

## Proposal for Joint Bournemouth & Poole SACREs Meetings.

### Background:

Each Local Authority has to maintain a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education [SACRE]. A SACRE is a permanent body which must be established by each local authority with appointed representatives to each of four committees, representing respectively:

**Group A:** Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the authority's opinion, appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area

**Group B:** the Church of England

**Group C:** teacher associations

**Group D:** the LA

The current law remains in place. Local Authorities have to appoint and maintain a SACRE as set out in statute and statutory instruments.

Agreed syllabuses have to be reviewed at least every five years and a revised syllabus published on the recommendation of an Agreed Syllabus Conference.

These functions have to be maintained even in authorities that currently have no schools to which an agreed syllabus or SACRE's advice applies.

SACREs have to report annually to the Secretary of State on the advice they have given and the response to that advice.

**The National Association of SACREs [NASACRE]** guidance suggests that as a minimum this entails:

- Clerking support for 3-6 SACRE Meetings a year
- Specialist RE advice and back up support for 3-6 SACRE meetings per year
- Specialist RE advice and support for preparation and publication of the SACRE Annual Report [which is a statutory requirement].

In addition - every five years there is the need for RE Specialist Support and advice for the Agreed Syllabus Conference - which oversees the revision of the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus.

Bournemouth and Poole already operate a joint Agreed Syllabus Conference - which has overseen the 2016 revision of the agreed syllabus.

The two Borough's SACREs have on occasions held joint SACRE meetings, most recently on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 to approve the jointly revised locally agreed syllabus "Any Questions".

There are several members in common on the SACREs in Groups A, B and C

### The Proposal:

1. That the meetings of the two SACREs are held simultaneously at an agreed venue.
2. That each SACRE continues to elect its own Chair.

3. That each SACRE continues to have its own Clerk.
4. That the Chairing of the joint meetings is shared between the two existing Chairs on a rotating basis.
5. That decision making votes are recorded separately by each SACRE's Clerk.
6. That the members of one SACRE are treated as members of the public when the other SACRE is making a decision that requires voting.
7. That the minutes and decisions of each SACRE continue to be published separately for each Borough, but there will be common items and common recording of these items.
8. That the two SACREs will commission the same person to provide specialist RE advice and support.

### **Benefits:**

- Given common membership of the two SACREs joint meetings will reduce the time commitments required of these members.
- Joint commissioning of a single source of specialist advice and support to both SACREs will give savings and better value for money.
- Both Boroughs already cooperate on the production of the locally agreed syllabus, joint SACRE meetings will streamline processes and ensure better coherence in decisions.
- SACRE meetings will be enriched by a wider range of participants.
- Decision making will retain its local flavour, but opportunities for more collaborative approaches will be greatly enhanced.
- The statutory requirements in relation to the maintenance by each LA of a SACRE will continue to be met.