

PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 19 June 2013 at 4.30 pm at the Ethnic Minority & Achievement Centre, Craneswater Junior School site, Southsea.

Present

Group A Representatives

Peter Davies, The Fellowship of Independent
Evangelical Churches (In the Chair)
Marilyn Leggett, The Salvation Army
Elizabeth Jenkerson, Baha'i Faith
Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union
Jane Lewis, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Sue Vigar-Taylor, Buddhism
Mr Syed Aminul Haque, Islam
Ruth Guyer, Judaism
Michael Dawes, Humanism

Group B Representatives

Brian Hay, Church of England
Tony Blackshaw, Church of England

Group C Representatives

Beverley Millsom, Special School Representative
John Spiegehalter, Teacher Liaison Panel Representative

Group D Representatives

Maria Cole, Portsmouth City Council

Co-opted Representatives

Sue Ganter

Officers in Attendance

Sarah Long, Local Authority Representative
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services

Prior to the meeting, the SACRE members had a look around the Ethnic Minority & Achievement Centre.

23 Welcome Introduction and Farewell (AI 1)

The chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, the first meeting at the Ethnic Minority & Achievement Centre in Craneswater Junior School.

The chair announced that the SACRE clerk, Teresa Deasy, would be retiring from her job at Portsmouth City Council and would therefore no longer be able to act as Clerk to this SACRE. On behalf of the SACRE members, he expressed his thanks to Teresa for her support to the SACRE and wished her well for the future. A presentation of a card and a bouquet of flowers was made to Teresa from the SACRE.

24 Moment for Quiet Reflection (AI 2)

Brian Hay, one of the Church of England representatives, led the moment for quiet reflection referring to his life as an Anglican and a Christian. Brian explained how he was committed to the good news of the gospel and explained that central to worship for Anglicans is the holy Eucharist which is the sacrament of bread and wine. Brian mentioned that, since 2006, the Anglican dioceses of Portsmouth and Winchester have been managed as a joint diocese and have shared staffing and resources in the management of 150 maintained schools and academies across the two dioceses. He hoped that religious education would continue to be a part of the national curriculum. He finished his moment for quiet reflection with a quote 'don't ask God to guide your steps if you are not willing to move your feet'.

25 Election of Chair (AI 4)

The clerk took the chair for the voting procedure.

It was proposed by Tony Blackshaw and seconded by Elizabeth Jenkerson that Peter Davies be proposed to continue as Chair of the Portsmouth SACRE. Peter agreed to serve as chair for another two years.

The SACRE members voted according to their groups and Peter Davies was unanimously elected.

26 Apologies for Absence (AI 5)

Peter Davies resumed the chair.

Apologies were received from Councillors Lynne Stagg and David Horne, and also from Taki Jaffer, Sarah Hanley, Emily Fletcher and Patrick Quirke.

27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 13th March 2013 (AI 6)

Brian Hay reminded members that he was present at the last meeting. However, his name had been omitted from the list of those present.

Jane Lewis advised that the reference to Note 7 in the last line of the first paragraph of Minute No 7 should read - 'Query 7'.

Sue Ganter advised on the following amendments: referring to minute number 16 on page 10, it was Nasser Kessell who had suggested inviting the Harbour and Mary Rose Schools to the RE Student Enrichment Day and not Beverley Millsom; Sue Vigar-Taylor and Jane Lewis would be running workshops instead of acting as guides.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2013 be agreed as a correct record subject to the above amendments.

28 Matters Arising (AI 7)

(a) Minute No 10(a) SACRE New Members and Refresher Course Organised by the Hampshire SACRE

Sue Vigar-Taylor and Maria Cole reported that this course had been very well attended and worthwhile; they had learned a lot about education generally and about the SACRE in particular.

(b) Minute No 10(b) One Day Religious Education Seminar

As Patrick Quirke was not present at the meeting this report was deferred to the next meeting.

(c) Minute No 10(d) RE Artefacts Boxes

Sarah Long reported that she had spent £200 on replacing artefacts from RE boxes and adding to the boxes with money remaining from the previous financial year's budget.

Beverley reported that the missing boxes had been replaced and stored in the City Council warehouse in Hilsea and were therefore not available for perusal by teachers. Twelve schools had signed up to use the boxes. It was suggested that when the new SACRE website was up and running and the boxes were available to view on site this was likely to lead to an increase in usage.

Beverley Millsom mentioned that teachers had suggested that information on how the various artefacts were used by the various faith groups could be provided on an information sheet included in the boxes. Some religious artefacts were unfamiliar to some teachers.

Jane Lewis volunteered to have a look at the boxes to assist in this work and this was agreed.

ACTIONS:

- 1. Beverley Millsom and Sarah Long to get together to organise the information sheets.**
- 2. Jane Lewis to assist with the management of the RE artefacts boxes.**

Sarah Long suggested that it might be appropriate for SACRE to allocate funds for more supply cover for Beverley to enable her to continue her work on the RE boxes.

It was agreed that this was a matter for the Finance Committee to decide on and report to the next meeting of the SACRE.

Michael Dawes agreed to have a look at the boxes to enable him to provide more information on the website. When the information on the website was available it was agreed to provide the link to Democratic Services so that it could be forwarded to SACRE members.

ACTION: Michael Dawes to forward the SACRE website link to the SACRE clerk for onward forwarding to SACRE members.

(d) Minute No 20 WJEC Conference on the 14th May

As Patrick Quirke was not present at the meeting a report could not be given.

29 Financial Report (AI 8)

The Chair pointed out that Patricia Hannam, the RE advisor to Hampshire County Council, would be attending the next meeting of the SACRE. This would incur a fee which the SACRE which had not yet been accounted for in the financial report.

RESOLVED that the financial report be noted.

30 Finance Sub-Committee - Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 March 2013

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 13 March 2013 be noted.

31 Student Enrichment Day, Thursday 27 June 2013 (AI 10)

Sue Ganter reported that a total of seven schools had booked to attend this conference. Following up on the feedback from last year's conference, Sue had noted the comments made by the pupils. For example, many commented that as students did not know each other, some had been a little shy at the start. Therefore, Sue had introduced an ice breaker session at the start of this year's programme to get the pupils more relaxed with each other. In addition, everybody would be issued with a name badge on the day and teachers would be more pro-active in helping with introductions.

Peter Davies had agreed to be a reserve workshop leader in case there were any problems last minute problems with workshop leaders not being able to attend.

Sue advised that there had been an offer from the Culham Institute to provide some money to film the conference as a promotional exercise. However, it was decided not to go ahead with filming this year because the costs were too high. However, the Culham Institute had indicated that it would be interested in supporting the conference next year and had advised the SACRE to put in a bid for next year. It was agreed to discuss this matter at the next meeting.

Sue expressed her thanks to Sarah Long and Rubi Giles at EMA for their assistance in producing all the documents, programmes and signage etc. for the conference.

It was noted that the Harbour & Mary Rose Schools had been contacted to invite them to attend but no response had been received.

In response to a question from Brian Hay, SACRE members were advised that helpers and workshop facilitators should be at Portsmouth College at 8.30 am.

There was a discussion about the timing of the conference in that it was the examination period for many pupils. Sue agreed that it would be appropriate to discuss the matter with teachers but it should be borne in mind that the month of June was a good time for Portsmouth College who were providing the venue at no cost.

The matter of publicity for the conference was discussed and Teresa Deasy agreed to contact the Communications Team at Portsmouth City Council with a view to issuing a press release.

On behalf of the SACRE, the Chair thanked Sue Ganter for putting this conference together.

32 Survey on Teaching RE at Key Stages 3 to 5 (AI 11)

Sue Ganter reported that a total of eight schools had responded to her survey and that included two more, Miltoncross and Springfield, since her last update report.

Sue tabled a report on the responses from schools.

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The matter of visits to RE classes in secondary schools was discussed. It was agreed that the school visits protocol should be amended to include further information about secondary school visits.

Beverley Millsom referred to the possible impact of schools becoming academies on the SACRE. John Spiegelhalter commented that, as academies were no longer Portsmouth City Council schools SACRE was not responsible for overseeing the teaching of RE in those schools and therefore SACREs would be obliged to develop relationships with academies.

Elizabeth Jenkerson suggested that it might be a good idea to co-opt an academy representative to the SACRE. Tony Blackshaw advised that a Charter Academy used the Living Difference Syllabus and he believed they would take part in SACRE if they could. Most Church of England secondary academies follow the Living Difference Syllabus. The Church of England was the biggest chain nationally of academy schools and it would be up to SACRE to make overtures to these schools.

It was agreed that the Protocol Sub-Committee should consider the matter and report back to the November meeting.

ACTION: the SACRE Protocol Sub-Committee meeting to discuss the possibilities of relationships with academy schools and report back to the next meeting.

33 SACRE Website (AI 12)

Michael Dawes reported that progress on the website was going well. The biggest component of the website is the status update of the RE boxes and the system for requesting boxes etc. He added that the website could go live as soon as the matter of the boxes had been resolved.

SACRE members decided that the SACRE website should have its own logo and agreed to vote on the samples suggested by Michael Dawes. Sue Ganter also suggested that it would be appropriate to invite the students at the RE conference to vote on the logo.

There was some discussion on the value of obtaining students' opinion as they did not know enough about SACRE. It was decided to take a vote on the matter at the end of the meeting.

34 RE Twilights (AI 13)

Beverley Millsom reported that the 1st May meeting had been postponed until the 17 June. This was the meeting that Judith Lowndes of Hampshire County Council was due to attend. However, as there was a very limited response with only two people signing up for the meeting, it was decided to defer the meeting to 10 December to which Judith Lowndes would again be invited. It was also decided to publicise the meeting more widely among teachers. SACRE members were invited to attend and if they wished to do so they were advised to contact Beverley Millsom at Redwood Park School or Rubi Giles at the Ethnic Minority & Achievement Centre.

Beverley mentioned that the group would be visiting the Jami mosque and the provisional date was 18 September at 4 pm. SACRE members would be welcome.

Beverley went on to report that there had been a meeting held on the previous Monday to establish a set of cluster secondary and primary schools to deal with RE. Solent, Court Lane and Springfield Schools had set up a cluster and Springfield had also set up a cluster with Highbury. Beverley would be visiting these schools to support the cluster.

At the last meeting the syllabus review had been discussed and teachers commented that they were happy with the agreed syllabus. The comment was made that there used to be an RE assessment tool on the RE website which Georgina Mulhall had produced and the question was asked as to whether this website would be closing down.

ACTION

Mike Dawes to check the state of play with regard to this website and if it was not going to be closed down he would contact Beverley.

Thursday the 6 January 2014 was agreed as the date for the spring meeting and it was hoped to be able to visit the synagogue. On Tuesday the 13 May 2014 a Hindu representative would be visiting Redwood Park School.

35 NASACRE Annual General Meeting (AI 4)

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported that NASACRE was experiencing financial issues and might have to close its website unless the dues owed by the SACREs were paid. Teresa Deasy reported that the invoice for the Portsmouth contribution to NASACRE had been passed for payment.

Elizabeth Jenkerson went on to report that there had been two main speakers at the annual conference, Mark Chater and Alan Brine. She added that their speeches had been uploaded to the NASACRE website and were worth reading. Mark Chater's talk was very controversial in that it questioned the reason for SACRE's existence. He was somewhat pessimistic about the future of SACREs.

36 RE Leadership Weekend -Leads for Changing RE: Defining Our Future 28/29 September 2013 (AI 15)

(TAKE IN COURSE DETAILS)

The clerk reported that this was an information notice for SACRE members about this free course and advised that, if any SACRE members wished to attend, travel expenses could be claimed.

37 SACRE Networking Meetings (AI 16)

Peter Davies reported that he had attended this recent meeting and representatives from the following SACREs had also been present: Surrey, West Berkshire, Bournemouth, Hampshire and Poole.

The Bournemouth SACRE would be arranging an informal meeting in September with their Mayor and heads of RE.

Hampshire will undertake the mid-turn review of the syllabus 'Living Difference'.

There was much discussion on the future of SACREs including the matter of whether all schools have a governor responsible for overseeing RE, as did Surrey. The matter of whether SACREs should be inspected by Ofsted with regard to their monitoring role was also discussed.

38 Any Other Business

(a) The Agreed Syllabus

SACRE members were advised to look at the Hampshire County Council website and to input information to the Agreed Syllabus survey. This review of the agreed syllabus review would not involve a big financial commitment for Portsmouth.

(b) Terms of Office

The clerk was requested to look at the terms of reference to find out the period of office for all SACRE members and to advise them by email.

(c) Vote on the SACRE Website Logo

SACRE members voted in their groups on the sample logos available. Sample number 4 was the preferred option. It was agreed that a further vote would be taken among the students attending the RE Students' Enrichment Day and the SACRE would decide at the next meeting on which logo to use.

39 Date of Next Meeting (AI 17)

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday the 13 November 2013 at Admiral Lord Nelson School.

The meeting concluded at 6.20 pm.

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