

PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 17 June 2015 at
4.38 pm in Ground Floor Meeting Room 5, Portsmouth Civic Offices.

Present

Group A Representatives

Elizabeth Jenkerson, Baha'i Faith (In the Chair)
Peter Davies, The Fellowship of Independent
Evangelical Churches
Ruth Guyer, Judaism
Syed Aminul Haque, Islam
Marilyn Leggett, The Salvation Army
Jane Lewis, Quaker

Group B Representatives

Rev. Alice Wood, Anglican Diocese
Brian Hay, Anglican Diocese
Rev. Nick Ralph (standing in for Ven. Dr Joanne Grenfell)

Group C Representatives

Eleanor Assinder, Secondary Teacher Representative
Beverley Millsom, Special School Representative
Sarah Sadler, Primary School Representative
Sarah Hanley, Post 16 Representative

Group D Representatives

Taki Jaffer, Portsmouth City Council
Maria Cole, Portsmouth City Council

Also in Attendance

Charlie Pericleous, Prevent Coordinator, PCC
Sarah Long, Local Authority Representative, PCC
Peter Smith-Parkyn, Democratic Services, PCC

15 Welcome and Introduction

The chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

16 Moment for Quiet Reflection

Marilyn Leggett led and explained that this coming weekend sees the 135th Anniversary reunion of Portsmouth Salvation Army Band, this is followed on 1st to 5th July the Salvation Army will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of its commencement in the East End of London with a Congress in the O2 Arena with representatives from 126 countries.

Marilyn continued with the awe-inspiring story of Lieut-Colonel Alida Bosshardt, whose humanitarian work and self-sacrifice throughout the second World War and beyond helped save many lives.

17 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Geoff Wheeler; Venuka Vyas; Ven. Dr Joanne Grenfell; Richard Wharton; Siôn Reynolds and Sandra Gibb.

19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 11 March 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

20 Matters Arising

(a) Minute No 10 - RE Boxes

Sarah Long reported that the RE boxes had seen regular use and borrowing from schools in the past few months.

Sarah Long also reported that it is expected that the EMAS office will be moving to the Civic Offices in September. It is anticipated that RE boxes may see a greater use because of this, as EMAS will be able to utilise the Council's courier/dispatch service, instead of relying on teachers to collect and return borrowed boxes.

The nominal charge of £1 per box per week is expected to continue to cover basic admin and fund replacement materials as needed.

21 Brief updates or notifications of items to be brought to a future meeting

Beverley Millsom informed SACRE members of the Primary Network meeting taking place next week (23 June) at Redwood Park school. Beverley is expecting 10 teachers to be in attendance and Taki Jaffer and Ruth Guyer both volunteered to take part in a "Q&A" session with regard to the respective faiths.

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported that the Monitoring sub-committee met yesterday and will bring a report to a future meeting.

22 Updates from the Chair

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported on the following items;

(a) SW SACRE

Elizabeth reported on the conference in Somerset with Dr Joyce Miller as main speaker, who is the Chair of the RE Council. The conference proved to be an excellent networking opportunity.

(b) Trojan Horse

Elizabeth reported on the Birmingham Trojan Horse, which has proven to be an interesting learning experience for all those involved in RE. Elizabeth cited Alan Brine (recently retired Ofsted inspector) who raised questions about

ethos of schools designated as a faith school and collective worship.

Elizabeth also mentioned that during the investigation, Ofsted inspectors viewed schools websites, which must include details about teaching of RE. Failure to do so can be considered as a violation of statute. The teaching of RE must include at least 2 religions for GCSE qualification.

(c) NASACRE AGM

As previously circulated to all SACRE members, Elizabeth covered some of the interesting points raised in Charles Clarke's pamphlet.

Particular concern was expressed about the concept of a possible introduction of a National Syllabus, replacing the Locally Agreed Syllabus. SACRE members discussed their concerns about a National Syllabus, arguing that at least in Portsmouth, using the LDR 2011 (having been identified as one of the best) changing would be to our detriment. It was also mentioned that if introduced as part of the National Syllabus, the question of parents being able to withdraw their children from RE which in turn could therefore allow withdrawal from other subjects.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

23 Conference Update - 3 September 2015 (AI 9)

Elizabeth Jenkerson informed members of SACRE of the one day conference taking place in September in Winchester. Details of the conference and booking form have been circulated with the agenda.

24 Prevent Agenda (AI10)

Elizabeth Jenkerson welcomed Charlie Pericleous, the prevent co-ordinator for Portsmouth City Council to the meeting.

Charlie gave a presentation that summarised the Prevent Agenda, explaining that it fits into the four Ps that are contained within the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Charlie further explained that the Prevent aspect (of the Act) is a duty on all authorities to have "due regard" to prevent all forms of radicalisation. That it is in essence the same as the safeguarding premise, that is to identify, analyse the risks and consider the options, and, importantly, to act and respond before any criminal offence has taken place.

Charlie further explained to SACRE that the definition of extremism feeds into the promotion of British Values and includes all extremist groups that promote hatred and/or violence, not just those of any given faith or belief.

SACRE members sought clarity around whom this Act was focusing on particularly given the previous version of the Prevent Agenda, however Charlie reassured SACRE members that Prevent Strategy clearly addresses all forms of extremism and is consistent with existing safeguarding procedures.

Sarah Sadler expressed on behalf of teachers, their concern about schools and teachers being held to account if they fail to identify individuals at risk.

Charlie reassured SACRE members by highlighting that school/teachers who follow relevant and up-to-date safeguarding procedures will be compliant with the new Prevent Duty. A number of training options are available to schools on the New Prevent Duty.

Charlie gave all members of SACRE an open invitation to contact him should anyone wish to know more on this subject, discuss concerns or have further questions about the prevent agenda in Portsmouth.

Resolved that:

- (1) Charlie be thanked for his presentation and;**
- (2) The information update on the Prevent Agenda be noted and;**
- (3) The presentation be circulated to all members of SACRE.**

25 Youth Voice

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported on the Hampshire initiative to seek the views and recommendations from year 8 and 9 students on the teaching of RE. Whilst limited to Hampshire at this time, the current thinking is Portsmouth may be involved and attend next year, or could set up its own version.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

26 Report on the South Central HUB meeting

Elizabeth Jenkerson reported that the South Central HUB now includes 14 local authority areas. Other matters raised at the meeting included a future "webinar" and University credits for teachers seeking Master level Degree qualifications.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

27 Grant Proposals

Elizabeth Jenkerson declared an interest in that she sits on the grant determination panel of Westhill.

Members of SACRE were asked to consider possible projects for which Portsmouth SACRE could bid from Westhill, as they still have unallocated funds this year. Elizabeth Jenkerson confirmed this stating that Westhill's grant application process had been extended to 22 July 2015.

RESOLVED that SACRE members write to the clerk with project ideas, with a view to submitting a grant application before 22 July 2015.

28 Co-opting on to SACRE

Given the freedom of Academies over their curriculum, it was understood that those in Portsmouth are still using LDR 2011 when teaching RE.

There was a general consensus that more schools will become academies in the coming years and SACRE members felt it is important to continue to maintain a good working relationship with academies.

Whilst it was felt that a co-opted academy representative would be beneficial, concern was raised over the fact that there are different groups. It is therefore unclear as to whether a single representative could reflect the views of the academy groups in Portsmouth.

RESOLVED that the teacher representatives will report back to SACRE after informal discussions with academy teachers.

14 Date and venue of the next meeting

The schedule of future SACRE meetings were agreed as follows (venues to be decided) all starting at 4:30pm.

Wednesday 11 November 2015

Wednesday 23 March 2016

Wednesday 15 June 2016

The meeting concluded at 6:25pm.

Chair