

AGENDA

Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

Date: **Monday 5 July 2010**

Time: **2.30 pm (or on the conclusion of SACRE if later)**

Place: **Council Chamber, Brockington**

Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call Paul James, (01432) 260460 on or e-mail in advance of the meeting.

Agenda for the Meeting of the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference

Membership

Chairman

Councillor J Stone

Vice-Chairman

Councillor WU Attfield

Mrs. C. Ault

Mrs L Barker

Revd. P. Barlow

Mr. P. Bowen

Mrs. J. Brown

Councillor Brig P Jones CBE

Mrs Gurmit Jutle

Mr T Leach

Mrs S McCamley

Sr. D. O'Donnell

Mr. Z. Pandor

Rev L Rickards

Ms C Wolfe

Local Authority

Bahai faith

Secondary Teachers

Church of England

Church of England

Special Education

Local Authority

Sikh Faith

Church of England

Primary Schools

Roman Catholic Church

Muslim Faith

Free Church Representative

Jewish Faith

GUIDANCE ON DECLARING PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

The Council's Members' Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare against an Agenda item(s) the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. Councillors have to decide first whether or not they have a personal interest in the matter under discussion. They will then have to decide whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.

A personal interest is an interest that affects the Councillor more than most other people in the area. People in the area include those who live, work or have property in the area of the Council. Councillors will also have a personal interest if their partner, relative or a close friend, or an organisation that they or the member works for, is affected more than other people in the area. If they do have a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay and take part and vote in the meeting.

Whether an interest is prejudicial is a matter of judgement for each Councillor. What Councillors have to do is ask themselves whether a member of the public – if he or she knew all the facts – would think that the Councillor's interest was so important that their decision would be affected by it. If a Councillor has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is. A Councillor who has declared a prejudicial interest at a meeting may nevertheless be able to address that meeting, but only in circumstances where an ordinary member of the public would be also allowed to speak. In such circumstances, the Councillor concerned will have the same opportunity to address the meeting and on the same terms. However, a Councillor exercising their ability to speak in these circumstances must leave the meeting immediately after they have spoken.

AGENDA

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY) To receive details of any Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3. MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2010.	1 - 4
4. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY) To answer any pre-received written questions from members of the public.	
5. AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP To consider the membership of the Agreed Syllabus Conference.	
6. SYLLABUS REVIEW - CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER DRAFTING WORK To consider the further drafting work undertaken by the Consultant for RE as part of the review of the Agreed Syllabus including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from Secondary sector consultation held 24 April and Primary sector consultation held 17 May 2010.• Consideration of change of government policy and its implications for RE and Syllabus. <p>(NOTE: copies of the first draft pages will be despatched to members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference with this agenda for their initial consideration. This work will form the basis of the publicly available published work early in 2011.)</p>	5 - 6
7. FURTHER WORK TO PROGRESS THE SYLLABUS REVIEW To consider any further issues requiring attention as part of the review of the Agreed Syllabus.	

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference held at Council Chamber, Brockington on Monday 15 March 2010 at 2.30 pm

Present: Councillor J Stone (Chairman)

Councillor WU Attfield, Mrs C Ault, Mrs L Barker, Revd. P. Barlow, Mr. P. Bowen, Ms T Gregory, Councillor Brig P Jones CBE, Mrs G Jutle, Mrs S McCamley, Sr. D. O'Donnell and Mr Z Pandor

In attendance: Mrs S Catlow-Hawkins, Mrs A Daniel and Ms. K. Mayglothling

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mrs J Brown, Mr T Leach and Ms C Wolfe.

The Democratic Services Officer reported that Mrs J Brown had resigned from the Agreed Syllabus Conference for personal reasons. The Conference thanked Mrs Brown for her valued contribution to Religious Education in the County and to the work of the Conference and wished her well for the future.

The Chairman reported that Mrs Bridget Knight, former Lead Officer to the Conference, had taken up a secondment post with QCDA. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Vicky Ward, General Inspector who would be the Interim Lead Officer.

23. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Ms T Gregory substituted for Mr T Leach.

24. MINUTES

In relation to Minute 20 it was clarified that arrangements were in hand to appoint Mr S Pett as Consultant for RE to replace Mrs J Mackley.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held 1 December 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No written questions were received.

26. AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE - BUDGET POSITION

The Syllabus Conference were informed of the budget position to undertake its work.

Herefordshire SACRE, held immediately prior to this meeting, were informed of the budget position for SACRE and the Agreed Syllabus Conference and the minute of that meeting is set out below for convenience:

The Chairman and the Interim Lead Officer (Vicky Ward, General Inspector) informed SACRE that the base budget figure for 2009/10 would be reflected in the 2010/11 budget. However, it had been acknowledged by the Local Authority that this figure did

not take account of the additional work needed in producing the Agreed Syllabus, being undertaken by the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference. The Interim Lead Officer reported that while Local Authority budgets were facing pressures, limited finance would be found in 2010/11 to enable the work to continue on producing a revised Agreed Syllabus. Expenditure incurred in publishing the Syllabus and training for teachers would fall in the 2011/12 financial year and therefore there was time to make appropriate budgetary arrangements.

The Syllabus Conference noted the position.

27. CONSIDERATION OF INITIAL DRAFTING WORK

The Conference considered the initial drafting work undertaken by the Consultant for RE as part of the review of the Agreed Syllabus.

The Consultant for RE (Stephen Pett) circulated a paper, a copy of which has been placed in the minute book, setting out a number of areas the Conference needed to consider that would guide the drafting of the new syllabus. Based on the principles agreed at the December 2009 meeting the paper set out: four 'options' for the extent of the review; a possible 'progression grid' with comments on it; how the changes related to the current syllabus; a possible model for option 3; sample pages using option 3; and an example planning grid for Key Stage 1.

During the course of debate the following principal points were noted:

- Having considered the four options, option three was favoured both by the Consultant and the Conference. This would build on the current syllabus, updating it for the next five years without substantial change. It would also allow for a slimmer, more usable document to be produced incorporating guidance on planning. It was acknowledged that this would be more expensive than option four, however, it could be produced as a Word document and converted to PDF for online access.
- The EML progression grid was a feature of the new primary curriculum RE programme of Learning (PoL) with Early-Middle-Late (EML) progression statements. Initially the Consultants thought there would be a great advantage in the new Syllabus containing such a page. However, on working with the page the Consultant (SP) had experienced difficulty with the EML Grid in that the official PoL was very limited, with a real imbalance between learning about and learning from, and the many statements that could be covered in PSHE or citizenship without any reference to religion and belief. The PoL format had been devised for other curriculum areas and the RE PoL had been 'squeezed' to fit. Other areas of difficulty were described in the paper.
- Option three was favoured as it offered more of a guide for teachers. Questioned whether a link could also be made to values education the Consultant (SP) undertook to look at including skills evaluation areas.
- Subject to resources, the intention was to consult with a group of teachers on the development of the content and to pilot certain parts before compiling the final version. Views were expressed that teachers, including non-specialist teachers, needed to be involved so that they had a sense of ownership and ensure that the Syllabus was deliverable. Working with teachers in cluster groups or via network groups was suggested.
- How the final Agreed Syllabus was to be presented (paper/ CD/web site) would be looked into. While this element, together with the launch, would be in the next financial year it was felt that advance planning was needed, particularly as this may have an impact on how the syllabus was initially drafted in digital form.

- Responding to a suggestion that the Annual Conference could be used to undertake the desired consultation, it was felt that the timing of this would be too late and paying delegates would expect more from the event.

RESOLVED: that

1. the comments and suggestions made in the Consultant for RE paper submitted to the meeting be agreed;
2. that option three in the paper (use the current Agreed Syllabus but re-write and slim down) be approved;
3. following consultation with the Interim Lead Officer regarding the use of resources, the Consultant for RE be authorised to undertake any necessary consultation with teachers and any other associated work to progress the drafting work; and
4. a further report on the drafting of the new Agreed Syllabus be reported to the July 2010 meeting.

28. FURTHER WORK TO PROGRESS THE SYLLABUS REVIEW

No further issues to progress the Syllabus Review were noted at this time.

29. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Conference noted the future meeting dates.

The meeting ended at 3.50 pm

CHAIRMAN

Agreed Syllabus Conference 5 July 2010

Agreed Syllabus Review – Consideration of Further Drafting Work

Report by S Pett, RE Consultant

Following the last ASC meeting on 15th March 2010 there have been meetings with primary and secondary teachers, and, of course, a change of government. Below are the key messages from the consultation and some comments on the impact of anticipated policy changes on the AS review in Herefordshire.

Hereford Secondary teachers 23.4.10

1. **Outline of proposal:** teachers considered the outline agreed by the last agreed syllabus conference. They were happy with the proposed model, with a slimming down of the current syllabus.
2. **Planning process:** teachers approved the planning process and requested that a version for doing cross-curriculum planning be included.
3. **Development of new questions:** teachers thought that the revised AS should allow for the flexibility of teachers being able to develop new questions, whether for cross-curriculum units or to reflect current affairs and issues. The planning guidance should demonstrate the rigour required for such new questions, including levelled learning outcomes etc.
4. **Programmes of study:** teachers requested that Islam be included in KS3 as a major component of KS3, alongside Buddhism and Judaism. They would like examples from Islam to be added to current questions where appropriate, and ensure that it has sufficient prominence. The ASC should consider if it replaces Judaism in level 1 of the breadth of study.
5. **Future input:** teachers recommended that future secondary network meetings should include time revising and updating non-statutory schemes of work to reflect the structure of the planning guidance.

Hereford Primary teachers 17.5.10

1. **Outline of proposal:** teachers generally approved of the proposed structure. They want to ensure that this is as useful and helpful as possible, noting that few teachers are going to wade through the whole syllabus.
 - The summary pages showing the importance and contribution of RE will be helpful.
 - We need to keep the page from the non-statutory guidance on planning for mixed year groups.
 - Significant discussion took place on the importance of making this reflect a distinctively local Herefordshire flavour. Units should reflect the rich resources available, e.g. links with the cathedral, with local churches including free churches, other places of worship, local faith groups e.g. Sufi Centre, the multifaith days etc.
 - We need to make RE more integrated in Foundation Stage and consider the extent to which there is an overlap with KS1. The syllabus needs to be coherent

at this point. At the moment the themes are not sufficiently broad and teachers need to be given clear permission to do the RE where it fits in with what they are doing, rather than having to do discrete RE.

- Exemplar “I can...” statements are very helpful.
 - P-levels requested.
2. **Planning process guidance:** There was some discussion about this guidance. Some were concerned that RE has the potential to get lost in schools, especially as part of cross-curriculum work, and that we need to do what we can to ensure that it is maintained and distinctive. Comments about the guidance included the idea that it would be useful but the question was raised as to who would use it. Responses to this included the idea that the planning guidance offers something that keeps the RE in the planning process, supporting rigour by including the need for levelled learning outcomes as part of the initial thinking. RE co-ordinators will use the planning guidance but it is envisaged that the process should be clear enough to support classroom teachers too, so that they can see the aims and purpose of their RE lessons.
- There was some disquiet over the thought that non-statutory schemes of work were not being provided for all units. Perhaps some current schemes of work can be worked on to match them to the planning process, to work as exemplars.
3. **Development of new questions:** the new syllabus should allow teachers to develop new questions. This is particularly important for cross-curriculum studies.
4. **Programmes of study:** Not discussed due to lack of time.
5. **Future input:** network groups will play an important part in keeping teachers informed about progress, allowing opportunities for feedback.

There was an encouraging turnout for the Primary meeting, with several emails from teachers and head teachers unable to make it, expressing interest in the process. We will build on this interest in network groups in the autumn term.

Department for Education:

With the recent change of government there has been some obvious effects on education. The demise of the proposed primary curriculum is a key result. This means that there is little use in sticking with the Early-Middle-Late progression statements, unless they have an intrinsic value. The review of the AS, with its focus on supporting teachers to use the syllabus better to develop more creative and rigorous RE, should still be in line with education policy, whatever changes occur.

Stephen Pett
June 2010