

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) - AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE.

MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 2018

A MEETING of the STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) - AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE. was held at the 007 B - CIVIC OFFICE on MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 2018, at 4.30 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair - Rev T McCready
Vice-Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors Derek Smith and R. Iball, T. Griffiths, M. Sivaanbu, B. Teimoori.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrea Robinson and from P. Kaur, A. Nicolson and J. Crowther.

1 Declarations of Interest, if any.

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

2 Update on planning and preparation for the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus 2018

The Clerk informed the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) of its duty to agree a Religious Education Syllabus which is educationally sound, meets legal requirements and may be adopted by the local authority. Members were also informed that the syllabus must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination and is subject to a review on a five yearly basis. The next review is scheduled to be undertaken during 2018.

A Sub-Committee of SACRE met on 14th December 2017 to consider options relating to the design and implementation of a new syllabus. A representative from RE Today was also invited to the meeting to provide information on the options available when reviewing and implementing a new syllabus. The meeting considered the future needs of a syllabus within Doncaster, as well as potential costs, impact on the quality of teaching, pupil progress and effectiveness of monitoring arrangements. It was agreed that further consideration be given by the ASC to the development of the syllabus and specifically the following three options:

- **Option 1** - The design and implementation of a fully bespoke syllabus
- **Option 2** - Use of a “franchised” syllabus which meets statutory requirements but has enhanced features and options such as teaching materials and resources which can be adapted to meet the needs of young people and teachers.
- **Option 3** - Use a franchised system without the option of materials and CPD.

The Committee welcomed Fiona Moss to the meeting to provide further information on the options available to the ASC. Fiona reported that RE Today was a charity established to support Religious Education in schools, including the teaching of the major world faiths and ensuring an accurate and fair representation of beliefs, values and practices in all its teaching materials.

Fiona delivered a presentation that detailed the approaches available to SACREs when agreeing a syllabus.

RE Today had developed a draft syllabus which met minimum statutory requirements and could be adapted to include information to ensure it was Doncaster specific.

The presentation focused on the content of the syllabus including:-

- Purpose and aims of RE
- Key strands within the syllabus (Believing, Expressing, Living).
- Example of programmes of study for key stages
- Guidance on planning and delivering key units within the syllabus and examples of teacher resources
- Examples of syllabuses adopted by other local authorities.
- Advice on planning and launching the revised syllabus to ensure maximum impact.
- Model scheme of work and additional resources available to schools wishing to enhance their RE offer..
- Additional support available from RE Today for SACREs , schools and teachers.

The Committee took the opportunity to ask questions and the following issues were raised:

Members welcomed the resource package which was available to assist RE teachers and non-specialist teachers delivering RE lessons. It was felt this would be particularly helpful in Primary Schools.

Whilst recognising schools' focus on core subjects such as Maths, English and Science examples were given of recent Ofsted inspections where the school's approach to RE had impacted on the overall judgement.

Members discussed the need for an effective launch event to ensure school's bought in to the new RE offer.

Following the opportunity for questions, Fiona left the meeting to allow the ASC to consider the offer from RE Today.

Members asked about the resources available to support the delivery of the revised syllabus. The Clerk informed members that £12.5k had been allocated within the current budget and authority had been given to progress with the development and launch of the syllabus. Members also asked if other funding opportunities could be explored to help develop implement and promote the process.

Members discussed how the syllabus document could be reviewed to ensure it included information about Doncaster, its schools and RE.

Members expressed a preference for Option 2. Although it acknowledged there was limited engagement with schools in respect of content it believed this model would best meet statutory requirements and have the flexibility to include the necessary training and support materials to deliver an effective new syllabus and be relevant to all schools. It was also stated that the revised syllabus would be more up to date and relevant than the current syllabus. Option 1 was considered to be both time and resource intensive to deliver and implement.

Option 3 was considered to be a minimalist offer with limited opportunity to promote and develop the RE offer in Doncaster schools.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) The ASC support Option 2 - a “franchised syllabus” which meets statutory requirements and has enhanced features and options such as teaching materials and continuous professional development which meets the needs of Doncaster young people and teachers;
- 2) A sub group be established to agree timescales for reviewing and progressing the development and launch of the syllabus;
- 3) The membership of the sub group include Reverend T McCready, Councillors K Rodgers, Derek Smith, R Iball, B Teimmori, M Sivaanbu, Alec Depledge and T Griffiths; and
- 4) All members of the ASC be invited to meetings of the sub group and substitute arrangements be permitted to ensure a quorum can be achieved.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____