

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

24 APRIL 2013

**TIMELINE AND LEGAL PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF THE AGREED
SYLLABUS**

**Joint report of the Executive Director of Children's Services and the
Head of Law and Governance**

As members will be aware there is a meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference to take place after this meeting to consider the agreed syllabus in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the Department for Children, Schools and Families document, Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010.

In essence the provisions are that the Local Authority (LA) must cause an Agreed Syllabus Conference to be held (either every 5 years or at the request of the SACRE) for the purpose of reconsidering any agreed syllabus. The groups on the ASC can be the same as the SACRE, and are called committees rather than groups as is the case with the SACRE. The Conference, like the SACRE, must be open to the public.

As with the SACRE, each committee of the ASC has a single vote. In terms of the syllabus, the ASC can either unanimously recommend to the LA that the existing syllabus should continue to be the agreed syllabus, or they can unanimously recommend a new syllabus to be adopted in substitution for the existing syllabus. (If the decision is not unanimous, the Secretary of State becomes involved, and appoints a body to prepare a syllabus which is then deemed to be the agreed syllabus). Following the recommendation from the ASC, if it appears to the LA that the existing or new syllabus "reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain" they may give effect to the recommendation.

The recommendation from the ASC will therefore need to go to the Council's Cabinet for consideration. If Cabinet accepts a recommendation for a new syllabus to be adopted, Children's Services will then advise when the syllabus can be launched.

The next Cabinet meeting at which this could be considered is 6 June 2013.

Members are requested to note the information.

