

## **Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 27 April 2023**

### **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) - Annual Report 2021/22**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Formally receive Staffordshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education's (SACRE) Annual Report for 2021/22.
- b. Raise any questions and/or make particular observations on the work of SACRE, as set out in their Annual Report 2021/22.

#### **Local Member Interest:**

N/A

#### **Report of Chairman of SACRE**

### **Report**

#### **Background**

1. Staffordshire SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is a statutory committee of the County Council.
2. The role of SACRE is to inform and advise the County Council on all matters relating to Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship (CW) in maintained schools within the County.
3. By statute, SACREs must meet at least once each term, and must produce an Annual Report on their activities. The Annual Report is primarily a report to the County Council. It is also sent for information to all maintained schools in the County, to the Department for Education, and to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

## **The “Agreed Syllabus” in Religious Education**

4. An important responsibility of the SACRE is to ensure that their local authority has a locally agreed RE syllabus in place, and to support and monitor the implementation of that syllabus. The syllabus must be followed by all maintained community schools and by Church of England (CE) Voluntary Controlled Schools within the County.
5. The 1988 Education Act set out the fundamental principles which should apply in drawing up an Agreed Syllabus: any such Syllabus must *reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain*. These principles still apply in law, and underlie Staffordshire’s Agreed Syllabus.
6. Local authorities must revise their Agreed Syllabus every five years. The Agreed Syllabus was last revised in 2016. Having set about the task of revising the Agreed Syllabus, and having followed due process, Staffordshire SACRE agreed at its meeting on 16 November 2022 to recommend a revised Agreed Syllabus to the County Council.
7. The Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) has accepted SACRE’s recommendation, and the revised Agreed Syllabus (2023) is therefore now authorised for implementation in Staffordshire’s schools. It replaces the 2016 Agreed Syllabus. A very successful launch event for the revised syllabus was held on 1 February 2023, attended by well over 100 RE teachers and senior leaders from across the county.
8. Staffordshire’s 2016 Agreed Syllabus was at the forefront of RE Syllabus development nationally, and has been popular with schools and RE specialists. The revised Syllabus has built on this, while taking note of current debate about a fuller inclusion of non-religious world views in RE syllabuses.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

9. The County Council’s Strategic Plan sets out their ambitions and priorities for the years ahead. It outlines what they want to achieve and how they intend to achieve it over the next three years (2022 to 2026).

10. The Plan's Vision is that Staffordshire is an innovative, ambitious and sustainable county, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.
11. As a result of this vision the Plan outlines three priority outcomes which the Authority will keep at the heart of what they do and how they aim to achieve them.
12. The County Council's second priority outcome is:- "Staffordshire people will live in thriving and sustainable communities" and the work of SACRE contributes to achieving this ambition by promoting, through education of young people, faith, goodwill and respect for others amongst residents.

### **Community Impact**

13. None from consideration of SACRE's Annual Report 2021/22.

### **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

Report of Michael Metcalf (Rev Prebendary), Co-opted Member of Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee (emailed 13 April 2023)

### **Contact Details**

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