

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education **DATE:** 17 June 2021

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PART I

FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to review the SACRE Terms of Reference and to make recommendations of its proposed changes as set out in this report to Council.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The SACRE is requested to consider the report and agree the proposed changes that it seeks to make to the Terms of Reference, and to recommend their endorsement by the Member Panel on the Constitution before being reported for approval by Council.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

Good governance arrangements will have positive implications for the SJWS and the JSNA.

3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

Good governance arrangements will enhance all the outcomes of the Five Year Plan.

4 Other Implications

- (a) Financial - There are no financial implications arising from this report.
- (b) Legal – The changes to the terms of reference are in the right direction. The changes will encompass the Council’s legal obligations. The relevant legal framework is this:

- 1) Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), ss. 149 and 153 Equality Act 2010 obliges public bodies to have due regard to:

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

2) Additional obligations under Part 3 of the *Equality Act 2010 (EqA 2010)*, including where the services, goods or facilities are provided in the exercise of a public function and this duty is anticipatory.

5 **Supporting Information**

Background

- 5.1 The SACRE appointed a Humanist representative as a co-opted member at its meeting on 4 November 2020. Co-opted members could participate fully in the discussions of the SACRE but could not vote. Members express a desire for the Humanist representative to be afforded full membership and enable voting rights but acknowledged that there was currently no category in which such a membership could be place to enable this to happen.
- 5.2 At its meeting on 3 March 2021, SACRE discussed the consideration of enabling the Humanist representative to be appointed to full voting membership. With advice from the Professional Adviser, the SACRE considered that Committee 1 (Christian Denominations and Other Faiths) could be broadened to include 'beliefs', which would allow for the inclusion of the Humanist representation. Members understood that this would be in line with a number of local authorities that had Humanist representatives on their SACREs with full voting membership.

The Position

- 5.3 The position is that local authorities decide which bodies are represented in each SACRE groups and the SACRE therefore recommended the Committee 1 (Category A) – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths to be widened to include Full membership of Humanist representation.

5.3 **Terms of reference**

- 5.3.1 There have been no legislative changes that have required Slough SACRE Constitution to be amended or updated. However Circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship issued in 1994 has since been replaced by Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010, which replaced the elements of Circular 1/94 relating to RE. The proposed revision of Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths, to include 'beliefs' and membership of Humanism is attached at Appendix 1.

6 **Conclusion**

Members are requested to consider the information in appendix 1 and consider the current SACRE membership of Committee 1 - Christian Denominations and Other

Faiths with a view to including 'beliefs' and Humanist the current named unions with six teachers and teachers' representatives from any union in primary and secondary (including special schools) schools in Slough.

7 **Background Papers**

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2020 and 3 March 2021.
2. Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010.

8 **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Current Slough SACRE Constitution

Appendix 2 - Slough SACRE Constitution and revised Committee 1 and inclusion of Humanist membership.