

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 14th November, 2018.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Sue Elbrow, Gulzari Lal Babber, Julie Siddiqi, Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan, Waqar Bhatti, Shujah Hamid and Ashpreet Singh Nainu

Committee 2 – Church of England

Rev Andrew Allen and Andrea Sparrow

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lynda Bussley

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillors B Bains, Bedi, Brooker and Smith

Apologies for Absence:- Christine Isles and Hardip Singh Sohal

PART 1

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Nominations were sought for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for the next SACRE year.

Julie Siddiqi was proposed and seconded to serve as Chair and this was agreed unanimously.

Ashpreet Singh Nainu was proposed and seconded to serve as Vice-Chair and this was agreed unanimously.

Resolved –

(a) That Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair for the 2018/19 SACRE year.

(b) That Ashpreet Singh Nainu be elected as Vice-Chair for the 2018/19 SACRE year.

(Julie Siddiqi in the Chair)

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 June 2018

Resolved – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th June 2018 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments and clarifications:

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- Present - Rev Andrew Allen was present. Apologies had been received from Christine Isles, Andrea Sparrow and Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan.
- Minute 37 – Shujah Hamid had been appointed as an Islam representative, not Sikh as had been stated.
- Minute 40 – it was confirmed that all schools were legally required to provide RE at both Key Stages 3 and 4.

3. Matters Arising

Minute 40 – it had been agreed that the Chair and professional advisor would draft a letter to headteachers and RE leads/co-ordinators after the GCSE results data had been published “...requesting details about the provisions in place for non-GCSE RE students at the school and ask what material resources they may require that SACRE could support the schools with.” The professional advisor informed members that the data was not yet available and the action had not yet therefore been completed.

Resolved – That the letter agreed at Minute 40 be drafted once the GCSE data was available.

4. SACRE Membership Update

The Clerk confirmed that Gulzari Lal Babber had been formally appointed by Council as a member of SACRE representing Hinduism.

The Chair highlighted that the bodies identified in Committee 3 – Associations representing teachers was out of date as several of the associations had merged. There were also several long standing vacancies and the SACRE felt that it was important the engagement with school leaders and teachers was strengthened. Members expressed the view that membership in this category be considered more widely, perhaps to include a student representative and RE teachers at primary and secondary level. Various suggestions were made about how schools and teachers could be approached and Members were encouraged to provide the Chair with suggestions of people who may have the necessary expertise and interest to contribute the work of SACRE.

It was noted that a more formal review of SACRE membership which was approved by Council would be required to change the prescribed bodies listed in Committee 3, however, this need not delay the engagement of any interested members from becoming involved in SACRE.

Resolved –

- (a) That the membership update be noted.
- (b) That suggestions be made to the Chair on potential new SACRE members to strengthen school and teacher engagement with a more formal review of membership of Committee 3 in the future.

5. SACRE Membership News

Members provided updates regarding activities undertaken since the last SACRE meeting.

Councillor Brooker informed members about a number of recent developments at Churchmead School including copies of the Quran in English; a £100 donation from the Church of England to purchase more study bibles; a councillor who had donated prayer mats and beads; and the appointment of a new and enthusiastic RE teacher. Members welcomed the availability of such resources and it was suggested that requests from other schools could be sent around via gatekeeper. SACRE would discuss the RE Resources Catalogue later at the meeting.

Sue Elbrow reported on a successful concert held in October at St Josephs Catholic School.

Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan updated on the Al-Madani Boys School on Bath Road. It was noted that the school had recently received a 'good' rating by Ofsted at its first inspection. It was agreed to provide contact for the school to the professional advisor. It was suggested that a future SACRE meeting be held at the school.

Julie Siddiqi noted that she had become a Governor of Eden Girls School and had delivered some talks to the pupils focusing on positive action.

Resolved – That the updates from members be noted.

6. Draft Annual SACRE Report 2017-2018

Members discussed the draft SACRE Annual Report 2017-18. It was a requirement for the SACRE to produce a document summarising its activity during the year, particularly the new Agreed Syllabus over the past year.

The final GCSE data would usually be included but it wasn't yet available and would be appended separately. It was confirmed that the Annual Report was for the school year and that, once agreed, a copy would be sent to the NASACRE. Members were asked to circulate the document within their organisations and/or to relevant contacts.

After discussion, the SACRE approved the Annual Report 2017-18 and agreed that it be circulated as widely as possible to libraries, places of workshop and relevant community groups.

Resolved – That the SACRE Annual Report 2017-18 be approved.

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7. Berkshire SACRE Hub notes - meeting held on 17 September 2018

The professional advisor provided an update on the latest developments with the Berkshire SACRE Hub. The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2018 were noted. The launch events for the new Agreed Syllabus had been considered to be successful with excellent speakers at the events across Berkshire.

It was reported that two advisors had started work to review support materials for the Agreed Syllabus; a Hub Action Plan was in place; and the promotion of the Crossing the Bridges project, including the possibility of a bid for a Westfield Community Grant. The list of schools in the Crossing the Bridges Directory did not include several schools in Slough and it was agreed that the professional advisor would clarify the process for added schools to the directory.

Resolved – That the update on the Berkshire SACRE Hub be noted.

8. Slough SACRE Action Plan - April 2018 - March 2019

The professional advisor introduced the SACRE draft Action Plan for the period between April 2018 and March 2019.

Members did not feel they could endorse the action plan at the current time due to the lack of clarity on the resources available to support activity.

Resolved – That the Action Plan be noted and considered for endorsement once the financial position was clarified.

(Lynda Bussley joined the meeting)

9. SACRE Finance: Update on Expenditure/Position of Adviser Support

The SACRE financial information as provided in the expenditure update was considered. The figures showed expenditure of £4495 for the period.

Members expressed frustration that the information was limited and it was not clear what period the expenditure was for and how much of the SACRE budget remained available to support its activity. It was agreed that the Chair would speak to the SACRE budget holder at the Council, Mr Kyriacou to seek clearer financial information to enable the committee to allocate its resources to achieve the objectives in the action plan.

Resolved –

(a) That the financial update be noted.

(b) That the Chair seek further information and clarity on the finances from the SBC Service Lead School Effectiveness who was the budget holder for SACRE.

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(Councillors Bedi, Bains and Smith left the meeting)

10. Religious Education (RE) Resources Catalogue Project update

Members discussed the ongoing work on the RE resources catalogue project. The background to the matter was summarised and it noted that the intention had been to arrange for the resources and artefacts to be photographed and logged.

The project had stalled and it was not clear where the resources were located. It was agreed that Sue Elbrow would try to find out where the resources were currently being stored and that arrangements be made for Lynda Bussley and Waqar Bhatti, who had volunteered to support the project, photograph and catalogue the resources.

Resolved – That the RE Resources Catalogue Project be progressed.

11. SACRE Members' Attendance Record

The attendance record for SACRE meetings in 2017/18 was considered. An inaccuracy was noted in that Lynda Bussley had attended, and chaired, the last meeting on 27th June 2018. It was agreed to correct the record.

Resolved – That the Members' Attendance Recorded be noted, subject to the amendment that Lynda Bussley had been present at the last meeting held on 27th June 2018.

12. Information items:

The information items were noted.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 6th March, however, as this would be Ash Wednesday it was agreed that the Clerk would seek to find an alternative date.

Resolved – That the date of the next meeting be confirmed.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.43 pm and closed at 6.06 pm)