

To: Council

On: 3 May 2018

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

**Heading: Church Representatives on Committees Appointed by
Education Authorities**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Section 124 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 provides that where an education authority appoints a committee whose purposes include advising the authority on any matter relating to the discharge of their functions as education authority or discharging any of those functions of the authority on their behalf, three of the members to be appointed (who shall not be members of the education authority) shall be church representatives. One of the three places requires to be filled in accordance with the Act by a nomination from the Church of Scotland and one by the Roman Catholic Church.
- 1.2 In the selection of the third person the Act specifies that the authority shall have regard (taking account of the representation of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland) to the comparative strength within the area of all the churches and denominational bodies having duly constituted charges or other appointed places of worship therein. At the statutory meeting of the Council it was noted that one nomination had been received in relation to the third representative, from PACT (Paisley Action of Churches Together), nominating Reverend Graeme Currie, secretary of PACT and the Pastor of Hopehall Evangelical Church (Paisley) and it was agreed that Reverend Currie be appointed.
- 1.3 Subsequently, Reverend Currie advised that PACT had closed and as a consequence he would no longer be their representative on the Education & Children's Services Policy Board and the Council at its meeting held on 28 September 2017 agreed that arrangements be made to secure a replacement nominee and, in the first instance, to approach Renfrewshire Evangelical Alliance of Churches. However, no response was received in relation to this invitation and the Council at its meeting held on 21 December 2017 agreed that an advertisement be placed in the local and national press and on the Council's website seeking nominations.

- 1.4 Adverts were placed in the Herald, Record, Paisley Daily Express and the Renfrew Gazette and on the Council website. In addition contact was made with Renfrewshire Interfaith Group asking if they wished to make a nomination.
- 1.5 Only one nomination has been received, from Ravinder Singh, Sikh Chaplain at the University of the West of Scotland, nominating himself. In support of his nomination Mr Singh has lodged letters from the Sikh Council of Scotland and from the Shri Guru Ravidass Community Scotland and from Reverend Peter Gill, Wallneuk North Church of Scotland, attached as appendices to this report. Mr Singh is a member of the Renfrewshire Interfaith Group.
- 1.6 As detailed in paragraph 1.2 above, in the selection of the third person the Act specifies that the authority shall have regard (taking account of the representation of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland) to the comparative strength within the area of all the churches and denominational bodies having duly constituted charges or other appointed places of worship therein. There are no Sikh places of worship in Renfrewshire. The 2011 census identified the religious beliefs within the then Renfrewshire population of 174,908 as follows:

Church of Scotland	Roman Catholic	Other Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other religion	No religion	Religion not stated
56,366	39,769	6,816	257	273	63	1,313	573	360	57,132	11,986
32.2%	22.7%	3.9%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%	32.7%	6.9%

- 1.7 Mr Singh is a member of the Renfrewshire Interfaith Group and his nomination is supported by a local Church of Scotland minister. He is also the Sikh Chaplain at the University of the West of Scotland. It is considered appropriate therefore that he be appointed as the third church representative on the Education & Children's Services Policy Board

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Council considers the appointment of Mr Singh as third church representative on the Children's Services Policy Board.
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Implications of this report

- Financial Implications** – none
- HR and Organisational Development Implications** – none
- Community Plan/Council Plan Implications** – none
- Legal Implications** – as detailed in the report.
- Property/Assets Implications** – none
- Information Technology Implications** – none

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety Implications – none

9. Procurement Implications – none

10. Risk Implications – none

11. Privacy Impact – none

List of Background Papers –

- (a) none
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