

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Cambridgeshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)  
at Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall on  
Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Present:** Aga Cahn, Amanda Fitton (SACRE Adviser), Catherine Watts, Cathy Michell, Cllr Claire Richards, Dennis Johnson, Julia Ewans, Kerri McCourty (Clerk), Moira Middleton, Raj Shah, Rev Robert Mackley, Shirley Hall, Tony Reynolds and Virginia Barnes

**Apologies:** Becky Smith, Ged McHale, Jag Srail, Janet Scott, Ray Mitchell, Cllr Samantha Hoy, Shahla Suleiman and Taradasa.

**Absent:** Elizabeth Bassett, Daniel Bennett

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

This meeting was quorate.

Julia Ewans (Vice Chair) chaired the meeting due to the retirement of ex Chair Cllr Tony Orgee.

Julia opened the meeting and welcomed Reverend Robert Mackley to the meeting. SACRE members went round and introduced themselves to Reverend Mackley.

**2. Apologies**

The SACRE Clerk informed those present that apologies had been received from Becky Smith, Ged McHale, Jag Srail, Janet Scott, Ray Mitchell, Cllr Samantha Hoy and Taradasa.

All apologies were read out and accepted by the committee.

**3. Minutes of 4 October 2017 and matters arising not elsewhere on agenda**

SACRE members checked the minutes of the last meeting for accuracy.

The minutes were subsequently signed by Julia Ewans (Vice Chair).

In regard to matters arising:

Pathway Project

Tony Reynolds questioned whether the project was still taking place due to the threat to CREDS. Amanda assured that the funding for the project was separate as it came from Erasmus.

#### **4. Correspondence**

There was one enquiry about collective worship in the county. Julia Ewans, Amanda Fitton and Helen Manley replied to the query stating that SACRE does look after Collective Worship and sent this person the guidance leaflet on Collective Worship that was produced by SACRE.

Due to limited resources, SACRE members do not have the time to go into every school and observe their Collective Worship practices.

#### **5. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

Due to the fact there is only two councillors that sit on SACRE committee D, the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 was not quorate so SACRE were not able to elect a Chair and Vice Chair.

Julia Ewans stood for Chair, this was seconded by Tony Reynolds and Virginia Barnes. The SACRE committee voted for Julia Ewans as Chair.

Aga Cahn nominated Cathy Michell for position of Vice Chair. This was seconded by Julia Ewans. SACRE members voted to elect Cathy Michell as Vice Chair.

#### **6. Agreed Syllabus update**

In December 2016, members from Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Northamptonshire SACRE convened as the Agreed Syllabus Conference. It is a joint Agreed Syllabus Conference that has developed innovative ways of working to reduce cost and increase efficiency.

Julia Ewans started by thanking Dr Shirley Hall, Janet Scott, Amanda Fitton and Kerri McCourty and others for their work on the Agreed Syllabus review. Julia informed the committee that there has been speculation regarding the adoption of the Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus Conference puts the new syllabus forward for adoption by the Local Authority. Julia Ewans and Helen Manley are attending the Children's and Young People (CYP) committee on 13<sup>th</sup> March to present the syllabus to the committee. However, Julia Ewans wants to clarify whether Cambridgeshire SACRE are content with the syllabus. Documents relating to the Agreed Syllabus were sent to members prior to the meeting.

Amanda Fitton has been working with different schools in Rutland, Northampton and Wisbech on exemplars for the Agreed Syllabus.

Tony Reynolds questioned whether material from the Agreed Syllabus 2013 is transferrable to the new syllabus. Amanda confirmed that much of the support material is transferrable. Schools are excited about being able to take ownership of their RE curriculum which the flexibility of the revised syllabus will allow them to do.

Ofsted are now commenting on RE and whether there is scope for different religions on the curriculum.

There will be a schedule of online resources for teachers to use.

Cathy Michell questioned whether the supporting documents would be released with the syllabus. The faith progression documents will need to be proof-read before they are published. Gurdev Singh from Peterborough SACRE will be formatting the Agreed Syllabus documents so that they look professional and coherent.

Reverend Robert Mackley brought it to SACRE's attention that the progression document for Christianity does not mention God in KS1.

**Action:** Amanda Fitton to look at Christianity progression document.

**AF**

## **6.1 Approval of the Agreed Syllabus**

Looking at the statutory part of the Agreed Syllabus, Cambridgeshire SACRE were happy for it to proceed to the CYP committee for adoption.

## **7. Conference to launch the Agreed Syllabus**

Amanda Fitton and Kerri McCourty met with the Marriott Hotel in Huntingdon to plan the Agreed Syllabus launch conference. The conference has been booked for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018. The venue holds up to 180 people.

The conference will have a two keynote speakers, Kathryn Wright (works with NATRE and Diocese of Norwich) and Janet Orchards (PGCE Secondary Co-ordinator at University of Bristol). There will also be workshops to support both primary and secondary teachers with the implementation of the new syllabus as well as promoting their own CPD.

There are currently 107 people booked to attend the conference.

## **8. Development plan 2017-2018**

Members had access to the 2016-2017 development plan. However it needs to be updated due to the Agreed Syllabus review coming to an end.

In relation to item 10 on the agenda, Amanda wants SACRE to come together to help monitor the teaching time of RE in Cambridgeshire. Moira Middleton volunteered to come up with questions that can be sent to schools to capture data from schools in Cambridgeshire.

**Action:** Moira Middleton to send KM questions for questionnaire.

**MM**

Amanda Fitton will put together a new development plan for the next SACRE meeting in June.

**Action:** Amanda Fitton to revise development plan.

**AF**

## 9. Annual Report 2016-2017

KM and AF met to start the Annual Report 2016-2017. Amanda Fitton asked if any members had additional items that should be included in the annual report.

**Action:** AF to start annual report and distribute to SACRE members for comment.

AF

## 10. NATRE figures

NATRE did some Freedom of Information requests to schools regarding the amount of RE that is taught in schools in Cambridgeshire. Amanda Fitton was not happy with the figures that NATRE sent because it does not reflect an accurate representation on the amount of teaching of RE.

Amanda Fitton is in the process of drafting a letter to all schools that reflect the statutory nature of RE. Once the letter has been finalised, this will be sent to all schools in the county.

Julia questioned whether SACRE could devise its own questionnaire that could be sent to schools to get a more accurate reflection of RE in Cambridgeshire.

## 11. Speakers in schools

Julia Ewans has concerns whether SACRE are prepared to recommend good speakers in schools. Julia questioned whether SACRE could give training to presenters so that they are prepared to visit schools. Aga Cahn noted that the Beth Shalom Synagogue in Cambridge is starting an accredited programme for speakers.

Julia Ewans will send the Humanist training resource that can be commented on.

**Action:** Julia Ewans to send SACRE members Humanist UK speaker training document.

JE

## 12. Training Update

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018, Amanda ran an Assessment Training course that saw 25 people attend.

Exploring Sikhism course on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018 has been cancelled due to lack of interest by schools. This is likely due to priority of Agreed Syllabus launch conference.

The prices of consultancies for schools has dropped in price from £96 per hour to £56 per hour to encourage schools to get in contact for more support.

### 13. Faith Direct Event 2017

The Faith Direct Event took place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 11:00-14:00 at Marriott Hotel in Huntingdon. In total there were 76 students in attendance. The event followed a “speed dating” format that allowed faith representatives to speak about their faith and illustrate it with artefacts for a few minutes, after which students then asked them questions about their faith/belief. After ten minutes each group of students moved on to another faith representative, and so on. It proved to be a lively and rewarding event. All of the major faiths were represented.

The event was attended by 7 schools across the three counties:

- Southfield School, Northamptonshire
- St Peter’s School, Cambridgeshire
- St Bede’s Inter-Church School, Cambridgeshire
- Thomas Deacon Academy, Peterborough
- Castle Special School, Cambridgeshire
- Hinchingsbrooke School, Cambridgeshire
- Witchford Village College, Cambridgeshire

In regard to representatives, the following beliefs were represented:

- Bahai
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Jewish
- Humanism
- Hindu
- Protestant
- Jainism
- Buddhist
- Roman Catholic

There was an introductory keynote presentation by David Hampshire, Assistant Director for Inter Faith Network for the UK. Overall the event was a great success and received positive feedback from the schools. *“A great opportunity for students. They enjoyed it very much.”* – Janice Mitcham, Southfield School

Cambridgeshire SACRE would like to run the Faith Direct Event again.

**Action:** KM to look into organising another Faith Direct Event.

**KM**

### 14. The Commission on RE: The Interim Report Conference

DJ attended the conference on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 on behalf of Cambridgeshire SACRE.

The conference spoke about the role of SACREs in the future. It was shared that SACREs can approach the DfE regarding concerns on the provision of teaching RE

in the curriculum and the DfE have been involved in the past in applying pressure to schools about their RE curriculum.

There may need to be change to the role of SACREs if the drafting of an Agreed Syllabus is no longer in SACREs remit.

## **15. NASACRE Conference and AGM**

This years' NASCRE Conference and AGM will be held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at the Merchant Taylors' Hall, City of London. This year the theme is Stronger Together - Celebrating the power of Community. Full conference details have yet to be announced.

Cambridgeshire SACRE were happy for Amanda Fitton and Kerri McCourty to go on their behalf.

## **16. AOB**

### Meeting dates for 2018-2019:

The clerk proposed the following meeting dates for 2018-2019

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018
- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019

### **Next Meeting**

#### **Formal Meeting**

The next meeting will take place Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018, 13:30-15:30 in the Kreis Viersen room at Shire Hall.

#### **Working Party Meeting**

The meeting closed at 15:47

Signed: ..... Date: .....