

Individual Decision

The attached report will be taken as an
Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

18 July 2008

Ref:	Title	Portfolio Member	Page No.
ID1474	West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Groups A and B Representation	Barbara Alexander	3-6

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Groups A and B Representation		
Report to be considered by:	Cllr Barbara Alexander	on:	July 2008
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1474		

Purpose of Report: To recommend Ms Alex Butler as a Church of England representative and Mazher Qazi as the Muslim representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Recommended Action: To agree the appointment of Ms Alex Butler as a Church of England representative, and Mr Mazher Qazi as the Muslim representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Reason for decision to be taken: Resignation of the previous representative in the case of the Church of England representation, and to fill a long-standing vacancy in the case of the Muslim representation.

List of other options considered: None

Key background documentation:

- Education Act 1996.

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) was established in accordance with Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 by West Berkshire District Council acting as the Local Education Authority.
- 1.2 The SACRE was established to set the RE Syllabus, advise the Local Authority on matters connected with religious worship, and advise on methods of teaching, the choice of materials used and the provision of training for teachers.

2. Nominations for membership of the West Berkshire SACRE

- 2.1 The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education comprises four groups each with a single vote to use when voting is necessary.

The four committees are:

Group A: Representatives of Christian denominations other than the Church of England, and of other religions	Group B: Four Church of England representatives
Group C: One representative from each of the following teacher associations: NUT, NAS/UWT, ATL, PAT, NAHT and ASCL	Group D: Representatives of the local authority

- 2.2 The Local Authority is responsible for appointing members to each of these four committees. This is usually achieved by seeking nominations from each area.
- 2.3 Members have taken the opportunity to consider the rationale for minority faith group representation taking into account that:

“The 1996 Education Act says that group A should consist of ‘a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area’; ... and ‘The number of representative members appointed ...to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, as far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group’s functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.”

- 2.4 In Group A the SACRE has representatives from the Free Church and Sikh communities, but has vacancies in other religious groups.
- 2.5 In Group B the SACRE has three representatives nominated by the Church of England but currently has one vacancy.

- 2.6 In Group C the SACRE has representatives from the ATL, NAHT, NASUWT, and NUT Unions, but currently has no representation from PAT and ASCL.
- 2.6 In accordance with the SACRE constitution, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People is requested to accept Ms Alex Butler as a Church of England representative and Mr Mazher Qazi as the Muslim representative on the West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Appendices

None

Implications *(Please note that the asterisked areas need to be completed in full)*

Policy:	In accordance with Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 the SACRE requires representations from the Muslim and Church of England Communities
Financial:	None as a result of this report
Personnel:	None as a result of this report
Legal:	None as a result of this report
Environmental:	None as a result of this report
Equalities:	The Muslim and Church of England communities would have representation on the SACRE.
Partnering:	None as a result of this report
Property:	None as a result of this report
Risk Management:	None as a result of this report
Community Safety:	None as a result of this report

Consultation Responses

(Consultation must be undertaken with the following Members, where appropriate, before any decision can be made by the Portfolio Member.)

Members:

Leader of Council:	Cllr Graham Jones
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:	Cllr Brian Bedwell – no comment to make.
Children and Young People Policy Development Commission Chairman:	Cllr Irene Neill – no response received.
Ward Members:	None
Opposition Spokesperson:	Cllr Alan Macro – no response received.

Local Stakeholders:	Jo Fageant, Adviser, the Diocese of Oxford – supported both nominations. The Diocese of Oxford – supported nomination of Ms Alex Butler. The Muslim Community – supported nomination of Mr Mazher Qazi.
Officers Consulted:	Rita Vasa, School Improvement Partner – supported both nominations.
Trade Union:	None