

MINUTES

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 11 November 2015

Present: **Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf**

Margaret Crossland, Paul Moseley, Sam Kirwan, Julie Thompson (Co-Optee), Sonia Andjelkovic, Diana Cutler, Dr Laow Panyasiri, Sue Blackmore, Peter Davies, Terry Finn, David Williams and Ian Lawson

Apologies for absence: Susan Devereux, Mick Dwyer, Tajinder Singh, G Devadason, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal, Muhammad Parekh, Sam Phillips, Colin Hopkins, Rosemary Woodward and Caroline Wood

Also in attendance - Helen Phillips and Mary Gale

PART ONE

12. Welcome to New Members

The Chairman welcomed Paul Moseley, Humanist representative and Margaret Crossland, Quaker representative, to the SACRE.

13. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Nominations had been received for Rev Preb Michael Metcalf and Hifsa Haroon Iqbal to be elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. No further nominations were received and it was:

RESOLVED – That Rev Preb Michael Metcalf and Hifsa Haroon Iqbal be elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively for the ensuing year.

14. Minutes of the SACRE Meeting held on 8 July 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 8 July 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

15. An Update on Key Issues

The SACRE received an update on key issues that had occurred since their last meeting, including:

- a) Members were updated on the maternity cover for Emma Jardine by Mary Gale;
- b) Guidance on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools, with Members hearing about the AREIAC and National Centre for Diversity's training around British values and SMSC in schools;
- c) SACRE lecture entitled "RE Matters" held on 10 November. Feedback from the lecture had been very positive, with delegates finding the event "informative" and "inspiring";

- d) RE teachers are now invited to attend NATRE meetings, with the most recent having been held on 22 October at which information was shared around the role of SACRE and the application process for the RE quality mark; and,
- e) The Woolf Institute had convened a Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public life, whose report, chaired by Baroness Butler-Sloss would be published very soon.

RESOLVED – That the update on key issues be noted.

16. Agreed Syllabus Review

[Karen Coker, Relationship Manager, Education and Wellbeing, in attendance for this item.]

Karen Coker made reference to the Options document previously considered by SACRE. Option A, the preferred option, had suggested 20 days would be needed to produce the Agreed Syllabus, being divided equally between the Entrust RE Advisor and a consultant from RE Today. Whilst the County Council could commission Entrust to produce the syllabus through their commissioning process there was no separate funding available and they were not in a position to commission outside Entrust. Funding the RE Today consultant would not therefore be possible.

The County Council were, however, able to commission the 20 days from within Entrust and separate to the SACRE budget. SACRE Members welcomed this progress.

SACRE noted the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 8 July 2015.

It was proposed that SACRE convene a meeting of their Agreed Syllabus Conference.

RESOLVED – That SACRE convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting.

[Note by Clerk: The SACRE meeting was formally closed whilst the Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened. Once the Agreed Syllabus Conference had concluded the SACRE meeting formally re-opened.]

17. An Update on NASACRE

The Chairman gave an update on recent NASACRE events, including:

- The NASACRE Annual General Meeting would be held on 17 May 2016 in Central Hall, Westminster. The main speaker was to be Baroness Butler-Sloss. In addition, Adam Dinham of Goldsmith's College would be speaking on Religious Literacy. If circumstances allowed, Secretary of State for Education and Skills Nicky Morgan would also give a short address; and,
- Out of 153 SACREs, 130 had been able to continue their membership of NASACRE, including Staffordshire.

RESOLVED – That the oral update by the Chairman be noted.

18. Application for Variation of Practice

There were none on this occasion.

19. SACRE Budget 2015 - 2016

SACRE received a breakdown of the current SACRE budget for the financial year 2015-2016. NATRE and AREIAC subscriptions were still to be taken from the budget along with the SACRE meetings costs.

RESOLVED – That the budget details be noted.

20. Reports on Stafford and District Friends of Faith

The Stafford and District Friends of Faith (SDFF) hold open meetings to which SACRE members are invited and encouraged to attend. SDFF is affiliated to the National Inter-Faith Network (UK). The meetings discuss issues which have a local or national importance for RE.

SDFF also had a high profile event held at Staffordshire University on Monday 16 November around the theme of peace, with SACRE members invited to attend.

SDFF were looking to develop a five year programme for their work.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and members be encouraged to attend the SDFF meetings.

21. Update on Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural education in schools in the new Common Inspection framework

In the Autumn 2015 a new Common Inspection Framework (CIF) was introduced for all education settings. This replaced the previous Ofsted framework of 2012. One very important aspect inspected was the impact of Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) education on pupils.

SACRE received details of SMSC in the new Framework and noted that tolerance and respect was expected to be intrinsic throughout the school and not only taught through separate SMCC.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

22. Key Recommendations of Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead "A New Settlement Religion and Belief in schools

During the 2015 NASACRE conference a keynote speaker, Charles Clarke, drew the Conference's attention to "A New Settlement Religion and Belief in Schools", a report he had produced jointly with Linda Woodhead. Members received details of the report's recommendations and gave consideration to their impact within RE.

This was not a statutory document but an attempt to spark debate within the world of RE and the Government.

Ofsted had taken some note of this document.

Members gave consideration to and had group discussions on the recommendations.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and the recommendations be noted.

23. Draft SACRE annual report 2014 - 2015

SACRE received their draft annual report 2014-15 for comment prior to it being published.

Any comments and/or amendments should be forwarded to the Clerk and/or Mary Gale by the end of November 2015. The report would then be updated and published.

RESOLVED – That any amendments be forwarded to the Clerk or Mary Gale by the end of November 2015.

24. AOB

The Chairman had received a request from the National Spiritualist Union for membership on the SACRE.

Membership of Committee A was a decision for the County Council but should reflect the diversity of faith communities within the County. There was also the facility to co-opt a member to the SACRE. Such co-opted members could take part in any debate but were unable to participate in any formal voting by Committees.

After some debate Members agreed to consider this in more detail at the February meeting alongside information about the National Spiritualist Union, their representation within Staffordshire, and a reminder of the purpose of SACRE's and their code of conduct.

25. Date of the next SACRE meeting

RESOLVED – That the next SACRE meeting be held on 10 February 2016, 2.00pm, at Entrust Headquarters, Riverway.

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

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.