

# **PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 8 November 2017 at  
4.30 pm in Conference Room A, Portsmouth Civic Offices.

## **Present**

### **Christian denominations and other religions and their denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area**

(Group A Representatives)

Elizabeth Jenkerson, Baha'i Faith

Ruth Guyer, Judaism

Peter Davies, The Fellowship of Independent  
Evangelical Churches

Renuka Vyas, Hinduism

Syed Aminul Haque, Islam

Geoff Wheeler, Baptist

Sarah Coote, Society of Friends (Quakers)

### **Representatives of the Church of England**

(Group B Representatives)

Brian Hay, Anglican Diocese

Reverend Jane Ball

### **Teachers representing the various key stages and an association recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation**

(Group C Representatives)

None.

### **Representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority**

(Group D Representatives)

Councillor Ryan Brent (Chair)

Councillor Suzy Horton (Vice Chair)

Councillor James Fleming

### **Also in Attendance**

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director for Education

Patricia Hannam, Professional Advisor (Hampshire  
Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS))

Peter Smith-Parkyn, Clerk, Democratic Services, PCC

The Clerk identified to members of SACRE that as there were no representatives from Group C (Teachers) the meeting was not quorate. The meeting may continue however, all decisions made by the Council will be subject to ratification by a later quorate meeting.

## **1 Welcome and Introduction**

The Chair, Councillor Ryan Brent welcomed everybody to the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

## **2 Moment for Quiet Reflection**

Peter Davies led the moment of reflection, focusing on acts of remembrance. Drawing firstly on the recent 5<sup>th</sup> November, "Guy Faulk's night" and upcoming Armistice Day on 11<sup>th</sup> November, both acknowledged differently, through bonfires and fireworks and the latter wearing of a poppy.

The act of remembrance is of central importance to religious groups, through anniversaries, holidays and other ways of recognising important aspects of one's faith or belief.

Peter Davies continuing his theme asked for members to reflect on five things to remember?

The Chair thanked Peter Davies.

## **3 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Captain Teresa Everett, Honorary Alderman Tom Blair, Sue Bowen, and Councillor David Tompkins.

## **4 Declaration of Interests**

Elizabeth Jenkerson declared a non-prejudicial, non-pecuniary interest in that she is on the selection board for Westhill grants.

## **5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Thursday 13 July 2017**

**RESOLVED (subject to ratification) that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

## **6 Matters Arising**

None identified

## **7 Brief Updates or Notifications of items to be brought to a future meeting**

It was proposed by Elizabeth Jenkerson and Seconded by Reverend Jane Ball that a represented from the Islamic, the Shi'a denomination religion be added to the SACRE constitution membership list.

SACRE members felt that in addition it would be appropriate to encourage all groups to undertake an action to engage with the public, about SACRE.

**RESOLVED (subject to ratification) that**

**(1) The Islamic Shi'a denomination be added to the SACRE constitution membership list and;**

**(2) An invitation be extended to appoint a representative**

**(3) All groups to actively engage with the public about SACRE**

## **8 Monitoring Group Report**

SACRE received a written report by Patricia Hannam from the new monitoring group.

SACRE members continued to be disappointed in that Ofsted report almost never refer to Religious Education explicitly, unless a longer report is produced. It was noted that Religious Education and the teaching thereof maybe only normally discerned through either SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) or British Values elements of short reports.

Reverend Jane Ball indicated that there may be value in including a regular review of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) reports.

ACTION - Reverend Jane Ball to provide Patricia Hannam with these reports.

**It was agreed that SACRE notes the Monitoring report**

## **9 Update regarding the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus**

Patricia Hannam gave a verbal update sharing that more offers of training for both Primary and secondary schools have been made. Confirming the distinction that whilst those schools who are Academies may follow Living Difference III, those schools under Local Authority control must do so.

SACRE welcomed the news that Patricia's colleague Justine Ball is planning on visiting 10 primary schools early in the new year. Members of SACRE were asked to indicate their availability if they are able to join Justine in the school visits.

Ruth Guyer strongly endorsed participation in school visits and shared that in her experience some children may not necessarily be religious but show high moral character and thoughtfulness. SACRE member agreed also with concept that an important element of good RE is both the ethos and the head teacher of the school.

**It was agreed that**

- (1) Patricia Hannam be thanked for her update and;**
- (2) SACRE members contact either the clerk or Justine if they are available to visit a school.**

## **10 Report on the interim report of the Commission on RE**

Patricia Hannam presented her report on the interim report on the Commission on RE. Patricia reported that the interim report of the 2 year project has many significant recommendations and is seeking all stakeholders to respond to their consultation. Patricia highlighted a number the recommendations and discussion points within the report, such as:

- A national entitlement for religious education
- Renewed and expanded role for SACRES

- The Right of withdrawal (from RE)
- A National plan for improving teachers and learning in RE

SACRE members discussed the topics in the report and raised a number of ongoing regular concerns, such as:

- teacher recruitment/training to specialist level (& bursaries)
- the question of a national curriculum verses a locally agreed syllabus
- the importance of a positive school culture from the top down

SACRE members agreed that whilst the consultation allows for a joint response from SACRE as a whole entity, owing to differing viewpoints that members should respond individually.

**ACTION:** All SACRE members are encouraged to respond to the consultation.

**Resolved that**

- (1) the report by the Patricia Hannam be noted and;**
- (2) the interim report of the Commission on RE recommendations be noted and SACRE members encouraged to respond to the consultation before 9am on 4th December 2017.**

## **11 SACRE Annual Report**

Patricia Hannam presented her draft Annual report, highlighting that the report is a factual representation of the 2016/17 year.

SACRE members were very encouraged to hear that RE results (shown in appendix E) were very positive and showed an improving trend. Further that Portsmouth is above the national average figures.

**ACTION:** the Chair, Councillor Ryan Brent to write to secondary schools to congratulate them (to be drafted by the Professional Adviser).

**Resolved (subject to ratification) that**

- (1) delegated authority be given to the professional adviser to amend in consultation from with the Chair and Vice-Chair to finalise the Annual report 2016/17 and;**
- (2) the final Annual Report be sent to the agreed circulation list (Appendix D).**

## **12 Date and venue of the next meeting**

**The next SACRE meeting will be on Wednesday 14 March 2018, starting at 4:30pm, venue to be confirmed by the clerk.**

The meeting concluded at 5:41pm.

Chair