
(SACRE) STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 November 2013

Present:

Group A

Christian Denominations

None present

Other religions

Elizabeth Jenkerson, David Vane, Priti Dave, Nicola Peckham. Anas Al-Korj

Group B – Church of England

Chris Pritchard

Group C – Teachers

Jackie Meering, Dr Richard Palmer, Mr D Parrott

Group D – Members of the Council

Kate Martin

18. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Members discussed the validity of appointing a Chair and Vice-Chair for the municipal year at this meeting due to the poor attendance and thus low representation.

RESOLVED that David Vane be appointed as Chair for the purposes of the meeting.

DAVID VANE IN THE CHAIR

19. **WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND CHANGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:-

Group A - Margaret Blake, Neil Maddock, Gail Ratcliffe,

Group B - Tony Blackshaw, Anne Steele-Arnett, Ros Wigley

Group C - Fiona Plummer

Group D – Councillors Daunt, Kaur, Parnell and Paffey

20. **STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR**

On behalf of the SACRE the Chair extended good wishes to Tony Blackshaw (Group C – Church of England) on his retirement from the Diocese.

21. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING**

It was noted that the previous meeting held on 7th October 2013 had not been quorate and that any resolutions needed to be ratified at the next meeting with a quorum of members present.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th June and 7th October 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record and the decisions made be ratified. (Copy of the Minutes circulated with the Agenda and appended to the signed Minutes).

Matters Arising

Minute 11 - It was acknowledged that this meeting was an addition to the agreed schedule of meetings for the year following agreement at the previous meeting held on 7th October that an additional meeting was required to take business forward. It was recognised that the short notice may have contributed to the poor attendance and that therefore the date of any additional meetings be circulated immediately after any such agreement. Members were requested to ensure that up to date email addresses were provided to the Clerk to facilitate this.

Minute 12 - Minutes of the Last Meeting Matters Arising - Members were reminded that the annual subscription for NASACRE had been renewed and that members were able to access the entire website by using the password provided by the Clerk.

Minute 13 - Membership of SACRE – It had been queried why four members specifically were required for Groups B and D (Church of England and the City Council respectively). The Clerk reported that whilst the Groups on SACRE were statutory requirement, the level of representation was by local agreement and it had not been possible so far to ascertain how this figure had been established in the Constitution, however investigation would continue.

Chris Pritchard offered apologies for the lack of representation for Group B (Church of England) at the previous meeting which had been due to a lack of communication.

Minute 17 - The Way Forward – regarding the possibility of adapting the questionnaire used in Hampshire to gain feedback and assess the attitude of schools to the Agreed Syllabus, members discussed how the agreed sub-group could take this forward given the current level of support for the SACRE.

22. **MEMBERSHIP OF SACRE**

Richard Palmer raised the issue of faith group representation on the SACRE and whether this was representative of the actual representation of faith groups in the City. He suggested that an assessment / survey of the faith groups in the City be undertaken and that the SACRE Constitution be amended to reflect the outcome if necessary.

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported that the question of Church of England Group being a statutory group had been discussed at the NASACRE conference. The feeling there had been that this was unlikely to change.

Members felt whilst there were issues around support and effectiveness for the SACRE, it was not a good time to invite wider representation. It was also recognised that there were resource issues around undertaking any form of City survey.

It was suggested that the Local Authority may have a list of recognised churches / faiths in the City and this information be sought by the Clerk and circulated to members prior to the next meeting when the issue could be given further consideration.

23. **REVIEW OF SACRE CONSTITUTION**

It was recognised that an annual review of the Constitution was a requirement for the SACRE as laid down in the Constitution (Para 7.1). However, due to lack of professional support this had not been done since 2010. It was suggested that further changes were needed to the Constitution but that recommendations agreed at the meeting in June be ratified for the present.

Members agreed that a working group of SACRE members be set up in order to carry out a thorough review of the Constitution. The following members volunteered: Elizabeth Jenkerson (Group A), Chris Pritchard (Group B), Jackie Meering and Richard Palmer (Group C) and Kate Martin (Group D).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the changes recommended in the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2013 be approved; and
- (ii) that a working group of SACRE members be set up to consider future changes to the Constitution.

24. **FEEDBACK ON EVENTS**

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported that she would be attending the Joint SACRE network meeting on 27 November and highlighted that the Interfaith Calendar was available on the Hampshire Interfaith Network website:

<http://www.hants-interfaith.org/cal.htm>

Priti Dave would be attending the Space for Peace event on 20 November one of the forthcoming events on the SCOF web pages:

<http://www.southampton-faiths.org/events/>

Members were also signposted to reports on the NASACRE website including the recent Ofsted report relating to Religious Education (RE) in English schools and the RE Review report.

<http://www.nasacre.org.uk/news>

25. **ANNUAL REPORT**

It was agreed that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

26. **THE WAY FORWARD**

It was agreed that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

However, members discussed the lack of professional support to the SACRE from the Local Authority. This was a matter of concern as it was greatly hindering fulfilment of the SACRE's obligations as a statutory body and primary objective to support religious education and collective worship in schools within the local area.

RESOLVED that a letter be sent on behalf of the SACRE to the Head of Children's Services to express concern at the lack of appropriate professional support to the SACRE which was preventing the undertaking of its core objectives as a statutory body.