

Title of report: Herefordshire SACRE Agreed Syllabus Review 2024

Meeting: Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)

Meeting date: Friday 15 March 2024

Report by: Democratic Services Officer

Classification

Part exempt

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

The Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE runs from 2020-2025. It is a legal requirement for Local Authorities to review its syllabus every five years.

Recommendation

That:

- a) Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) considers the syllabus options as contained in Appendix 1.**

Alternative options

1. There are three potential RE syllabus options open to the agreed syllabus conference to recommend to the local authority, as below:
 - a. Re-license with RE Today, to their updated syllabus, for the next five years.
 - b. Look at alternative syllabuses available
 - c. Move to a 'religion and worldviews' approach syllabus.
2. A fourth option might be to write a new syllabus ourselves. However, this is not a serious solution given the challenge of funding such a major undertaking.

Key considerations

3. The syllabus options are presented in Appendix 1 and will be presented at the meeting held 15 March 2024.

Community impact

4. The provision of religious education and collective worship seeks to increase understanding and tolerance of all religions in all local communities. A stated aim in Herefordshire Council's corporate plan is to ensure that there is access to excellent education and learning opportunities at all levels, including early years/schools, Further Education, Higher Education and adult learning.

Environmental Impact

5. There are no implications for the environment arising from this report.

Equality duty

6. 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.
7. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our Health providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.

Resource implications

8. There are no direct resource implications as a result of this paper. However, there may well be resource implications in the future which will be covered by governance. The potential costs associated with the relicensing of the Herefordshire RE syllabus are contained in appendix 2 to this report. This appendix is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972.

Legal implications

9. In accordance with Section 35, Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 the council is obliged to establish an Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce and recommend to the council an agreed education syllabus for Herefordshire.

Risk management

10. There are no risk implications identified emerging from the recommendation in this report.

Consultees

None identified.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Herefordshire SACRE agreed syllabus review

Appendix 2 – Costings for a relicensing of Herefordshire syllabus – Exempt appendix by virtue of paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972.

Background papers

None identified.