

AT A MEETING of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) held in the Mitchell Room, The Castle, Winchester, on 1 March 2011

PRESENT

Chairman

p Councillor P. Mutton (Hampshire County Council)

Vice-Chairman

P Councillor R Muschamp (Hampshire County Council)

p Mr. Mohammed Ansar	-	Muslim
p Councillor Mrs C. Bailey	-	Hampshire County Council
p Mrs. Maureen Barnes	-	Teachers Association
p Mrs. Elaine Bellchambers	-	Higher Education – Co-opted
p Mr. Tony Blackshaw	-	Church of England
a Mrs. Dawn Casson	-	Teachers Association
p Mrs J. Chong	-	Roman Catholic
a Mrs R. Costambeys	-	Secondary - Co-opted
p Councillor Sam Darragh	-	Hampshire County Council
a Councillor Mrs Liz Fairhurst	-	Hampshire County Council
a Ms. Emily Fletcher	-	Church of England
p Mrs. Pat Fry	-	United Reformed Church
p Mr. Ganshin Rock	-	Buddhist
p Mrs Maeve Gordon-James	-	Buddhist
p Ms Patricia Hannam	-	Support Officer
a Mr Colin How	-	Methodist
p Mr Chris Hughes	-	Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
p Mrs Elizabeth Jenkerson	-	Baha'i
p Mrs Julie Lemon	-	Special Education – Co-opted
p Mrs Judith Lowndes	-	Support Officer
a Ms Jackie McGregor	-	Salvation Army
p Miss M Matthews	-	Society of Friends
p Mrs Jean O'Reilly	-	Humanism – Co-opted
p Mrs Jane Pridmore	-	Teachers Association
p Mr Paul Tipple	-	Baptist Union
p Major Suryaparsad Upadhya	-	Hindu
a Mrs J Warren	-	Higher Education – co-opted
a Rev. Howard Wright	-	Church of England
a Mrs. Jenny Zeffertt	-	Jewish
observers		
Mr Joel Matthews	-	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Mr Mark Gilmour	-	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Ms K Mitchell	-	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Prior to the start of the meeting Elizabeth Jenkerson, member of the Baha'i faith gave a short talk and Members were given time for questions.

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs L Fairhurst, Mrs D Casson, Ms E Fletcher, Mrs J Zeffertt, and Councillor Mrs J Porter.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that, where they believed that they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally, at the time of the debate, declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code .

No declarations of interest were made.

60. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Item 51 – Humanist Representation on SACRE

The Chairman thanked Jean for her presentation at the last meeting and the subsequent discussion about bringing Humanists into Group A (which comprises Christian denominations, other than the Church of England, and other religions and denominations representative of the area) rather than being co-opted member; she explained that a vote had not been taken at the meeting as the Council was not quorate. With regard to the issue of future membership of Group A she felt that it would be a good idea and a fair way forward to set up a sub group which would identify criteria that could be referred to when new members wish to apply to become members of SACRE. The meeting of this sub group would be held on 4 May 2011 at 12.00 pm at the RE Centre, Monarch Way, Winchester. Councillor Mrs Sam Darragh, Councillor Mrs Roz Muschamp, Mr Mohammed Ansar, Mr Chris Hughes, Mrs Jean O'Reilly, Mrs Elizabeth Jenkerson and Mr Tony Blackshaw volunteered to form the group.

It was indicated that the religion of the observer at the previous meeting should have been represented as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and not Mormon.

61. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman introduced Sue Butler as the new clerk to SACRE. She welcomed Margaret Matthews as the new representative from the Society of Friends and three observers from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.

She indicated that the next meeting, on June 7 2011 would be held at Fernhill School in Farnborough, starting with a presentation by students.

Members' attention was drawn to a free NASACRE Conference in Birmingham on 31 March 2011 entitled 'Whose RE Is It Anyway' and to the NASACRE AGM on 11 May 2011, which she would be attending; the remaining place at the AGM was offered to members and taken up by Mr Tony Blackshaw.

Mr Mohammed Ansar agreed to give a short presentation on the Muslim faith at the start of the November meeting. Members were also informed about how to obtain the Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals.

62. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations

63. MONITORING SUB GROUP

The Council received the report of the Director of Children's Services on the SACRE monitoring visits and GCSE results for summer 2010 (item 6 in the Minute Book).

Referring to their report the Officers indicated that the outcome of the, now completed, Primary monitoring visits had been very positive; they felt the reasons for this were that the syllabus was good and the schools had been trained to teach it. The outcome of the Secondary visits, which would be completed shortly, would be brought to the Council at the next meeting.

Concerns were raised about the continuation of the monitoring visits in the current economic climate, as they might be seen as a soft target for cuts, although this was the only way to monitor RE. There was considerable discussions about the monitoring of RE, particularly on the County Council's legal obligation. It was commented that the added value that SACRE's monitoring brings should have been in the report. Members urged that the County Council should be encouraged to look at the future of SACRE and its purpose, the nationally recognised syllabus that Hampshire has produced and to maintain this monitoring work.

Patricia Hannam referred to her report on the GCSE results and asked for the Council's approval to send letters of congratulations on behalf of SACRE to schools that had large numbers of candidates and very positive residuals for RE.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That SACRE notes the report
- (ii) That SACRE approves the proposal to write to congratulate schools with particularly positive outcomes for GCSE RE.

64. THE LAUNCH OF LIVING DIFFERENCE REVISED 2011

The Council received the report of the Director of Children's Services on the launch of Living Difference Revised 2011 (item 7 in the Minute Book).

It was confirmed that the Syllabus was now in all schools and members had been sent theirs. Patricia Hannam said that she had been working with the Corporate Communications department to arrange publicity for the Syllabus to coincide with events for National Celebrating RE month. She also indicated that they were looking at ways to market the Syllabus nationally. Some members raised concerns that many authorities and SACREs did not understand the conceptual enquiry approach required by the Hampshire Syllabus and would not be willing to change current practices; it was suggested that an approach be made to the National Society of RE Advisers to raise the profile of the Hampshire Syllabus.

RESOLVED:

That SACRE notes the report

65. THE NATIONAL CELEBRATING RE MONTH

The Council received the report of the Director of Children's Services on the National Celebrating RE month Celebrations (item 8 in the Minute Book).

In addition to the events noted in the report, the Officers brought to members' attention that there was a substantial list of events going on in both Primary and Secondary schools which could be accessed on RE Moodle; this included two Alton schools who would be planting a special tree as part of their Holocaust memorial work and several secondary schools who were hosting interfaith question times.

Members were pleased to be informed that three Hampshire Primary Schools - Hordle C of E Primary, St Albans C of E (Aided) Primary, Havant, and Sparsholt C of E Primary had won competitions as part of the RE celebrations. SACRE members were asked to volunteer to present the prizes at these schools .

RESOLVED:

- (i) That SACRE notes the report.

- (ii) That SACRE members contact their local schools to offer support during Celebrating RE month.
- (iii) That the prizes be presented at Sparsholt by Councillor Mrs Charlotte Bailey and either Mrs Pat Fry or Mr Mohammed Ansar, at Hordle by Mrs Elizabeth Jenkerson and at St Albans by Mrs Jackie Chong.

66. THE COALITION GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER FOR EDUCATION REFORM

The Council considered the report of the Director of Children's Services on the potential implications of the White Paper for RE in Hampshire schools (item 9 in the Minute Book).

Patricia Hannam introduced her report by explaining that the English Baccalaureate was not a new qualification, but a new measure by which schools would be judged. She gave a brief timeline of developments since its publication; and informed members that there was a national debate about whether the Humanities element of the English Baccalaureate should be restricted to History and Geography. There was concern that if RE was not included, even though it was to remain a compulsory subject, then schools would be likely to remove it from the GCSE curriculum in Key Stage 4. It was also brought to members' attention that spiritual, moral, social and cultural education had not been mentioned in the White Paper.

The officer gave her opinion that where the RE was good and highly regarded in Hampshire schools then heads seem likely to make no change to the KS 4 Curriculum, but that this might not be the case in all schools. She reiterated that within Hampshire schools the GCSE RE results were excellent and there had been a year on year increase in the numbers taking it.

There was considerable discussion about the status of RE in the context of a 'well-rounded education', its place in the English Baccalaureate, and the possibility of GCSE RE being removed or reduced as an option taken by young people at Key Stage 4 curriculum in some schools as a direct consequence of RE being excluded from the English Baccalaureate .

There was a consensus among members that channels should be found to raise the issue of RE as a Humanity in the English Baccalaureate and various options were considered. It was also agreed that SACRE should encourage schools to continue to provide a variety of RE courses at KS4 in order to ensure compliance with the statutory requirement .

RESOLVED:

- (i) That SACRE writes to Michael Gove and the Bishop of Oxford to encourage them to include RE in the English Baccalaureate.

- (ii) That SACRE writes to all Secondary School heads (with Heads of RE copied in) to encourage them to maintain GCSE RE as an option.

Mr Tony Blackshaw expressed his appreciation of the officers of the County Council who he said were showing real professionalism in the wake of all the changes that were going on in the departments in these difficult times.

Mr Mohammed Ansar told members about Southampton Muslim Council's Muslim Awareness month; he invited SACRE members to make contact if they would like to attend the conference on 26 March 2011.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 7 June 2011 at Fernhill School and Language College, Neville Duke Road, Farnborough, GU14 9BW