

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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2017**

**VENUE: ST NICOLAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL, LINK ROAD,
NEWBURY RG14 7LU**

Present:

Group A – Other Faith Members

Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church)

Group B – Faith Members

Revd Mary Harwood (C of E) and Mr Robin Sharples (C of E)

Group C – Teaching Association Members

Mr Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT)

Group D – WBC Councillors

Councillor Pamela Bale (WBC) and Councillor Billy Drummond (WBC)

Also Present: Ms Alison Harris (Independent Consultant), Keith Harvey (Head Teacher) and Jo Watt (Appeals Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Sheila Ellison (WBC), Mrs Lucy Gallagher (Catholic), Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge (WBC), Mr David McKay (Buddhist), Clare Nolan (NASUWT) and Mrs Maria Pratico (C of E)

18 Minutes

It was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2016 were a true reflection of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

19 Matters arising from the Minutes

The Committee noted that the GCSE results had not been attached to the minutes of the last meeting. Jo Watt said she would circulate the results as soon as possible. *Post meeting note – Jo Watt circulated the GCSE results on 1.3.17.*

The Committee asked that the agenda and minutes of the West Berkshire SACRE meeting be available on the Council website as it was a statutory meeting and should be accessible by the public. Any confidential discussions could be dealt with under Part II and would not be published.

With regard to the Hindu and Muslim representatives, Keith Harvey said that he had spoken to the parents who had expressed an interest and had asked them to provide a letter of recommendation from their relevant organisation. The letters had not yet been provided. Keith suggested that the parents in question could be invited to the next West Berkshire SACRE meeting to get an idea of how the committee worked and allay any possible fears regarding workload. **Action – Keith Harvey to contact the parents concerned and invite them to the next meeting.**

The change to the SACRE constitution was discussed under 'Update on membership'.

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Alison Harris gave an update on support work with teachers. Alison reported that she had spoken to Sharon Goddard in the Council's Education department regarding the date of the next network meeting. It was hoped that this would be held before the Autumn SACRE meeting in for potential new committee members to be sought.

Alison Harris also provided the following updates:

- The Hub conference was held on 10th January 2017
- Anne Andrews from the Oxford Diocese was providing the support for training new SACRE members.
- The 'Crossing the Bridges' project now has 21 places of worship for schools to visit. The teacher trip on 8th March 2017 which aimed to train both the teachers and hosts had proved very popular and was over subscribed. A power point pack of information would be created.
- It was noted that if a faith did not have 'a place of worship' then they could be invited to visit a school to speak about their faith.
- Alison Harris said she would ask Catherine Jinkerson to contact David Taylor to explain more about the Crossing the Bridges initiative. In the meantime, further information could be found at: www.Discoveryschemeofwork/crossingthebridges

20 Elect new Chair and Vice-Chair

The Committee was asked for nominations for the Chairman of the West Berkshire SACRE to hold office until the first meeting of the new academic year (November 2017).

Jo Watt requested nominations for Chairman.

Councillor Pamela Bale proposed The Revd Mary Harwood. Councillor Billy Drummond seconded the proposal. The Revd Mary Harwood was elected Chairman until the first meeting of the new academic year.

The Revd Mary Harwood in the Chair.

The Revd Mary Harwood asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. The Revd Mary Harwood nominated Bernard Eggleton. Robin Sharples seconded the proposal. Bernard Eggleton was elected Vice-Chair until the first meeting of the new academic year.

21 Update on membership

The Committee noted that Sue Plackett (C of E representative) had resigned from the Committee. The Committee thanked Sue for her involvement and wished her well for the future. Robin Sharples said that he would contact the Area Dean with the view to finding a replacement for Sue Plackett. Councillor Billy Drummond said that he knew someone who might be interested in joining the Committee as a C of E representative and he would investigate this further. **Action – Robin Sharples and Councillor Billy Drummond to investigate possible C of E representatives to replace Sue Plackett.**

With regard to the appointment of Union representatives (Group C – Associations representing teachers), the Committee agreed to amend their constitution to read:

'Up to 7 Education Union representatives from the following Unions, with no more than 3 from any one union:

NUT, NAS/UWT, ATL, PAT, NAHT, SHA'

Following this change to the constitution, the Committee asked that Clare Nolan from Little Heath School be asked if she would like to formally join the committee. **Action: Jo Watt to amend the SACRE constitution, invite Clare Nolan to join the Committee**

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and then officially appoint her through the Council's Individual Decision process.
Post meeting note – Clare Nolan has agreed to join West Berkshire SACRE and Jo Watt will arrange the appointment by Individual Decision.

Alison Harris said that she would also raise union representatives at the next network meeting to see if she could find any interested people. The committee noted that Anne Andrews would be providing support for induction training to new SACRE members under the hub initiative and it was agreed that this was a very positive development.

The Committee noted that David McKay (Buddhist representative) had not attended a committee meeting for some time. The Committee noted that under Section 2 (Term of Office) of the West Berkshire SACRE constitution, it was stated that 'any member who fails to attend three consecutive ordinary meetings of the SACRE other than for a reason approved by the SACRE shall cease to be a member'. **Action: Jo Watt to write to David McKay regarding his membership.**

22 Annual Report - progress and timescales

The Committee agreed that to give Alison Harris sufficient time in her new role as advisor to the West Berkshire SACRE and therefore in a position to write the Annual Report, it should be presented to West Berkshire Council in May 2018.

23 Locally Agreed Syllabus Review

It was noted that the Locally Agreed Syllabus was due to be reviewed by the Hub and this pan Berkshire arrangement had been very successful in 2012 when the last review had taken place. Alison Harris explained that the Hub would be the steering group for the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

The committee noted that the review was very much a two way process with each unitary authority SACRE being involved from the beginning of the process. Mary Harwood explained that she would be involved in the early meetings through the Hub Chair's group and then she would delegate to Alison Harris to find local teachers to review the document. It was noted that each SACRE did have a veto if they did not agree with any proposed changes but Mary Harwood said it was highly unlikely that it would be needed due to the close involvement of each SACRE in the review.

Alison Harris said that in her experience, (citing the example of Bournemouth and Poole), it was possible to make small amendments at the unitary authority level, if the committee wished to make something more explicit for example.

It was noted that the agreed syllabus would be reviewed in time for implementation in September 2018.

24 Budget proposals

Keith Harvey updated the committee on the current budget situation following discussions with Sharon Goddard at West Berkshire Council. The Committee noted that £1,030 remained from the 2016/2017 budget and this had been allocated as follows:

- £500 for the preparation and attendance of Alison Harris at the 28th February 2017 meeting.
- £750 to St Nicolas Church of England Junior School for Keith Harvey's time spent advising SACRE. The committee noted that this amount would be less going forward.
- £250 to the company who hosted and maintained the 'RE Trails' resource website. The Committee asked whether this resource could be copied and put on the Hub website. Robin Sharples offered to help with the maintenance of this resource if

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necessary. **Action – Keith Harvey to investigate the possibility of the ‘RE trails’ resource being copied to the Hub website.**

The Committee noted that the budget for 2017/2018 was £4,120, broken down as follows:

- £250 for the RE co-ordinators meeting and £100 for the venue.
- £500 for Alison Harris to write the Annual Report including the impact statement.
- £1,500 for Alison Harris to attend and prepare for the three West Berkshire SACRE meetings.
- £1,700 for the Hub.
- £140 for attendance at the SACRE conference.

Mary Harwood thanked Keith Harvey for his work on the budget.

25 **Autumn 2017 meeting date**

The committee noted that the Autumn meeting would take place as follows:

Tuesday 7th November 2017 at 4.00 pm at St Nicolas Church of England Junior School .

It was noted that the committee would need to nominate a new Chairman at this meeting.

26 **Any Other Business**

Alison Harris said that Anne Andrews had sent out details of the ‘Understanding Christianity’ conference. ‘Understanding Christianity’ was essentially a resource to help church schools as two thirds of their RE teaching had to be based on Christianity. It was noted that church schools could now buy the resource for £30 but they had to attend the training first.

Non church schools could buy the resource but they would have to pay the full price.

The committee noted that the Oxford Diocese Board of Education Conference would take place on 17th March 2017. SACRE members were welcome to attend.

Alison Harris said that she would bring the new ‘Discovery’ module to the next meeting. **Action – Jo Watt to add new ‘Discovery’ module to the agenda for the next meeting.**

Councillor Pamela Bale reminded the committee that Governors were going to be asked to help find out what currently happened in schools regarding visits to places of worship. The committee asked Alison Harris to write something outlining the ‘Crossing the Bridges’ project for the Governor newsletters and consider including information in the Governor Training Programme. **Action – Jo Watt to contact Michelle Blain in Governor Support regarding these issues.**

27 **Date of Next Meeting**

The committee noted that the next meeting would take place as follows:

Tuesday 27th June 2017 at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2 at West Berkshire Council, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD.