

AT A MEETING of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
held at the Portsmouth Synagogue, Southsea on 19 June 2012

PRESENT

Chairman

a Councillor A McNair Scott (Hampshire County Council)

Vice-Chairman

a Councillor R Chadd (Hampshire County Council)

p Mr. Mohammed Ansar	-	Muslim
a Councillor Mrs C. Bailey	-	Hampshire County Council
p Mrs. Maureen Barnes	-	Teachers' Association
a Mrs. Elaine Bellchambers	-	Higher Education – Co-opted
a Mr. Tony Blackshaw	-	Church of England
p Mrs J. Chong	-	Roman Catholic
Mrs R. Costambeys	-	Secondary - Co-opted
p Sheikh Fazle Abbas Datto	-	Muslim
p Councillor Sam Darragh	-	Hampshire County Council
p Councillor Mrs Liz Fairhurst	-	Hampshire County Council
a Mrs. Pat Fry	-	United Reformed Church
a 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 Joyce Johnson	-	Church of England
p Mrs Julie Lemon	-	Special Education – Co-opted
p Mrs Judith Lowndes	-	Support Officer
Ms Jackie McGregor	-	Salvation Army
p Miss Margaret Matthews	-	Society of Friends
p Mrs Linda Miatt	-	Teachers' Association
a Mrs Jean O'Reilly	-	Humanist – Co-opted
p Mrs Jane Pridmore	-	Teachers' Association
Rev.Ganshin Rock	-	Buddhist
Mr Harjap Singh	-	Sikh
a Mrs P Timms Blanch	-	Teachers' Association
p Mr Paul Tipple	-	Baptist Union
a Major Suryaparsad Upadhya	-	Hindu
p Mrs J Warren	-	Higher Education – co-opted
p Ms Caroline Welch	-	Church of England
a Rev. Howard Wright	-	Church of England
p Mr. Michael Zeffertt	-	Jewish

Observers – Mrs Lisa Gilmour of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints
Mr Warren Friedman of the Portsmouth Synagogue.

Prior to the start of the meeting Michael Zeffertt, the Jewish representative on SACRE, gave a presentation about the Jewish faith and answered questions raised by Members. He spoke about the history of the Jewish Community in Portsmouth and highlighted some of the interesting features of the building. He explained some of the liturgy, including giving a demonstration in Hebrew of some readings and hymns.

Councillor Liz Fairhurst was Acting Chairman for the meeting

Councillor Fairhurst explained that she would be Acting Chairman for this meeting, at the request of the Chairman, as neither the Chairman nor the Vice-Chairman were available. She further explained that Councillor Pam Mutton had had to step down from the Chairmanship of SACRE as she had been appointed Vice-Chairman of the County Council and that Councillor Anna McNair Scott would be taking on the role again.

107. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Anna McNair Scott, Councillor Roz Chadd, Councillor Pam Mutton, Councillor Charlotte Bailey, Colin How, Maeve Gordon-James, Elaine Bellchambers, Tony Blackshaw, Patricia Timms Blanch, Joyce Johnson, Julie Lemon, Major Suryaparsad Upadhya and Reverend Howard Wright .

108. 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.

109. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2012 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

101 SACRE – Membership of Group A

Members were informed that the County Council would also have to ratify SACRE's recommendation of a new group to be represented on SACRE.

110. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Acting Chairman thanked Michael Zeffertt for his presentation. She welcomed Mrs Lisa Gilmour of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints and Mr Warren Friedman of the Portsmouth Synagogue to the meeting.

Councillor Mutton had sent her thanks to all SACRE Members for the support they had given her over the last two years, and also to Patricia Hannam, Judith Lowndes and Sue Butler for their support and knowledge. She expressed her and the Council's appreciation of the commitment given to SACRE by Mr Paul Tipple who would be stepping down as the Baptist Union representative after 23 years on SACRE, including the Monitoring Sub-group.

Members were also informed that Mrs Julie Lemon, who represented special schools, was also retiring and thanks were given to her for her contribution to the work of SACRE.

111. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

112. SACRE MONITORING SUBGROUP

The Council received the report of the Monitoring Subgroup concerning a questionnaire on the implementation of Living Difference Revised, recent Ofsted reports and accreditation for non-examination RE.(item 7 in the Minute Book).

Judith Lowndes explained to Members that as the Agreed Syllabus had been in place for over a year the Subgroup felt it was important to evaluate its impact in schools; it was stressed that this questionnaire was a quantitative survey and that a qualitative one would follow. Members agreed to an amendment to question 5, to include whether a school had received an inspector's visit, attended a course or had a SACRE monitoring visit.

Members were told that the Subgroup had scrutinised recent Ofsted reports from nearly 40 primary and secondary schools in Hampshire and found that less than half mentioned spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and none had mentioned RE, despite the higher profile that had been given to SMSC in the new framework. Concerns about this had been raised with Alan Brine,

Ofsted's specialist adviser for RE, and Members were directed to Appendix 2 of the report to read his response. Attention was also drawn to the highlighted wording in the Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance (appendix 2) which specifically mentioned that the provision of RE should be looked at. Members expressed the hope that future inspections would take more account of this.

Members were informed that the County RE inspector was working with a number of Hampshire schools to formulate a non-examination RE course that would be of value to schools and students.

It was noted that funding had been received to continue the school monitoring visits during 2012/13. Members who had attended training with the syllabus, Living Difference Revised, were asked to indicate whether they would like to take part in the visits. The focus of the secondary school visits would be on the issue of the gender gap in attainment.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE endorsed the proposals from the group to carry out a quantitative survey by questionnaire of all relevant Hampshire schools.
- That SACRE noted the report

113. THE CONFERENCE FOR SOUTH WEST SACRES

The Council received a verbal report from Councillor Sam Darragh about the South West SACRE Conference that she attended on March 27 2012 on SACRE's behalf.(item 8 in the Minute Book)

She informed Members that the aims of the conference had been to give delegates clarity and understanding over the issues and challenges surrounding RE. It had been a good opportunity to share ideas and exchange experiences with attendees from SACRES all over the South West.

She highlighted a talk given by South Gloucestershire on promoting their SACRE by running events. She also spoke about two workshops she had attended; the first, entitled 'Belief: Sex and Relationships', had dealt with combining the emotional and religious aspects of sex education. The second workshop, on Collective Worship, had been delivered by an education officer for the Diocese of Exeter, which had focused heavily on Christian worship without much discussion or sharing of ideas for non-church schools.

She reported that many of the SACREs represented had had similar discussions to Hampshire about Humanist members becoming full voting members and a number of them had ignored legal advice and agreed to them joining their SACREs.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.

114. YOUTH VOICE

The Council received a report from Patricia Hannam about the preparations for the Youth Voice group (item 9 in the Minute Book).

Members were informed that the first meeting of Youth Voice was due to be held on 22 June 2012, with a second on 10 October 2012; five schools would be sending three students accompanied by a teacher. It was envisaged that a report would be brought to the November SACRE meeting on the outcome of these meetings. One of the initial questions for discussion by the group would be 'Why do we think RE is important in the world today?'

There was discussion after concerns were raised about the wording in 3.2 of the report about the involvement of young people 'from faiths' and whether Youth Voice would be a representative group of young people in Hampshire if non-faiths were not represented. It was commented that it was unknown whether the students attending the meeting had any religious affiliation and that this was only the first step on this venture. Members agreed that future paperwork would include the wording faith and non-faith.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.

115. ACADEMIES AND THE PROVISION OF RE

The Council received the report of the Director of Children's Services about schools in Hampshire that had converted to academies and the implication for the provision and monitoring of RE (item 10 in the Minute Book).

Members were informed that by the end of the summer term 2012 half of Hampshire's secondary schools would have become academies, but that the numbers converting had slowed since the monetary incentives had been reduced. The three types of academies were explained to the Council. Patricia Hannam indicated that making contact with the academies run by private companies was the most difficult.

It was reported that the impact on RE had been minimal so far. It was explained that the local authority had no responsibility for the RE provision within academies and that SACRE had no direct means of monitoring provision, but that good contact with teachers in all schools was being maintained and training and networking were continuing to be offered. Concerns were raised by Members about profit-making private companies taking over schools and the lack of monitoring. Members agreed to a proposal that a member of an academy school be invited to join SACRE as a co-opted member.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report and endorsed the proposal to invite a representative from an academy school to SACRE meetings as a co-opted member.

116. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SACRES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

The Council received the report of the Director of Children's Services on the NASACRE AGM and Conference on 23 May 2012 which had been attended by Patricia Hannam, the county inspector/advisor for RE and History, Councillor Roz Chadd and Major Suryaparsad Upadhya.

Patricia Hannam gave an overview of the Conference, highlighting the keynote address by Professor Robert Jackson and the national updates from Alan Brine, Ofsted Senior Inspector for RE, and Sarah Smalley, Chief Executive of the RE Council. She drew Members' attention particularly to page 2 of her report, explaining about The Council of Europe and its work, and indicated that a report about the implementation of Recommendation CM/R (2008)12, which concerned the teaching of RE across Europe, would be brought to the next SACRE meeting.

An email from Stephen Lloyd MP, Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Religious Education, concerning the inaugural meeting of this group on 11 June 2012 was circulated to Members. It was noted that two of the members were Hampshire MPs and it was suggested that other local MPs should be encouraged to support or join the group.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report and would consider at a later date the issues raised by the implementation of Recommendation *CM/R (2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers of member states on the dimension of religions and non religious convictions within intercultural education.*

117. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Michael Zeffertt brought to Members' attention his concerns regarding a recent GCSE RE question, which had made the news: *"Explain, briefly, why some people are prejudiced against Jews."* It was generally felt that the question was inappropriate, and would also have been if used in any other religious context. It was commented that if the subject had been well taught then students would answer this type of question appropriately and experience had shown that more intolerant answers were found on general religious papers, rather than ones concerned with a specific religion. Patricia Hannam told Members that her investigations about the question had shown it had been on a resit paper with only about one thousand students nationally sitting the paper.

Mohammad Ansar informed Members that he hoped to attend a joint meeting of the APPG on Education and the APPG on Islamophobia, at the House of Commons on 20 June 2012. The group would be looking at a report for the National Curriculum Review on improving the quality of History teaching in relation to religion and that he would report back to SACRE on the meeting. He also suggested that the introduction of an Islamophobia module into the Agreed Syllabus should be considered.

The Acting Chairman thanked Michael Zeffertt and the members of Portsmouth Synagogue for hosting the meeting, for their warm welcome and for giving a most informative presentation at the start of the meeting.

118. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 13 November 2012 at 1.30pm in the Mitchell Room, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester.

Prior to the main meeting there would be a talk by Mrs Lisa Gilmour from the Church of Jesus of the Latter-day Saints.