

**CONSTITUTION OF THE DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Composition and Membership:**

1. In accordance with the Education Act 1996 (Section 390 (4)), the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education ('the Council') will consist of or comprise four groups of representative members, all of whom are to be appointed by Darlington Borough Council ('the Authority');
2. The four representative groups will have the following members:
  - (a) **Group A – Persons to represent the Authority** - Such persons to represent the Authority as the Authority (that is, Members of the Council who have not themselves been co-opted) shall co-opt. These will hold office on such terms as may be determined by the members co-opting them (3 members);
  - (b) **Group B – Church of England** - the Church of England (3 members);
  - (c) **Group C – Other Religious Faiths** - Such Christian and other religious denominations (except for the Church of England) as in the opinion of the Authority, reflect the principal religious traditions of the area; namely, the Methodist Church (1), the Roman Catholic Church (1), the Assemblies of God (1), Hebrew Congregation (1), Islam (1), Sikhism (1), Hinduism (1) Buddhism (1), Society of Friends (1), Salvation Army (1), United Reform Church (1) and Baptist Church (1).
  - (d) **Group D – Teaching Organisations** - Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the Authority, ought to be represented; namely (5) representatives of teaching unions.
    - (i) National Union of Teachers (1)
    - (ii) National Association of School Teacher / Union of Women Teachers (1)
    - (iii) Association of Teachers and Lecturers (1)
    - (iv) National Association of Head Teachers (1)
    - (v) Association of School and College Lecturers (1)
3. The Council may also co-opt members. Such members may participate fully in discussions of the SACRE, but may not vote.
4. The appointment of members is subject to the following provisions:
  - (a) Before appointing a person to represent any denomination or associations, the Authority shall consult locally and take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that he/she is representative of the denomination or associations in question;
  - (b) A member appointed by the Authority may be removed from membership if, in the opinion of the Authority, he/she ceases to be representative of the denomination or

associations he/she was appointed to represent or (as the case may be) the Authority;

5. Members of the Council shall hold office for four years. Any outgoing member may be re-appointed.
6. Any Member of the Council may at any time resign his/her office. A member replacing an existing member would hold office for a full four years from the date of appointment.
7. Any member of any the representative groups unable to attend a meeting of the Council may arrange for a substitute to attend on his / her behalf, however said substitute must fulfil the same representative criteria as the member that they are deputising for. The substitute will have the same voting powers as the member in whose place they attend. Such arrangements must be notified to the Clerk of the Council in advance of the meeting by the member to be substituted.
8. Where a member fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Council, and is not represented at any of these meetings by a named substitute in accordance with paragraph 8 above, he/she shall cease to be a member of the Council, shall not be eligible for re-appointment for a further period of three meetings and the nominating body shall be invited to nominate another representative provided that:
  - (a) The Clerk to the Council has advised the member in writing of the provision of this clause within a fortnight of the second missed meeting, and at least a fortnight before the third missed meeting.
  - (b) The Council does not decide to waive this rule for reasons of extenuating circumstances.

### **Powers, Duties and Responsibilities**

9. The Council has two main responsibilities:
  - (a) To advise the Authority on such matters connected with religious worship in its schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus as the Authority may refer to the Council, or as the Council may see fit. These matters include in particular methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers. In the performance of this task the Council may expect to be consulted by the Authority and kept fully informed on all matters relating to religious education and collective worship in the schools of the Authority.
  - (b) To consider and make a 'determination; on any application that the requirement for Christian collective worship should not apply to a particular school or class or description of pupils within that school.

### **Additional Powers, Duties and Responsibilities**

10. The representative groups on the Council, other than that consisting of persons appointed to represent the Authority, may at any time require a review of any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the Authority. Each representative group concerned shall have a single vote on the question of whether to require such a review.

11. The Council shall in each year publish a report on the exercise of its functions. The report shall in particular;
  - (a) Specify any matters in respect of which the Council has given advice to the Authority;
  - (b) Broadly describe the nature of the advice given; and
  - (c) Where any such matter was not referred to the Council by the Authority, give the Council's reasons for offering advice on that matter. Copies of the annual report will be sent to schools and to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. They will be sent to local teacher training institutions when the report makes reference to initial teacher training or in-service training.

### **Proceedings**

12. The Council shall appoint a Chair from among its members, whose term of office shall be for four years. An outgoing Chair may be re-elected. The Chair does not have a casting vote.
13. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
14. The Council and, in relation to any question failing to be decided by members of the Council of any particular category, the members of that category may regulate their own proceedings, subject to the following limitation:

*On any question to be decided by the Council only the representative groups on the Council shall be entitled to vote, and each such group shall have a single vote. Decisions within groups on how that vote is to be cast shall not require unanimity.*
15. The majority vote will decide the motion, however should there be an equality of votes then a proposal would not be carried.
16. The validity of proceedings of the Council, or of the Members of the Council of any particular category, shall not be affected:
  - (a) by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council required by item 2 of this Constitution; or
  - (b) on the grounds that a member of the Council appointed to represent any denomination or associations does not at the time of the proceedings represent the denomination or associations in question.
17. A quorum at a meeting of the Council shall be at least one representative from each of the representative groups A-D.

### **Clerk to the Council**

18. The Clerk to the Council shall be provided by the Democratic Services Section, Corporate Services Department of the Authority.

