

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held Online on Tuesday, 8 March 2022.

PRESENT: Mr S C Manion (Chairman), Mrs N Younosi (Vice-Chairman), Ms N Brownfield, Ms K Burke, Mrs M Duncombe, Mrs C Elapatha, Ms F Hawkes, Mrs B Naden, Mr J Paul, Mrs G Spragg, Mrs R Swansbury, Miss R Walters and Mrs J Wigg

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms P Smith-Orr (Consultant Advisor), Miss K Reynolds (Democratic Services Officer) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

25. Apologies for Absence/Substitutes

(Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Brady, Mrs Goldstein, Mr Chambers and Mrs Roddan.

26. Declarations of Interest

(Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

27. Minutes of Meeting on 2 November 2021

(Item 3)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 were correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chairman.

28. Membership

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the membership of Kent SACRE be noted.

29. Future Work Programme

(Item 5)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr provided an update on the Kent SACRE Development Plan and highlighted to Members the achievements and progress that had been made to date. Supplementary to this, Mrs Smith-Orr informed Members that a new Development plan had been produced which set out the new priority objectives for September 2021 through to July 2022.
2. In response to questions from Members it was said that:

- A. There was scope for SACRE to interact with the teaching school hub programme when this had been fully set up.
- B. There was a need for a united approach to ensure that high quality RE training support was provided. Although not all SACRE Members are teachers, all should be encouraged to attend appropriate training opportunities.
- C. Mrs Swansbury agreed to contact Mrs Smith-Orr regarding the RE Leadership Development Programme available through the Diocese of Canterbury.
- D. It would be sensible for school website monitoring to resume in September 2022.

RESOLVED to comment on the Future Work Programme and to note the verbal update.

30. SACRE self-evaluation Tool - Sections 1 & 2

(Item 6)

- 1. Mrs Smith-Orr introduced the updated self-evaluation tool which had been created to help SACREs in their role to advise the Local Authority (LA) in meeting the entitlement of pupils across the LA to engage in high quality Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship (CW) and to support the LA to reflect on its practice. SACRE Members discussed Sections 1 and 2 and agreed to the ratings of the key areas.
- 2. In response to Members' concerns regarding the link between the work of SACRE and the wider authority, Mr Manion agreed to query whether a lead officer could be present at SACRE meetings.
- 3. Members agreed that there was a need for better insight into assessment in schools in order to monitor the quality of RE delivery in Kent. It was said that a regular agenda item could be added to consider Kent Schools which have been inspected by Ofsted.

RESOLVED to make a set of recommendations for SACRE to action.

31. Budget Update

(Item 7)

- 1. Mrs Smith-Orr reported that there was an underspend on the budget. This was attributed to the fact that the organisation of physical meetings and work with schools had not been possible due to the pandemic. The total underspend for 2021/22 was £4,462.20. It was explained that any underspend would be returned to KCC.
- 2. Mrs Smith-Orr said that a training day on 20 October 2022 had been booked. She had arranged for this to be invoiced before the end of March 2022 so that the underspend would not return to KCC.

RESOLVED that the budget update be noted.

32. Review of the Syllabus during 2022

(Item 8)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr reminded Members of the requirement to review the RE syllabus during 2022. It was said that continuing with the current provider, RE Today, would involve a license renewal valued at £28,000 for an updated syllabus. However, this cost could be spread over two financial years. It was said that there were a number of additional units included in the updated RE Today syllabus and these would be discussed outside of the meeting.
2. Mrs Swansbury said that from a teacher workload point of view, there was a preference to maintain the current syllabus. It was said that to allow for adequate preparation time, the outcome of the syllabus review would need to be communicated to schools ahead of the summer holidays.
3. SACRE Members agreed that the resources required to independently write a new syllabus would outweigh the costs involved with the license renewal.
4. In response to questions from Members, Mr Manion agreed to contact the Cabinet Member regarding the budget availability.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update.

33. RE Teachers Training

(Item 9)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr confirmed that RE teacher training would take place with RE Today on 20th October 2022. She agreed to contact RE Today to establish potential attendance costs.
1. SACRE Members agreed that it would be advantageous to involve more schools in the training.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update.

34. Films for Schools

(Item 10)

1. Mrs Swansbury gave an update on the production of Religious Education films and said there were four completed films.
2. Mrs Swansbury said she was mindful of safeguarding the young people in the films and said the videos were currently held on the Canterbury Diocese YouTube page, only accessible to those provided with the link. SACRE Members agreed that it would be preferable if these videos were hosted by the SACRE page on KELSI.
3. Due to technical issues, Mrs Wigg agreed to arrange for the Salvation Army footage to be redone.

RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted.

35. The Wire Award

(Item 11)

1. SACRE Members joined Mrs Smith-Orr in congratulating Ms Brownfield on St George's CE Primary School's receipt of the Kent WIRE award. It was said that this had been particularly challenging to pursue during the pandemic and that the school had done an excellent job. Ms Brownfield confirmed receipt of the voucher that had been awarded.
2. Mrs Smith-Orr said several schools who had applied had not yet submitted their evidence in support.

RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted.

36. Submission of Annual report 2020-21

(Item 12)

The Chairman advised that on 1 March 2022 he had presented the SACRE Annual Report 2020-21 to the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, and that the report was received positively.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

37. NATRE School Workforce Data 2020

(Item 13)

1. Further to a recommendation from the SACRE Meeting held on 2 November 2021, Mrs Smith-Orr referred back the report which was sent to each local authority by Deborah Watson, NATRE Research Officer, to accompany the release of school level data from the 2020 DfE School Workforce Census. Mrs Smith-Orr reiterated that the report included most schools in Kent, but not all, as some did not respond to the census.
2. Members of SACRE agreed to wait to receive the next DfE School Workforce Census before considering a support plan for schools that were struggling.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

38. NASACRE Conference May 23rd 2022 - delegates

(Item 14)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr informed Members that the annual NASACRE conference and AGM was held to be held in Birmingham on Monday 23 May 2022. It was said that there would be the option to attend virtually.
2. Mr Manion confirmed in-person attendance and Mrs Younosi tentatively agreed to attend in-person.
3. Members queried whether it would be possible to gather locally and attend the conference *en masse* virtually. Mrs Smith-Orr agreed to contact NASACRE to query attendance options.

RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted.

39. Interfaith Issues

(Item 15)

1. As the Chair of the Maidstone Inter-Faith Network, Mrs Younosi raised concerns regarding KCC's lack of participation in events such as National Inter-Faith Week. It was said that the Council-led group who were responsible for organising events to commemorate days in the religious calendar had been disbanded.
2. In her capacity as Vice-Chair of Kent SACRE, Mrs Younosi would contact Chairman of KCC on behalf of SACRE to raise these concerns.

RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted.