

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

13 March 2017

PRESENT: Michael Gammage (Chairman), Karen Butler (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Natasha Airey and Richard Kellaway, Anne Andrews, Hilary Harris, Ila Gangotra, Joan Hicks, Barbara Meaney, Deborah Firth, Louise Ceska and Ravinder Singh Zandu.

Officers in attendance: Andy Carswell and Clive Haines

ACTION

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies For Absence

Apologies were received from Liz Jenkins, Anthea West and Ceri Neil.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes Of Meeting on November 8

The minutes of the meeting held on November 8th 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

Members discussed the actions arising from the previous meeting.

Action	Responsibility	Progress
Sub group to be set up to investigate fundraising	Andy Carswell/Clive Haines/Cllr Airey	Completed
Area Dean to be contacted regarding replacement for Felicity Gunn	Anne Andrews	Area Dean contacted/discussions taken place with Joan Hicks
Annual Report to be submitted	Anne Andrews	To be submitted following discussion relating to GCSE results
NASACRE to be informed of members' approval of the Constitutional changes	Anne Andrews	Completed
NASACRE to be informed of member feedback regarding the Building Respectful Schools and Societies letter	Anne Andrews	Completed
Members to receive meeting brochure and booking form for Oxford Diocesan	Andy Carswell	Completed

Board of Education's training course		
Refreshments to be provided at future meetings	Andy Carswell	Completed

Anne Andrews informed members that no feedback had been received from NASACRE relating to concerns raised about the wording of the Building Respectful Schools and Societies letter.

Clive Haines informed members that all expenses had been accounted for in the Budget and that it was likely that there would be around £600 to be rolled over into next year's Budget. Payments relating to the Crossing the Bridges project and support provided by Anne Andrews had been accounted for. Anne Andrews said that the amount spent on Crossing the Bridges this year would be spent on the Syllabus Review next year.

Clive Haines said that although the Budget for next year had been agreed, and that the sums would be similar to this year's, Officers had not yet seen a full breakdown of figures for the Budget.

5 Membership Update

Anne Andrews informed members that Gary Homewood was still on long term sick leave and was unable to attend meetings. She had asked about a replacement member being available to represent the Methodists at meetings. A replacement had been agreed in principle; however they had been unable to attend the meeting.

Anne Andrews informed members that the Area Dean had been contacted in relation to providing a replacement for Felicity Gunn, but no suggestions had been forthcoming. However she had also spoken to Joan Hicks in relation to this, and two possible replacements had been identified. Anne Andrews informed members that both replacements may join SACRE as Joan Hicks had indicated that she may wish to step down from the group.

Action: Anne Andrews and Joan Hicks to make arrangements for the two identified replacement members.

6 Fundraising Update

Cllr Airey informed members that a sub group was set up with a view to raising money that would be used to pay for school visits to places of worship. A number of businesses were identified during the sub group discussions and contacted to ask if they were willing to make a donation. Cllr Airey informed members that a limited number of responses were received from the businesses that were contacted, and that nobody had said they were willing to donate to the fund. Due to the amount of Officer time spent on the project without success, it was agreed not to proceed any further. However Cllr Airey stated her belief that many businesses would now be aware of SACRE and the Crossing the Bridges project as a result.

Karen Butler asked if any of SACRE's budget could be used towards providing funding for school visits. Cllr Airey said that this would not be an appropriate use of the budget and that it would be more appropriate for schools to apply for a grant instead.

Barbara Meaney asked if other companies and businesses could be contacted to ask if they had any available transport that could be provided. Clive Haines said that this would lead to issues regarding arrangements for insurance.

Clive Haines left the meeting at 6.39pm.

7 NASACRE Big Survey

Anne Andrews informed members that her preference was for the answers to the Big Survey questions to be agreed after a group discussion, rather than for it to be done electronically. A group discussion followed to consider the best responses to the questions being asked.

Cllr Kellaway left the meeting at 7pm. Cllr Airey left the meeting at 7.15pm.

During the discussions on the Section 3 items, members agreed that they were in favour of a nationally agreed RE syllabus. Members felt that a national framework would be useful as a training tool for teachers, although it was felt that there needed to be flexibility to allow input at a local level. It was agreed that it should be suggested that a national syllabus should be applied to the EBacc examination.

In relation to Section 7, members agreed that the three main areas of work covered by the RBWM SACRE were sourcing funding, teacher training, and Crossing the Bridges/collaborating with other SACREs. It was agreed that the SACRE does monitor the compliance and quality of RE provision through teacher training and responding to Ofsted and SIAMS reports. Members agreed that looking to the future there should be a continuing focus on Crossing the Bridges and provision of teacher training, and attempting to increase the number of school visits to places of worship.

Members were asked if they wanted to investigate the possibility of holding meetings at schools around the Royal Borough. It was felt that although the idea was good in theory, it could lead to additional costs from hiring venues and having the appropriate school staff available. Members felt it would be more productive if SACRE members could give a talk at a school and provide feedback at the next meeting.

Action: Anne Andrews to respond to NASACRE with members' answers to the Big Survey questions.

Action: Karen Butler and Louise Ceska to arrange a school visit and report back to members at the next meeting.

8 Syllabus Review

Anne Andrews informed members that the process of discussing the syllabus review would begin at the next SACRE Hub meeting on April 25th. She informed members that she had spoken to RE Subject Leaders at a recent meeting and would raise their comments at the Hub meeting.

9 Pan Berkshire SACRE Hub

Members were informed that a training session would be held on April 25th at Wokingham Borough Council. Karen Butler said that the information provided by Jan Lever at Hub meetings was comprehensive and informative. Karen Butler expressed disappointment that six people had had to drop out of the last training session at late notice, with four of those representing the Royal Borough and two of those being from the same school.

Members were also informed that the next Annual Conference had been arranged for September 28th.

Action: The clerk to circulate details of the training session to gauge interest, and to send the attendance list to the administrator.

10 SACRE Member training

Member training had been discussed during the item on the NASACRE Big Survey. It was agreed that no further discussion was necessary on this item.

11 Self Evaluation Toolkit

The Chairman noted that discussions relating to four sections of the Toolkit had taken place during the item on responding to the NASACRE Big Survey. The only section that remained outstanding related to Collective Worship. It was agreed to defer the item until the next meeting for further discussion.

Action: For an item on discussions relating to Collective Worship to be included on the next meeting agenda.

12 Annual Report 2015-6

Members felt there was no more to add on this topic as discussions on the Annual Report had already taken place during the meeting.

13 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business raised by members.

14 Dates Of Future Meetings

The clerk informed members that the dates for the next three meetings would be June 6th 2017, November 28th 2017 and March 27th 2018. All meetings would take place at 6pm in the Council Chamber.

15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The resolution was not needed.

16 Results of GCSE RE exams in the Royal Borough

Members were reminded that data relating to GCSE results from the last three years had been requested at the previous meeting.

Cllr Kellaway expressed his disappointment that some schools were not offering RE as a GCSE subject. Louise Ceska said that although there was a requirement for RE to be studied, there was no requirement for it to be taught as a GCSE exam subject.

Anne Andrews said that she had sent a letter to schools in Bracknell Forest, in her role as RE advisor within the Borough, to ask what provision there was for RE teaching in schools that did not offer the subject at GCSE. She explained that the schools had responded positively to the letter. It was noted by members that Desborough College did not have anybody take RE at GCSE in 2016, and that the numbers at the Boys' and Girls' Schools in Windsor were very low, and that these schools could be sent a letter.

Members were asked whether the exam results should be included in the Annual Report to be sent to NASACRE. After some discussion it was decided not to include the full breakdown of results, but to provide a detailed commentary. It was noted, for example, that the number of A*-C passes in the Royal Borough had risen over the last three years.

Action: Anne Andrews to write to Desborough College, Windsor Boys' and Windsor Girls' Schools to ask about their provision for RE teaching.

Action: The exam results to be removed from the Annual Report and replaced with a commentary prior to being submitted to NASACRE.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, ended at 7.44 pm