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## Appendix 3:

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### CONSTITUTION OF THE DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

#### STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

##### A. Composition and Membership

1. The Council will consist of:
  - (i) 4 groups of representative members, all of whom are to be appointed by the Local Education Authority;
  - (ii) Such members as the Council (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.
  
2. The 'representative members' will be representatives of:
  - (i) such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions (except for the Church of England) as, in the opinion of the Local Education Authority, shall, so far as is consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area: namely, the Methodist Church (2), the United Reformed Church (2), the Roman Catholic Church (2), the Baptist Church (1), the Assemblies of God (1), Salvation Army (1), Society of Friends (1); Hinduism (1), Buddhism (1), Sikhism (1), Judaism (1), Islam (1), Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai Faith (1) (*Committee A*);
  - (ii) the Church of England (5 members) (*Committee B*);
  - (iii) such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the Authority, ought to be represented: namely, (8) representatives of teaching unions, plus (2) from the R.E. Curriculum Development Group (*Committee C*);
  - (iv) the County Council (4 Elected Members) (*Committee D*).
  
3. The appointment of members is subject to the following provisions:
  - (i) Before appointing a person to represent any denomination or association the Local Education Authority shall consult locally and take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that he/she is representative of the denomination or association in question.

- (ii) A member appointed by the Local Education Authority may be removed from membership if in the opinion of the Local Education Authority he/she ceases to be representative of the denomination or association he/she was appointed to represent or (as the case may be) the Authority.
- 4.
- (i) Members of the Standing Advisory Council shall hold office for four years. Any outgoing member may be re-appointed. Substitutes may be allowed at the discretion of the SACRE chairperson for representatives who are unable to attend a particular meeting.
  - (ii) Any member of the Standing Advisory Council may at any time resign his/her office.

## **B. Powers, Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Standing Advisory Council has two main responsibilities:

- (i) to advise the Authority on such matters as the Authority may refer to the Council or as the Council may see fit, connected with collective worship in community schools and other maintained schools having no religious character and the religious education to be given in schools in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus.

These matters include in particular giving advice on methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers in these areas

In the performance of this task the Council may expect to be consulted by the Local Education Authority and kept fully informed on all matters relating to religious education and collective worship in the schools of the Authority.

- (ii) to consider and make a 'determination' on any application from a community school or other maintained school having no religious character (from the head teacher after the head teacher's consultation with the school's governing body) that the requirement for the majority of acts of collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character should not apply to a particular school, or class or description of pupils within that school. The Council's decision should have regard to the backgrounds of the pupils concerned. The Council should review any such determination every five years. Appeals against any such determination are to be dealt with by a panel chaired by the chairperson of SACRE (who has no vote), consisting of one member of each of the representative groups as determined by each group.

2. Additional powers, duties, and responsibilities:

- (i) 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.
- (ii) The Council may offer advice to head teachers, governing bodies and such other parties as it sees fit, and disseminate information about good practice in religious education and collective worship.
- (iii) The Council should monitor the practice of religious education and collective worship, including the delivery of the agreed syllabus, in particular through the inspection reports on religious education, collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- (iv) The Council should consider any complaints about the provision and delivery of religious education or collective worship referred to it by the Authority.
- (v) The Council shall in each academic year publish a report with respect to the exercise of its functions, in accordance with the guidance on the format and structure of such reports provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This annual 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 also be sent to local teacher training institutions when the report makes reference to initial teacher training or in-service training.

**C. Proceedings**

1. The Council shall appoint a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members, whose term of office shall be for four years. An

outgoing chairperson or vice-chairperson may be re-elected. In the absence of either person, the Council may appoint a chairperson for that meeting.

2. The Authority will provide a clerk to attend and minute each meeting.
3. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
4. The Council and, in relation to any question falling 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. Co-opted members do not have a vote. In the event of a tied vote of the Council, the proposal will be lost.

5. The validity of proceedings of the Council or of the member of the Council of any particular category shall not be affected:
  - (i) by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council required by section A of this constitution, or
  - (ii) on the ground that a member of the Council appointed to represent any denomination or association does not at the time of the proceedings represent the denomination or association in question.
6. The quorum for a meeting of the Council will be one quarter of the total membership.
7. The Council may appoint sub-committees, providing that the sub-committees represent the four representative groups and voting follows the procedure given in section C.4 of this constitution.
8. Meetings of the Council shall be open to the press and public, except in the case of matters deemed confidential by the Council.
9. Notice of meetings, together with an agenda, will be circulated by the clerk at least five days before the meeting.
10. Extraordinary meetings may be called at the request of the Authority, or on receipt by the clerk of requests for such a meeting from at least two of the representative groups.

11. The costs of the Council and of its sub-committees shall be met by the Authority.