

**MINUTES of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Tuesday 1 December 2009 at 2.15 pm**

**Present:** Councillor J Stone (Chairman)

Councillor WU Attfield, Mrs C Ault, Revd. P. Barlow, Mrs. J. Brown,  
Mrs A Daniel, Councillor Brig P Jones CBE and Mrs S McCamley

**16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from: Mrs L Baker, Mrs S Catlow-Hawkins, Sr. S O'Donnell, Mrs G Jutle, Mr T Leach, Ms K Mayglothing, and Ms C Wolfe.

**17. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Ms Teresa Gregory, Deputy Director and Schools Advisor Herefordshire Church of England Diocese, substituted for Mr T Leach.

**18. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That subject to amending Manger to Manager in minute 8 and minute 14, the minutes of the meeting held 29 June 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**19. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

No written questions were received from the public.

**20. AGREED SYLLABUS REVIEW AND QCDA**

The Chairman introduced Dr Mark Chater, QCDA, who had attended an earlier informal meeting with Councillor J Stone (Chairman), Mrs J Mackley and Mr S Pett (RE Consultants) and Mr P James on behalf of the Clerk to SACRE.

SACRE were briefly informed by Dr Chater that 28 SACREs were due to review their Agreed Syllabuses. QCDA were inviting those SACREs to collaborate in drafting a syllabus template that other SACREs could use. He emphasised that any template devised would need to contain that which is nationally required and that which is open to local interpretation.

The Chairman thanked Dr M Chater for attending the earlier meeting and for briefly attending SACRE.

SACRE noted the position and that further debate concerning the Syllabus review would take place at the Agreed Syllabus Conference following this meeting.

## **21. RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATION RESULTS FOR 2009**

SACRE considered the 2009 Religious Education examination results for Herefordshire.

The Lead Officer for SACRE presented the agenda report and took SACRE through the statistics.

Concern was expressed that according to the statistics approximately one third of the total cohort hadn't taken an accredited examination. However, it was acknowledged that those pupils may have undertaken the course but had decided not to sit the examination.

Questioned on individual school performances the Lead Officer responded that this information could be provided to members.

Appreciating the usual variances between gender and course type SACRE thought the results were good but there were no grounds to be complacent.

**RESOLVED: that the report on RE examination results in Herefordshire for 2009 be noted.**

## **22. DRAFT SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 - 2013**

SACRE considered the draft Development Plan 2010 - -2013 for approval.

The Consultant for RE reported that the current plan ran until 2010. In reviewing the Plan a group Chaired by the Chairman, Councillor J Stone, had met to formulate the draft now submitted for consideration. The Consultant of RE reported that her involvement had been funded by the Diocese as the reduced budget for SACRE had not been sufficient to enable all the planned activities to be undertaken. She briefly took SACRE through the draft Plan which had been based on the guidance available. She emphasised that the Plan should guide the work and agendas for future meetings.

**RESOLVED: That the draft SACRE Development Plan 2010 – 2013 be approved.**

## **23. SACRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2009**

SACRE received a report on the Herefordshire SACRE Conference 2009.

The RE Consultant reported that after initial concerns about attendance, a late take up had increased numbers to a respectable 55 including workshop leaders. The offer of '2 for 1' had increased the numbers and had been welcomed by schools. Jane Brooke (RE advisor with National Society/Chester Diocese) had provided an excellent start to the day with a practical and engaging presentation on 'What makes for good RE: the ingredients for quality RE in the classroom'. Workshops were led by Jane Brooke, Stephen Pett (RE Advisor with RE Today) and Shahne Vickery (Gloucester Diocesan schools advisor).

The Chairman and the Lead Officer for SACRE commented that it had again been a good quality conference held in a convivial atmosphere with high quality workshops.

It was commented that the '2 for 1' offer had probably encouraged colleagues from the same school to attend and therefore people hadn't felt isolated and were more likely to talk about the event afterwards.

It was noted that Hedley Lodge had taken photographs of the event for their promotional use and that these may be available for downloading to the 'schools on line' web site to promote future SACRE conferences.

SACRE thanked Joyce Mackley, RE Consultant, for organising the event and thanked all those who contributed in making it a successful Conference.

It was agreed that the theme of next years conference be considered at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

#### **24. MULTI-FAITH EVENT HELD 19 OCTOBER 2009**

SACRE received a report on the Multi-Faith Event held on 19 October at Holmer CE Primary School, Hereford.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Judy Cecil, Headteacher at Holmer, her staff and the workshop leaders for running the event and commended the pupils who had acted as excellent ambassadors for the school.

At various times in the afternoon the event had also been attended by ten Herefordshire Councillors, including the Cabinet Member (Children's Services), who had all appreciated the event and hoped that the event would be developed further.

Mrs C. Ault, Multi Faith Group member and Baha'i workshop leader, commented that the pupils had shown reverence for each session and had appreciated the unity, or thread, that ran through each of the different faiths.

Responding to a suggestion that Christianity be added to the 4 faith workshops, thereby enabling pupils to get a greater appreciation of the commonality between faiths, Mrs Ault commented that the intention had been to provide encounters with those faiths that children do not normally meet – access to Christianity was less problematical.

In response to a comment from the Diocesan schools advisor who asked that all schools should have access to this event the RE Consultant commented that 5 out of 6 primary schools had been involved in the last 3 years. Wigmore High and its feeder schools had just had a similar event, as had Whitecross High and its pyramid schools.

SACRE noted that the Multi Faith Group had secured a small grant for 2010/11 and had written to all high schools and the County Cohesion Inspector offering to assist them on projects put forward by schools.

The Lead Officer for SACRE thought that, in view of the financial situation, working through cluster groups could be a good model to follow. This could be taken further by arranging events over the space of a few days thereby hopefully saving on the cost of getting workshop leaders to the County at different times.

SACRE noted that special schools were not part of the school cluster arrangements. The Special schools representative requested that these be included in the events.

It was commented that the Multi Faith Group had probably taken the initiative as far as they could at present and it was asserted that as multi faith events contributed to both schools and the local authority's community cohesion agendas it was for the Local Authority to take the multi-faith initiative forward and to disseminate the pyramid idea.

It was suggested that a note of the event, and future aspirations, be communicated to all members of Herefordshire Council.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted and**

- a) SACRE recommend that the local authority give further consideration to supporting Multi-Faith Events in schools to support the community cohesion agenda;
- b) The local authority give consideration to promoting the pyramid idea with schools as one means of providing a multi-faith event; and
- c) Notes of the Multi Faith event, and future aspirations, be communicated to all members of Herefordshire Council.

**25. DRAFT HEREFORDSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT - ACADEMIC YEAR 2008/9**

SACRE considered the draft SACRE Annual report for the academic year September 2008 to July 2009 prior to submission to QCDA.

The Clerk to SACRE representative presented the draft for comment and highlighted that the examination statistics discussed earlier in the meeting together with any comment made by SACRE would be added to the document. He also requested that SACRE provide guidance on any comment it wished to include under the 'summary' section.

SACRE agreed that commentary be included on: the multi-Faith events, SACRE Annual Conference and the vital part that Collective Worship plays in RE in schools.

It was agreed that any further comments would be forwarded as soon as possible to the Clerk for consideration.

**RESOLVED: that subject to the inclusion of the examination statistics and commentary under the 'summary' section, the Annual Report be approved for submission to QCDA.**

The meeting ended at 3.22 pm

**CHAIRMAN**