

# CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S CABINET MEMBER MEETING

## Agenda Item 27

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Brighton &amp; Hove City Council Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2011 - 2015</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>20 January 2012</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director, People</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Michael Nix</b>	<b>Tel: 29-0732</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>michael.nix@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Forward Plan No: N/A</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Each local authority has a statutory duty to adopt an Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education for use by maintained schools in its area, and to arrange for it to be reviewed through an Agreed Syllabus Conference at least every five years. The purpose of this report is to seek formal City Council approval for the Agreed Syllabus 2011 - 2015, which was unanimously approved by the Agreed Syllabus Conference which met on 1 February 2011.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2011 – 2015 at Appendix 1 to this report, for use in Brighton & Hove City Council maintained schools.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The previous Agreed Syllabus was adopted by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) in 2005 and took account of the Non-Statutory framework of 2004. Although the publication of the new syllabus was due in 2010, Brighton and Hove SACRE decided to wait for the publication of proposed curriculum changes so that the new syllabus could take them into account.
- 3.2 Religious Education has an important place in the curriculum in Brighton and Hove schools. Our society has never been so diverse, and good Religious Education plays an important role in helping to keep this country a tolerant and inclusive place in which to live, for those of all faiths or of none. In 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain, it is vital that young people develop a good critical understanding of their own and other people's beliefs.

- 3.3 This Agreed Syllabus builds on the firm foundation of the previous Agreed Syllabus to bring a curriculum that reflects the current focus on progression of both skills and content as identified in Transforming Religious Education (OfSTED 2010). This report emphasised the need for creative activities to enhance learning in RE and this Agreed Syllabus gives the structures for this to take place in a coherent way through effective planning and assessment.
- 3.4 The revised Agreed Syllabus was prepared by a working party consisting of primary and secondary school teachers and the RE Adviser for the Diocese of Chichester, and advised by the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). It was discussed in detail and unanimously approved by an Agreed Syllabus Conference, drawn from the membership of SACRE, on 1 February 2011.
- 3.5 Presentation of the Agreed Syllabus for approval by the City Council was initially delayed because of the imminence of the City Council elections in May of this year. Changes of personnel within the Children's Services Department have unfortunately caused further delay.
- 3.6 It is proposed to publish the Agreed Syllabus online, as a result of which publication costs will be minimal.

#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Agreed Syllabus was developed through a working party of representative primary and secondary school teachers, advised by the RE Adviser to SACRE and local authority officers. The members of the working party drew upon their experience of teaching RE in the city and elsewhere, and on their contact with colleagues in other schools.
- 4.2 The Agreed Syllabus Conference is made up of representatives of the local authority, teachers, the Church of England and other Christian denominations and principal religious traditions present in the city.
- 4.3 There was no specific additional community engagement activity: the breadth of representation on the Agreed Syllabus Conference brought to the consideration of the Agreed Syllabus a wide range of community views on the matter.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

*Finance Officer Consulted:      Name Andy Moore      Date: 24/11/11*

##### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure the appropriate provision of religious education in maintained schools within its area (other than voluntary aided schools). It has complied with its duty to seek advice from SACRE.

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3.1 No Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the Agreed Syllabus. The law requires that Religious Education must reflect the religious traditions in Great Britain recognising that these traditions are “in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.” [Education Act 1996, ch 56, section 375, (3)]. This requirement is reflected in the Agreed Syllabus. Legislation allows parents a right of withdrawal from all or part of Religious Education, and this right is clearly indicated in the Agreed Syllabus.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 None.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 None.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 There are no direct corporate or city wide implications. However, a good understanding of the principles of the various religions practiced in the city and elsewhere, and the development of tolerance and respect towards those of all religious faiths and of none, contribute to the creation of the kind of city envisaged in the City Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 The preparation and approval of an Agreed Syllabus of RE is a statutory duty of the Council.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The Council is required to have an Agreed Syllabus in place, and to keep it under review. In preparing this new Agreed Syllabus, advice was taken from teachers and other experts in the field, ensuring that the final text conforms with legislative requirements and reflects the particular character of the city. The Agreed Syllabus was recommended for approval by the properly constituted Agreed Syllabus Conference at its meeting on 1 February 2011.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Brighton & Hove Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education 2011 - 2015

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

None.

**Background Documents**

None.