

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 14th October, 2009.**

**Present:-**

**Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths**

Sue Elbrow – Free Churches  
Jo Osborne – Judaism  
Latif Khan – Islam

**Committee 2 – Church of England**

Christine Isles  
Andrew Allen  
Jo Fageant

**Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations**

Lil Abdo – VOICE

**Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA**

Councillor Coad  
Councillor Maclsaac  
Councillor Mann  
Councillor Pabbi

**Also Present:** Annie Keighley, Senior Adviser, Standards and Achievement and Claire Gray (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Lynda Bussley

**PART I**

**1. Election of Chair**

**Resolved** - That Jo Fageant be appointed Chair for 2009/10 Academic Year. The meeting noted its thanks to Lil Abdo for her work as Chair over the past years.

**2. Election of Vice-Chair**

**Resolved** – That Jo Osborne be appointed Vice-Chair for the 2009/10 Academic Year.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved subject to the attendance list being amended to replace Councillor Fageant with Jo Fageant.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

The Council was informed that the Advance Skills Teacher had not been able to attend the last meeting due to another commitment and a representative from Surrey SACRE had not been able to attend as they had been given the incorrect time for the meeting.

The Senior Advisor, Standards and Achievement informed the SACRE that there was approximately £1000 left from the funding for the RE Resources Centre that could be used to support a Youth SACRE.

**Resource Base** - SACRE continued to support the RE Resource Centre which would continue at Iqra School. In response to a question it was confirmed that the room the centre was to be accommodated in was smaller than the current space. Therefore some of the collections from the resource base had to be, regrettably disposed of. It was noted that at present the local authority did not have the capacity to store any additional documents. It was reported that the resource base would be accessed via a teaching area in the new school building, which was not ideal. The move would be taking place in half term and members were asked to liaise with the RE Resource Centre Co-ordinator if they were able to provide any assistance.

**Advanced Skills Teacher** - A member asked whether it was possible to re-invite the Advanced Skills Teacher to the next meeting or perhaps visit her within the classroom space. It was suggested that it would be useful to hold the next meeting of SACRE at Wexham School in order to visit her beforehand and invite her to attend the meeting.

**Youth SACRE** - The Senior Advisor, Standards and Achievement informed the SACRE that there was approximately £1000 of funding that could be used to support a Youth SACRE. The Chair advised that there was money from NASACRE available annually but that SACREs had to bid for the funding. A Member noted that there was a Pupil Participation Group in Slough that could possibly become involved with the Youth SACRE. The Chair noted that Lil Abdo had experience with the Surrey Youth SACRE and Rabbi Solomans was preparing a paper on Youth SACRE. It was suggested that a small group from the SACRE should look into setting up a Youth SACRE and report back on this to a future SACRE meeting. A Member asked about what the aims and objectives of a Youth SACRE were. A number of Youth SACREs were in operation which functioned on slightly different lines. It was agreed that Annie Keighley, David Maclsaac, and Jo Osborne would work together in order to investigate the possibilities for moving forward the Youth SACRE. The Chair confirmed that she would attempt to obtain the information from Rabbi Solomans and Lil Abdo was asked to pass the information on from the Surrey Youth SACRE.

**Joint SACRE Conference** – It was reported that the conference held on 25<sup>th</sup> June was very informative and useful but questions were raised about the continuing viability of the joint SACRE conference. The conference joined together the six SACREs from the Berkshire area. The conference was

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funded from the different SACREs and each was charged for five delegates whether they attended or not. Members were asked to consider whether it was useful for Slough to continue with the joint SACRE conference unless it was focussed on something that fed back into the work of Slough SACRE. A Member commented that they felt it was desirable to stay in the joint conference and that Slough should continue to play a part. It was noted that it was useful in bringing SACRE up to date in what was currently happening in RE circles. Members also noted that it would be useful if someone from each faith group was able to attend in future. A report was circulated to all Members from the joint conference.

### **5. NASACRE Update**

Copies of SACRE news were distributed to Members. This included an update on training and the different approaches to it. The Chair noted that this used to be printed and circulated to all members but this was no longer the case and it was only now available via email. Regarding religious institutions in the local area that people could use as a resource by visiting them, a list was kept by the RE Centre and this would be forwarded to members of the SACRE.

A number of Members and some religious groups in particular were not represented well at SACRE. It was agreed to write out to the current representatives asking whether they wished to continue to act as Members of the SACRE. Members suggested that the Constitution allowed for Members to be replaced if they missed three consecutive meetings without providing apologies. It was noted that this would be checked in the Constitution and confirmed. SACRE Members asked for the Constitution to be amended if this was not the case. It was agreed that the different faith groups should be written to regarding representation and the necessity for their SACRE nominations to attend. Members also asked whether it would be possible to have a defined term of service and that this be brought to a future meeting of the SACRE.

Members asked about visiting schools to see RE in action. The Senior Advisor Standards and Achievement noted that there were a number of schools which had agreed to allow SACRE Members to attend some of their RE lessons and if Members were interested in attending they were asked to contact the officer and a meeting would hopefully be arranged before the end of the current term and again in January. It was agreed that a timetable of meetings would be sent to Members.

The Chair informed the meeting that there was a consultation underway on a code of conduct for practicing RE teachers, which any individual could respond to. It was noted that a self evaluation for RE Teachers on the effectiveness and impact of RE in schools was in the process of being updated.

The week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> November was due to be National Interfaith week. There was lots of different work going on in schools and an email had been

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sent about the activities taking place in Slough. For example, a number of different places of worship had agreed to be opened up to allow visitors. Many of these had not been opened before. Each faith group would be having a particular day in the week and all schools would be involved. It was noted that the NASACRE was conducting recruitment for Members to Group A and training was due to be provided. This included an excellent course for SACRE Members.

### **6. Any Other Business**

A Member informed the Forum that she had been asked to speak at a conference organised by local Sikhs who were concerned about the number of attacks on members of the Sikh community. The organisers were interested in providing information to the SACRE and getting out their message to other people.

Issues were raised about the level of involvement from Humanists on SACREs and in religious education in general. It was noted that there was increasing representation from Humanists on SACREs. A number of Members mentioned concerns about a review of Circular 1/94 which might clarify the position of Humanists on SACREs. In the Slough syllabus, the teaching of Humanist ideas was possible as an option for schools.

### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of next meeting was noted as 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2010 and the location would be confirmed.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 5.55 pm)