

**WEST BERKSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 15 MAY 2018**

**VENUE: THE ROGER CROFT ROOM, WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL, MARKET
STREET, NEWBURY, RG14 5LD**

Present:

Group A – Other Faith Members

Mr Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim faith) and Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church)

Group B – Faith Members

Mrs Valerie Bolan (C of E), 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:

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Sheila Ellison (WBC), Mrs Lucy Gallagher (Catholic), Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge (WBC) and Jo Watt (Appeals Officer)

Absent:

58 Overview of West Berkshire SACRE - Reverend David Taylor

The Reverend David Taylor (Chairman) welcomed everybody to the meeting and drew the Committee's attention to the document at page 25 of the agenda regarding an overview of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). The Committee noted the document.

59 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2018 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

Membership update - Page 4: 'Debbie Arden-Hunt' to be replaced with 'Debi Arden-Hunt'. David Taylor also corrected that Mrs Arden-Hunt was an IT teacher; she had expressed interest in joining the Committee but had not been able to attend the meeting.

Feedback from Hub meeting - Page 5, 4th bullet: replace 'GCSE' with 'Key Stage 4'.
Page 6: Alison Harris advised that the £30 price for the 'Understanding Christianity' resource was only available to church schools.

60 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

61 Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus Draft 6 feedback and actions

Alison Harris introduced draft 6 of the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which had been streamlined and made more clear following feedback from

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teachers. The guidance had been removed and placed into a separate document. Regarding the remaining actions, Alison noted that the invitations to the launch event had already been dispatched.

David Taylor tabled the wording he intended to use as the foreword for the document. The Committee commended and approved the foreword.

Bernard Eggleton queried the use of vocabulary such as 'holistic' and 'experiential' and asked if these words were sufficiently clear. The Committee held a discussion and concluded that the vocabulary was used by teachers and therefore would be clear to them as the main audience of the document.

David Taylor enquired how the document would be printed and disseminated. Jo Reeves advised that the Committee could ask the Council's print room to print the document.

Action: Jo Reeves/ Jo Watt to organise printing of the final document.

David Taylor advised that he would like to provide paper copies of the syllabus at the launch event.

Mobasshir Mushtaq joined the meeting at 4.35pm.

62 Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus launch event

David Taylor advised that nine out of ten secondary schools and 46 teachers representing 31 of the District's 49 primary schools had accepted the invitation to the Syllabus launch event. The event would be held on Tuesday 3rd July 2018, 4.15pm – 5.30pm at Thatcham Baptist church. David Taylor asked that members of the Committee informed him if they planned to attend. He also stated that he would be grateful of any assistance that the Committee could offer to set up the venue on the day.

63 Budget for 2018/19 and action plan

David Taylor tabled an updated version of the SACRE budget for 2018/19.

Following discussions with the hub at Wokingham, it had been agreed to continue making a contribution. Albeit reduced from the budget included in the agenda. It had also been determined that it would not be a priority to hold a conference so the budget line would be removed.

David Taylor asked the Committee whether, when the syllabus was refreshed again in 2023, they should consider asking the local authority for an enhanced budget or if the Committee should attempt to carry over savings in preparation. Alison Harris advised that the funding landscape might be different in five year's time and suggested that the Committee continue to spend their allocated budget as intended.

Robin Sharples suggested that the Committee write to the local authority on the subject.

Action: Alison Harris to include a letter in the action plan.

Alison Harris informed the Committee that at the syllabus launch event, she would appeal to schools to host the RE network meetings and find out from teachers what they would like from the meetings.

64 Ramadan briefing paper - Mobasshir Mushtaq

The Committee thanked Mobasshir Mushtaq for the helpful briefing paper regarding Ramadan. Mobasshir advised that he would like to make some final amendments to the formatting of the document in advance of it being circulated to schools.

Action: Mobasshir Mushtaq to send a final version of the briefing paper to Jo Watt to circulate to all headteachers.

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Alison Harris asked to share the document with Wokingham as headteachers in that area would also find the document helpful.

Keith Harvey noted that his school would be taking a residential trip during Ramadan and the document would assist him to understand the needs of a Muslim pupil.

65 Any Other Business

Bernard Eggleton reported that he had been concerned to read an article in the i newspaper regarding parents withdrawing their children from RE only when Islam was being taught. Robin Sharples noted that under the legislation parents were able to pick and choose in what RE their children participated.

Alison Harris noted that a motion had been put to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) conference that it would be impossible for schools to fulfil their responsibilities under the Prevent strategy if they were not able to teach all children Islam.

David Taylor invited Mobasshir Mushtaq to give a sense of the feeling in the Muslim community, in the light of the refusal of planning permission for a new mosque and the recent incident in Tilehurst. Mobasshir advised that they were disappointed to be refused planning permission and would try again.

David Taylor asked whether the Committee had ever looked into whether there was a Jewish community in West Berkshire. Mary Harwood advised that she had asked the Rabbi in Reading but they were unaware of any families in the area.

66 Date of Next Meeting

The Committee set the date of the next meeting as 6th November 2018, 4.15pm at St Nicholas' Primary School.