- Ensure that all SACRE publications are circulated to the relevant bodies;
- Liaise with the LA's Legal/committee section regarding governance issues;
- Undertake administrative work relating to the meetings of sub groups of the SACRE e.g. working parties for particular initiatives;
- Help organise events such as the launch of the new agreed syllabus, SACRE open evenings;
- Be responsible for the payment of invoices relating to SACRE work e.g. payment for attendance at national conferences, catering for meetings or training;
- Maintain oversight of the SACRE budget, advising the Chair of issues relating to this budget.

APPENDIX B

TASKS OF THE SPECIALIST RE PROFESSIONAL ADVISER/CONSULTANT

- Attend all SACRE meetings, helping to prepare Agendas and key papers;
- Advise SACRE on issues relating to its work;
- Ensure SACRE is up to date with local, regional and national initiatives and issues related to RE and collective worship, e.g. Ofsted subject reports, DfE funded initiatives;
- Relate SACRE's work to wider community issues, including partnerships with faith and belief communities;
- Lead on areas related to the Agreed Syllabus, RE and collective worship;
- Manage and deliver the training of SACRE members and, where appropriate, teachers and other groups interested in RE;
- Produce reports to meet the deadlines agreed for distribution of papers for the meetings;
- Support individual SACRE members' development including their ability to provide a bridge between their sponsoring body and the full SACRE;
- With relevant administrative support and the SACRE clerk, manage and advise meetings of sub groups e.g. working parties for particular initiatives;
- With the SACRE clerk ensure that all SACRE publications are circulated to the relevant bodies;
- Working with the Chair, the clerk and other SACRE Officers, produce reports to the Mayor and Cabinet e.g. when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required;
- Draft and edit the SACRE Annual Report and all SACRE materials and publications;
- With administrative support, update any relevant RE / ASC / SACRE website and SACRE's presence on the LA website;
- Take the lead on the monitoring aspects of SACRE, especially agreed school visits and analysis of examination results in RE/RS.

BG/10/11