

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

17 June 2021

PRESENT: Michael Gammage (Chairman), Karen Butler (Vice-Chairman), Chris Sayers, Darcy Chesterfield-Terry, Margaret Dudley, Ila Gangotra, Sarah Bradley, Clare Roberts, Barbara Meaney, Ravinder Singh Zandu, Councillor Donna Stimson, Councillor Julian Sharpe and Councillor Shamsul Shelim

Officers in attendance: Anne Andrews, Shilpa Manek and Mark Beeley

ACTION

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

2 Reflection

Barbara Meaney gave a short reflection to SACRE.

3 Membership Update

The Chairman explained that a new member had joined SACRE. Clare Roberts, from Cheapside School, introduced herself.

4 Apologies For Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Clive Haines, Thomas Kingsley-Jones, Louise Ceska, Anthony Lewis, Richard Rhodes, Sally Lynch and Hilary Harris.

5 Minutes Of Meeting on 09/03/21

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2021 were approved.

Karen Butler asked why there was not an item on the agenda for SACRE members to report back from visits into schools, as had been discussed at the last meeting.

The Chairman explained that it would be part of SACREs plan to monitor progress in schools going forward. The item had not been included on the agenda for the meeting as it was expected that members of SACRE had not been able to visit schools due to the pandemic.

**6 NASACRE Funding Report - questions to LA and SACRE response
*Update - this will be a verbal report***

Anne Andrews explained that NASACRE had sent out a Freedom of Information request to all local authorities to find out how much of the budget was being spent on SACREs. NASACRE suggested that funding should come from the 'central schools services block', but funding for the RBWM SACRE did not come from this block. The results showed that there was variation in the funding SACREs received, some got a significant amount of funding while others did not. The mean funding across the country was around £11,000.

These results would allow SACREs to approach their local authority to see if they could gain further funding, if required.

The Chairman mentioned that Anne Andrews was now on the executive committee of NASACRE. Clive Haines had provided a written update where he confirmed that the RBWM SACRE was not funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant, it was funded by the General Fund. The Chairman drew particular attention to the following question: "Were there any barriers to providing funding to fulfil your statutory duties in relation to SACRE and/or the Agreed Syllabus Conference, that you'd like to tell us about?"

The response from Clive Haines had been "There was insufficient funding to provide enough adviser support, fund activities and events." The Chairman agreed with these comments and that is important for SACRE to be given the appropriate resources to fulfil its duties.

7 Summary of Ofsted Review and report into RE

Anne Andrews said that the report from Ofsted was very useful, particularly for syllabus reviews. The document set out the expectations and principles of what made good RE. It suggested that the curriculum should be a 'vehicle for pupil progress' in the subject while the report discussed three types of knowledge, substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge. Looking at the consequences of the report for SACRE, the syllabus should be revised and ready for 2023 and then implemented in 2024. It was useful that the Ofsted review had come out now, the last commission on RE report was after the syllabus had been revised so the report could not be taken into account at the time.

Anne Andrews explained that she had put together a document containing all the key points of the Ofsted report, which had been circulated as part of the agenda pack. The report talked about the country being a multi-religious and multi-secular world which was important. Richard Kueh, who was the Ofsted HMI for RE, was happy to talk to SACREs and it might be a good opportunity for him to be involved with the syllabus review.

Karen Butler suggested that Richard Kueh could be invited to a Pan-Berkshire meeting when the syllabus review was launched, to give a keynote talk.

Anne Andrews said it would be good to have all six Berkshire SACREs invited to a keynote talk when the syllabus review was launched.

The Chairman said the timing of the Ofsted review was good as it would mean the syllabus review could be shaped by what had been suggested in the report. Ofsted were publishing a report next spring on the quality of RE being taught which would again be useful to feed into the syllabus review. The Chairman said the report was ambitious for RE and it was clear that Ofsted wanted to tackle the issues in society.

Barbara Meaney said that she had seen several things from Richard Kueh and felt that he seemed very interested in RE, schools and teachers. The report wanted RE to be a positive experience.

Margaret Dudley said that she was impressed by the report, it came across as very positive. She thanked Anne Andrews for her summary which was also very useful.

8 Progress report from Thomas Kingsley-Jones and Fr Darcy on filming

As Thomas Kingsley-Jones was unable to attend the meeting, the Chairman read out a written update which had been sent in advance. Thomas Kingsley-Jones had been working with Anne Andrews and Father Darcy on creating a set of 'Faith-Discussions' starting with a Christian beliefs and practices discussion. A Zoom planning meeting and a face-to-face planning session had taken place in the Church and it was hoped to film before the summer holidays. The first video would be trialled for use at Churchmead School and if SACRE and RE Networks thought they would be of use then this could be shared after the trial period.

Darcy Chesterfield-Terry said that a date for filming had been set and they were going to plan what would be talked about. A 'behind the scenes' film would also be produced.

Anne Andrews said that she attended the first planning meeting to offer ideas.

The Chairman asked what the film would be about.

Anne Andrews explained that the Westhill films only dealt with certain areas, these films would look at GCSE knowledge and more in-depth theology.

Karen Butler said that she thought the original purpose of the films was to have a virtual tour of the church.

Darcy Chesterfield-Terry said that there was so much to take in on a virtual tour and that there was almost too much to be able to make a condensed worthwhile film.

9 Westhill project update - next filming dates and feedback from launch and NASACRE AGM

Anne Andrews explained the launch was well attended, with around 50 people being present including a significant number from RBWM and Bracknell Forest. Barbara Meaney stood in at the last minute to deliver a workshop which was really appreciated. The films were now available on the NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE) website and it would be interesting to see if page analytics were available so that the number of people who had watched the films could be tracked. Anne Andrews had given a presentation on the project at the NASACRE conference and the feedback was very positive. Reading Faith Forum was closing down and had money to dispose of, a bid had been put in of £2,000 to make another five films.

Karen Butler asked Anne Andrews to give a brief summary of the project for Clare Roberts, who was attending her first SACRE meeting.

Anne Andrews explained that 36 individual short films in total had been created which had been filmed at six religious venues. Each film focused on one syllabus question and two films were made at each Key Stage in each venue, with accompanying notes being provided on the NATRE website. There were plans to get a working party of teachers together to produce detailed lesson notes and resources, with different questions being asked for each Key Stage group.

The Chairman commented that the films were an excellent resource and had been created on a limited budget.

Members of SACRE discussed the newsletter and Clare Roberts mentioned that she did not receive the newsletter emails from Anne Andrews.

ACTION – Anne Andrews to check newsletter distribution list and add Clare Roberts to the list.

10 Report form others who attended NASACRE AGM on keynotes and workshops

The Chairman provided a written update from Thomas Kingsley-Jones, who attended the NASACRE conference. He thanked SACRE for the opportunity to attend the conference which was incredibly interesting, thought-provoking and professionally useful. Thomas Kingsley-Jones passed on his congratulations to Anne Andrews on her new appointment to NASACRE.

Barbara Meaney also attended the conference. She really enjoyed it and took notes on a number of the key notes and speakers, professional notes were also provided by NASACRE for those who were not able to attend. After the key notes, the conference broke off into smaller discussion groups and also took part in various workshops across the day. Barbara Meaney also congratulated Anne Andrews on her appointment to NASACRE.

The Chairman suggested that it would be useful to circulate the feedback and notes that NASACRE had produced. Anne Andrews said that the notes were available on the website and had also been sent out to SACRE clerks.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to send out NASACRE conference notes to SACRE members.

11 Update on the timing of the secondary survey

This was considered as part of the 'Forward thinking' agenda item.

12 Budget Update *Update - this will be a verbal report*

The Chairman had been given a written update from Clive Haines, where it was confirmed that there was £1,500 left in the SACRE budget for this year.

Karen Butler said that at the last Hub meeting, the syllabus review had been discussed and would cost around £500 in the current financial year.

The Chairman discussed the FOI request and said that he would ask Clive Haines when the responses were published.

Anne Andrews said that she assumed the responses Clive Haines had given were the final version as the deadline to submit information was 31st March 2021.

The Chairman said that he would check with Clive Haines to see if the FOI responses would be published and if they were, they could then be distributed to SACRE members.

ACTION – The Chairman to check with Clive Haines regarding the FOI responses.

13 Forward thinking - what do we plan for next year?

The Chairman said that SACRE had three objectives and it was important that members tried to understand what was going on in schools so that high quality RE teaching could continue to be delivered. A network for primary school

teachers was up and running and a secondary school network had also been launched.

Anne Andrews said that the syllabus review needed to be considered. She agreed with the Chairman that it was important to find out what was going on in schools. Anne Andrews was surprised when she first joined SACRE that there was no system in place to easily monitor teaching. She suggested that it would be useful for a member of SACRE who was not involved in schools already to come to a network meeting to get a sense of what was going on.

Karen Butler suggested to Anne Andrews that it could be worth raising as part of her new role on the NASACRE executive committee. It was important not to judge teaching and that it was all about describing rather than evaluating. SACREs were required to monitor teaching and it was one of its key functions. Karen Butler was interested in hearing the views of teachers on how SACRE could improve its monitoring.

Sarah Bradley asked why judgement was being avoided. Teachers received limited feedback on their teaching, so useful feedback from SACRE observations could prove to be beneficial.

Clare Roberts agreed and suggested that monitoring could work in a similar way to how it was used by school governors.

Barbara Meaney said that her school had struggled with moderation of work to ensure that it truly reflected ability. Moderation meetings could help to support teaching.

Karen Butler said that Anne Andrews could pick that up as part of the secondary teachers network. SACRE members could sit in and observe moderation sessions which would provide good evidence of the quality of work being produced.

Anne Andrews said that across the diocese six RE network meetings had been planned, one for each term and 13 different schools would be involved. Teachers would be able to go to their nearest 'hub' to undertake the work monitoring which had been suggested by Barbara Meaney. The main challenge was capacity and finding SACRE members with time to go into schools to observe lessons.

The Chairman said finding ways to be more systematic and developing the primary and secondary networks further should be viewed as the direction of travel for SACRE. He suggested that along with the Vice Chairman and Anne Andrews, they would create a document setting out what SACRE was hoping to achieve over the coming year. The Chairman invited anyone else who would be interested in taking part to help with the document.

Karen Butler said that it was important to include the foundations for the review of the syllabus.

The Chairman said that the budget should also be considered. A case could be made to RBWM to increase the amount of money available for SACRE to use, to match its ambitions.

Councillor Stimson left the meeting.

Barbara Meaney expressed an interest in being involved in the SACRE action plan for the forthcoming year.

Anne Andrews said that she would be meeting with the other advisors on the Hub in July to work on a timeline for things like the syllabus review.

ACTION – The Chairman, Karen Butler, Anne Andrews and Barbara Meaney to work on a document setting out what SACRE aimed to achieve over the next year. The Chairman to discuss budget proposals with Clive Haines.

14 Any Other Business

Karen Butler asked if any SACRE members had visited any schools since the last meeting.

Margaret Dudley said that she had recently started providing assemblies for Eton Wick, twice a week.

Darcy Chesterfield-Terry said that he was continuing to do virtual assemblies and classes for primary schools.

Clare Roberts said that their local vicar was doing assemblies outside in the school playground.

15 Dates Of Future Meetings

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 13th September 2021, starting at 6pm.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, ended at 7.30 pm