**Minutes of the Meeting of the Bath and North East Somerset Council**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**Held at Bath Spa University**

**on Wednesday 5th February 2020, 7.00 – 9.00 pm**

**Attendance:**

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| **Committee A: Christian Denominations and other Religions** | | |
| Jane O'Hara | Baha'i Community (Chair) | P |
| Mary Read | Catholic Community | P |
| Andrew Avison | Free Churches Group (Salvation Army) | A |
| Narada Das | Hindu Community – ISKCON (Vice-Chair) | A |
| Iris Segall | Jewish Community | P |
| Imam Mohammed Gamal | Muslim Community | A |
| Gagan Deep Singh | Sikh Community | - |
| Tim Powell | Unitarian Community | - |
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| **Committee B: Church of England** | | |
| Tony Bradley |  | P |
| David Williams | (Vice-Chair) | A |
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| **Committee C: Teachers’ Associations** | | |
| Kevin Burnett | National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) | P |
| Mary Patterson | Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) | A |
| Mark Quinn | Bath Spa University | P |
| Lindsey Thompson | National Education Union (NEU) | A |
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| **Committee D: Local Authority** | | |
| Cllr Eleanor Jackson |  | P |
| Yukteshwar Kumar |  | A |
| Stephen Luke | Senior Adviser: School Improvement and Achievement | A |
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| **In attendance** | | |
| Dave Francis | Clerk/Associate Adviser | P |
| Polly Netto | National Education Union (NEU) | P |
| Miranda Young | CofE Cathedral Education Office | P |

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

| **Item** | **Notes and resolutions** | **Action** |
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|  | **Welcome to members (Agenda item 1)**  JOH, in the Chair, welcomed members to the meeting, including prospective new members Polly Netto, National Education Union (NEU) and Miranda Young, Church of England (CofE). Apologies were noted as listed above. |  |
|  | **Public Discussion and Members’ Declarations (Agenda items 2, 3)**  No members of the public were present.  No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made. |  |
|  | **Minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2019 (Agenda items 4.1, 4.2)**  In relation to item 6, DF reported that he had been putting together a bid for funding for a NASACRE / Westhill Award and he undertook to forward his proposal to members for comment before submission.  In relation to item 7, JOH asked whether any further applications for the WIRE Award had been received. IS said that only one school had enquired so far, but they did not meet the criteria just yet. MR asked about the reasons for no further schools applying as in Bristol advisers were able to get into schools and encourage applications. IS suggested that we could continue to publicise the Award whenever we contact schools, and MR added that there might be opportunities linked to the new syllabus review as well as at LTLRE meetings. DF would remind schools of this in his next communication.  KB asked about the Local Advisory Network (LAN) pilot project. DF had requested further information from Claire Clinton who was leading the project. She had been ill and so progress with the project ha been delayed. More information was expected by the end of the month.  JOH proposed that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record, MQ seconded, and then all approved. | DF |
|  | **Membership and elections (Agenda item 5)**  Stephen Luke was proposed as the new Local Authority representative, taking over from Tom Morrison, by JOH and seconded by MR. Polly Netto was proposed as the new National Education Union (NEU) representative, in place of LT, by TB, and seconded by IS. Miranda Young (Wells Cathedral) was proposed as an additional Church of England representative by MR and seconded by KB. All were approved.  DF would ensure the NASACRE SACRE handbook would be sent to all new members. JOH reminded everyone of the rule about members who have not attended three meetings without offering apologies. Members had noted that TP had not attended recent SACRE meetings and DF had sent him an email asking whether he wished to continue as a representative for the Unitarian Church community. No reply had so far been received, so this would be followed up with a letter.  JOH reported that Dr Charles Bleakley of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) had expressed an interest in having representation on SACRE. DF suggested that, pending the naming of a specific person to the role, SACRE could debate the application in principle He reminded members of the legal requirement that SACRE Committee A comprises ‘such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the Authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area’. EJ asked about the LDS and whether they featured in any agreed syllabus. She had previously argued for the presence of Paganism in the agreed syllabus. DF suggested that it would be helpful to know more about the size of the local LDS community and IS noted that there were several young LDS members at a meeting of the Interfaith Group at the Bath LDS church. TB said there were about 18 million members of the LDS Church worldwide. There was a case for their representation as they might contribute optional teaching materials as JOH had provided for the Bahai Faith. EJ agreed that we should have a bit more information about the size of the community. JOH made the point that in the Interfaith Group it was a general expectation that there was no proselytising and she was sure the LDS would not do so as part of SACRE. MR said that if there were a practising LDS group in our area they should have a right to be represented on SACRE. TB agreed – they were a worldwide Church. DF would write to Charles about SACRE’s work and ask for some further information about the community locally.  MR wondered about the size of the Rastafarian community and information from the last census. EJ noted the presence of Fairfield House in Bath, where Haile Selassie had lived for a while, though there was only a small Rastafarian community in Bath itself. The next national census would be in 2021. | All members DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Finance Statement (Agenda item 6.1)**  DF circulated the latest SACRE Finance Statement and noted the items of spending so far. He reported that the funded initiatives spending included his visits to support Shoscombe and St Julian’s Primary Schools and the venue costs for the Holocaust Education Trust training that took place on Wednesday 15th January. His visit to Norton Hill Secondary School and the Holocaust Education Trust’s Officer expenses were to be added to the account. Since no more visits had been requested DF suggested that some of the remaining amount in that budget line be used to support his work on the Agreed Syllabus Review including a meeting with advisers in our syllabus partner SACREs: Bristol, Haringey and North Somerset. He would also prepare a bid to NASACRE / Westhill for funding to support a project involving teachers in developing materials on the use of contemporary issues and events in RE.  TB asked about how this fitted in with the Agreed Syllabus Review and DF replied that he was attempting to spread the costs over three financial years.  SACRE then agreed DF’s proposal.  Other items of expenditure were accounted for and members with travel expenses would be reminded to submit them immediately following the South-West SACREs conference on 2nd March.  DF said that the latest copies of the RE Today magazine along with a new curriculum booklet on Hindus would be added the Resources Centre at Saltford School. JOH confirmed that she had delivered the previous copies there since the last meeting. MQ has been given the latest BJRE and the Secondary curriculum booklet for the use of students on his PGCE programme. | JOH, MQ, DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Development Plan for 2020-21 (Agenda item 6.2)**  DF introduced the proposed development plan for the coming financial year, 2020-21.  This included an additional component for the Agreed Syllabus Review. He had, with encouragement from ND, EJ, JOH and YK written to various councillors in support of the request for additional funding and discussed this with SL at last month’s pre-SACRE planning meeting.  EJ reported that the new LibDem administration was reviewing all budgets. In the Scrutiny Panel it was uncertain how long it was going to take to review the external contracts. Information was hard to come by in terms of the breakdown of lump sums. The new administration had introduced a new type of budget: aspirational and with a particular focus on climate change. One of the other aims, to which RE most definitely contributes, is that of improving people’s lives. The ‘Prevent’ programme was also relevant here. EJ had spoken to the Scrutiny Panel about the SACRE requirement for funding. EJ noted that YK was on the administrative group and would be able to make a good case for SACRE funding. The Labour Group had looked at the proposal made by DF and said it was a relatively small bid that should be paid. EJ would press the case, aiming to bring the SACRE budget up to the suggested national minimum and that YK could help. JOH suggested we ask for a meeting with Kevin Guy and / or Mike Boden, but EJ said there was little time to do this now. EJ would meet the Leader of the Council next week and would talk to YK to go to cabinet on our behalf. DF would also write to Richard Samuel for support. A decision would likely be made by the Council on 25th Feb. | EJ, YK, DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Opportunities for SACRE members: South-West SACREs conference and NASACRE Conference and AGM (Agenda item 6.3)**  DF was pleased to note that three SACRE members would be attending the South-West SACREs conference at Dillington House in 2nd March: NB, JOH and KB. DF would also be attending as a workshop leader.  He also noted that some money had been set aside for attendance at the next NASACRE AGM and conference, to be held on 18th May at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, London, and asked if any member could attend. No one was sure but KB and MR thought they might be able to. DF would send an email reminder about the event to all. | All members KB, MR, DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Report on the proposal for SACRE to support implementation of Relationships and Sex Education (Agenda item 6.4)**  DF drew members’ attention to the report in the latest NASACRE Briefing. This had taken account of the letter he had sent on behalf of Bath & North East Somerset SACRE following discussion at the last meeting. He had not yet sent a letter to the Schools Minister about this and was waiting for the NASACRE response. He wondered whether we had a clear enough question or point to put to the Minister.  JOH reminded us that SACREs have no statutory duty or powers to provide RSE advice or support to schools.  MR wondered whether we could offer to approve schools’ new policies on RSHE as schools are interested in this. She thought this might raise the profile of SACRE as well as the new Ofsted Framework. She suggested that we might brief ourselves on the guidance as it applies to different age groups.  TB was concerned that the RSE world changes quite a bit. Schools had flexibility to use cross-curricular approaches and flexibility on how much faith comes into it. But if we were offering any advice that would be a big responsibility. MR acknowledged that but suggested as a first step that we brief ourselves as to what is already out there in terms of faith. PN said she was in charge of PSHE at her School – they had needed to make many changes as their current programme already covered the requirements. She thought it might be useful, though, to see what’s happening in different schools. Some buy in published materials such as ‘Jigsaw’ , others develop their own programmes.  KB wondered if we could clarify with the DFE what exactly primary schools are to be taught at different ages – it just wasn’t clear at present and left schools with a huge responsibility for which they had little guidance. DF thought that it might be good for NASACRE to ask the Minister about this and undertook to raise this with NASACRE. MR thought the guidance as it stood was not so threatening. She undertook, with PN, to bring some materials to brief SACRE members at the next meeting. | MR, PN, DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Update: Planning for Agreed Syllabus Review (Agenda item 7.1)**  DF reported that a meeting of advisers of the four Agreed Syllabus partner SACREs had been set up for 13th March in Bristol. The meeting was intended to plot the way forward and would make use of the schedule discussed at our last SACRE meeting. He mentioned that others with a keen interest can attend, but it is a small room. In the meantime advisers would work on the issues to be addressed, taking into account discussions in SACRE meetings, such as the *Report of the Commission on Religious Education* (CoRE) and publications such as the *Understanding Christianity* resource and the new *Ofsted Framework*.  JOH noted how the name ‘Awareness, Mystery and Value’ had caused some confusion and suggested that we might consider a new name as part of the review. | DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Report: Training from the Holocaust Education Trust (Agenda item 7.2)**  DF and MQ informed members about the training day led by the Holocaust Education Trust (HET) on 15th January 2020 at Bath Spa University. 14 History students and 3 RE students, plus 2 primary school teachers attended. DF’s report was included in the papers for this meeting. MQ noted that there were plenty of History students, as well as RE, at the event and they, and he, were all very impressed. Many of the students were interested in following this up with visits to Auschwitz and Israel. The trainer was ‘absolutely brilliant’; very engaging and sensitive to making sure the material was appropriate for different age groups. PN said that she had used the lessons from Auschwitz material and produced a cross-curricular scheme with History. IS thought the event was very useful but wondered how much should be done in RE, as it may have been more relevant in History. There had to be more than the Holocaust about Judaism. MR agreed but added that there were many philosophical and ethical points to be raised in RE lessons. MQ said he hoped to organise another HET training day for Bath Spa University Humanities students later in the year.  EJ noted that the recent Holocaust Memorial Day event in Bath had not given sufficient acknowledgement to British shortcomings in relation to the Holocaust.  TB noted that the word Holocaust is insufficient. It was important to note all the different groups caught up in the genocide. | MQ |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Bath Abbey Footprint Project (Agenda Item 7.3)**  DF reported that he had been contacted by the Leader of this project, Polly Andrews. She intended to get in touch with MP and DW about how to develop the project in relation to RE. JOH noted that there were forthcoming talks about the project taking place locally. | MP, DW |
|  | **Standards in RE and collective worship: Implications of the new Ofsted Framework (Agenda item 8.1)**  PN spoke about how her school was preparing for the new Ofsted Framework as a possible ‘deep dive’ subject. They had considered how Ofsted would scrutinise the curriculum by speaking with teachers and pupils about their learning. The key was ‘sequencing of learning’ and the big picture of whether pupils can make the link between what they learn in Year 7 and what they do in Year 11. PN provided handouts of the sorts of questions that inspectors might ask teachers, pupils and middle leaders at the school.  DF thought this would be important in the syllabus review, including its relation to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, British values, progression in learning and non-exam RE at Key Stage 4.  TB noted the varied experiences of RE in the Primary sector and DF said that the Agreed Syllabus Review needed to take account of national guidance on entitlement to RE.  KB added that governors would need to consider how to explain why they were doing things in a certain way in their particular context. They would need to show they understood the importance of children building up 'big ideas' and concepts in their learning. Schools would need to show how sequences of learning fit together to create the general picture of knowledge for each subject. Knowledge retention i.e. 'Learning the key ideas' was a focus and some schools were using recent research to support children to retain what they have been taught. Workload was particularly an issue at primary level as there were no 'Heads of Dept.' for each subject nor time or money to ensure such curricula were developed. |  |
|  | **Standards in RE and collective worship: To receive the SACRE Annual Report for 2018-19 (Agenda item 8.2)**  DF said that schools had been sent a final electronic copy of the Annual Report, which now included analysis of examination results, and that it had been uploaded to the SACRE website. Copies had also been sent to the Secretary of State for Education, NASACRE and to our local MPs, along with an invitation to attend a SACRE meeting. Wera Hobhouse (Bath) was not able to attend presently, but Jacob Rees-Mogg (North Somerset) had agreed to attend the July meeting.  The SACRE officers would meet in June to plan the agenda for that meeting and would include opportunities for Mr Rees-Mogg to meet SACRE members and to ask questions at the meeting. | All members  DF, DW, ND, JOH |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) (Agenda item 9.1) and the SACRE website (Agenda item 9.2)**  DF reported that the SACRE website had been updated and the Annual Report was available to download from there. MR noted that she and IS were unable to attend the LTLRE steering group meeting. MQ is a new member but was also unable to attend. MR would ask Ed Pawson for more information on forthcoming meetings of the group. | MR, MP |
|  | **Regional and local developments: SACRE Resource Centre (Agenda item 9.3)**  JOH said there was nothing to report. | JOH |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Diocese of Bath and Wells (Agenda item 9.4)**  MY explained that the Diocese of Bath & Wells covers three local authority areas: Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and Somerset. Events at the Cathedral are done with all schools across the three LAs – there’s a sixth form conference for example. The conferences bring in speakers from different faiths. She asked if Wells Cathedral contacts could be put on the SACRE website list of places to visit and DF undertook to investigate.  JOH and IS also informed her that there is a thriving Interfaith Group in Bath which could help with contacts from different faiths. | DF |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Bath Interfaith Group (Agenda item 9.5)**  JOH provided a handout about the Group’s AGM on 10th February, 7 pm, at Bath Islamic Centre. Members would be informed of further events in due course. | JOH |
|  | **National developments: (Agenda items 10.1, 10.2)**  The latest NASACRE briefing had been circulated with the papers before the meeting.  Members suggested that the new South-West Regional Ambassador for RE, Laura Harris, might be invited to a future SACRE or LTLRE meeting. | All members |
|  | **Date and Venue for Next Meetings (Agenda item 11)**  The next meetings would be held at Bath Spa University on Thursday 2nd July and Wednesday 14th October 2020. MQ undertook to book a room for the next meeting. | All members  DF, MQ |
|  | **Other Business (Agenda item 12)**  There was no other business. |  |

Jane O’Hara (Chair)



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