

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)
Date:	5 November 2019
Title:	Key National and Local RE Matters
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to enable SACRE to consider key RE developments, nationally and locally, not mentioned elsewhere in the agenda.

Recommendation(s)

2. That SACRE notes the report.
3. That SACRE agrees to send 2 delegates to the NASACRE conference in May 2020.
4. That SACRE supports the collaboration with NASACRE initiatives in relation to Local Advisory Network (LAN) research.
5. That SACRE agrees to convene a time-limited small group to consider the schools' advice document and make suggestions, if necessary, for alteration or addition.

Executive Summary

6. This report updates and informs SACRE of key national developments, for example the work of the Religious Education Council and NASACRE as well as national RE Research and local RE matters.

Contextual information

7. **The Religious Education Council (REC)** is an 'umbrella' body made up of members from many organisations in England and Wales with an interested position in relation to RE. It has taken on a particular significance in the last three years as the body that initiated the independent 'Commission on RE' (CoRE). The final report of which was published in September 2018.

The next meeting of the REC is on November 6th at the East London Mosque.

The Education Committee of the REC is taking forward the recommendations of the CoRE report and has grouped the recommendations into three groups. The first are those things that are uncontested and can be undertaken quickly and which need no legal change. The second group are those which need no legal change but warrant further discussion in the RE community. The Third are those which require legal change and will form part of a longer-term agenda.

8. **National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)**. NASACRE is the national body representing and leading on SACRE's interests. A regular newsletter is circulated to SACRE members through their SACRE.

NASACRE, as a constituent member of the REC, has been working with the education committee on CoRE proposals that would particularly impact SACREs. NASACRE is inviting SACREs to participate in a project in relation to Local Advisory Networks (LAN), considering the proposals to reshape SACREs.

9. **South Central SACRE hub**. The next meeting of the South Central SACRE Hub is on November 27 in Winchester.
10. The **Reading and Research Group** meeting at Winchester University in the autumn term will take place on 26 November at 4.30pm on the subject of Judaism. In the spring term the Group meeting is on 25 February on Non-Conformist Christianity and, in the summer, on 23 June on Sikhism.
11. SACRE have noted during the year that schools have asked for advice on a variety of different issues, particularly requests for absence for religious observance. Hampshire SACRE wrote an advice document for schools on issues that might arise on religion and faith in 2017, which included advice on this issue; this is on the RE website to provide advice to Headteachers. As the document was written two years ago, it is timely to review the document and see if further information or advice should be added to it.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- (a) SACRE's core business is to ensure high quality religious education in Hampshire which, it is intended, will make a positive difference to the way young people 'think speak and act in the world' (See purpose statement of Living Difference III 2016, the agreed syllabus for religious education in Hampshire).