

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Monday, 14th July, 2014.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Sue Elbrow, Julie Siddiqi (Chair), Hardeep Singh Sohal, Ashpreet Singh Nainu

Committee 2 – Church of England

Rev. A. S. Allen, Christine Isles, Victoria Hall, Andrea Sparrow

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lynda Bussley

Committee 4-LEA Representatives

Councillors Brooker and Cheema

Other

Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor

Cllr PK Mann, Observer

PART 1

1. Election of Chair 2014/15

It was moved by Councillor Mann, seconded by Councillor Brooker, that Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair for the year 2014/15.

Ms Siddiqi indicated that she would be happy to Chair the SACRE.

Resolved - That Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair of SACRE for 2014/15.

(Ms Siddiqi in the Chair).

2. Election of Vice Chair 2014/15

It was moved by Christine Isles, seconded by Linda Lewis, that Lynda Bussley be elected as Vice Chair for the year 2014/15.

Ms Bussley confirmed that she would be happy to act as Vice Chair of SACRE.

Resolved - That Lynda Bussley be elected as Vice Chair of SACRE for 2014/15.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 13th March 2014

Resolved – That the minutes of the last meeting held on 13th March 2014 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

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Minute 90 – Nominations for further Sikh members were not required, as Sikhism membership was full.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Membership 2014 - Verbal Report

Members discussed the position regarding the current SACRE membership and an update on the actions taken to fill the vacancies was provided.

Islam: An expression of interest had been received from Mr Waqar Bhatti, who attending the meeting as an observer. It was noted that subject to other nominations, Mr Bhatti's nomination be put forward to Council for appointment to SACRE.

Judaism: Jo Fageant confirmed she would continue to attempt to source nominations for this vacancy.

C of E: Jo Fageant confirmed that she would continue to attempt to source a replacement to fill this position.

It was noted that Linda Lewis, as representative of VOICE, was now confirmed as appointed to SACRE following the most recent Council meeting in June.

Finally, it was confirmed that the length of SACRE membership was three years, and that this length of term would be added to all documentation when appointing new members. All current SACRE members were advised that their Membership would run until 2017.

6. Update on the Appointment of a Professional Advisor

Robin Crofts, Director of Education, Cambridge Education, confirmed that the appointment of Jo Fageant as Professional Advisor to SACRE was very close to being finalised. Contracts had been forwarded for completion, and though an up-to-date DBS document was required, this should not prohibit the processing of the signed contract once received. Mr Crofts confirmed that as this matter was so close to completion, it was appropriate that Jo Fageant move forward in her role as the new Professional Advisor to SACRE.

Ms Fageant then went on to provide a brief outline of her role as Professional Advisor, and advised that she was part of an expanding team made up a range of colleagues with specialist knowledge of certain topics. Ms Fageant advised that these colleagues would be an excellent resource that she would be drawing on moving forward, once certain projects were identified that her colleagues could be included in.

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Mrs Fageant went on to confirm that the amount of work that could be completed by her colleagues and herself would be dictated by the SACRE budget, but that many things that were previously put forward, such as a dedicated SACRE newsletter, could now be finalised due to the appointment of a Professional Advisor.

The topic of how Academy schools would fit in with SACRE's work moving forward was brought up. Robin Crofts confirmed that he would explore this, before providing an update at the next SACRE meeting. This update would include detail on the logistics and financial components inherent to the topic.

7. Joint SACREs conference on 25th June - Outcomes

Ms Fageant briefly outlined the nature and format of the recent Joint SACREs conference held on the 25th June. Of the Slough SACRE members who attended, feedback was very positive and it was felt that this was a very worthwhile day. It was confirmed that it was particularly useful to meet with other SACREs and understand what they do, and how they do it.

Ms Fageant confirmed that the main topic of discussion at the conference centred on the currently explored initiative to create regional SACRE hubs. These hubs would be made up of several SACREs, from various neighbouring authorities. This idea was received very positively by the conference attendees, with attendees looking forward to the potential benefits of working more closely with neighbouring SACREs. In addition, it was confirmed that Culham St Gabriel's Trust had agreed to help create and fund these hubs.

It was proposed to the Slough SACRE that 6 SACREs from the Berkshire area could form a hub to share best practice and work on projects together, as well as sharing budgetary concerns relating to those projects. If approved, the newly formed hub would then need to meet early in September in order to maximise the impact of the hub throughout the next school year. Membership of the hub would last for 1 year.

The topic was opened to discussion, and the proposal was received positively. It was decided that for the first meeting in September, this hub would be made up solely of the Chairs of the 6 SACREs in question. From there, attendance could be widened to draw on the relevant expertise from within each SACRE's membership, once projects had been decided upon.

Mrs Fageant confirmed that she would contact the 6 SACREs to organise the meeting in September, including time and venue, and also look to ratify terms of reference etc.

Resolved – That Slough SACRE be included in a regional SACRE hub made up of neighbouring authorities. Jo Fageant to arrange first meeting in September, comprising the Chairs of the relevant SACREs.

8. Develop a Vision for the work of SACRE in the next Financial Year - Development Plan

The aim of SACRE in promoting quality Religious Education in schools was discussed. The ideas that had come about during the previous meeting were put to the Mrs Fageant, who advised that several of these ideas could be instigated very quickly.

These were:

- The SACRE newsletter. A newsletter would be drafted for the next school term, notifying schools of what SACRE can offer.
- School visits of Places of Worship. A list of suitable places of worship within Slough, and incorporating Windsor and Maidenhead, was to be compiled that could then be forwarded to schools for the purpose of class visits.
- Collective Worship. It was confirmed that within Ms Fageant's team was a colleague with expertise on collective worship, who could prepare a training document containing the legal requirements and best practice, to be forwarded to schools.

In addition, the need for training of RE teachers was discussed, particularly around the use of the Discover RE resource. Ms Fageant confirmed that she would look into organising an introductory meeting for teachers and community members, to identify who required the training. It was also proposed that SACRE should employ some kind of evaluation of the training once it had been held, potentially through an online tool such as Survey Monkey.

The budget for the forthcoming year was discussed. Robin Crofts, confirmed that the budget was set at £5,000.00, and that if there was any money left over at the end of the year, that this would be carried over into the budget for 2015/16.

It was also pointed out that SACRE could ask for the return of any money unused by Montem School RE Trail. Ms Lynda Bussley confirmed that she would review exactly how much could be recouped. Robin Crofts advised that this could be ring fenced as part of Z-Code, and would review this before feeding this detail back to the next SACRE meeting.

Resolved –

That Ms Fageant will progress the following:

1. SACRE Newsletter
2. List of Slough Places of Worship
3. Collective Worship Training Document
4. Introductory Meeting to identify training needs

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That Mrs Bussley will review the value of money available to be recouped from Montem School RE Trail.

That Mr Crofts review Z-Code ring fencing, to be confirmed at the next SACRE meeting.

9. Exemplar RE Planning Prepared by the Diocesan RE team

Ms Fageant confirmed that the Diocesan RE Team had put together a resource similar to the Discover RE resource pack. However, this resource was substantially cheaper, costing £200.00 per pack.

The pack in question contained 6 medium term plans, for school years 1 to 6, and was available to any school who wished to purchase it.

Ms Fageant confirmed that she would send an email to school promoting the resource.

10. Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that in light of the creation of the regional hub, and the meetings inherent to the hub, Slough SACRE would continue to meet three times a year, or once per school term.

The date of the next SACRE meeting was confirmed as Wednesday, 15th October 2014, at 4.30pm. It was proposed that the meeting be held in a mosque. Ms Siddiqi confirmed that she would review venue availability, and confirm at a later date.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.36 pm and closed at 6.40 pm)