

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 2 March 2023.

PRESENT: Mr S C Manion (Chairman), Miss C Bostock, Mr A Brady, Ms N Brownfield, Ms K Burke, Mrs N Cheema, Mrs M Duncombe, Mrs C Elapatha, Mrs J Grant, Ms S Hamilton, Miss M Paddison-Chapman, Mr J Paul, Miss E Pope, Mr A Shepherd, Mrs R Swansbury and Mrs J Wigg

ALSO PRESENT: Ms Natalie Ralph

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

65. Apologies for Absence/Substitutes

(Item 1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Lawson, Ms Goldstein, Ms Walters, Mrs Younosi, Ms Naden, Mr Chambers and Ms Hawkes.

66. Declarations of Interests

(Item 2)

Mr Manion declared that he was a Member of the Canterbury Diocese Board of Education.

67. Membership

(Item 3)

It was announced that Mrs Swansbury was resigning from SACRE. Ms Natalie Ralph was present as a guest and would be appointed as the new representative for the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education in Group 2. SACRE Members thanks Mrs Swansbury for her positive contribution to Religious Education (RE) in Kent.

68. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 November 2022

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2022 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

69. Development Plan 2022-23

(Item 5)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr provided an update on the Kent SACRE Development Plan.

2. In response to questions from Members it was said that, at the time of the meeting, the exam results for Kent schools had still not been received or evaluated.
3. RESOLVED to note the update and to comment on the Development Plan 2022/23.

70. Budget Update

(Item 6)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr provided an update on recent expenditure and advised SACRE Members that the overspend was due to the Agreed Syllabus launch in 2022.
2. SACRE Members expressed their gratitude to Kent County Council (KCC) for the allocated SACRE budget and for the Council's significant spend on RE in Kent.
3. In response to questions from Members it was said that the RE Today new secondary units were circulated to schools on 24 January 2023. SACRE members were reminded that there had been a delay in sending the syllabus to Kent schools due to difficulties in locating a full contact list. It appeared that some RE teachers had yet to receive the syllabus. Mrs Smith-Orr agreed to circulate the link to the syllabus and the secondary units to SACRE Members via the Clerk.
4. RESOLVED that the budget update be noted.

71. RE Coordinator Group Meetings

(Item 7)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr requested permission from SACRE Members to start an RE network independent of the teaching school hubs. Members were told that co-opted Member Mr Shepherd was planning to host a network meeting in March 2023.
2. Miss Pope endorsed the proposal for a RE Coordinator Group meetings. It was said that the teaching school hubs were still in early stages and they would not offer the services needed for RE networking until the hubs were well-established.
3. It was recommended that the group leaders were affiliated to National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE). However, Members recognised the cost implication of this recommendation. Members suggested that the NATRE Membership fees were paid out of the SACRE budget. Members queried whether a Terms of Reference (ToR) or best practice model should be established for these groups based on the advice provided by NATRE.
4. Mrs Smith-Orr recommended the NASACRE online training programme. In particular, the Collective Worship session.

5. RESOLVED to note and comment on the verbal update.

72. Virtual Summer Meeting

(Item 8)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr and Mrs Swansbury provided a verbal summary of the proposal to hold a virtual meeting in the summer term as a follow up to the 20th of October 2022 Kent Revised RE Syllabus Launch & Teachers Training event. The event would focus on the syllabus and training would be provided on the new units. It was suggested that ahead of the virtual meeting, attendees would be sent a welcome pack including a teabag.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was agreed that training offered between the hours of 14:00 to 16:00 would be better attended by teachers. It was also said that the summer meeting would be targeted to primary school teachers. An additional meeting would be held in September to support senior school teachers.
3. RESOLVED to note and comment on the verbal update.

73. The Wire Award - Review of Award Criteria

(Item 9)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr introduced the item. Members were reminded of the concerns raised at the November 2022 SACRE meeting regarding the varying quality of evidence provided by WIRE award applicants. It was agreed that the focus of the WIRE award should be on the impact of the work undertaken. A column would be added to the application form for applicants to demonstrate the impact of the activities completed.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) Mrs Smith-Orr would update the wording of the WIRE Award criteria to be more inclusive following a number of suggestions for improvement. An updated version would be circulated to Members for comment.
 - b) An anonymised version of the Garlinge Primary School evidence would be added to Kelsi as an example of the expected standard of submission.
 - c) It was agreed that the new WIRE award criteria would be launched at the summer meeting. The new criteria would replace the current criteria from 1 September 2023.
 - d) The validity of the award would be increased from 2 years to 3 years.
 - e) Members would consider the option of annually awarding an 'Outstanding' award to the application that stood out.
3. RESOLVED to discuss and comment on the WIRE Award criteria.

74. Feedback on Holocaust Memorial Day and National Religions Day

(Item 10)

1. Mrs Grant provided feedback on Holocaust Memorial Day and World Religions Day. It was said that the Chairman of KCC and three mayors were present at the Holocaust Memorial Day event. In addition, guest speakers attended to

share their personal stories. However, it was not well attended by the public. Regarding World Religions Day, Mrs Grant said that the Maidstone Interfaith Group were invited to Maidstone Grammar School in January 2023 to speak to four Year 13 students on the topic of whether the United Kingdom could be considered to be a Christian, multifaith, multicultural or secular country based on 2022 census data. It was said that the discussion was well received by the students.

2. Members thanked Mrs Grant and Mrs Younosi for promoting SACRE at these events.
3. RESOLVED to note and comment on the verbal update.

75. SACRE Annual Report - Update

(Item 11)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr introduced the item and Members confirmed receipt of the final draft of the SACRE Annual Report 2021-22. It was said that the report would be taken to the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee meeting on Wednesday 8th March 2023.
2. RESOLVED to note and comment on the verbal update.

76. Films for Schools

(Item 12)

1. Mrs Swansbury encouraged SACRE Members to produce more films to ensure that there was a diverse offer. It was agreed that the criteria for the films would be circulated to SACRE Members again for reference.
2. The Clerk agreed to contact Emma Stone regarding the Vimeo account.
3. RESOLVED to note and comment on the verbal update.

77. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

(Item 13)

Members were told that the NASACRE Conference and AGM would be held in Fishmongers' Hall, London on Monday 22nd May 2023. There was the opportunity for two Kent SACRE Members to attend. The Chair agreed to attend and to report back to SACRE Members on the event.