

AT A MEETING of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at Ashburton Hall, Winchester on
Tuesday, 6th November, 2018

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Roz Chadd

Vice-Chairman:
p Councillor Charles Choudhary

p Councillor Anna McNair Scott p Councillor Mike Thornton
p Councillor David Simpson

p Margaret Boyne, United Reformed Church
p Harmeet Singh Brar, Sikh
a Amanda Cawood, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
a Rev Seishin Darren Clark, Buddhist
a Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato, Muslim
p Elizabeth Jenkerson, Baha'i
p Rhian Jones, Salvation Army
a Jo May, Baptist Union
p Sushma Sahajpal, Hindu
p Chris Hughes, Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
a Yasmeen Hussain, Muslim
p Lisa-Marie Taylor, Buddhist
p Heather Thorpe-Tracey, Society of Friends
p Danny Habel, Jewish

a Caroline Welch, Church of England
Richard Wharton, Church of England
p Reverend Jeff Williams, Church of England
p Rev Howard Wright, Church of England
Robert Sanders, Church of England

p Maureen Barnes, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Patricia Timms Blanch, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Susannah Burns, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Graeme Rowe, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Julie Kelly, Teachers' Liaison Panel

Co-opted members

p Pam Brown, Special Education
a Jon Hamer, Secondary Schools
a Gill Heron, Academy Schools
a Rhiannon Love, Higher Education
p Alasdair Richardson, Higher Education
p Chris Robinson, Humanists
p Kate Stubbings, Primary Schools

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman:
Mr John and Mrs Jan Marr who were deputising for Amanda Cawood.
Mrs Rachel Jackson from the Primary RE Steering Group

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

54. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Gill Heron, Rhiannon Love, Jon Hamer, Amanda Cawood, Darren Clarke, Yasmin Hussain, Jo May and Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dattoo

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Elizabeth Jenkerson noted that she was a judge for the Westhill Awards

56. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting on 26 June 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of Danny Habel as present at the meeting.

It was noted for amendment in future that the Minutes had inaccurately listed all the members, except Councillors, as co-opted, which they are not.

57. MATTERS ARISING

Updates were given about a number of matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Item 47 (Page 8): Members were informed that both recommendations had been completed.

Item 48 (page 8): The Annual Survey had been delayed due to a new system being adopted, but was expected to go out before the end of November.

Item 49 (page 9): These recommendations would be discussed as separate agenda items.

Item 51 (page 10): It was noted that the South Central Hub meeting on 19 November had been re-scheduled for 6 December.

Item 52 (page 10): The Chairman informed Members that she had sought the advice of the Leader of the Council and the Director of Children's Services regarding SACRE's suggestion that the MP Damien Hinds should be invited to one of the meetings. The advice had been that it was unlikely that he would have time to visit during the week for a meeting, but instead it was suggested that he should be invited to come on a Friday, when he was likely to be in his constituency, and sample some of SACRE's work, including meeting some of the Members and Youth Voice. It was agreed that the Chairman should invite him, providing him with a variety of dates.

58. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed new SACRE members to their first meeting, Julie Kelly, Graham Rowe and Councillor Mike Thornton. She also welcomed John and Jan Marr who were deputising for Amanda Cawood and Mrs Rachel Jackson from Braishfield Primary School who was a member of the Primary RE Steering Group.

Members were informed of the launch of the Hampshire Interfaith Calendar on Tuesday 13 November at 5pm in the Ashburton Hall and were encouraged to attend. She also indicated that the calendars were available to buy from the Hantsweb shop.

The next meeting of the Reading and Research Group would be on 21 November for a talk on Humanism led by one of the University's masters students, Sophie Etheridge. The County Inspector/Adviser, Dr Patricia Hannam, also had a launch of her book, entitled '*Religious Education and the Public Sphere*' on 9 November. Both meetings would be at Winchester University and all were welcome to attend.

The Chairman also read a letter of thanks from the former Jewish representative, Michael Zeffertt.

59. MONITORING GROUP

The Council considered a report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Adviser on the discussions and findings of the Monitoring Group at their meeting on 1 October (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Members were alerted to the worrying drop in attendance at paid-for RE courses (3.2). It was stressed that training for both teachers and managers was key for the Agreed Syllabus to be successful. However, this trend has also been seen in other subjects. The inspectors are working on ways to reach teachers through twilight sessions and additional resources being made available on the RE moodle and schools communication system.

In relation to 'Understanding Christianity', the Church of England resource to support the teaching of Christianity in its schools, the primary inspector indicated that she would be improving some of the current teaching guidance packs to clarify the links between Understanding Christianity and Living Difference III (section 3.3). Representatives from the Diocese confirmed that Understanding Christianity is used in all its schools. Living Difference III must be used in all Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools and remains the RE syllabus in Diocesan Voluntary Aided (VA) schools. Understanding Christianity is not a scheme of work, but only a resource to be used with the locally agreed syllabus (Living Difference III) at the enquire and contextualise step.

The inspectors also highlighted concerns that recent Ofsted reports had raised. Members were informed that Ofsted has a framework and a handbook that should be used for its inspections and that the appendix to the handbook clearly sets out what RE should look like in different types of schools. But these recent reports suggest it is not being followed correctly.

RE is rarely mentioned in primary reports and the primary inspector had decided to investigate whether, where it is mentioned, it is the same inspectors doing so each time. The intention would be to feedback positively to Ofsted those inspectors that are carrying out their job correctly.

Members were provided with further details of the Ofsted reports which were worrying. The reports had been positive about the RE in the schools, but it was obvious from their online RE pages that they are not using the Locally Agreed Syllabus and data suggested no RE was taking place in these schools. Concerns were raised about the training that Ofsted inspectors have, particularly with regard to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. SACRE monitoring visits would be made to these school urgently and additional resources had been granted to allow for some extra visits.

There was discussion about what SACRE could and should do. It was agreed to support the monitoring group's suggestion that the Chairman should write to the regional and national offices of Ofsted for information about how the inspectors had taken the Locally Agreed Syllabus into account when making their judgements on these schools. The inspectors would raise their concerns at the RE Council AGM. One Member on the NASACRE general council noted that the NASACRE website has template letters for SACREs to use to raise complaints about schools to the DfE. It was also suggested that, although SACRE could request the County Council to do a full assessment of RE provision in its schools, the lack of time and resources would make it difficult to get this information from schools. It was agreed that a short survey should be considered to see how schools were currently meeting their requirements for RE.

RESOLVED:

1.1. That SACRE thanked the monitoring group for their Report

- 1.2. That SACRE agreed that a letter would be written by the Chairman to Ofsted to enquire how their inspectors take the Locally Agreed Syllabus into account when making their judgements about RE in Hampshire Local Authority Schools.
- 1.3. That the Monitoring Group and the Local Authority should undertake further work to gain information on their RE provision.

60. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

61. **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

SACRE received a report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Advisor, on the membership of SACRE (item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members were asked to support the appointment of Graeme Rowe, Julie Kelly and Rob Sanders to SACRE.

RESOLVED:

- That Graeme Rowe and Julie Kelly be appointed as representative and substitute representative, appointed by the Teachers' Liaison Panel, to Group C.
- That Rob Sanders be appointed as substitute representative, appointed by the Church of England, to Group B.
- That the officer supporting SACRE extends an invitation to the next SACRE training and offers to link them with an experienced member of SACRE as mentor for the first year of service on SACRE.

62. **THE IMPACT OF THE NEW RELIGIOUS STUDIES GCSE IN HAMPSHIRE**

SACRE considered a report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Advisor on the findings of the time-limited group convened to consider the impact of the new Religious Studies GCSE (item 9 in the Minute Book).

Members were informed that the group had met on 5 September 2018 and had included members of SACRE and secondary RE teachers from the steering group. They had considered three questions: was the new GCSE too difficult and had led to a reduction in numbers taking it, were there theological problems associated with the content that might lead to reductionism or essentialisation, and was the syllabus content too great which could affect the proper teaching of RE using the Agreed Syllabus?

The group had come to the overall conclusion that where specialist teachers were teaching the subject, the correct amount of time recommended by the exam boards was allocated and where the subject was being studied by students who had opted to do it, then the new GCSE was fine.

RESOLVED:

- SACRE thanked the GCSE review group for their report and requested that, following further GCSE analysis by the monitoring group in January, any outstanding concerns are brought back to the next SACRE meeting.

63. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The Council considered the SACRE Annual Report for 2017/18 prepared and presented by Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Adviser. (Item 10 in the Minute Book). Members were invited to make comments and ask questions.

Commenting on the GCSE results tables on page 38 of the pack, it was highlighted to Members that it has become increasingly difficult to make a full analysis of the data, particularly because short course results are not available. Members expressed concern at the apparent decline in performance since 2013; the Inspector/Adviser explained that this was in part due to Hampshire schools opting to teach the full course GCSE on less than the required time, rather than entering students for the short course which would not count. It was intended to investigate the data to look at the differences in results compared to the ways that schools choose to teach the course. Members were informed that nationally a fair proportion of schools were giving up on the GCSE because it is impossible to get through the content in one lesson a week. It was generally agreed that this was a dilemma for schools.

In relation to primary schools, Members asked what the 'barriers to improvement' were, mentioned on page 40 of the pack. It was answered that schools where the headteacher, governors and teachers value the status of the subject and were knowledgeable about the locally agreed syllabus and where teachers were confident in assessment, were likely to have good RE.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE approved the Annual Report and that it is made available on the appropriate websites.

64. FINAL REPORT ON THE COMMISSION ON RE (CORE)

The Council considered and discussed a presentation and report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Adviser, on the recommendations in the Final Report from The Commission on RE. (Item 11 in the Minute Book). Members had been provided with the Executive Summary to the Report as Appendix 1.

Members agreed with the opinion that Religious Education needs rejuvenating because of the variable quality of teaching around the country, the legal arrangements around RE no longer working as schools in many areas have become academies, and young people today encountering a growing diversity of religions and world views in their lives. Some of the recommendations, such as the improvement to primary Initial Teacher Education, additional funding for CPD, and the requirement for inspectors to report on the National Entitlement would not be contentious. However, others could be controversial.

After an explanation of the 11 recommendations, Members discussed, in small groups, three of the recommendations – the change of name of the subject to Religion and Worldviews, the establishment of a National Entitlement to RE and the replacement of SACREs by local advisory networks. It was noted that it was rumoured that some of the recommendations were not made with the full agreement of all the commissioners; some of them were also very vague and unclear.

Members commented on the difficulties that would be posed in trying to get a countrywide consensus to a National Entitlement and what should be included in such a curriculum; and how would regional diversity be satisfied if the locally agreed syllabus did not exist. One suggestion was that a local SACRE might be responsible for devising a syllabus based on the National Entitlement.

Concerns were raised about the new Local Advisory Networks that were intended to replace SACREs; in particular how would they be formed, what accountability would they have and who would be on them. It was pointed out that the Commission specifically chose not to look at Collective Worship, and therefore, SACREs would still need to exist to monitor what was still a legal requirement. For authorities with a weak SACRE and locally agreed syllabus these Networks might work, but for counties like Hampshire, that have a strong SACRE and a school inspection and improvement service, then it would not be a good move.

Members were reminded that this was not a government commission, but by the RE Council and at some point the recommendations may get to parliament. It was agreed that the basis of the Report was good, but the details needed to be thought through. The RE council was open to further consultation and influence and it was agreed that a time-limited group should be set up to consider the recommendations in more detail and draft a response for SACRE's approval. Members who were interested in being part of the group were requested to email the inspectors. It was suggested and agreed that the next meeting of the South Central Hub should also formulate a response to the Report.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That a time-limited group should be convened to draft a response to the CoRE Report to the Religious Education Council.
- 1.2 That the CoRE Report should also be discussed by the South Central SACRE Hub at its next meeting.

65. **SACRE YOUTH VOICE**

The Council received a verbal report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector/Adviser on the activities of the Youth Voice since the last SACRE meeting on 26 June 2018 (Item 12 in the Minute Book).

Members were informed that there had been a very successful Youth Voice conference in July with about 80 students. The new Youth Voice members had not yet met this term.

A new Primary Youth Voice group in the Chandlers Ford/Eastleigh area is being established. Maureen Barnes would ask local primary teachers in the north of the county about having a local area meeting to supplement the conference that they held in the summer.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report

66. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Justine Ball, the Primary Adviser/Inspector informed Members that she had received funding for a visit to Berlin in relation to Holocaust Education. This would feed into a pack she was writing for Year 6 children on Remembrance from the Jewish point of view.

67. **DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 5 March in the Ashburton Hall, Hampshire County Council Winchester at 2.00pm.

At 1.30pm, prior to the main meeting, there would be a presentation by Mr Chris Anders, Head Teacher of Park Community School in Havant.

Chairman,