

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 16 November 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Report for Amended Terms of Reference for Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) / Standing Advisory Council (SAC) 2023
Purpose of Report:	To ratify the revised Terms of Reference for SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) /SAC (Standing Advisory Council)
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language
Responsible Officer:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Francesca Wright, Senior Governor Support Officer</p> <p>Trevor Baker, Head of Service, Strategy, Community Learning & Resources</p> <p>Cllr Edward Williams, Chair of SACRE/SAC</p> <p>John Sparks, Head of Governor Support</p> <p>Lisa Lewis, Operational Manager Strategy and Resources</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for executive decision by the Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Curriculum for Wales was implemented from September 2022 on a phased basis. Given the Curriculum for Wales phased introduction, there will be some year groups to which the current legislative requirements for Religious Education, and the roles and responsibilities of SACRE, still apply along with the Curriculum for Wales (2021) Religion, Values and Ethics and the roles and responsibilities of SAC. Therefore, the Local Authority will need to ratify an amended Terms of Reference that accommodates both SACRE and SAC, until the roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales is completed. 	

Recommendation

1. Cabinet is recommended to agree the revised Terms of Reference (Revised Constitution of SACRE/SAC for RVE, May 2023) attached at Appendix A.

Reason for Recommendation

1. That the Terms of Reference (Revised Constitution of SACRE/SAC for 'Religion, Values and Ethics') are agreed that accommodate both SACRE and SAC, until the roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales is completed.

1. Background

- 1.1 The introduction of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act) established the Curriculum for Wales in law and replaced the previous curriculum.
- 1.2 The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 Act sets out 'Religion, Values and Ethics' (RVE) as one of the mandatory subjects which spans the 3 to 16 learning continuums. The subject of RVE forms part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience within the new Curriculum for Wales. Subject specific guidance on RVE contained within the Humanities Area of the Curriculum for Wales, is statutory and is published under section 71 of the Act. The guidance is designed to assist those responsible under the Act for designing the RVE syllabus as part of the school curriculum.

Support to Schools and requirements

- 1.3 SACRE will continue to work together to continue to support schools with the requirements of the 'legacy' curriculum during the phased roll out of the new Curriculum for Wales. In addition, SAC for RVE will support schools with the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales 2021.
- 1.4 SACRE and SAC will continue to support schools and settings to have 'regard to' the two locally Agreed Syllabi, one for RE and one for RVE, when designing and implementing their curriculum.
- 1.5 The Terms of Reference (Revised Constitution of SACRE/SAC for RVE) have been revised considering the current changes to the legislation within the Curriculum for Wales.
- 1.6 The legislation itself is clear that RVE includes non-religious philosophical views, including beliefs such as humanism, atheism and secularism, although this is not an exhaustive list. These changes make explicit what the law already requires in respect of pluralistic RVE.
- 1.7 Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACRE) will be renamed Standing Advisory Councils (SAC) for RVE for the Curriculum for Wales 2021. They will advise on matters relating to religion, values and ethics. 'SACRE' will be required to continue to advise on matters relating to Religious Education, until

the Curriculum for Wales 2021 rolls out in its entirety to all learners. Both SACRE and SAC will run concurrently until the full roll out of the new curriculum occurs.

Local Member Consultation

- 1.8** Local Members were involved within the SACRE and SAC consultation and amending the wording of the legacy Terms of Reference in line with the legal legislation changes and requirement for RVE.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 legislation states some legislative changes for the roles and responsibilities of Local Authority Standing Advisory Councils for RVE (SACs). The Act provides for the appointment of persons to the committee who represent holders of non-religious philosophical beliefs in the same way as they permit the appointment of persons who represent holders of religious beliefs.
- 2.2** It is a matter for the Local Authority to decide on the appointment of appropriate persons. The final decision on an appointment is dependent on the relevant local authority's determination that such a representative would help ensure the relevant traditions of the area are appropriately reflected. Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education will be renamed Standing Advisory Councils for RVE.
- 2.3** The Local Authority must take all reasonable steps to secure that the membership of the group is broadly proportionate to the strength of each religion, denomination, or conviction in its local area (see new subsection (6A) and (6B) of section 390 inserted by paragraph 9(8) of the Schedule).
- 2.4** These are the only legislative changes within the Act relating to the roles and legal responsibilities of Standing Advisory Councils on RVE. The legislation relating to all their other existing roles and legal responsibilities remains unchanged.
- 2.5** The existing Terms of Reference for Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education (SACRE) required updating to include the new legal roles and responsibilities for the Local Authority Standing Advisory Councils for Religion, Values and Ethics (SAC).
- 2.6** Until the rollout of the Curriculum for Wales is complete in all schools and settings, in 2025, there is a need to have both SACRE and SAC. This has meant that the wording of the Terms of Reference has been amended to include both the roles and responsibilities for SACRE and SAC.
- 2.7** The inclusion in the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act), of the appointment of persons to the committee who represent holders of non-religious philosophical beliefs in the same way as they permit the appointment of persons who represent holders of religious beliefs has meant required amendments to the existing SACRE Terms of Reference wording.

- 2.8** SACRE and SAC members are recommending that the Local Authority accept the changes to be in line with the legislative changes in the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act).

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (“the 2015 Act”) requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.
- 3.2** The Council has committed as part of the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 to achieving a vision of ‘Working Together for a Brighter Future’. This plan is reflective of the Welsh Government’s Well-being of Future Generations Act and is comprised of four Well-being objectives to deliver this vision:
- Objective 1 - To work with and for our communities
 - Objective 2 - To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
 - Objective 3 - To support people at home and in their community
 - Objective 4 - To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment
- 3.3** To make sure we are all working towards the same purpose, the 2015 Act puts in place seven well-being goals on the Council. The 2015 Act makes it clear the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals, not just one or two, these being:
- A prosperous Wales
 - A resilient Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh Language
 - A globally responsible Wales
- 3.4** Support for schools in relation to the curriculum contributes to the Council's Wellbeing Objectives drawn from the Corporate Plan 2020-25. There is specific alignment with our wellbeing objectives to work with and for our communities and to support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth.

- 3.5** This report recognises the importance of involving pupils, staff, parents, governors and members of the local community to participate and engage with schools in developing their vision and curriculum design.
- 3.6** This report outlines how partnership work through SACRE/SAC is supporting schools in engaging with professional learning opportunities and elements of curriculum design. It recognises the need for education provision and the accompanying legislation to be flexible and responsive to future needs, including expanding participation from persons of religious and non-religious beliefs together to support schools in the development and delivery of the RVE curriculum in the Vale of Glamorgan.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no climate change and nature implications resulting from this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Employment

- 5.2** There are no employment implications as a result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** Members will note the provisions introduced by the Curriculum and Assessment Act 2021 re-title 'SACRE' to 'SAC' and change the composition requirements. The revised Terms of Reference presented for adoption reflect the updated legislation requirements.
- 5.4** Wales Act 2021: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/4/schedule/2> with 1996 Act: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/schedule/31/enacted>
- 5.5** Summary of legislation for Religion, Values and Ethics: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation#religion,-values-and-ethics>
- 5.6** Summary of legislation for the Agreed Syllabus Guidance 2022: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation#agreed-syllabus-conferences-and-the-agreed-syllabus-for-religion,-values-and-ethics>
- 5.7** Guidance for Religion, Values and Ethics: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/humanities/designing-your-curriculum#religion,-values-and-ethics-guidance>

6. Background Papers

None.

VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS (SAC) AND STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) in the Vale of Glamorgan is established in accordance with sections 390-397 of the Education Act 1996 and guidance contained in the Welsh Circular 10/94 as updated. In addition, the Standing Advisory Council (SAC) on religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) in the Vale of Glamorgan is established in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 (see Annex 1).

CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the LA on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the LA on matters connected with Religion, Values and Ethics and Religious Education which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five-year statutory time scale, the LA should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the LA and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider with the LA the support offered to Religion, Values and Ethics, or Religious Education in its schools, with particular regard to methods of teaching, the choice of teaching materials and the provision of training for teachers.
6. To offer advice on any other matters related to its function as it sees fit.
7. To publish an annual report on its work, which should:
 - a. specify any matters on which it has advised the LA;
 - b. broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - c. set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the LA; and
 - d. record the membership of SAC/SACRE and the dates of meetings held.
8. To participate in the LA's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religion, values and ethics or religious education and/or collective worship.

9. To receive and make determinations in respect of applications from headteachers of county schools for the lifting or modifying of the requirements that collective worship in such schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Composition of SAC/SACRE in the Vale of Glamorgan

10. SAC/SACRE shall comprise three groups representing:
 - a. Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Local Authority will appropriately reflect the religious traditions in the area and also such persons who represent holders of non-religious philosophical convictions in the same way as they permit the appointment of persons who represent holders of religious beliefs; (section 390(4)(a) of, and paragraph 4(2)(1) of Schedule 31 to, the 1996 Act) and in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021).

The final decision of an appointment rests with the SAC/SACRE, as they are best placed to assess whether the SAC/SACRE has the necessary expertise and experience to properly discharge its function.
 - b. Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the Local Authority, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area.
 - c. The Local Authority.

11. The council may also include co-opted members.

12. The Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE has agreed the following membership:

Representatives from religious traditions, denominations and holders of non-religious philosophical convictions.

To optimise the efficiency of the SAC/SACRE, membership is sought from a wide range of religious traditions and from persons who represent holders of non-religious philosophical convictions that which may at any time, be directly present within the Vale of Glamorgan.

Twelve places from a range of religions, denominations and from non-religious philosophical convictions groups which could include but is not restricted to:

- The Church in Wales
- The Roman Catholic Church
- Free Churches
- Bahá'í Faith
- Buddhism
- Hinduism

- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Humanism

Teacher representatives

Eight places from a range of teacher associations. The teacher representative must currently be employed and working within a school in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The LA

Six members representing the local authority.

Co-opted members (with no voting rights)

Up to four members who have an interest in religious education/religions, values and ethics and collective worship and can assist the committee in its functions.

11. Membership of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE shall be for a period of four years. Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.
12. Membership of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE is subject to the condition that the LA has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative, as the case may be, of the denominations, associations or non-religious philosophical convictions group in question.
13. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religion, values and ethics and/or religious education.
14. Individuals may be removed from the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE if they cease to be representative of the denomination, association, non-religious philosophical convictions group or of the Authority they were appointed to represent.
15. Any member of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE may at any time resign.
16. Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without apology will cease to be a member. An individual who is so disqualified shall not be precluded from being reappointed by the appropriate nominating body.

Proceedings for SAC/SACRE meetings in the Vale of Glamorgan

17. The LA will appoint a clerk to SACRE/SAC.
18. Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE shall meet **not** less than once in each school term.
19. SAC/SACRE shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each academic year. The chairperson and vice chairperson in any one year shall not be drawn from the same representative group. An outgoing chairperson may be re-appointed.

20. If both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are absent from a meeting, a person to take the Chair for the meeting shall be appointed upon the collective consent of the members present at the meeting. Should the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson arrive during the rest of the meeting, the appointed substitute will hand over to them as soon as the time under discussion on their arrival is completed.
21. On any question to be decided by the SAC/SACRE only the representative groups on SAC/SACRE shall be entitled to vote and each group shall have a single vote. Before a formal vote is taken opportunity shall be given to each representative group to determine how its vote is to be cast.
22. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
23. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson or vice chairperson in consultation with the clerk to SAC/SACRE and Local Authority Professional Officer. Any voting member of SAC/SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda at least twenty working days prior to any meeting. Only items on the agenda may be considered at any meeting except at the discretion of the chair.
24. The SACRE/SAC may, if it so wishes, arrange the attendance at a meeting of a specialist speaker who is not a member of the SACRE/SAC.
25. Each or any of the representative groups may require the attendance of a specialist speaker who is not a member of the SACRE/SAC, but only for the period during which any relevant matter is under consideration and provided that at least ten working days' notice of such requirement is given to the Clerk for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting.
26. In the case of any member not being able to attend a SAC/SACRE meeting, a substitute may be nominated by the body which that person represents, provided that the substitute meets the eligibility criteria and the Education Directorate of the Local Authority and the clerk to SAC/SACRE is notified in advance of the meeting.
27. A meeting of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE will be deemed to be quorate if at least one member of each of the three representative groups is present. The validity of proceedings of SAC/SACRE shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE.
28. The representative groups on the Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE, other than that representing the Authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the Authority. At such time an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.
29. The Vale of Glamorgan SAC/SACRE shall consider its annual report at the first meeting to be held in each academic year. Upon the Council's ratification of the report it shall proceed to publication.

30. The Clerk to SAC/SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be published on the Vale of Glamorgan's website, sent to all schools within the Authority, to DfES, the National Library and to such other individuals and institutions as the Local Authority, sees fit.

ANNEX 1

The Standing Advisory Council (SAC) on Religion, Values and Ethics

The constitution, functions and working arrangements of the Vale of Glamorgan SAC shall follow those of the Vale of Glamorgan SACRE, as stated above. The two committees will coexist until 2025 and for the efficiency and integrity of both committees, meetings will be held at the same time, with all business dealt with as appropriate to each committee. These arrangements will continue until the Curriculum for Wales has been implemented to all relevant year groups, at which time the Vale of Glamorgan SACRE will be dissolved and the Vale of Glamorgan SAC will continue.