

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th February, 2011.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Mrs S Elbrow

Committee 2 – Church of England

Ms J Fageant (Chair) and Mrs C Isles

Committee 3 – Representatives of LEA

Councillors Basharat and M S Mann

Committee 4 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Mrs M Stacey and Mrs L Bussley

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Bains and Maclsaac; Andrew Allen, Alan Bignell and Vijay Gupta

PART 1

22. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday, 13th October, 2010 were approved as a correct record subject to an amendment to clarify that details of members attendance shown under Committee 3 related to Committee 4 membership and vice versa.

It was noted that members titles were shown incorrectly and in future should be entered as follows:

Mrs S Elbrow
Mrs C Isles
Mrs L Bussley.

23. Mrs Jo Osborne

The Chair advised that sadly, since the last meeting, Mrs Jo Osborne had died. Members paid tribute to Mrs Osborne who had given unstinting service to SACRE and would be greatly missed by her colleagues.

The meeting stood for one minute's silence in memory of Mrs Osborne.

24. Matters Arising

RE Centre - Update

It was reported that most of the artefacts from the Centre had been forwarded to St Mary's school on a loan basis and that the final Committee meeting of

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the Centre would be held that evening, following the SACRE meeting. Members questioned whether the 'Sukkha' remained in the Centre and the whereabouts of the sacred books.

Resolved –

- (a) That Mrs Bowen ascertain whether the Sukkha remained in the Centre and if this was the case that it be offered to the teacher who had made it.
- (b) That Mrs Bowen ascertain whether any sacred books remained in the Centre and if this was the case that these be offered to Mosques and Temples.

RE Trails - Update

It was reported that children had visited a Mosque, Temple and the Gurdwara. Mrs Bussley stated that she was interested in obtaining funding for her own project and at present this was planned within her school budget.

Resolved – That Mrs Elbow would check whether any funds remained in the RE Centre budget so that this could be used for the funding of further projects.

The Scheme of Works for RE

Mrs Bussley advised that she had prepared the Scheme of Works and it was based on five religions and easy to use.

Resolved – That details of the Scheme of Work be forwarded to the Chair by Mrs Bussley and copied to Mrs Isles.

Membership

Members were reminded that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that several Muslim and Sikh members would be contacted regarding their poor attendance and advised that their membership could be terminated if they did not attend the future meeting. It was not known whether Miss Gray had forwarded the relevant letter at this stage. It was emphasised that it was important that individuals who accepted membership in future should do so on the understanding that they were committed to attend SACRE meetings.

Resolved –

- (a) That Mrs Clark discuss the position regarding the Advisory Letter with Miss Gray.
- (b) That provided a letter had been sent to members regarding poor attendance at meetings, that Miss Gray confirm in writing to the

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respective members that their membership had been formally terminated.

(c) That the Chair discuss future membership with Miss Gray.

25. RE in the Latest Curriculum Developments

The Chair advised that Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education had indicated that the National Curriculum for the following year would not include RE. It was therefore suggested that SACRE could draw up a syllabus for Slough schools but this must not be too out of step with the rest of the agreed curriculum. There was a concern that RE had been omitted from the English baccalaureate and the reason given for this decision was that RE was not a statutory subject. The Chair advised that the National Association for Teachers of RE had sent an email expressing their concern this week and the MP for Eastbourne had tabled an early day motion for RE to be included in the English baccalaureate.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Chair write to all three Local MPS on behalf of SACRE, expressing the concern regarding the withdrawal of RE from the curriculum and that a copy of the correspondence be forwarded to SACRE members.
- (b) That the Chair contact Dennis Kitchener, SBC to circulate a copy of the emails.
- (c) That an individual email be sent to each member so that they are able to respond.

26. 2011 Joint SACREs Conference and an Update of the RE Syllabus Review

The Chair advised that the joint conference in June would address how the syllabus should be taken forward. The Chair had agreed to draft questions to schools and analyse the results for each authority.

The date for the meeting was to be confirmed but would likely be 21st, 28th or 29th June at East Hampstead Park, Bracknell, from 6 pm to 9 pm.

The agreed syllabus for review paper was tabled and it was emphasised that this was a locally reviewed syllabus that would be forwarded to RE Co-ordinators in schools.

Members reviewed the questions and it was suggested that the middle 'unsure' column be removed so that respondents did not automatically favour the unsure option.

Resolved-

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- (a) That Members forward their preferred date for the Joint Sacre meeting to the Chair.
- (b) That the reviewed RE Syllabus questionnaire format be approved subject to the removal of the 'unsure' column.

27. NASACRE Conferences

Members noted that the AGM of the National Association of SACREs would be held on Wednesday, 11th May, 2011 in Birmingham and there was a delegate fee. The NASACRE Conference would be held on Thursday, 31st March, 2011 in Birmingham and there was no charge for attendance. It was not clear at this stage whether any funding would be available to allow Members to attend the AGM meeting on 11th May – if this was the case then it was possible that one or two members would be able to attend on a first come first served basis.

Mrs Bussley indicated that she wished to attend the free Conference on 31st March, 2011.

Resolved –

- (a) That Miss Gray would ascertain whether any funds were available for the conference on 11th May and in conjunction with the Chair, advise members accordingly.
- (b) Miss Gray would contact members to confirm attendance at the free conference on 31st March, 2011 and forward the attendance details to Yvonne Cameron, Centre Administrator.

28. NASACRE Advice Paper to SACREs and LAs

The meeting noted the contents of an advisory report by the National Association of SACREs which detailed the requirements for local authorities to provide support for SACREs. The report highlighted the LAs statutory responsibility to establish a SACRE and an agreed syllabus conference together with the obligation to provide sufficient funding for the Bodies to perform their duties. The National Association of ?? had indicated that budgets were under threat and that many RE advisers would lose their jobs.

Resolved –

- (a) That a copy of the report, together with a covering letter from the SACRE Chair be forwarded by Miss Gray to Clair Pyper, Strategic Director, Education and Children's Services, Slough BC and to Councillor Pantelic, SBC.
- (b) That Miss Gray establish the available SACRE budget through Dennis Kitchener, Slough BC and report this information to the Chair.

29. Training session for members using the NASACRE CD

It was suggested that due to the low number of Members present that the training session be held at a future meeting.

Resolved - That the training session using the NASACRE CD be deferred to the next SACRE meeting on 14th June, 2011.

30. Proposed Date of Next Meeting

Members discussed the possible venue for the next meeting and the programme of meetings for the future year.

Resolved –

- (a) That Miss Gray liaise with the Chair to discuss the venue for the next meeting on 14th June, 2011.
- (b) That the programme of meetings for the future year be decided at the next meeting on 14th June, 2011.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 6.05 pm)