

**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 13 March 2020 at 2.30 pm**

**Present:** Venerable Tsultrim Tenzin Choesang (chairperson)  
Mrs Ault, Mrs Barker, Mr Harrington, Mrs Nugent, Cllr Stone and Ms Westlake

**Officers:** Lead officer for SACRE, Strategic Finance Manager and Consultant to SACRE

**9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Debenham, Councillor Harvey and Councillor Hewitt.

**10. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting on 29 November are agreed and signed by the Chairperson.

**11. SACRE BUDGET 2020/21**

SACRE received a report from the SACRE Lead Officer which provided details of the budget for 2020/21. The report was introduced by the Strategic Finance Manager (SFM) who explained the source of SACRE's funding and the accounting practice of aggregating the annual surplus to fund the syllabus review every five years.

SACRE raised the principal points below in the debate:

- How would SACRE apply for increased funding? *The SFM explained that SACRE would need to ask the Schools Forum for an increase in funding including the reasons why the current budget was insufficient.*
- The amount of funding accrued for the syllabus review was queried. *The SFM explained that the amount available would be affected by inflation and potential increases in the cost of the contract with the RE consultant.*
- The reduction in the number of SACRE meetings from three to two was raised and the costs associated with meetings was queried. It was proposed that the autumn meeting was brought forward to ensure there was not such a long gap between meetings. *The SFM explained that the majority of meeting costs were associated with Committee Services.*
- Proposals for additional funding could concern: an RE conference for children; the introduction of faith boxes; and training for SACRE members. It was explained that faith boxes existed in Ludlow which could be reserved; details would be shared with SACRE following the meeting.
- SACRE could apply to the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education for funding and a number of trust funds. Specific details of a project

and costs would be required. A faith room in a school was suggested and it was proposed that the Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School could be considered as a venue. Councillor Stone and the RE Consultant could assist with the completion of applications for funding.

**RESOLVED: That the SACRE budget 2020/21 is noted.**

## **12. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXAMINATION RESULTS 2019**

SACRE received and noted the presentation, attached to the agenda, from the SACRE lead officer which provided detail of the performance of pupils in RE examinations at Herefordshire schools. It was explained that schools had an obligation to teach RE at key stage 4 but there was no requirement to enter pupils for GCSEs.

## **13. RE CONFERENCES**

SACRE received and noted an update on the RE conferences planned for summer 2020. The RE consultant introduced detail of the planning undertaken for the conferences and explained that the primary and secondary conferences would be combined on a single day. The conferences would equip teachers and schools to meet Ofsted's requirements and to answer those questions posed during inspections. The event would be hosted by the Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School and publicity would be circulated in spotlight and through the Diocese. In the event that the coronavirus prevented the conference taking place contingency measures were being investigated including online training through live or recorded webinars.

The principal points below were raised during the debate:

- The cost of the conference to SACRE members was raised. *The RE consultants explained that SACRE members could attend without charge.*
- The conference for special needs schools was proposed for the autumn.

## **14. UPDATE ON ANY NEW INITIATIVES IN RE**

SACRE received and noted updates on new initiatives in RE from the RE consultant.

Ms Westlake provided an update on the RE primary network; following the initial meeting of the network in July 2019 numbers had reduced at the recent meeting. Despite the lower numbers there had been a number of contacts from people with proposals for new ideas and more remote arrangements to engage with the group might be undertaken in future. Recent issues that had been explored by the network included the difficulty of compiling evidence to demonstrate to Ofsted progress in RE learning.

The RE consultant introduced the updates and explained the recent Ofsted inspections that had taken place; it was clarified that the inspection of the community primary school had taken place under the new Ofsted framework.

SACRE raised the principal issues below in the debate:

- The new Ofsted framework was queried and whether it was very different from the previous framework. *The SACRE Lead Officer explained that it was different and in anecdotal evidence the majority of teachers preferred the new approach.*
- It was queried how schools with a bad Ofsted rating for RE were assisted. *The SACRE Lead Officer explained that schools with a good rating were put into contact with those schools that had received a bad judgement.*
- The launch of the new syllabus was an opportunity to co-ordinate secondary school teachers across Herefordshire.

- Local schools were linking together; Marlbrook had recently linked up with Black Marston.
- Support was expressed for the delivery of the new syllabus.
- There was concern that teachers would be unable to afford attendance at the conference due to a lack of funding for schools.
- The Peace Service on 20 September was raised and members of SACRE were encouraged to assist in preparations.

## 15. **UPDATES TO THE HEREFORDSHIRE SACRE CONSTITUTION**

SACRE considered a report by the Director Children and Families which set out proposed changes to the constitution. The representative of the clerk to SACRE introduced the report and explained that the recommendation proposed introducing the position of a vice chairperson on SACRE and the addition of faith representatives to SACRE's membership.

SACRE discussed the changes and agreed that the position of vice chairperson should be established and faith representatives for the Hindu and Quaker faiths should be added to the membership. It was felt that the addition of a Sufi representative required further consideration before inclusion in the membership; the implications for the Muslim representative required evaluation.

Councillor Stone moved and Mrs Barker seconded the motion that the constitution be amended to include the position of a vice chairperson and the addition of faith representatives for the Hindu and Quaker faith.

**RESOLVED: That the SACRE constitution is amended to include the position of a vice chairperson and the addition of faith representatives for the Hindu and Quaker faith.**

Mr Harrington proposed and Mrs Ault seconded Mrs Barker as the vice chairperson of SACRE until May 2023.

**RESOLVED: That Mrs Barker is appointed as vice chairperson of SACRE until May 2023.**

## 16. **MEETING DATES 2020 - 2021**

SACRE indicated that it was content with the timing of meetings on a Friday and the location of Shirehall. SACRE was informed of the need to submit items of business for discussion two weeks ahead of a meeting and it was agreed that before meetings there would be a prayer.

The meeting dates in 2020/21 were agreed on 9 October 2020 and 12 March 2021.

**RESOLVED: That the following dates are agreed for meetings of SACRE during 2020/21:**

- **9 October 2020**
- **12 March 2021**

The meeting ended at 3.35 pm

**Chairperson**