

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 2 March 2005 at 4.30 pm
in Conference Room B, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square.

Present

Group A Representatives

Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union
Julius Klein, Judaism
David Lewis, The Religious Society of Friends
Reverend Dr Beryl Wright, Methodist Church
Sue Vigar-Taylor, Buddhism
Dalbara Kalsi, Sikhism
Mrs Ephrat Miller-Foroughi, Baha'i Faith

Group B Representatives

Brian Hay
Reverend Oriel Alby

Group C Representatives

Georgie Tüzemen

Group D Representatives

Councillor Malcolm Hey (Chairman)
Councillor David Stephen Butler
Councillor Terry Henderson

Co-opted Representatives

Terry Carter
John Lance
Sue Ganter

Officers in Attendance

Clive Erricker, Hampshire Area Education Office
Judith Lowndes, Hampshire Area Education Office
Mike Johns, Key Stage 3 Foundation Subjects Advisory, PCC
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services, PCC

1 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Gillian Coles, New Church of England Representative; Katie Moore, Foundation Stage Advisory Teacher; Mohammed Riyami, Islam; Councillor Tom Blair, PCC; Roger Bentote, Teachers' Liaison Panel; Jean Howarth, The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

2 Minutes – 17 November 2004 (AI 2)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2004 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- (a) David Lewis be recorded as present.**
- (b) Minute No 27 – SACRE Annual Report – The words "next year" in line 5 of paragraph 5 be deleted.**
- (c) Minute No 28 – Non-Statutory National Framework for RE Launch – 28 October 2004. In paragraph 2 the first sentence be amended to read as follows: "Sue Ganter suggested that it would be a good idea for SACRE to advise schools on the status of the new framework document." It was also pointed out that Charles Clarke's surname was spelt incorrectly in this minute and should be corrected.**
- (d) Minute No 32a – Teacher Representation on SACRE – Delete the word "secondary" in line 3.**

3 Matters Arising (AI 3)

(a) Minute No 24c – NASACRE Annual General Meeting

Clive Erricker advised that the NASACRE Annual General Meeting would take place on Tuesday 19 April. He mentioned that he would be attending on behalf of Hampshire County Council and suggested that the Portsmouth SACRE should be represented. Oriel Alby and Dalbara Kalsi volunteered to represent the Portsmouth SACRE.

(b) Minute No 24b – SACRE Budget

Councillor Terry Henderson enquired whether details had been obtained regarding the cost of supplying the Primary RE News and the Secondary RE News, published by Hampshire County Council to Portsmouth schools.

Clive Erricker replied that the cost would be £40 per year. Georgie Tüzemen mentioned that some schools were already purchasing these publications. It was suggested that SACRE should negotiate a deal with Hampshire County Council for all Portsmouth schools to receive copies of RE publications.

ACTION

The Chairman to pursue this matter with Hampshire County Council.

4 Equalities Issues (AI 9)

Mo Love, Principal Equalities Adviser, of the Equalities Unit at Portsmouth City Council gave a presentation. She gave a brief outline of the work of the

Equalities Unit at Portsmouth City Council, commenting that the reorganisation of management structures at the City Council would ensure that Equalities would be given a high profile.

The Government Office for the Southeast (GOSE) works with local authorities to improve community cohesion. The Local Strategic Partnership has Community Cohesion in its Community Involvement chapter of the Community Strategy. The concept of community cohesion arose from the race riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford and guidance had been sent out initially from the Home Office.

Mo went on to say that faith was an important factor in community cohesion and it was believed that the riots in the north of England might have involved faith rather than racial hatred. The Home Office has introduced a Faith Unit and encourages local areas to set up Faith Councils. There is a Southeast Faith Forum.

Mo then referred to the guidebook, produced by Portsmouth City Council on ethnic minorities in the area, entitled "One City, Many Cultures". She mentioned that the guidebook had won gold and silver at the national British Diversity Awards. However, it was recognised in the review process, that insufficient information had been provided on faith groups and the revised version now covers this. The book has been produced by linking the local ethnic and faith groups who also help to run workshops where questions may be asked.

Mike Johns pointed out that he was the Equal Opportunities Representative on EQAG for the School Improvement Service and that equal opportunities issues also formed part of his work as Key Stage 3 Foundation Subjects Adviser. He commented that the evaluation process, which SACRE was undertaking, would be dealing with issues relating to faith and ethnic minorities in the area. Once the evaluation process was completed, the group responsible would be able to report back to the Equalities Unit.

John Lance mentioned that the majority of young people were not signed up to any particular faith. He asked whether anything was being done to contact those who had no faith at all. Mo responded that although it was important to include everyone, the guide was a rudimentary guide to raise awareness about specific groups and faiths.

The Chairman, on behalf of SACRE, expressed his thanks to Mo for her excellent presentation.

5 SACRE Self-Evaluation Sub-Group Report (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker introduced his report and said that the sub-group had met for the second time on 3 February 2005. He explained that the sub-group's task was to scrutinise SACRE's performance in relation to the provision of RE teaching in schools. The group agreed to conduct its procedures using the self-evaluation tool devised by AREIAC (attached as Appendix 9).

Mike Johns referred to the recommendations in the report and asked SACRE members for their approval of the questions to be addressed to the LEA, as outlined in the recommendations.

SACRE members discussed the report and it was agreed that the Chairman should write to Mike Johns to request that the LEA provide answers to the questions outlined in the report.

RESOLVED (1) that the Chairman to write to Mike Johns to request information from the LEA on the following:

- **Evidence of the level of compliance regarding the legal requirement for RE in Portsmouth schools**
- **Exemplification of the strategy used to address weaknesses in relation to standards in RE in Portsmouth schools**
- **An annual summary to the SACRE Monitoring Sub-Group on the quality of teaching, leadership and management in Portsmouth schools**
- **Information on the provision of RE subject leadership in primary schools**
- **A report on RE resource provision in Portsmouth schools**

(2) that SACRE receives a programme of presentations from teachers in Portsmouth schools.

6 Report from the Monitoring Sub-Group: Summary of Findings from Ofsted Reports (AI 4)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Judith Lowndes apologised as some of the text was missing from the report and gave a verbal account of the sub-group's findings. It was agreed that the full report would be circulated with the papers for the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7 Report on Conference on National Development and the Work of SACREs (AI 5)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Brian Hay reported that he had attended a conference on national development and the work of SACREs in London on 9 December. He gave an outline of matters discussed. These were largely germane to other items presented on the agenda and would be discussed under those items.

8 Young People's Faith Forum (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker announced that NASACRE was promoting the idea of young inter-faith projects to be set up by SACREs with funding from the Westhill Trust. SACREs must submit bids for grants to initiate a project by 18 March 2005. Projects could be submitted by individual SACREs or by joint bids. Funding of £5,000 for each successful bid would be made available in 2004-5, from an overall budget of £20,000. Funding would also be available for 2005-6. He explained that bids should include details of how the project would promote dialogue between young people of different faith positions, achieve community benefit, or might be sustained beyond the initial period of funding.

A joint meeting with representatives from Portsmouth, Southampton and Hampshire had been arranged to discuss the possibility of a joint bid. Unfortunately, the Hampshire and Southampton SACRE representatives had been unable to attend. The Chairman of the Portsmouth SACRE had attended the meeting and he reported that he had gained some useful information on possible ideas for a bid.

Clive suggested three possible courses of action:

1. A joint bid is submitted for the current year.
2. Preparation work is undertaken with a view to submitting a sustainable joint bid from the three SACREs for the following year.
3. The Portsmouth SACRE submits a bid for the current year.

The chairman proposed that, as it was apparent that there was insufficient time to hold meetings with the Southampton and Hampshire SACREs with a view to developing plans for a joint bid before the closing date, the Portsmouth SACRE should submit its own bid. He proposed that Portsmouth's bid should be built into the highly successful annual GCSE RE conference. He suggested extending the conference to a wider audience.

One of the ideas, which emerged from the recent meeting to discuss bids, was to stage a concert based on celebrating faith and cultural diversity. There was a band from Southampton, which specialised in this type of concert and he proposed that the event could take place immediately following the RE conference.

Clive Erricker reminded SACRE members that the project should be student led. SACRE members discussed the proposal and were generally in agreement with the idea of submitting a Portsmouth bid. However, concerns were expressed about the short timescale involved and the organisational problems that SACRE might incur, should the bid be successful.

Georgie Tüzemen advised that, in her opinion, there was not sufficient time to allow students to take ownership of this event, which was an essential element of the project.

Other members suggested, in view of the time restrictions, that the concert should be held in the autumn. However, there was a general consensus that this would be too difficult to organise; that the RE conference was a ready-made forum of young people and the project could be an appropriate add-on.

Following some discussion, a vote was taken on the proposal that the Portsmouth SACRE should submit a solo bid for the NASACRE interfaith project. The motion was carried by nine votes in favour and three votes against. There were two abstentions.

RESOLVED (1) that the Portsmouth SACRE should submit a solo bid to NASACRE for the funding of a Young People's Faith Forum involving an event celebrating faith and cultural diversity, taking account of the initiatives within the annual GCSE conference;

(2) Clive Erricker to inform Hampshire and Southampton SACREs of the Portsmouth proposal;

(3) Clive Erricker to prepare a bid.

9 Any Other Business

(a) Venue for the Next Meeting

The Chairman referred to the usual practice of holding one meeting per year in an appropriate venue. Ted Parker, of the Salvation Army, extended an invitation to the SACRE to hold its next meeting at the Salvation Army building in Lake Road. SACRE members welcomed this offer and it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 22 June 2005 at 4.30 pm in the Salvation Army building in Lake Road, Portsmouth.

The meeting concluded at 6.30 pm.