

<b>Report to:</b>	SACRE
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 May 2017

## COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update members on the Commission on Religious Education.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the update.

2.2 To consider any actions for the SACRE in relation to the activities of the Commission On Religious Education.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To assist in the further development of religious education

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, the item is for discussion.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

## 5.0 Background Information

The **Commission on Religious Education** (CoRE), established in mid-2016, is picking up momentum. After a very positive response to the call for evidence with over 2,000 people responding, CoRE is exploring additional ways to hear from stakeholders in RE. Commissioners have now met for a second residential meeting and are considering a wide range of evidence on which to base their interim report. This is a substantial project with the potential to create some of the most exciting developments in religious education for decades. **14 commissioners** with a wide range of expertise and experience have been appointed to review the legal, education, and policy frameworks for RE. The Government is watching with interest, waiting to hear what the commissioners will recommend.

This is a vitally important time for RE: academisation has put the SACRE system under substantial pressure, and CoRE offers a way to make recommendations that could transform the situation and ensure that RE has strong foundations. It is therefore critically important that everyone with an interest in RE should feel able to engage with CoRE. It is particularly important for the commissioners to hear from SACREs and from people working with SACREs. As the bodies with a statutory role overseeing religious education, SACREs have a crucial role to play in any discussion over the future legal, educational and policy frameworks for the subject.

There are many ways to get in touch with CoRE. Some SACREs have already sent evidence to CoRE as a result of the online call for evidence that CoRE ran from December 2016 to February 2017. It is still possible to **submit evidence via the CoRE website**.

It is also possible to give evidence orally at one of a series of public evidence-gathering sessions. We have already run one session in London, but there will be further sessions.

Birmingham, Manchester, Exeter, Durham, as well as a second London session (the dates for these sessions will shortly be announced).

To get a flavour of the public evidence session, you can read an account of the first session by one of the commissioners at Appendix 7a. If you would like to give evidence at any of the upcoming sessions please get in touch with CoRE's project manager on [enquiries@commissiononre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@commissiononre.org.uk).

The commissioners are also keen to learn more by getting out and about, meeting and talking with as many people working in RE as possible. If you'd like to invite a commissioner to a SACRE meeting, or to attend an event your SACRE is running.

An interim report from CoRE will be published later on this year, after which there will be a further consultation where again, a range of views from SACREs will be vital. The final report is due out in mid-2018.

For CoRE to be a success it will need to build on the wisdom within the RE community. CoRE needs to hear about what works (and what doesn't) on a local level.

The Commission on RE is therefore the chance for every SACRE to explain what is necessary to secure a strong future for RE

5.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.3 **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7a: Commission on Religious Education report on first meeting.

6.0 **Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

7.0 **Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.