

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Monday, 21st October, 2013.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Sue Elbrow, Hardip Singh Sohal

Committee 2 – Church of England

The Rev Allen, Jo Fageant, Christine Isles

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lynda Bussley

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillors Brooker, Chaudhry and MS Mann

Apologies for Absence:- Julie Siddiqi

PART 1

61. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on Monday, 17th June 2013

The Minutes of the Last Meeting held on Monday, 17th June 2013 were approved as a correct record.

62. Election of Chair

Jo Fageant nominated and it was seconded by Councillor Brooker that Julie Siddiqi, be elected as Chair for the year 2013/14.

Ms Siddiqi was not in attendance but had previously indicated to Jo Fageant that she would be happy to Chair the SACRE.

Resolved-

- (a) That Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair of SACRE for 2013/14.
- (b) That Councillor Brooker be elected to chair the meeting

(Councillor Brooker in the Chair).

63. SACRE Membership 2013/14

Robin Crofts, Assistant Director, Achievement & Inclusion, advised that he had contacted the Unions regarding membership but there was no response. It was agreed that Linda Lewis of 'Voice' be invited to attend the next meeting by Christine Isles.

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Members discussed the policy for member attendance and it was agreed that the Clerk would review attendance statistics. The Clerk advised that in the previous year a number of members had been reminded of the policy and were subsequently excluded from the SACRE due to their failure to attend meetings.

64. Application for a Determination on Collective Worship from Godolphin Junior School

Jo Fageant confirmed that the application for Godolphin Junior School would be determined by the Secretary of State who would if necessary ask the SACRE for guidance. It was highlighted that there was no requirement that the SACRE must endorse the application.

In response to a question by Sue Elbow, it was confirmed that there were 18 Academies in Slough and this would rise in the near future to 24. It was highlighted that Montem Primary, James Elliman, Baylis Court, and Godolphin Infant School would all require determinations on collective worship in 2015.

Resolved- That Jo Fageant write to the Head of Godolphin School enclosing the supporting documentation.

65. Ofsted Report

Members discussed the key findings of the report entitled, 'Religious Education, realising the potential.' It was highlighted that the evidence base for the report was drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012 but Slough schools were not included.

It was confirmed that Ofsted had ceased doing subject based inspections and this would be the last report produced of this nature. Members were advised that details of full course RE could be found on the internet where excellent examples of case studies and practice could be found. It was highlighted that Ofsted had not inspected Voluntary Aided Schools.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

66. Primary Governors Briefing Paper

Members discussed the content of the 'Religious Education the Truth Unmasked' report relating to primary schools which had resulted from the findings of a recent all party Parliamentary Group for RE inquiry. It was felt that the report painted a bleak picture regarding the number of RE teachers available and recruitment. In particular there was found to be a lack of confidence reported by half of those teaching the subject, issues which were frequently reported at other SACRE meetings.

Members discussed the distribution of the report to Slough Schools and Governing Bodies.

Resolved -

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- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the report be distributed by Paul Brotherton (SBC) to all Slough School and Governing Bodies through the Council's Gatekeeper system.

67. Secondary Governors Briefing Paper

The item was discussed in conjunction with the above minute item.

Resolved-

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the report be distributed by Paul Brotherton (SBC) to all Slough School and Governing Bodies through the Council's Gatekeeper system.

68. Training Provision for teachers of R.E.

Lynda Bussley advised that she had received details of religious training courses being held on three different days. Costs were £80 plus VAT per course. It was agreed that Lynda would forward details on. Jo Fageant advised that there would also be training available at Moor Hall in Windsor and RBWM had sent details to schools.

It was agreed that details of the courses could be notified through the Gateway system.

Resolved - That details of training be noted.

69. Update on the Development Plan

Jo Fageant updated Members on progress with the Development Plan, following discussion with Julie Siddiqi. A request had been received from schools for information on contacts for places of worship.

Members discussed and agreed to take responsibility for providing the detail required. The information would be given to Jo Fageant. The Rev Allen advised that there were 15 Christian congregations in Slough and it was therefore more difficult to obtain a consensus. He agreed to provide contact details for the Christian town centre denominations.

It was agreed that Jo and Julie would design a contact details pro forma which could be used to gather the required information. Jo also questioned whether a piece of work could be done to compile contact details and other useful information such as the nature of the building and whether meetings could be hosted there.

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It was agreed that this could be placed on the next meeting agenda for consideration.

Resolved - That the matter be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

70. Consideration of the appointment of a Professional Advisor to the SACRE

The SACRE was asked to consider the appointment of a professional advisor.

(Jo Fageant left the room during the consideration of the item)

Robin Crofts (RC) advised that £5000 had been set aside for the SACRE budget and the funds could be used for purposes agreed by the group. It was clarified that if SACRE wished to appoint a salaried advisor then a standard recruitment process would have to be followed which normally required the provision of 3 quotes for services, and/ or advertising for expressions of interest.

RC advised that he would take advice from the Council's procurement team to establish whether exceptional arrangements could be made in this case having regard to the specialist nature of this role. He would look at a job description for the role and develop a job pack for members to consider.

RC advised that he would keep the Chair informed on the progress.

Resolved - That the appointment of a Professional Advisor be agreed in principle and progressed by the Assistant Director, Achievement & Inclusion.

71. RE Newsletter

Jo Fageant referred to the publication of new RE guidance and it was agreed that she would download the detail and publish within a newsletter. Schools would be invited to express an interest.

72. SACRE Annual Report 2012/13

The meeting received the Annual SACRE report as set out in the agenda.

With regard to membership it was agreed that the Clerk would write to Kevin Walker to seek nominations for a Roman Catholic Church representative.

Resolved- That the SACRE Annual Report 2012/2013 be endorsed.

73. NASACRE Newsletter

Members were advised that NASACRE would change the format of future newsletters and have for example, 2 or 3 thought pieces and articles about

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substantial issues. There would be 6 news updates per year and the new website was accessible using a new password (distributed to members).

It was highlighted that the SACRE identity paragraph on page 46 of the report was particularly useful. It was agreed that sub-para c) How are your SACRE's activities relevant to supporting excellent school RE? be used as a topic for discussion at the next meeting.

Resolved - That the NASACRE newsletter be noted and that an item on SACRE's activities be considered at the next meeting.

74. Members attendance record 2013/14

Resolved- That the Members' attendance record be noted.

75. Date of Next Meeting - 5th February 2014

Members discussed the timings of future meetings and requested that these be agreed on an ad-hoc basis rather than set in the Corporate Diary. The start time of the meeting would also be reviewed.

Resolved - That the next meeting be confirmed as 5th February 2014.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 6.20 pm)