

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Friday 9 November 2018</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Draft SACRE Annual Report for the Academic Year September 2017 – July 2018</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Director of Children and Families</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose and summary**

To approve the draft SACRE Annual Report for the academic year September 2017 to July 2018.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) subject to any comments by SACRE, the SACRE Annual Report 2017/18 be approved; and**
- (b) the clerk to SACRE be authorised to finalise the document to take account of any comments by SACRE and final proof reading, and to publish/circulate the report as necessary.**

## **Alternative options**

1. The broad role of SACRE is to support the effective provision of Religious Education and collective worship in schools. This report enables SACRE to fulfil this role therefore no

alternative options are proposed.

## Key considerations

2. There is a duty for SACRE to publish an annual report, ideally by the 31st December each calendar year but if necessary in the following calendar year. The report must be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners, including schools, teacher training institutions, libraries and councillors.
3. The annual report should hold the local authority (LA) to account by providing detail of the advice that SACRE has given to the LA during the year and the nature of its response, including advice on RE and Collective Worship in schools that are the responsibility of the LA. The annual report provides the mechanism through which to hold the LA to account through informing the secretary of state and partners of the advice provided by SACRE.
4. The following issues arose from the previous annual report for 2016/17:
  - The annual report 2016-17 noted the declining membership of SACRE and that one of its meetings during the year had been inquorate; *efforts have been made to recruit members to SACRE during 2017/18 and new representatives of the Roman Catholic faith and the Church of England have been appointed to its membership.*
  - SACRE commissioned a local teaching school to draw up a guide for visits and visitors to schools; *this guide was shared with SACRE in March 2018.*
  - The declining numbers attending the Primary RE Conferences 2017 continued to be a concern and the lack of attendance of any Herefordshire schools at the Secondary Conference 2017. These issues would be addressed by SACRE during 2018. *SACRE considered arrangements for the conferences at its meeting on 29 June and a number of actions were proposed including increased publicity and a change to the structure of conferences by offering opt-in sessions.*
  - Regular updates on the Commission on RE had been received and would continue into the next year. *SACRE has received updates and will receive a report on the final report of the Commission in November 2018.*
5. The following issues arise from draft annual plan contained in the appendix:
  - A further inquorate meeting in March 2018; *efforts will continue to fill vacancies in the membership of SACRE during the forthcoming year;*
  - An assessment of the quality of teaching of RE in Herefordshire schools; *a primary school survey will be circulated during autumn 2018; and*
  - The need to encourage better attendance at the conferences; *a number of proposals to increase attendance at the conferences are contained in the draft annual report and will be discussed by SACRE.*

## Community impact

6. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, Herefordshire Council must ensure that those making decisions and delivering services are accountable for them. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a

transparent manner. The provision of an annual report assists in maintaining transparency and an understanding of where the focus for improvement should be.

## **Equality duty**

7. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
8. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires the council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that 'due regard' is paid during decision making concerning the design of policies and the delivery of services. The provision of religious education seeks to contribute positively to the specific duty by increasing the understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities. SACRE contributes to this duty by advising the LA on its arrangements for religious education. The provision of Religious Education and collective worship seeks to increase understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities.

## **Resource implications**

9. There are no resource implications involved in the production and consideration of this report. There is no cost associated with the production of the annual report which will be published and circulated electronically.
10. If there are any resource implications of those actions identified in paragraph 5 the intention is that these will be met within the existing budget for SACRE.

## **Legal implications**

11. Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires the council to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise them on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.
12. SACRE's main function is to advise the council upon matters connected with religious worship in schools for which the LA has responsibility and with the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus. Under Section 391(6) and (7), Education Act 1996, SACRE is required to publish a report each year as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council.

## **Risk management**

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The annual report identifies an issue of quoracy at meetings of SCARE	Vacancies for Church of England and Roman Catholic representatives have been filled.

## **Consultees**

13. None

## **Appendices**

Appendix - draft SACRE Annual Report 2017/18

## **Background papers**

None identified