

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Thursday 8 March 2007 at  
4.30 pm at Somers Park Primary School, Somers Road, Southsea.

**Present**

**Group A Representatives**

Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union  
Julius Klein, Judaism  
Sarah Coote, standing in for David Lewis of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
Ted Parker, Salvation Army  
Reverend Beryl Wright, Methodist Church  
Sue Vigar-Taylor, Buddhism  
Mrs Ephrat Miller-Foroughi, Baha'i Faith

**Group B Representatives**

None attended

**Group C Representatives**

Ros Griffiths  
Georgina Mulhall

**Group D Representatives**

Councillor David Horne

**Co-opted Representatives**

John Lance, South Hampshire Humanists  
Sue Ganter, Co-ordinator "Interfusion"-  
Portsmouth Youth Diversity Forum  
Moses Tutesigensi, "Interfusion" –  
Portsmouth Youth Diversity Forum  
Kieran Anderson, Interfusion –  
Portsmouth Youth Diversity Forum

**Officers in Attendance**

Clive Erricker, County Inspector for RE,  
Hampshire Area Education Service  
Judith Lowndes, General Inspector for RE,  
Hampshire Education Service  
Mike Johns, General Adviser, Children, Families &  
Learning Directorate, PCC  
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services, PCC

**1 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from the following: Celia Axton, Roman Catholic Church; David Lewis, the Religious Society of Friends; Mohammed Riyami, Islam; Brian Hay, Church of England; the Venerable Trevor Reader, Church of England, Roger Bentote, TLP; Alison Spittles, Primary School Teacher representative; Patrick Quirke, Secondary Teacher representative; Councillor Malcolm Hey and Terry Carter, retired RE teacher.

**2 Minutes – 15 November 2006 (AI 2)**

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2006 be agreed as a correct record.**

**3 Matters Arising (AI 3)**

**(a) Minute No 28 – Report from the Monitoring Sub-Group: Summary of Findings from Ofsted Reports 2005-6**

Mike Johns referred to the discussion at the last meeting regarding the need to find a mechanism for consulting young people about the monitoring of RE teaching. He reported that he had met with a group from Interfusion and had suggested to them that they may like to consult with other young people in schools on the subject of RE teaching. He added that he would be able to offer administrative support to Interfusion to enable them to undertake this task. Georgina Mulhall commented that this would be in support of what was already happening at the moment in schools via the Schools' Council.

Kieran Anderson commented that, in his opinion, this was a task that SACRE should undertake directly, rather than asking a co-opted group to do it. He believed that the best way of involving young people would be to co-opt students onto the SACRE.

Moses Tutesigensi pointed out that, since he had been involved with Interfusion, he had become aware of the SACRE and its role. He suggested that the involvement of the young people from the Interfusion group in the consultation exercise, as suggested by Mike Johns, could be a way of involving young people in the SACRE and informing them about its role in relation to RE teaching.

## **ACTION**

**The Interfusion group to take the suggestion that they undertake a consultation exercise with other young people regarding the teaching of RE in schools to the next meeting of their Executive Committee (the young people) and then the Advisory Panel and to report back to the next SACRE meeting.**

### **4 Report from NASACRE Meeting on Effective SACREs (AI 4)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker referred to his report and mentioned that since the meeting, which he had attended on behalf of the Portsmouth SACRE, he had been informed about discussions at a meeting of the RE Council the previous Friday. The purpose of this meeting had been to draft a number of documents, one of which, he believed, would have a bearing on Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth's agreed syllabus. During the drafting of these documents, it was suggested that agreed syllabuses should be encouraged to/required to adopt statements of levels of attainment in line with the national framework. He commented that, as the structure of the agreed syllabus was different from that of the national framework, it would not be possible to adapt our statements of attainment in line with the levels of the national framework.

Clive went on to say that he had been in touch with Hampshire County Council and had spoken to David Kirk, the Executive Member with special responsibility for Education and had explained this difficulty to him. Mr Kirk had agreed to write to Lord Adonis, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Department for Education and Skills, should the need arise. In this letter, he would be pointing out the incompatibility of Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth's agreed syllabus with the RE Council's proposals.

SACRE members discussed the matter and Mike Johns explained that the implication for Portsmouth would mean that every school in the city would fail to meet the statutory requirements.

Portsmouth members decided that they would like to become co-authors of the letter from Hampshire County Council and it was also suggested that Southampton and Westminster City Councils should also be consulted to ascertain whether they wished to offer their support to the letter from Hampshire County Council.

Georgina Mulhall also gave a report on the NASACRE conference, which she had also attended along with Clive. She explained that she had participated in a different discussion group from Clive and had come away with the impression that many of the people that she had talked to at the conference were unaware of what was happening with regard to the teaching of RE in schools. She had heard lots of sweeping statements about poor standards of RE teaching in schools. However, she thought that this was probably because she was one of only two teachers at the conference. She tabled a document entitled "30 + things that a good SACRE can do".

### **ACTION**

**Teresa Deasy to circulate this document to all members of SACRE. SACRE members are asked to read this document for the next meeting.**

On a positive note, she commented that she was very pleased to have been exposed to such a conference. It had made her more aware of the need to raise the profile of SACREs.

### **ACTION**

**Mike Johns to ensure that the raising of SACRE's profile should be an agenda item at the next meeting.**

**It was agreed that, subject to approval by the headteacher at Solent Junior School, Georgina Mulhall would represent the Portsmouth SACRE at the NASACRE Conference on 8 May.**

Clive Erricker suggested that the recommendation in the report be amended to take account of the SACRE's decision to co-author the letter from Hampshire County Council and to invite Southampton and Westminster City Councils to support the recommendations in the letter. This was agreed by the SACRE.

**RESOLVED: that SACRE notes the report and considers how initiatives reported on from this national workshop could contribute to its development plan and respond to developments in the national strategy.**

## **5 Social Cohesion (AI 5)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker referred to his report and explained that he had become aware of a growing concern among parents in Hampshire where school visits to places of worship, particularly mosques were arranged. Increasingly, he had come across parental withdrawal from these visits for reasons resulting from negative media coverage of Islam and changes in attitude towards diversity.

In order to address this situation, Hampshire had made money available from its Social Cohesion Project and would be liaising with neighbouring local authorities. The purpose of this report was to make this issue known to SACRE members and to ask them to consider involvement.

Mike Johns advised that he had been in touch with Nick Ralph of the Anglican Diocese with regard to this matter.

### **ACTION**

**Mike Johns to report back to the SACRE on the response from Nick Ralph.**

**RESOLVED that the Portsmouth SACRE considers involvement in Hampshire's planned strategy.**

## **6 Interfusion Update (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Sue Ganter announced the good news that Interfusion had been successful in their bid to the Community Development Fund for a grant. They had made a bid of £24,640 and had been successful in obtaining a grant of £17,930. She added that over 1,200 applications had been submitted to the Community Development Fund and Interfusion had been fortunate enough to be among the 343 organisations which had been successful. She added that she was confident that Interfusion would be able to make up the shortfall from other sources.

Sue mentioned that Interfusion had managed to register a domain name for their website, which was [interfusion.org.uk](http://interfusion.org.uk).

Sue advised that Interfusion had been asked to participate in a consultation exercise by the Royal Navy and the MOD/Civil Service on their BME action plan with regard to public relations and recruitment targets. Sue explained that she had unofficially represented the passionate and wide-ranging views of Interfusion on this occasion, when the Second Sea Lord had been present. As a result of this useful exchange of views, the Equality and Diversity Officer of the Royal Navy had been invited to attend an Interfusion Executive Committee meeting in order to obtain further honest feedback.

Sue also mentioned that a group of young people from Interfusion had participated in a Wave 105 radio interview, which had taken place at the synagogue, thanks to Julius Klein. A very lively discussion and exchange of views had taken place and the interview would be broadcast shortly. Sue agreed to let Teresa Deasy know the broadcast time and date so that she could email SACRE members.

Moses Tutesigensi was leading a bid for the Youth Led Media Project. This might involve the production of a DVD about Interfusion to be made available to schools and faith communities.

Interfusion members had chosen the artwork for their banner design, which was being produced and should be ready in time for the Portsmouth Interfaith Forum Communities Open Event, which would be taking place at Buckland Community Centre on Sunday 11 March. Posters were distributed and SACRE members encouraged to attend and publicise amongst their communities.

Finally, Sue referred to the fact that there were still some faiths which were not represented on Interfusion. She explained that this was due to the difficulties in making contact with some faith groups and because some Interfusion members had left to go to university etc. She asked SACRE members for permission to pass on their contact details to members of Interfusion. Interfusion members could then get in touch with them with a view to increasing the number of faith group representation on Interfusion. SACRE members agreed to this request with the proviso that any member not wishing his/her contact details to be passed on to Interfusion should inform Teresa Deasy.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**7 The Revised Constitution for Portsmouth SACRE (AI 7)**

(TAKE IN REVISED CONSTITUTION)

Ros Griffiths suggested that there should be a procedure for amending the constitution and a review date should also be specified.

SACRE members agreed to this suggestion and it was also agreed that Ros Griffiths should email Teresa Deasy with some suggested wording with regard to the procedure for amending the constitution. It was further agreed that the review date should be annually on presentation of SACRE's annual report.

**RESOLVED (1) that the procedure for amending the constitution and the insertion of a review date as stated above be incorporated into the constitution;**

**(2) that the SACRE Chair be authorised to sign off the final version of the revised constitution and that it be brought to the attention of the Executive Member for Education.**

**8 Australian Reviews of Living Difference, The Handbooks (AI 8)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Judith Lowndes drew SACRE members' attention to her report which provided reviews from an Australian publication on Living Difference, the Primary Handbook and Living Difference, the Secondary Handbook.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**9 Chair's Communications (AI 9)**

**(a) Withdrawal of Support from Hampshire County RE Inspector**

The Chair referred to minute No 33(a) of the minutes of the previous meeting. He explained that, as requested by the SACRE, he had written to the Executive Member for Education expressing SACRE's concern regarding the withdrawal of funding to support the work for the Portsmouth SACRE carried out by the Hampshire County RE Inspector's office. He stated that he had not yet received a reply from the Executive Member. He explained that he did not expect a reply until the City Council's budget for the next financial year had been agreed. A budget meeting had been held in February and a second meeting would be held on 27 March to finalise the budget. At that stage, he would then be expecting a reply from the Executive Member.

SACRE members discussed the matter and it was agreed that it was important for SACRE to communicate to the City Council their extreme concern regarding the withdrawal of funding for the support to SACRE provided by the Hampshire County RE Inspectorate. It was suggested that, if the funding was not made available to the SACRE, all members should consider resigning.

The meeting concluded at 5:55pm.