

# Public Document Pack



## Northumberland County Council

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:**

**Enquiries to:** Rebecca Little

**Email:** Rebecca.Little@northumberland.gov.uk

**Tel direct:** 01670 622611

**Date:** Tuesday, 25 January 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** to be held in on **WEDNESDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2022** at **4.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally  
Chief Executive

### **To the members of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

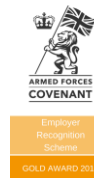
This meeting will be followed by an Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting. The Agreed Syllabus Conference has, by law, to review the County's Agreed Syllabus for RE every five years. The ASC will consider the outcomes of the ASC working group. All SACRE members will be expected to attend in order that we can conduct formal business.

Any member of the press or public may view the proceedings of this meeting live on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/NorthumberlandTV>. Members of the press and public may tweet, blog etc during the live broadcast as they would be able to during a regular Committee meeting.

*Members are referred to the risk assessment, previously circulated, for meetings held in County Hall. Masks should be worn when moving round but can be removed when seated, social distancing should be maintained, hand sanitiser regularly used and members requested to self-test twice a week at home, in line with government guidelines.*



**Daljit Lally, Chief Executive**  
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## **AGENDA**

### **PART I**

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

#### **2. MINUTES**

(Pages 1  
- 6)

Minutes of the meeting of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on 18 November 2020, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code of Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

**N.B.** Any member needing clarification must contact the Legal Services Manager, on 01670 623324. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

#### **4. AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION**

To receive an update from Caroline Weir, Part-time RE Consultant about the provision of RE in-service training and contacts with schools since the last related meeting.

#### **5. NASCRE ISSUES**

##### **The NASACRE Newsletter**

To receive the latest newsletter – for information.

Reminder of web site link: [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk) for other interesting articles.

- 6. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN SEPTEMBER 2021 - AUGUST 2023** (Pages 7 - 10)
- To monitor progress with the Northumberland SACRE Action Plan and to consider future development and monitoring of the action plan.
- 7. SACRE SUB-COMMITTEE** (Pages 11 - 20)
- To consider the creation of a sub-committee to provide support and challenge to the Northumberland SACRE and consider the draft terms of reference.
- 8. STATUTORY ANNUAL NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE REPORT FOR 20/21 ACADEMIC YEAR**
- To receive a copy of the (draft) statutory annual report of Northumberland SACRE, for consideration and approval. (Report to Follow)
- 9. TERMS OF REFERENCE** (Pages 21 - 22)
- To consider the revised terms of reference for the Northumberland SACRE
- 10. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**
- To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.
- 11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- The next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will be held on Wednesday, 27 July 2022
- 12. AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE** (Pages 23 - 32)

**IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:**

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussion or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

<b>Name (please print):</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>
<b>Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b>
<b>Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):</b>
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>

**1. Registerable Personal Interests** – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or

b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

**2. Non-registerable personal interests** - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

### **3. Non-participation in Council Business**

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

**This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.**

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## **NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

At a meeting of the **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** held in Meeting Space, Block 1, Floor 2, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on Wednesday, 8 December 2021 at 4.00 p.m.

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor. G. Renner-Thompson  
Chair, in the Chair.

#### **COUNCILLORS**

Bowman, L.

#### **TEACHER'S ASSOCIATIONS/UNIONS REPRESENTATIVES**

Nicholls, T.

#### **CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES**

Hudson, C.

#### **REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS**

Miller, Dr. J.

#### **CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES**

Dearlove, S.

#### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Cookson, D.	Commissioner for Secondary Education
Greally, R.	Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Weir, Ms. C.	RE Consultant

Ch.'s Initials.....

## 57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor N. Morphet, C. Naylor, M. Connolly, D. Van Der Velde, P. Rusby, B. Rhasa, J. Cousin.

## 58. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held on 14 July 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## 59. AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION

Ms. C. Weir informed Members that she had been researching syllabus options for the agreed syllabus conference.

She had led two network meetings; a primary and special and a secondary meeting. In the network meeting teachers were signposted to various educational sites and the Ofsted RE subject review (May 2021) was discussed. The key concern raised in the network meeting was the new syllabus. It was explained that as the last ASC meeting had not been quorate the syllabus was yet to be agreed.

Ms C. Weir had also attended NASACRE webinars ('New SACRE annual report template' and 'How to apply for a WESTHILL/NASACRE award')

She also highlighted the training session; "How to be an effective Chair" which was to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> January. It was agreed that the information would be shared with the Chair in the hope that he would be able to attend.

**RESOLVED** that the report and information discussed be noted.

## 60. NASACRE NEWSLETTER

Mr D. Cookson, Commissioner for Secondary Education, presented the newsletter to the committee. There was nothing specific to highlight to members.

All Members were encouraged to look at the training packages and attend any training that they felt was relevant to them as the training package had been purchased.

Ch.'s Initials.....



There was also a new template for the SACRE annual report which would be looked at for the future.

The following comments were being made in response to questions:

- It was confirmed that an annual report was always submitted and the intention was to continue this.
- There were provisions in place for one attendee to the NASACRE conference that was scheduled to be held in May. Anyone who was interested in attending could raise this with D. Cookson.
- The self-evaluation tool on the NASACRE website was a new tool. It had not yet been used by Northumberland but could be looked into.

## **60. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER**

Mr D. Cookson updated the SACRE on the newsletter arrangements. The new arrangement meant that the newsletter was published online with a link on the website. The positives of this were that the newsletter was always up to date. If any members had anything they wanted added to the newsletter they were to contact Mr D. Cookson.

There was an awareness that the newsletter needed to be promoted and publicised as there was a hope that it would be the place for RE teachers to go to for information. Mr D. Cookson was going to investigate if there was a way to indicate how many times the website link had been used.

It was noted that SACRE tried not to send round robin emails to schools to promote the newsletter as it was not an efficient way to promote it. Headteachers received a large amount of emails anyway and it was difficult to maintain an up to date list of RE teacher contacts. It was suggested that Union reps could distribute the message at Union meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## **61. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN SEPTEMBER 2021 - AUGUST 2023**

Mr. D. Cookson updated the committee on the action plan and assured Members that it would be shared with them after the meeting. Mr D. Cookson noted that there were two actions that were to be completed by the end of the year;

- produce a SACRE action plan

Ch.'s Initials.....

- produce a SACRE newsletter.

Both of which were to be completed by the agreed time.

It was suggested that a sub-committee be formed. Dr J. Miller agreed to draw up terms of reference and membership details for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## **62. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

Members noted that there would be an event held in County Hall. Information regarding it would be shared in due course. The members agreed that it was good that there was going to be an event held for Holocaust Memorial Day.

Members noted that a Councillor had a knowledgeable friend who was a Rabbi that had previously been involved in the Memorial Day previously. The connection would be passed on to colleagues who were organising the event.

Members noted that schools were provided with information regarding the holocaust and how to mark it and the school was left to organise the event in their own way.

**RESOLVED** that the information on the Holocaust Memorial Day be noted.

## **63. URGENT BUSINESS**

Members noted that legal services were looking into the constitution in regard to moving the Humanist member to committee A. Once an agreement had been made members would be informed.

Members questioned whether future meetings were able to be held virtually. Mr D. Cookson would confirm this and get back to members.

Members requested that workforce data including number of hours given to Religious Education was included on the next agenda.

Members noted that expenses forms would be emailed out to members again.

**RESOLVED** that the position be noted.

Ch.'s Initials.....

**CHAIR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Ch.'s Initials.....

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## Northumberland SACRE Action Plan: September 2021 - August 2023

- To assist Northumberland schools to carry out their statutory functions with regard to RE teaching and collective worship
- To monitor, support and evaluate the implementation of the locally agreed RE Syllabus
- To provide training and support as may benefit RE teaching and collective worship

Objective	Action	Responsible	Cost	Success criteria/outcomes	Date achieved
<b>To produce an updated agreed syllabus by January 2022</b>	Complete the rewrite process started in 2021	RE Consultant LA Officers SACRE	£££	Updated agreed syllabus in place and available to schools from December 2021	December 2021
<b>To disseminate information about the new agreed syllabus</b>	Ensure that schools which MUST use the syllabus do so and know how to access its content	RE Consultant LA Officers	£	All school that MUST use the syllabus do so  The syllabus is easily accessible via the SACRE webpage on the NCC website	December 2021 – April 2022
<b>To support school staff as they implement the agreed syllabus</b>	Provide face to face briefings on the content of the agreed syllabus  Provide an online briefing on the content of the agreed syllabus  Continue with network meetings	RE Consultant LA Officers	££	All schools develop schemes of work which meet with the requirements of the syllabus.  Staff responsible for RE feel confident teaching the subject	January 2022 – July 2022
<b>To monitor implementation and delivery of the agreed syllabus</b>	Schools encouraged to submit examples of schemes of work to the SACRE  LA Officers report to the SACRE about delivery of the syllabus observed during visits to schools	RE Consultant LA Officers	£	Time allocated to RE conforms with the advice in the syllabus  Schools meet their statutory duties in relation to the agreed syllabus	April 2022 – July 2023
<b>To monitor results in RE/RS/philosophy and ethics exams</b>	Interrogate relevant exam results annually for examined KS4 and 5 courses, and compare such results	LA Officers	£	Report is submitted to SACRE at the Spring term meeting	Depends on the availability of data from Summer 2021 “exam” season

	with past trends both locally and nationally				
<b>To monitor the number of pupils and students withdrawn from RE</b>	Examine the number of pupils and students withdrawn from RE  Offer advice to schools about how to reduce the number of pupils and students withdrawn from RE	LA Officers	£	Report is submitted to SACRE at the Summer term meeting	June 2022
<b>To monitor provision of collective worship in relation to the 2021 NCC Collective Worship Policy</b>	Letter to all appropriate schools seeking confirmation that collective worship conforms with the advice in the 2021 policy	LA Officers	£	SACRE has a more accurate picture of collective worship provision in the County  SACRE has evidence to confirm to what extent legislative requirements as they apply to collective worship are being met	June 2022
<b>To monitor the number of pupils and students withdrawn from collective worship</b>	Examine the number of pupils withdrawn from collective worship  Offer advice to schools about how they can reduce the number of pupils withdrawn from collective worship	LA Officers	£	Report is submitted to SACRE at the Summer term meeting  Confirm that suitable alternative provision is made for pupils	June 2022
<b>Comply with the SACRE's statutory responsibilities</b>	Produce a 3-year SACRE action plan	LA Officers	£	Raised awareness of the SACRE's role and responsibilities among SACRE members and the local authority as a whole	September 2021
<b>To produce a SACRE newsletter for schools, which will include information about new RE resources and best practice</b>	Design a new online newsletter to replace the current printed version  Add relevant content to the newsletter in a timely fashion  Teachers and SACRE members contribute examples of good practice to disseminate	LA Officers	£	The newsletter is always "up to date"  Readership increases	From September 2021

<p><b>Produce an annual report about the work of the SACRE in line with NASACRE guidance</b></p>	<p>The Chair and LA officers to collate information and write the report</p> <p>On completion, the report to be circulated to all the usual recipients</p>	<p>LA Officers</p>	<p>£</p>	<p>Statutory duty is met and good work carried out by the SACRE, NCC and the County's schools affirmed</p>	<p>July 2022</p>
<p><b>Broaden the membership of the SACRE, thereby ensuring, a) all four voting committees have sufficient representatives for SACRE to be quorate, and, b) other stakeholders are represented through co-option or as observers</b></p>	<p>The Church of England, other faith communities, Teachers' Associations and the LA to be approached for representation, as appropriate. Other stakeholders to be approached for representation as co-optees, as appropriate</p>	<p>LA Officers SACRE</p>	<p>£</p>	<p>The SACRE embraces a rich variety of religions and beliefs, and accesses the viewpoints of a wide range of stakeholders, all of whom seek to improve RE and collective worship in the County</p> <p>The SACRE enhances its knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to RE and collective worship</p> <p>The SACRE is kept informed about concerns, priorities, developments, etc. nationally as they relate to RE and collective worship</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>To send a delegate to NASACRE's Annual Conference</b></p>	<p>A representative of/officer associated with the SACRE volunteers to attend the Conference and to report to the SACRE about the main outcomes</p>	<p>SACRE</p>	<p>££</p>	<p>The SACRE is informed about concerns, priorities, etc. of SACREs nationally, and about the latest developments in relation to RE and collective worship</p>	<p>Annually</p>

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## **Northumberland County Council Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)**

### **Constitution**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Sections 11 and 12 of the 1988 Education Reform Act, amended by Sections 15 and 16 of the 1993 Education Act and then by Section 390 - 397 of the Education Act 1996 requires Northumberland County Council to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (the SACRE), which is a permanent body.

1.2 "Members" of SACRE refers to those appointed by the Local Authority to represent interest groups in accordance with the 1996 Education Act.

1.3 The aim of SACRE is to advise the Local Authority on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship. This constitution sets out:

- the main functions of the SACRE
- membership and voting arrangements
- rules on the conduct of business and administration.

#### **2.0 The objectives of Northumberland SACRE**

2.1 The core objectives of the SACRE are:

- the provision of independent consultation and detailed scrutiny on any matters within the scope of interest of SACRE;
- to determine any application from Headteachers for amendment(s) to the requirement that collective worship be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character;
- to publish an annual report that provides details of any matters on which the SACRE has advised.

#### **3.0 The scope of interest of Northumberland SACRE, including the relationship of SACRE with the Local Authority**

3.1 SACRE will have a separate identity to and is independent from, the Local Authority.

3.2 The Local Authority will consult the SACRE on any issues within its scope of interest.

3.3 SACRE's primary function is to advise the Local Authority on matters relating to religious education and worship in Community and Voluntary schools and to provide advice on the Religious Education provided in such schools in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

3.4 The Local Authority may refer to the SACRE for any other matters they believe to fall within its scope.

3.5 SACRE can require that the Local Authority undertake a review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. It is a statutory duty of the Local Authority to review the Locally Agreed Syllabus every five years.

3.6 SACRE must consider all applications made by a Headteacher of a Community school or other school that is not designated as having a religious character, requesting that the requirement for

Collective Worship to be wholly or broadly of a Christian character shall not apply for some or all pupils at that school.

3.7 Thus, SACRE's scope and function in the broadest sense is to support the effective provision of Collective Worship and Religious Education in schools.

#### **4.0 Accountability**

4.1 The SACRE is independent from the Council. When actions or reporting is required that needs the consideration of the Council these will be formally considered by the Cabinet/Cabinet Member or Officer acting under delegated powers.

#### **5.0 Activities of Northumberland SACRE**

5.1 In the pursuit of its aims SACRE will:

- adhere to a timetable that reflects the municipal year of the Local Authority
- hold meetings (including extraordinary meetings) at times that allow for full participation by members, including holding meetings at County Hall and/or other easily accessible venues or online
- timing these so that they begin after the end of the school day
- notify SACRE members 5 working days before each regular meeting
- meet at least 3 times per year, with one meeting taking place in each school term require at least one member from each voting group to be present to constitute a quorum in order to have a fully constituted meeting
- seek to operate on a consensus basis. If a consensus cannot be reached, members will be required to undertake a formal vote as outlined in section 8 of this Constitution
- review and recommend to Cabinet/the Cabinet member, any amendments to its Constitution on an annual basis
- review and adopt the terms of reference for any subcommittees on an annual basis following a formal consultation process with the sub-committees
- keep a written record of all SACRE meetings and meetings of its subcommittees
- any member of the SACRE can submit items for inclusion on the agenda of a main meeting of the SACRE. Such items must be supported by a written statement/report to the Chair at least 10 working days before the meeting is due to take place
- the agenda and any reports will be circulated generally at least 5 working days before a meeting
- create sub-committees where these are necessary
- be able to ask that the Local Authority to consider holding an extraordinary meeting of the SACRE at the written request of at least one member

#### **6.0 Membership of Northumberland SACRE and Consultation**

6.1 The SACRE will be made up of members from the 4 committees below.

6.2 Member panels:

Committee A: Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other faiths or belief systems active in Northumberland, namely: the Assembly of God, the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Salvation Army, the Society of Friends, the United Reformed Church, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, the Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaism, Sikhism, Humanism (1 representative for each church or religion).

Committee B: The Church of England – four members

Committee C: The Teachers' Professional Associations – four members: nominated by NASUWT, NEU, NAHT and ASCL

Committee D: Local Authority – up to four elected members of the Council. The elected members represented on Committee D shall reflect, as far as is practicable, the prevailing balance of power among the leading political parties/groups.

6.3 SACRE shall have the power to co-opt representatives to the SACRE as additional members. Co-opted persons may participate fully in discussions but may not vote.

## **7.0 Election and nomination of members**

7.1 Nominees will be invited as observers to their first meeting of SACRE, ahead of voting.

7.2 Before appointing a person to represent a religion, denomination or association on Committees A, B or C, the local authority shall consult locally and take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that he/she is representative of the religion, denomination or association in question.

7.3 A representative of a religion, denomination or association may be removed from membership of the SACRE if, in the opinion of the local authority, he/she ceases to be representative of the religion, denomination or association he/she was appointed to represent.

7.4 Members of the SACRE, with the exception of co-opted members (see 7.5), will be appointed for four years.

7.5 The SACRE may co-opt additional persons. This may include teachers to ensure adequate representation of teachers who are actively engaged with religious education in schools. Any co-options will be for a period determined by the SACRE.

7.6 No more than 5 co-opted persons shall belong to SACRE at any one time.

7.7 The Local Authority will review the membership of the SACRE annually in line with the Constitutional review.

7.8 The Local Authority may terminate the membership of any member of the SACRE by providing one month's written notice.

7.9 Subject to condition 7.10 and 7.11 below, members of the SACRE who have served a full term are eligible for re-appointment.

7.10 A member ceases to be a member of the SACRE if they resign from the SACRE or no longer occupies the office which he or she was nominated to represent.

7.11 A member of the SACRE appointed by the Authority may be removed from membership by the Authority at any time if, in the opinion of the Authority, the person ceases to be representative of either the denomination, religious group or association which they were appointed to represent.

7.12 Subject to conditions 7.10 and 7.11 above members of the SACRE who have served a full term are eligible for re-appointment.

7.13 At the invitation of the Chair of the SACRE, School Improvement Officers and/or RE Consultants can attend SACRE meetings. They can provide professional expertise but they are not members of the SACRE and cannot vote.

7.14 The Director of Education will receive a standing invitation to attend all SACRE and sub-committee meetings but are not members of the SACRE and cannot vote. They may address the meeting if invited to do so by the Chair.

7.15 At the discretion of the Chair of the SACRE, observers can attend SACRE meetings. Observers are defined as individuals interested in the work of SACRE. At the discretion of the Chair of the SACRE observers can address the meeting. However, they are not members of the SACRE and cannot vote.

## **8.0 Voting**

8.1 Only the representative groups on SACRE shall be entitled to vote. Each shall have a single vote.

8.2 In the event of a tied vote groups are to revisit the issue in question until a decision has been achieved.

8.3 Co-opted members do not have a vote.

## **9.0 Meetings of Northumberland SACRE**

9.1 The SACRE shall normally meet termly on three occasions per year.

9.2 Meetings of the SACRE may be convened at the request of the Chair or any of the representative groups.

9.3 Any member of the SACRE unable to attend a meeting may appoint a named substitute to attend in their place. However, the said substitute must fulfil the same representative criteria as the representative for whom they are deputising (see 7.2 and 7.3 above). The substitute representative will have the same voting powers as the representative in whose place they attend. It shall be the responsibility of the relevant representative or co-opted member:

i. to determine whether or not it is necessary for the relevant named substitute to attend a meeting in their place

ii. to notify the Clerk to the SACRE, in advance of the meeting, that the named substitute will attend in their place

iii. to notify the named substitute of the time and place of the forthcoming meeting

iv. to brief the named substitute on the forthcoming meeting.

9.4 If a member of SACRE fails to attend three consecutive meetings (without sending a substitute), their membership will be reviewed. If non-attendance continues the membership may be terminated.

## **10. How the SACRE Conducts its Business**

10.1 The SACRE shall meet not less than once each school term.

10.2 The quorum for a meeting of the SACRE shall be not less than one member of each of the four representative committees.

10.3 The quorum for a meeting of a representative committee shall be not less than one member of the committee in question.

10.4 If, within a period of thirty minutes after the time fixed for the start of the meeting of the SACRE, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall not be held. If, during the course of a meeting, a quorum is no longer present, the meeting shall be terminated. However, those present may decide to remain to discuss matters relating to the agenda, on the understanding that no decisions can be reached on the SACRE's behalf due to a quorum not being present.

10.5 If a meeting is not held, or is terminated before all the proposed business has been transacted, a further meeting shall be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable. A meeting of the SACRE shall be convened by the Clerk to the SACRE after consultation with the Chair, but the Clerk to the SACRE will comply with any direction given by the SACRE at the previous meeting, or with any direction given by the Chair, or, in her/his absence, the Vice Chair of the SACRE.

10.6 Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and with the prior agreement of the Chairperson, every member of the SACRE shall be given written notice of the meeting, signed by the Clerk to the SACRE, not less than seven clear days before the date of the meeting. Such written notice will include the agenda and all relevant reports or papers required for business within the meeting to be undertaken efficiently.

10.7 No issue shall be discussed at the meeting of the SACRE unless notice of the intention to discuss that issue is given in the agenda for the meeting. Any SACRE committee representative or co-opted member can, at any meeting of the SACRE, propose agenda items for the next or a future meeting.

## **11.0 Chairing**

11.1 The Chair and Vice Chair are appointed from committees A, B, C and D. Any appointments will be for the municipal year or until the person appointed ceases to be a member of the SACRE, whichever is sooner.

11.2 In the event of more than one committee representative being nominated for the role of Chair or Vice-Chair, an election shall be held. Those entitled to vote are the representatives of committees A, B, C and D. Each representative shall have one vote. A simple majority will decide who is to be elected Chair or Vice Chair.

11.3 Continuing members of the SACRE are eligible for reappointment to the position of Chair or Vice Chair.

11.4 The Vice Chair will act as Chair should the Chair be unable to attend.

## **12. The SACRE Sub-Groups**

12.1 In order to more efficiently conduct its business, the SACRE may convene a SACRE sub-group. The SACRE will provide such a sub-group with a specific task or tasks to address and a time scale in which to complete its deliberations. Once its task or tasks are complete, the sub-group will bring the results of its deliberations to the SACRE. The SACRE will discuss the merits of the sub-group's deliberations and either accept fully, accept partially or reject in full the outcomes.

12.2 Any sub-group formed by the SACRE shall include committee representatives and/or co-opted members of the SACRE. However, should it feel it will be helpful, the SACRE shall invite other persons to join the sub-group if their knowledge, understanding and/or skills are deemed relevant to the task or tasks in hand.

## **13.0 Codes of Practice**

13.1 Interests, whether personal or prejudicial, should be declared. If a member has a prejudicial interest, they should declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the decision.

## **14.0 Servicing the Committee**

14.1 The specific responsibilities of Democratic Services of the Council are:

- convene meetings of the SACRE
- arrange accommodation for meetings
- co-ordinate and act as secretariat to meetings
- copy, circulate and dispatch appropriate papers and
- provide appropriate guidance on the operation of local government and other relevant procedures.

14.2 The specific responsibilities of the Professional Advisors to the SACRE will be to:

- provide advice to the SACRE and any sub-committee(s) on professional issues
- advise and update SACRE members on any new government guidance or policy documents.

## **15.0 Disputes, complaints and Freedom of Information**

15.1 The SACRE is intended to be a collaborative body and needs to ensure that no particular sector or member is unduly favoured. Problems and issues should usually be raised and resolved at the SACRE meetings. However, if parties feel that an issue has not been resolved, the following process should be followed and minutes should be taken.

Stage 1: Parties who are in dispute meet with the Chair of the SACRE and the School Improvement Adviser who will assist in finding or recommending a solution.

Stage 2: A special meeting of the SACRE is convened. Papers should be prepared by the parties representing different views. The Chair and the School Improvement Adviser also prepare a paper

offering possible options for resolution. If the problem is not resolved, the dispute is referred to Stage 3.

Stage 3: If the issue is not resolved then guidance or clarification will be sought from the relevant Government Department.

15.2 Complaints from members of the public will be handled by the Council's Complaints Procedure.

15.3 Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act will be handled in accordance with the Council's published procedures for dealing with such requests. If any member of the SACRE receiving a request under the FOIA will be required to pass that request to **Legal & Democratic Services within 24 hours of receipt of that request in order that Legal & Democratic Services may deal with the request on behalf of the SACRE within the 20 working day time limit. ???**

## **16.0 Monitoring and Inspection**

16.1 The effectiveness of the SACRE will be assessed by an annual internal review via the SACRE Development Plan.

16.2 The SACRE will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and the principles of the Constitution are given full effect. They may make recommendations for ways in which it can be changed.

16.3 The SACRE is authorised to make any variations to those parts of the Constitution to give effect to any changes in the law and where, in its opinion, circumstances require it.

## **17.0 Dissemination of the Annual Report**

17.1 The Annual Report will be made available for public inspection. Additionally, a copy will be sent to the Department for Education, NASACRE and to other organisations and stakeholders, including all schools within the county, local teacher training institutions and others as Northumberland SACRE considers appropriate.

## **18. Public and Media Attendance at the Meetings of the SACRE**

18.1 The meetings of the SACRE shall be open to members of the public and duly accredited representatives of the news media. Members of the public and representatives of the news media can attend as observers, not as participants in the discussions or proceedings. The attendance of the public and representatives of the news media at meetings of the SACRE are subject to the [Religious Education \(Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils\) Regulations 1994](#).

18.2 Public notice of the time and the place of any meeting of the SACRE shall be given by posting it on the Council website, at least three clear days before the meeting. Copies of the agenda, and all relevant reports or papers for the meeting of the SACRE, shall be available for inspection by members of the public at least three clear days before the meeting.

18.3 Copies of agendas, reports, papers and minutes shall be available for inspection by members of the public after a meeting of the SACRE until the expiration of six years beginning with the date of

the meeting. All such documents will be kept at County Hall, from where they will be made available to the public on request.

**19. The Validity of Proceedings of the SACRE**

19.1 The validity of proceedings of the SACRE shall not be affected:

- (a) by a vacancy in the office of any committee representative of the SACRE required by 6.2 above;
- (b) on the grounds that a committee representative of the SACRE appointed to represent any religion, denomination or association does not at the time of the proceedings represent the religion, denomination or association in question;
- (c) by reason of an individual SACRE member not having received written notice of a meeting or a copy of the agenda;
- (d) by the failure of any representative committee to agree on how its vote shall be cast on any particular issue before the SACRE.

**20. Making Alterations to/Amending the Constitution**

20.1 This Constitution was adopted as the Constitution of the Northumberland County Council Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education at a meeting duly convened

at: .....

on: .....

20.2 These arrangements may not be amended so as to make them inconsistent with the 1996 legislative requirements.

20.3 To the extent that these arrangements may be amended, they may only be amended by a decision of the SACRE.

20.4 In order to ensure a consistent approach to meetings, and that changes to these arrangements are not made without full notice and proper consideration of the implications of any proposed change, any change shall only be made as follows:

- (a) any member of the SACRE may propose a change to these arrangements;
- (b) any appropriate proposal to change these arrangements shall be submitted in writing to the Clerk to the SACRE for inclusion on the agenda of the next AGM of the SACRE, the proposal to include both the form of words suggested for inclusion in these arrangements and a statement of the objective to be achieved by the proposed change;
- (c) the SACRE shall then, at the AGM, convene a SACRE sub-group to consider the merits of the proposed change to the existing arrangements. The sub-group will meet to decide on the merits of the proposed change. The sub-group will bring a summary of its deliberations to the next full meeting of the SACRE and the SACRE will decide on what action, if any, to take.

**21. Additional Information about the SACRE Annual Report**



21.1 The annual report of the SACRE shall follow the structure and content as suggested by NASACRE in their [annual report framework](#).

## **22. Additional Information about the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)**

22.1 For the purpose of preparing an Agreed Syllabus for RE, the local authority must convene an ASC. An ASC is a separate legal entity from the SACRE and, although common membership is permissible, it must be separately convened.

22.2 The role of the ASC is to produce and recommend an Agreed Syllabus for RE which meets fully the present legislative requirements and is educationally sound. The task of producing a syllabus cannot be delegated except to a sub-group which must include at least one member of each of the representative committees constituting the SACRE. This does not prevent an ASC receiving advice or comment from outside groups or individuals. Only an ASC may recommend an Agreed Syllabus for RE, and its recommendation must be unanimously agreed by the representative committees constituting the ASC.

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## Terms of Reference

Proposed Sub-committee of Northumberland SACRE

### Objective:

With the appointment of a new advisory teacher and a new agreed syllabus under discussion, SACRE needs to be able to provide increasing levels of support and challenge in the teaching of RE in the county. This will require an active, quorate and committed membership. The Sub-committee can address the current issues and help create a more vibrant and effective SACRE.

### Terms of Reference:

The Sub-committee considers and examines the following questions in order to create a more vibrant and effective SACRE:

- What can we do to make our meetings quorate?
- How can we better support the Officers and the Chair?
- How far are we in agreement about the aims and purposes of RE in schools?
- Are there changes we would like to see in the way we currently operate?
- What can we learn from good practice in other SACREs?
- Can we be more visible in our support and challenge for schools?

To report initial findings and recommendations to SACRE in the summer term.

### Timescale:

W/b 14 February: First online meeting of the sub-committee

W/b 21 February: First interim report sent to sub-committee members

W/b 7 March: Second online meeting of sub-committee

W/b 21 March: Draft final report sent to sub-committee members for comment and correction

W/b 28 March: Possible online meeting of sub committee; final report submitted to Chair and Officers

### Membership:

At least one member from each SACRE committee will be present and will nominate a substitute if unable to attend. The sub-committee should not exceed eight members in total. Joyce Miller will act as Chair and secretary. No quorum will be set.

The Sub-committee meetings will be held online.

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## AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

### AGENDA

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

#### 2. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on Wednesday, 8 December 2021, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chair.

#### 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code of Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

**N.B.** Any member needing clarification must contact [monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk). Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

#### 4. SHORTLIST OF AGREED SYLLABUS OPTIONS

#### 5. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

**IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:**

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

<b>Name (please print):</b>
<b>Meeting:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>
<b>Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b>
<b>Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):</b>
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>



**1. Registerable Personal Interests** – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

- a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or
- b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

- (1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship;
- (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

- (1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management ); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

**2. Non-Registerable Personal Interests** - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

### **3. Non-Participation in Council Business**

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate)

in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

**This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.**



**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE**

At a meeting of the **Agreed Syllabus Conference** held in Meeting Space, Block 1, Floor 2, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on Wednesday, 8 December 2021.

**PRESENT**

Ms C. Weir Chair, in the Chair

**COUNCILLORS**

Bowman, L.,

Renner-Thompson, G.

**TEACHER'S ASSOCIATIONS/UNIONS REPRESENTATIVES**

Nicholls, T.

**CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES**

Hudson, C.

**REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS**

Miller, Dr. J.

**CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES**

Dearlove, S.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Cookson, D.

Commissioner for Secondary  
Education

Greally, R.

Assistant Democratic Services  
Officer

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor N. Morphet, C. Naylor, M. Connolly, D. Van Der Velde, P. Rusby, B. Rhasa, J. Cousin.

## **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE HELD ON 14 JULY 2021.**

Members noted that SACRE was on the title of the minutes and requested that this be amended.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 14 July 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## **3. SHORTLIST OF AGREED SYLLABUS OPTIONS**

Caroline Weir, RE Consultant, reiterated that it was agreed in principle from the last meeting that she was to research options for the RE syllabus. It was agreed that creating a syllabus from scratch wasn't practical due to the extensive work, therefore it was agreed in principle to purchase a syllabus from another Authority or from RE Today. It was important that teachers felt supported and had guidance from the syllabus as this had been highlighted as a possible issue in the past. C. Weir outlined the steps she had taken to research options:

- She started by looking at Counties with similar demographics, which were rural and had no major Cities. When researching she found the following;
- Cumbria had a similar statutory programme to Northumberland, there was a lack of clarity with some of the coverage and it was less clear about non-religious views;
- Norfolk had a different model. They had a multidisciplinary approach of theology, philosophy and human & social sciences. It was abstract and there was a worry that it was too much of a 'blank canvas' for this Authority as teachers had made it clear that they wanted structure and guidance within the syllabus. It would require significant CPD for teachers to access;
- Lincolnshire was next to be researched. It focused on four strands that were looked at in every religion and world view that was covered. It was felt that the syllabus was perhaps a bit narrow as its key focus was on three religions and would have required a lot of CPD for teachers for them to access and utilise the syllabus appropriately;
- The next Authority C. Weir looked at was Devon & Torbay. Devon's syllabus was Model B from 'RE Today'. The model had clear unit outcomes and

suggested activities which was positive. It gave a clear overview of what should have been covered;

- Cornwall also use Model B and showed how general units in the syllabus were tailored to the region's heritage. It was suggested that these units could have been adapted to include Northumberland's religious heritage which had been a recommendation by members in previous meetings;
- The Model B approach had both systematic and thematic approaches in the syllabus. Its pedagogical approach is focused through three main strands that run throughout the syllabus: belief, impact and connections. It also contained information for special schools which was a real positive as that had previously been lacking in Northumberland's syllabus;
- In contrast to the rural Authorities, Hertfordshire's syllabus was also researched which had a completely different approach. The syllabus had 8 strands which were to be covered in every year group. It was a good progression model but there was a worry that it would become a 'tick box' exercise. Also, it was felt that it was perhaps too general in its approach for where Northumberland teachers currently are;
- The RE Today Model A syllabus was also investigated; it was found to take a more thematic approach. It had 3 key pedagogical strands; believing, expressing and living. It was suggested that a thematic approach works best after a systematic approach, so the students had a core understanding of the view and then applied it. There was a worry that this syllabus could be mismatched in places. It appeared to have less scope than model B to explore non-religious views and secularity;
- C. Weir recommended to the committee to use RE Today Model B for Northumberland's RE syllabus.

The following comments were made in response to members' questions:-

- Members welcomed the opportunity in RE Today Model B to adapt units to include Northumberland's religious heritage. It was noted that Northumberland had an abundance of opportunities to explore. Members noted that the Lindisfarne Gospels were coming to Northumberland and it would have been an opportune time to take a cross curricular approach to religious heritage;
- Members noted that the RE Today Model B had an option for schools to use Understanding Christian Project resources, however the syllabus could have worked without the training or resources. It was also noted that there was a subsidy for RE Today to allow community schools to attend training at a

greatly reduced cost.

- Members welcomed the KS2 section of the Model B syllabus and felt it was divided well as clear provision is made for LKS2 and UKS2 separately. It was felt that this would work particularly well in Northumberland where there were middle schools as the progression was clear over the year groups.
- It was confirmed that the aims in Model B were the same aims that were given in RE Today Model A.
- It was suggested that discussions were had with Durham County Council in regard to the KS4 and post 16 RE guidance offered in the syllabus as none of the syllabuses had specific mention of the provision and Durham SACRE used CSTG funding to form a working party to create some KS4 and post-16 unit suggestions.
- Members acknowledged that it was difficult to compare syllabuses fully as the information was received shortly before the meeting.
- It was agreed that after the meeting a spokesperson from each committee who had attended the meeting would liaise with the rest of the committee members. Each committee had one vote for the syllabuses.
- It was agreed that Dr J. Miller (committee A), C. Hudson (committee B), Cllr G. Renner-Thompson (committee C) and T. Nicholls (committee D) would act as the spokespersons. It was agreed that the spokesperson was to organise a virtual meeting with their committee members.
- Notes of the syllabus presentation would be shared with the members. Members were asked to email C. Weir and D. Cookson with any comments or questions. Final decisions were to be made by email to D. Cookson by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

**AGREED** that all suggestions and decisions would be made by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

**CHAIR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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