

Minutes of the meeting of Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) held at Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX on Friday 29 November 2019 at 3.00 pm

Present: Carolyn Ault, Lou Barker, Pat Burbidge, Ben Caldicott, Venerable Tsultrim Tenzin Choesang, Stewart Debenham, Mark Harrington, Councillor Liz Harvey, Councillor Jennie Hewitt, Jonathan Nicholas, Anna Nugent, Councillor John Stone and Tracey Westlake

31. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Councillor John Stone opened the meeting as the outgoing Chairperson of SACRE and explained that the meeting of SACRE had been moved to follow the meeting of the agreed syllabus conference.

Councillor John Stone proposed Lama Choesang as Chairperson of SACRE which was seconded by Councillor Jennie Hewitt. The appointment of Lama Choesang was agreed unanimously by SACRE for the remainder of the current council term, until May 2023.

RESOLVED: That Lama Choesang is appointed the Chairperson of SACRE until May 2023

Gratitude was expressed for Councillor Stone and his chairmanship of SACRE for the previous 19 years.

32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

33. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

There were no substitutes.

34. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting on 15 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting on 15 March 2019 are agreed as a correct record.

35. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no written questions.

36. PLANS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2020

SACRE considered detail from the RE consultant concerning professional development in RE. The RE consultant explained that since the March meeting of SACRE there had

been two conferences. The feedback from the primary conference was very good and it had been highly rated. The secondary conference had received positive feedback but it had been a challenge to ensure teachers attendance; it was hoped that the conferences in 2020 would be better attended due to the new syllabus launch.

Tracy Westlake provided an update on the establishment of a local NATRE group which had held two meetings with a good attendance from local teachers of RE. The Chairperson of SACRE explained that it was important that representatives of SACRE attend the meetings of the group.

With respect to the forthcoming conferences the following points were discussed by SACRE:

- The conferences would include a launch of the new syllabus and all schools would be encouraged to attend.
- It was confirmed that Bishop's would be prepared to host the conference.
- The idea of combining the primary and secondary conference was raised.
- There was a discussion regarding the timing of the conference and whether there was an advantage in holding the event earlier in the summer term. The date of 5 June was agreed for the conferences which was consistent with the timetable for the introduction of the new syllabus.
- The importance of retaining a separate conference for special schools was raised and the potential for a joint conference with Worcestershire.

RESOLVED: That SACRE agrees the date of 5 June for the conferences.

37. DRAFT SACRE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR SEPTEMBER 2018 – JULY 2019

SACRE considered a report by the RE consultant which provided the draft annual report for the 2018/19 academic year. The RE consultant outlined a change to the wording in paragraph 3 to explain that the funding for SACRE had been retained at the same level as 2017/18. The RE examination results also needed to be added to the document which would be undertaken once available.

The element of the annual report relating to the statutory duty of schools to provide RE was raised. It was felt that this was a significant issue particularly in light of the workforce data which showed a number of schools failing to provide RE. The head of learning and achievement explained that the issue had been raised with secondary schools however there was some doubt concerning the accuracy of the information contained in the workforce data. Those head teachers of schools with a zero percentage of time spent teaching RE would be asked to comment on the accuracy of the information and explain how RE was being taught in their school. The RE consultant explained that it was important that the information provided by schools to the school workforce survey was accurate. NATRE would request and publish the data in an annual basis and Ofsted would also consider the data in the survey.

The data contained in the examination results outcomes was also queried and the apparent lack of an educational record for some pupils who had been taught RE. It was explained that there had been some consideration of the value of requiring all pupils to take RE; it was felt that there was a significant advantage teaching RE to pupils who had opted to study the subject.

RESOLVED: That SACRE approves the annual report for the academic year 2018/19 subject to the changes outlined above.

38. HEREFORDSHIRE INTERFAITH SERVICE 2020

The Chairperson of SACRE highlighted the Herefordshire interfaith service 2020 which would focus on the subject of peace. The service would take place at the cathedral on 20 September 2020.

39. UPDATE ON ANY NEW INITIATIVES IN RE

The RE consultant introduced updates on latest initiatives in RE. The following outcomes from the NATRE survey were outlined:

- 50% of secondary schools were not teaching RE at key stage 4 and it was recognised that this was a national issue.
- RE GCSE entries had fallen.

40. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Chairperson introduced some items for future business which included a review of the constitution to include the position of a vice chairperson and a review of the faiths represented on SACRE. Other faiths included Hinduism, Sikhism, Sufi and Quakers. It was confirmed that there would also be a push to fill the current vacancies on SACRE in particular a representative of the Jewish community had been identified and a meeting with the Chairperson would take place.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

Chairperson

