

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on
Wednesday, 4th November, 2020**

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Ashpreet Singh Nainu (Chair), Sue Elbrow, Julie Siddiqi, Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan,
Waqar Bhatti, Shujah Hamid and Hardip Singh Sohal

Committee 2 – Church of England

Lynda Bussley (Vice-Chair) Christine Isles and
Andrea Sparrow

Committee 3 – Teacher (Representing Primary, Secondary and Special Schools)

Munsoor Malik – Primary
Priya Lamba – Primary
Ian Sharpe - Secondary

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillors Basra, H Cheema, Gahir, Qaseem and Smith

Humanist Non-Voting Co-opted Member

Robin Launder

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Nominations were sought for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for the next SACRE year.

Ashpreet Singh Nainu was proposed and seconded to serve as Chair and this was agreed unanimously.

Lynda Bussley was proposed and seconded to serve as Vice-Chair and this was agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

- i) That Ashpreet Singh Nainu be elected as Chair for the 2020/21 SACRE year.
- ii) That Lynda Bussley be elected as Vice-Chair for the 2020/21 SACRE year.

(Ashpreet Singh Nainu in the Chair).

2. Welcome and introduction

Congratulations

Members congratulated Julie Siddiqi on being awarded an MBE in the recent Queen's Honours List for services rendered in widely promoting interfaith understanding.

Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting. Rev Gordon Briggs, the prospective Church of England representative and Robin Launder, a prospective Humanist Co-optee were introduced to the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 15th July 2020

Resolved – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th March 2020 be approved as a correct record, subject to £9000 being amended to £900. in Minute 29: *Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub Notes of meeting held on 30th January and 2nd July 2020.*

4. Matters Arising

Arising from Minute No. 30 (SACRE Network meeting held on 22nd June 2020 – Update), Julie Siddiqi reported that Ian Sharpe had produced a presentation recording of an assembly on Remembering Srebrenica that could be a useful resource for RE teachers.

Resolved - That the update be noted.

5. SACRE Membership Update

It was noted that three teachers had been nominated and appointed to Committee 3 category (representing Primary and Secondary Schools). There were still 3 vacancies remaining in this category.

Lynda Bussley had been nominated and appointed to Committee 2 category (The Church of England). Rev Gordon Briggs had been proposed as a Church of England representative, subject to his nomination being formalised. There were no remaining vacancies in Committee 2.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

6. Appointment of Co-Opted member (Humanist specialist)

SACRE appointed Robin Launder to serve as a Co-opted member with an expertise in Humanism. As a Co-opted member, he will serve as a full member but would not have the right to vote.

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Mr Launder trained people to become school speakers, was a teacher and a Humanist School speaker.

The Professional Adviser (Adviser) added that NASACRE had recommended that it was vital to have a Humanist representative on SACRE. It was also nationally recognised that the agreed Syllabus had been broadened to include Humanism (or other non-religious world views).

During discussion, the issue of providing voting rights as a Humanist representative under Committee 1 (Christian Denomination and Other Faiths) was raised. It was highlighted that by law, Humanism could not be listed under Committee 1. The issue of voting rights would therefore have to be explored further and reported back to a future SACRE meeting.

(Cllr Qaseem joined the meeting).

Resolved:

- i) That Robin Launder be appointed with immediate effect to 2024, as a Co-opted member to provide expertise as a Humanist representative on Slough SACRE.
- ii) That further details relating to the guideline on Humanism be provided for SACRE members for information.

7. Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub Update

Real People, Real Faith – A film resource

Christine Isles reported that filming had now been completed with the final filming at Slough Baptist Church. A great variety of people from different faiths and background had been filmed sharing their views on their faith. The films would be accompanied by notes to support teachers as a useful RE resource in teaching.

The SACRE discussed various ways that the films could be made available to schools and noted that they could be pinned, but would ultimately be posted on TrueTube, a website for schools where short films could be posted. They may also be posted on the Oxford Diocese website. The Adviser would liaise with Anne Andrews (RE adviser, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education) to arrange for links to be sent to teachers to access the videos and to explore the possible of joining YouTube as an additional platform to make the films more widely available and easily accessible.

It was highlighted and acknowledged that not all primary schools were permitted to access YouTube.

Resolved that:

- i) The update be noted.

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- ii) The Professional Adviser would liaise with Anne Andrews (RE adviser, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education) to make arrangements for enabling schools to access the films and accompanying notes via TrueTube and any other possible platforms.

8. Draft Annual Report 2019-2020

The Adviser introduced the draft SACRE Annual Report 2019-2020. The Chair's comments had yet to be included and members were invited to send comments by end of November 2020.

It was highlighted to note the change in Committee 3 membership.

The 2019-2020 GCSE data was not yet available and would be attached separately.

A copy of the Annual Report would be submitted to the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) once the Chairs comments and amendments had been made.

Resolved – That the Draft Annual Report be approved, subject to the inclusion of the Chair's comments.

9. SACRE News Letter - Autumn Term

The SACRE noted the Autumn Term 2020 RE Newsletter. It was reported that the regular updates on national and local RE issues were included in the newsletters. Updates on free CPD (continuing professional development) resources, as well as online support were also included to provide support for teachers in Slough.

The Chair highlighted the Starter Activity Grid appended to the back of the newsletter and thanked the two teachers that had developed the grid and for agreeing for it to be shared with other teachers.

SACRE noted that the proposed question and answer sessions (Q & A) for RE teachers had been postponed, due to limited time in linking the sessions in with Inter Faith Week. The Adviser reported that teachers at the Network meetings did not consider that it would be appropriate to proceed with the proposal, as it would not be possible to interact with pupils, given the current Covid-19 restrictions on social distancing. Support would continue to be provided to teachers through the Network meetings and the RE Newsletter.

The following were requested to be included in the next newsletter:

- Presentation assembly on Remembering Srebrenica.
- Information on Humanism.

The Chair suggested that a Q & A session with Julie Siddiqi (Islam), Lynda Bussley (The Church of England) and Robin Launder (Humanism) should be

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arranged after the Easter break. Members would be invited to talk to teachers about their faiths, followed by questions and discussions on how best they could be supported in their teaching.

It was discussed that a 'good news' section should be included in the Newsletter for teachers to share the positive things they were doing in class.

The Adviser confirmed that success sharing would also be included as an item on the agenda at the next Network meeting.

(Jo Curd joined the meeting).

Resolved that:

- i) The Autumn Term 2020 RE Newsletter be noted.
- ii) A Q and A session on SACRE members' faiths with the members set out above be arranged to take place after the Easter school holidays.
- iii) The Starter Active Grid to be circulated to schools via the Link.

10. SACRE Action/Forward Plan 2020-2021

Members reviewed and discussed the Action Plan/Forward Plan 2020-2021.

Subject to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, the Adviser urged members to attend the NASACRE AGM on 24 May 2021 and the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub conference in July 2021.

The SACRE commended David Rees, the Professional Adviser for all his hard work.

Resolved - That the update to October 2020 be noted.

11. Equality and Diversity Resources

The Adviser announced that many online activities were available during Inter faith week and highlighted the forthcoming Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2021.

Members were encouraged to notify the Adviser of any activities that were taking place in Slough for information.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

12. SACRE Finance Update

The Senior Effectiveness Officer reported that no record had been found of the £1,300 that had been ring fenced in 2016 for purchasing RE resources (formerly stored at Montem Primary School); or record of the money being passed on to the Oxford Diocese .

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It was confirmed that the ring fenced funding of £1,300 had however been reinstated.

Members discussed that the money should be carried over, as it had been ring fenced for the sole purpose of purchasing or providing RE resources for schools.

With regard to the issue of carrying over money to the next financial year, Rev Briggs advised that SACRE could either direct accounts to make an accrual to carry over to spend in the new financial year, or pass the money to Oxford Diocese to retain and return to SACRE when needed. The remaining £395 underspend from the SACRE budget could also be carried over in this way.

During discussions the following possible options for spending the remaining money were suggested:

- Increase the number of RE network meetings.
- Check whether/how schools could be supported using some of the money. It was acknowledged that this option would be an issue in the current Covid-19 environment, as paper resources could not yet be used.
- Increase the level of training.
- Retain the money until restrictions were lifted as it would be hard to engage speakers to visit schools in the current environment.

(The Professional Adviser left the meeting).

Resolved:

- i) That SACRE directs the School Effectiveness Officer to liaise with Rev Briggs to make an accrual for the carryover of £1,300 ring fenced RE resources money.
- ii) That an accrual be made for £395 underspend from the SACRE budget to be carried over to the next financial year.
- iii) That the RE Network meetings be increased to six meetings this year.
- iv) That due to Covid-19, expenditure on resources using ring fenced money be put on hold until the lifting of restrictions.

13. SACRE Membership News (An update from members regarding activities undertaken since the last SACRE meeting)

Julie Siddiqi advised that she had received the MBE for services rendered in promoting interfaith understanding since 1996 and for her community work. She had been doing charity work for over 25 years and had set up a Muslim Women's Network group five years ago. Mrs Siddiqi had been proactive in challenging the status quo regarding gender and equality in variously places including the Mosque. She had continued to question why there were no women in leadership positions and highlighted faith community issues

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regarding gender. Mrs Siddiqi was also a governor at Slough and Eton and Eden Schools.

She would be taking part in the Women and Faith in Slough discussions with local women on 15 November 2020, as part of the Interfaith Week.

SACRE gave a vote of thanks to Julie for all her hard work as a SACRE member and the work she had done in the Slough community.

The Vice-Chair announced that St Mary's Church was currently in the process of appointing a new rector to replace Rev Andrew Allen.

Sue Elbow reported that the Free Churches had been proactive in supporting feeding programmes in Africa and were equally engaged in providing soups, blankets for people in need in the community. Individuals had also been giving donations to help provide much needed support to people during the Covid-19 crisis.

Councillor (Cllr) Gahir reported that the Gurdwaras in Slough had been doing great work in feeding the homeless and helping people get back on their feet and saving lives.

Cllr Smith commended the work that was being done in Slough to bring charities and other faith groups together. He celebrated the Slough community for working in harmony to support those in need in the current crisis.

Julie Siddiqi highlighted that it was disappointing that there had been a delay in the distribution of school vouchers in Slough. The delay had led to children not receiving free school meals leading to the half term holidays, causing great concern to parents. Slough outreach and Slough and Eton had contributed in providing meals for families in need and many more families still continued to be in need.

The Chair suggested that members should inform families about the support being provided by local churches and places of worship in Slough.

The Vice-Chair advised that people could also make self-referrals to local food banks.

Rev Briggs reported that the Rotary Club of Slough had donated £1,000 to the local food bank.

Resolved – That the updates be noted.

14. Members' Attendance Record

Resolved – That the Members' Attendance Record be noted.

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15. Information Items for noting:

Resolved – That the information items on NASACRE - SACRE Briefing Issue 27 and Interfaith Week – 8 -15 November 2020 be noted.

16. Date of Next Meeting - 3rd March 2021

Resolved - The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 3rd March 2021.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 6.20 pm)