

## MINUTES

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 6 November 2019

Present: **Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf** (Chairman)

Linda Goodwin, Julie Thompson, Tajinder Singh, Mohamed Parekh, Sam Phillips, Ian Lawson, Lauren Nicholson Ward (Vice-Chairman), Mark Sutton, Syed Hussain, Judy Wyman and Gabi Oldfield

Apologies for absence: Sam Kirwan, Vickie Longson, Lydia Bartlett and Shaun Miles

Also in attendance – Mary Gale (SACRE advisor) and Mandy Pattinson (Clerk)

### PART ONE

#### 41. Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman

**RESOLVED:** That:

- a) The Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf be appointed as Chairman for the ensuing year.
- b) Lauren Nicholson-Ward be appointed as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

#### 42. Welcome to New Members and Membership update report

SACRE considered the report which updated them on their current membership. Members were reminded that they were appointed for a five year term and at the end of each five year term the membership was reviewed and nominating bodies/organisations were contacted and asked to either nominate new representatives or reappoint current ones. Organisations who had vacant posts were also contacted and asked to nominate representatives.

Following the review, one new member had been appointed to represent the Muslim faith. Two further nominations had been received to represent the Church of England and Rising Brook Baptist Church respectively and they would be contacted about joining SACRE before the next meeting. The Jewish and Hindu communities had also expressed some interest and these contacts were being encouraged.

**RESOLVED:** The report be noted and Mr M Sedky, representing the Muslim faith was welcomed in his absence.

#### 43. Declaration of Any other Business

No declarations were raised.

#### 44. Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 June 2019

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 19 June 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Following a question on Minute 34, Members were informed that the only press coverage relating to recent extensions to the Westhill/NASACRE project was an article in a parish magazine. It was felt that the County Councils Communications team might be able to help with promotion and should be contacted.

With regard to minute 35, the survey would be promoted to all schools in the spring e-bag.

#### **45. An Update on Key Issues**

SACRE considered the report which covered the main issues affecting Religious Education (RE) since the last meeting. Further to the report, the following information was provided:

Mary Gale would be running a primary school training course for teachers who were to deliver the curriculum according to the Agreed Syllabus. Hodder's "Explore RE" text book would be used to support teacher knowledge, this book covered all major religions. Free copies would be provided for delegates during the training. In addition, a story book entitled "Images of God" would be explored during the training to support whole class reading in primary schools. The costs for materials would be paid for by Mary Gale.

There was a discussion on the use of the term 'RE' to mean Religious Education and the mixing up of the acronym with RE which could be used to reference Relationship Education. Schools had been asked to keep all references clear and to use the term RE when referencing Religious Education, and to use the full term when refernceing Religious Education. In high schools RSE could also be used for Relationship and Sex Education, this also could cause confusion.

With regard to the update on Ofsted reports in which there were references to Religious Education (RE), members were informed that this information would be shared with school governors and leaders in the next Governor Information Pack in Spring 2020. Ofsted were able to choose at least two 'deep dive' areas to review during their inspections. The information shared with members was available on the internet, and to date, only three secondary schools had had RE chosen for a 'deep dive', none of which were from Staffordshire.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received.

#### **46. NASACRE Update**

The Chairman informed SACRE that of the potential 153 members nationally, just over 100 SACREs had paid their annual subscriptions and were now members of NASACRE. A Statement of Accounts was available on the internet and this contained the organisations expenditure and costs.

It was reported that NASARCE remained unconvinced by the recommendations in the Commission on Religious Education "Religion and World Views" to replace SACREs with Local Area Networking (LAN) groups. If the recommendation became statutory

then the LAN groups would be supported by the local authority in the same way as SACRE.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received.

#### **47. Article by Reverend Preb Michael Metcalf**

SACRE considered the article written by the Chairman which had been included as a link in the last NASACRE briefing. A member specifically noted the value of the article.

**RESOLVED:** That the article be noted and the Chairman be thanked for his contribution.

#### **48. Draft SACRE Annual Report for 2018-19**

The draft Annual Report had been distributed to SACRE members. Subject to SACRE's approval and final editing, the report would be distributed electronically to NASACRE and headteachers of all schools in the county and would also be available to teacher associations and local faith communities via the Entrust website.

SACRE felt that it should be made clear that the responses to the survey questions, were 'of those who responded'.

Members were requested to read the report and make any comments available to the clerk by 22 November 2019.

**RESOLVED:** That the 2018-19 Annual Report be approved, subject to final editing.

#### **49. Reflection on GCSE papers - interactive session**

Members of SACRE looked at and briefly discussed the 2019 GCSE RE exam papers. The ambiguity of the wording of some of the questions was highlighted.

#### **50. Further update on the Westhill/NASACRE legacy project - Explore-Engage-Reflect**

During the previous financial year, SACRE had received a grant from the Westhill/ NASACRE Award scheme to help disseminate the new Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE through a Conference for pupils entitled Explore-Engage-Reflect. This funding had been carried forward into the 2019/20 budget.

Youth Net, in conjunction with the Entrust Minority Ethnic Advisory Service (MEAS) team had delivered two events offering support, resources and workshops on Christianity and Islam for schools in Staffordshire. Another event was planned in January. Delivery of the course was in line with the grant application and reflected the approved syllabus. It was acknowledged that if alternative providers could be found, other faiths could be included in the events, e.g. Hindu. This would be investigated and if possible, offered to the Burton area of the County.

The future of the project was discussed and was also discussed in the budget report.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received.

## **51. Commission on Religious Educations Report - Religion and World Views. The Way Forward - A National Plan for RE**

SACRE considered:

- A summary of the Commission on Religious Educations document 'Religion and World Views: The way forward – A national plan for RE 2018';
- The response from the Religious Education Council to the Secretary of States initial reaction to the document;
- AREIAC Executive response to Religion and worldviews: the way forward.

Members were informed that the document had been considered by the Welsh Department of Education within their own review of RE provision in Wales. The Department was proposing that the subject be called Religions and World Views. This was viewed as a significant variation from the document's own preferred name.

Members asked if there had been any consideration of the document in England. The Chairman informed SACRE that the Secretary of State had indicated that as some of the recommendations needed significant changes in legislation, there was little chance of this at the moment given the government's other priorities. However, many of the recommendations did not need new legislation and some were already being implemented.

**RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

## **52. The SACRE Budget 2019-20**

SACRE considered the update report on the 2019/2020 budget. The annual budget was set at £6,070 and to date £5,870 remained. In addition, there was £2,725 which had been carried forward from the previous year for the Westhill project.

Following a question at the last meeting, members were informed that the general budget was for subscriptions, refreshments, stationery, postage etc and any development work that SACRE commissions. The funding for Mary Gale was part of the Entrust contract.

Members considered what further expenditure was needed during 2019/20 financial year. It was agreed that the following would be funded:

- The Westhill funding would be used to fund three additional events offering support, resources and workshops on Christianity and Islam for schools in Staffordshire. If possible, an event would be held in the Burton area covering other religions. In the budget year 2020/21 it was hoped that two more events would take place.
- Mary Gale to attend the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) national conference in January 2020 in London.
- The purchase of additional Key Stage 3 books (Hodder "Explore RE") to support those high and middle schools. These would be at a cost of approximately £300.

- GSUS bus hire for secondary schools. This would be for May 2020, which was outside the financial year. However, Mary Gale would enquire if it was possible to pay for the event from this financial year.
- Sacred/Prayer areas development in secondary schools. It was agreed that Mary Gale should be commissioned to facilitate the development with the support of Youth Net. This could also support teachers with professional development, possibly through CPD credits.

The requests would need to be approved by the Head of Education Strategy and Improvement, prior to commissioning. This would be via email communication.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- The Westhill funding be used to fund additional events.
- Mary Gale be authorised to attend the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) national conference in January 2020.
- The purchase of additional Key Stage 3 books (Hodder “Explore RE” and covered “Images of God”) be agreed.
- Mary Gale enquire if it was possible to pay for the GSUS bus hire for secondary schools event from this financial year.
- Mary Gale be commissioned to facilitate the development of Sacred/Prayer areas in secondary schools with the support of Youth Net.

**53. Applications for Variation of Practice**

There were none on this occasion.

**54. Date of next meeting and future meetings**

**RESOLVED:** That the following dates for future meetings be noted:

Wednesday, 5 February 2020

Wednesday, 24 June 2020

Wednesday, 18 November 2020

**Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf  
Chairman**