

**WEST BERKSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 9 JUNE 2015**

VENUE: THE WILLOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL, NEWBURY

Present:

- Group A** -
Group B Revd Mary Harwood (C of E)
Group C Mr Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT)
Group D Councillor Sheila Ellison and Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge

Also Present: Ms Jo Fageant (Independent Consultant), Mr Keith Harvey (Head Teacher), Will Walker (Newbury Weekly News)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Mrs Becky Aboutaj (Muslim), Councillor Pamela Bale, Rev Bev French (Free Churches), Mrs Maria Pratico (C of E), Mr Robin Sharples (C of E) and Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Jewish)

Absent: Councillor Billy Drummond, Mr David McKay and Mrs Sue Plackett

1 Minutes

It was agreed that the Minutes were a true reflection of the previous meeting, but could not be agreed as the meeting was not quorate.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

Regarding the letter to SACREs from Lord Nash: NASACRE have suggested that each SACRE come up with a letter to Lord Nash responding to the key issues raised. For example, funding will be an issue to be raised. It was agreed that West Berkshire will send a letter to Lord Nash. JF has already drafted a letter based on advice. JF and MH will liaise and copies will then be sent to councillors and MPs as well as Lord Nash.

Secondary network: JF was unable to update on this as the next meeting is next week. New GCSE specifications are providing uncertainty. RE teachers are coming together across the authority to ensure similar things are being taught in all schools.

3 Progress with the six SACREs hub initiative and Joint SACREs Conference

£2000 has been received from Culham St Gabriel's to fund this project. There has been a meeting of the six chairs of the Berkshire SACREs. It was discussed that one of the best learning experiences in R.E. is to visit places of worship and meet members of the faith community that they represent. However these visits are not always as effective as they could be.

In each Local Authority, there is a termly meeting of coordinators. This has therefore been discussed with RE teachers, including what teachers and hosts need to provide for each visit.

There will be a joint SACREs conference on Monday 15th June. Teachers are coming from every local authority. The aim is to launch the project and to make it more widely

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 9 JUNE 2015 - MINUTES

known. A letter will then be sent out to places of worship to discuss hosting visits. Planned partnerships will be set up between places of worship and schools.

CJD asked if there is any way that members can support. JF said that it would be good for each person to talk to their own place of worship to see how they could be further involved. We need to work in a spirit of open, tactful, honesty and be honest when visits don't work perfectly so that things can be improved for next time. Places of worship will need to provide additional information such as about toilets, lunch etc. as well as what interesting features each of them has. There is a responsibility on both sides to make the visit successful.

The project is about SACREs getting up and doing things to be proactive for RE. MH said that we should look at every possibility to support RE teachers. The project will also provide positive feelings towards different religions. JF said that there may be opportunities for invitations to the Newbury mosque during Ramadan.

4 NASACRE AGM Feedback

JF represented West Berkshire at the NASACRE AGM. Charles Clark spoke at the meeting and a summary was provided to members of the SACRE. He suggested that building bridges between schools and faith communities is really important.

The afternoon of the conference was workshops and notes from discussion groups and information from this will be on the NASACRE website. There was a discussion on the name of the subject. It was agreed that a balanced RE curriculum should be a right for all children.

BE asked whether there was any discussion about academies and their role within SACREs. Should academies pay for the support? How do we balance the mismatch? In all places that JF has worked, academies are working with the SACRE.

5 Budget

The budget for 2015/16 for the SACRE is £4,120. This includes consultant and adviser fees of £2,870. Hire of Shaw House for RE coordinator meetings will come to approximately £210. This leaves approximately £1,040. This will include spend on the joint SACREs conference and any ongoing costs for the RE trails website.

6 Membership update and continuing issues

We have a number of vacancies on the SACRE. JF is aware of a Hindu that may be willing to represent. The Headteacher of St Finian's School is willing to become the Roman Catholic representative. KH will speak with heads to see if anyone is willing to join SACRE.

7 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14th October 4pm at the Willows Primary School.