

AT A MEETING of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
held in the Mitchell Room, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester on 4 March 2013

PRESENT

Chairman

p Councillor Anna McNair Scott (Hampshire County Council)

Vice-Chairman

p Councillor Roz Chadd (Hampshire County Council)

p Mr. Mohammed Ansar	-	Muslim
p Councillor Mrs C. Bailey	-	Hampshire County Council
a Mrs. Maureen Barnes	-	Teachers' Association
Mrs. Elaine Bellchambers	-	Higher Education – Co-opted
p Mr. Tony Blackshaw	-	Church of England
p Mrs J. Chong	-	Roman Catholic
p Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato	-	Muslim
p Councillor Sam Darragh	-	Hampshire County Council
p Councillor Mrs Liz Fairhurst	-	Hampshire County Council
a Mrs. Pat Fry	-	United Reformed Church
p Mrs Maeve Gordon-James	-	Buddhist
p Ms Patricia Hannam	-	Support Officer
p Mrs Gill Heron	-	Academy – co-opted
p Mr Colin How	-	Methodist
p Mr Chris Hughes	-	Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
p Mrs Elizabeth Jenkerson	-	Baha'i
p Mrs Joyce Johnson	-	Church of England
p Mrs Judith Lowndes	-	Support Officer
a Ms Jackie McGregor	-	Salvation Army
p Miss Margaret Matthews	-	Society of Friends
p Mrs Jo May	-	Baptist Union
p Mrs Linda Miatt	-	Teachers' Association
p Mrs Jean O'Reilly	-	Humanist – Co-opted
p Mrs Jane Pridmore	-	Teachers' Association
a Mr. Ganshin Rock	-	Budhhist
Mr Harjap Singh	-	Sikh
a Miss Ceri Taylor	-	Special School – co-opted
p Mrs Patricia Timms Blanch	-	Teachers' association
a Major Suryaparsad Upadhya	-	Hindu
p Mrs Jane Warren	-	Higher Education – co-opted
p Ms Caroline Welch	-	Church of England
p Rev. Howard Wright	-	Church of England
p Mr. Michael Zeffertt	-	Jewish

Also present – Mr Richard Moss - Buddhist

Prior to the start of the meeting Mrs Jacky Chong gave a short talk on Roman Catholicism, answering questions from Members. She mentioned the retirement of Pope Benedict XVI; 2013 had been declared a Year of Faith by the Roman Catholic Church and this talk had given her the opportunity to reflect on her faith and what it means to her. She explained the differences between Roman Catholicism and other Christian doctrines and the Seven Sacraments which supported their religious beliefs. The Chairman thanked her for a very clear and lucid presentation.

135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mrs Pat Fry, Ms Ceri Taylor, Mrs Jackie McGregor, Mrs Maureen Barnes, Major Suryaparsad Upadhya and Mr Ganshin Rock.

136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations of interest were made.

137. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2012 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

138. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

139. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Jo May to her first meeting as the representative for the Baptist Union and Mr Richard Moss as an observer from the Buddhists.

Tony Blackshaw updated Members on the National Takeover Day on 23 November 2012 where the Head Boy and Girl from the Bishop of Winchester Academy in Bournemouth had taken over his job for the day; the day had been challenging in both directions and had included a visit to Southampton mosque and Winchester University, a meeting with Councillor McNair Scott and Councillor Perry and ended with tea at the Romsey Deanery with the Bishop of Southampton.

The Chairman informed Members that she, Patricia Hannam and Tony Blackshaw had met with the Bishop of Winchester on 19 February 2013 to discuss the teaching of RE. It was felt that the meeting had been very positive and that the Bishop understood the distinctiveness of Hampshire's Agreed Syllabus.

Members were asked if any wished to attend the NASACRE AGM on 23 May 2013 in Birmingham as Hampshire usually sends two delegates; Tony Blackshaw, Colin Hughes and Elizabeth Jenkerson all expressed an interest.

Finally the Chairman reminded Members to respond to a recent letter that had requested confirmation of their and their organisation's willingness to remain on SACRE; this was in accordance with the appointments that would need to be made at the County Council AGM in May 2013 following the County Council elections.

140. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

141. MONITORING SUB-GROUP

The Council received the report of the Monitoring Sub-group on the activities and findings of the Monitoring Sub-group with regards to the standards and provision for RE in Hampshire schools (item 7 in the Minute Book).

Patricia Hannam indicated to Members that the examination of 2012 GCSE Religious Studies data had focused on the County Priority of achievements of more vulnerable groups of pupils. As a consequence of this, a key priority for 2013/14 would be firstly to gain clarity on the numbers of vulnerable pupils opting for RE and, where they are taking in general cohorts where all students take Religious Studies, to raise their achievement. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Elizabeth Jenkerson and Maeve Gordon James had taken part in monitoring visits to a range of Secondary Schools and Jackie Chong, Michael Zeffert Elaine Bellchambers, Joyce Johnson and Chris Hughes had supported Primary visits. Members who had taken part in these visits expressed the view that they were very valuable and helped them to understand the principles and workings of the Agreed Syllabus. The Officer drew Members' attention to the key findings of these visits (3.6 in the report), highlighting that the most successful RE was in those schools where RE leaders and managers were

attending training and were enabled to disseminate their knowledge to all staff. It was noted that there were still concerns about those schools using teaching assistants to teach RE and a letter had been sent to highlight this. Members were informed that schools that had been monitored received a report of the findings.

Members were informed that the Primary and Secondary RE newsletters for schools were being replaced by online versions that schools would have to buy, but it was confirmed that SACRE members would still have access. Both these newsletters contain information about SACRE. A Primary Newsletter was circulated.

It was suggested that the Equalities Impact Assessment which is included in all reports should be completed in more detail.

Commenting that the Agreed Syllabus has been shown to have a good impact on achievement in RE, it was asked whether there had been any studies on the effects of the cycle of learning on other subjects and whether work was being undertaken with teacher trainers and other departments to use this approach. It was noted that effective links with the use of the cycle were being developed in some schools.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.

142. ADDITION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS TO GROUP A OF SACRE

The Council considered a report from the interview panel recommending the addition of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints into group A of SACRE. (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The Chairman informed the Council that an interview panel, consisting of herself, Councillor Roz Chadd, Chris Hughes, Maureen Barnes and Tony Blackshaw had interviewed Mrs Lisa Gilmour on 19 November 2012 and as a result were recommending the inclusion of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints in Group A of SACRE. They had felt that as part of the process for groups joining SACRE that it was important for the group and its representative to have training to ensure that they understand the background to SACRE, its purpose, and the principles behind the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus. There was considerable discussion by Members about the need for acceptance of the core values of SACRE, the possibility of having something similar to a code of conduct to sign up to, the induction of new Members, and whether SACRE would still be effective if it got any larger. A draft template letter, which would be sent to any new group being admitted to SACRE was circulated to Members; this was approved with a few minor changes.

A vote was then taken by the individual groups which agreed the recommendations; Group A wished it to be noted that theirs was a majority decision, with some dissenting votes.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE approved the appointment of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints to Group A of Hampshire SACRE.
- That SACRE approved the standard letter, circulated at the meeting, which would be sent to any group applying to join Group A of Hampshire SACRE, subject to substituting the word 'faith' for 'Church' in the last paragraph.
- That SACRE would seek the ratification of its decision by the County Council.

143. UPDATES: ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, TEACHING SCHOOLS, ACADEMIES AND THE RE REVIEW

The Council received a report updating SACRE on several national developments in RE which have or may have an impact on Religious Education locally.(Item 9 in the Minute Book).

Patricia Hannam highlighted that the supply of RE teachers and support for them in Hampshire was still good; three teacher training establishments in the area provided a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course in RE, which can be accredited at Masters Level. In addition to this the Local Authority continues to offer high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for primary and secondary RE teachers. There were concerns about the serious reduction of specific monitoring of RE in academies by Ofsted and that Ofsted is rarely commenting on RE in its reports. The Officer informed Members that Michael Wilshaw, head of Ofsted, had suggested the need for a mediating layer for monitoring in schools in general; for RE this could be a role for SACREs.

Members were informed that Hampshire had five Teaching Schools, which are beginning to train secondary teachers on the job. It was indicated that this was not being taken up yet for the training of RE teachers in Hampshire, although there is the possibility of this beginning in 2014/15. It was foreseen that there could be problems in ensuring quality and consistency both in the selection of trainees and of the training being provided by a variety of different types of institutions. It was indicated that the withdrawal of the bursary for trainee RE teachers would also affect numbers and quality of those applying to teacher training establishments.

Patricia Hannam told members that the ending of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) role would be a great loss. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the three teachers, Rebecca Costambeys at Costello School, Penny Morgan

at Henry Beaufort School and Kathy Bagley at Lee-on-Solent Junior School, to express SACRE's thanks for all their work.

Reporting on academies the Officer emphasized that partnership was the key word and that there was so far little change in relationships with these schools. Members were concerned to hear a letter from the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth to its schools encouraging them to convert to academies.

There was nothing new to add to the progress of the RE Curriculum review, except to hope that local determination of RE would be well-supported.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.
- That the Chairman would write to thank the Advanced Skills Teachers.

144. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman expressed thanks to Councillors Charlotte Bailey and Sam Darragh, who had informed Members that they were standing down as Councillors in May, for all their work for SACRE.

Members were informed that the Youth Voice was meeting on 8 March with three new schools attending and that a Joint SACRE meeting with representatives from SACREs around the Wessex region was taking place on 11 March. Members were asked for any items that they would like discussed at the Joint meeting. Reports on these meetings would be given to SACRE at the June meeting.

New Members, and those wishing for a refresher, were asked to sign up for a training session which was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 7 May at the RE Centre in Winchester.

Councillor Liz Fairhurst's suggestion that each group in turn should provide biscuits for the meeting was agreed unanimously; the Councillors would provide them for the June meeting.

Further thanks were expressed to the Mrs Jacky Chong for her talk at the beginning of the meeting.

Mr Colin How offered to give a talk on Methodism at the meeting on 12 November

145. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 25 June 2013 at 1.30pm at Halterworth Primary School, Romsey.