

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (KENT)

MINUTES of a SACRE meeting held in the Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 21 November 2012.

PRESENT: Mr M C Manion (Chairman) Ms K Burke, Mrs S Clark, Rabbi C Cohen, Mrs P Fairchild, Mr G K Gibbens, Mrs J Grant, Miss S Malone, Mrs T Martin, Mrs M McDowall, Mr J Northey, Mr M Papadopoulos, Mr S Platnauer, Miss E Pope, Miss S Shaw, Mrs V Thornewell, Mr N Utton, Miss R Walters and Mrs J Wigg.

ALSO PRESENT: Prof R Norman

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Foster (Consultant) and Mrs C Wade (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

20. Membership

To note the appointment of Anne Donnelly, Group1 Roman Catholic Representative.

21. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2012 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

22. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

23. Budget

(1) Mr Foster confirmed the budget had been reduced from £7k to £5k as a result of an underspend. Mr Manion and Mr Foster had met the budget holders and arranged for a regular monthly update in future.

(2) Mr Foster presented a slide of the latest figures which the clerk would circulate to members.

(3) It was noted £886 had been spent to date, but there were a number of invoices and expenses to be reconciled. It was expected the Budget would be fully committed.

(4) Members discussed the individual amounts estimated under specific headings and it was explained that SACRE could make any adjustments as necessary, in order to identify the actual costs.

(5) It was noted supply cover was only paid for teacher members not working in Academies. Ms Burke was under the impression that she had been unable to claim for a number of years and the Clerk agreed to check the minutes for an explanation.

(6) Ms Burke was concerned that in her AST role she was aware that very few schools knew about, or used the new Kent Agreed Syllabus. It was agreed that any excess funds be used to send a mailshot to remind schools where to find the Syllabus on the website and how to access all SACRE publications. Ms Burke also suggested that if SACRE wished to make use of the AST's expertise it should be factored into the budget forecast.

(7) Mr Foster agreed that SACRE have a duty to promote knowledge and use of the syllabus and would add publicity to the Development Plan.

(8) Mr Platnauer suggested building up a register of RE teachers in schools to ensure contact is made with the correct person, but Mr Foster advised that he would follow up all responses to the Secondary and Primary Survey he had conducted- therefore compiling a list of contact names for future use.

(9) Mrs Martin reported difficulties getting details of C of E training courses advertised on the Kent website and Mr Foster agreed there appeared to be no ELS lead for training. He had spoken to Jo Winkler and was trying to get access to Mrs Rogers. Mrs Martin suggested the possibility of organising a SACRE Roadshow offering access to the Syllabus, timed to coincide with the five non-teaching days. She reported that a recent Barnabus course with forty places offered to primary schools had a take-up of only nine.

(10) In conclusion it was noted no budget roll-over was permissible.

24. Annual Report

Mr Foster presented the Draft Annual Report which was approved by members. The final version would be forwarded to NASACRE, KCC Members and Mr Gove and the Dept for Education and published on the SACRE webpages on www.kent.gov.uk ; and on kenttrustweb

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=145&MId=5064&Ver=4>
http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/ask8/ask8_secondary_re_sacre.cfm

25. Draft Constitution

(1) Members had received the draft constitution showing track changes added to take account of members' views at the previous meeting and the deliberations of the Steering Group.

(2) It was agreed that the previously deleted vision statement be reinstated and to use more inclusive language eg. the word "pupils" in preference to all faith groups.

(3) It was agreed the practice of one group, one vote would continue, with the addition of the Chairman's casting vote.

(4) Mrs Thornewell raised her concerns about the voting rights of co-opted members and echoed members' views that co-opted members were appointed to fulfil a particular/valid role and as such should have their voice heard within the Group vote. This was agreed for inclusion in the Constitution.

(5) Mr Foster agreed to incorporate members' points and pass the updated document to the KCC Legal team for approval.

(6) Members expressed the wish to revisit the Vision statement regularly as a working reminder of the main functions of the Council, and the Chairman requested the item be added to the Development Plan for review annually.

26. Kent Youth SACRE - Working Group Update

(1) Mr Tyson-Youth SACRE Working party convenor had emailed the group suggesting an inaugural meeting of the Youth SACRE be arranged to take place in February 2013.

(2) Members debated the issues and timeline and Mr Gibbens stated the venue should be County Hall, and in his view it was key to involve the Kent Youth Council. It was agreed the Kent Youth Council could possibly be approached to send representatives and each secondary school be invited to send two post year 10 pupils. With teachers and facilitators this could be in excess of two hundred people.

(3) Members agreed February 2013 was too short notice to plan, prepare and facilitate an exciting first meeting empowering young people to become actively involved in RE. Mr Foster reminded members that the funds had been allocated in this year's budget and the topic had been discussed for a long time.

(4) Ms Burke is a member of the working group and requested the Clerk arrange a meeting to follow the next Chairman's briefing at Oakwood House.

(5) Mr Utton advised that the Headteacher Conference he had organised had administrative support bought in from Training and Development to co-ordinate the work and produce the flyers and publicity etc. It was agreed this would produce a more professional job if the funds were available.

(6) The Chairman and Mr Foster agreed to arrange a meeting with Mr Tyson to feed back members' views.

27. Development Plan / website Working Party

(1) Monitoring standards, quality and provision of RE.

(2) Mrs Martin apologised for having circulated the incorrect version of the Plan in the papers and provided amendments.

(3) Members debated the difficulty of gathering meaningful data since schools only reported on core subjects and RE was not commented on in Ofsted Inspection Reports. Mrs Martin suggested Mr Foster could contact schools by telephone-but this

was too big an ask within his limited timeframe, but he agreed to try and enlist the assistance of colleagues in ELS to resolve the issue.

(4) The Chairman asked if the faith schools and Academies collate data and Mrs Martin advised C of E schools do have inspection and provided data for end of Key Stage assessments-but this was not within SACRE's remit.

(5) Miss Pope commented she had never been asked for end of Key Stage 3 results- She was happy to send a spreadsheet if requested, but if the individual schools failed to deliver RE, in reality it was not true data and had limited value.

(6) Mr Utton added the only reliable source of data for Key Stages 3 and 4 was public exam results.

(7) Mr Manion invited members to share the load by contacting schools in their own area to monitor provision and address non-compliance and send results direct to Mr Foster. The intention was to follow up any non-compliance indicated when the Survey responses were collated.

(8) Mrs Martin felt the Development Plan was too long and had too little impact. She suggested prioritising specific areas on a rotating programme, perhaps concentrating on non-compliance of Collective Worship later, whilst still fulfilling SACRE's legal obligation.

(9) Mr Platnauer reiterated the need for the SACRE website to allow teachers easier access to more meaningful information to aid better lesson planning. It was agreed that the working group would meet after the Chairman's next briefing meeting at Oakwood House.

(10) Mr Foster reminded members website resources were all listed in the Agreed Syllabus.

28. Overview of National and Local Developments

London and SE Regional Conference

Mr Foster had attended the Conference and agreed to inform members about the pilot for a national RE Quality Mark next meeting. A summary of key points was shared via a powerpoint presentation, which will be circulated to members along with minutes.

NASACRE and AREIAC's joint statement on Circular 1/94 and collective worship-October 2012

It was noted that in their Circular 1/94 was often a barrier to good collective worship and the above bodies therefore advised schools and Academies not to use the Circular, but be guided by the legal requirements set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act and confirmed in the 1996 Act.

NASACRE Newsletter

Members were encouraged to read the Autumn edition which had a good article about spiritual development.

29. Meeting Dates

SACRE

Thurs 7 March 2013 – County Hall – Mr P Leeson Speaker

Wed 26 June 2013 – Gurdwara, Gravesend

Tues 19 Nov 2013 – County Hall

Briefing

Mon 4 Feb 2013 – including : Development Plan Working Group

Youth SACRE

Website Working Group

Mon 20 May 2013

Mon 21 Oct 2013

Venue: Oakwood House, Maidstone

30. Guest Speaker - Prof Norman - A Humanist Perspective on Religious Education

- (1) Prof Norman gave an illustrated presentation about his individual experience as a Humanist, although he believed his views would be generally applicable.
- (2) He produced a number of statistics which indicated that a large percentage of pupils in Kent schools had no religious affiliation or belief, and said the teaching of RE should take account of this.
- (3) The Chairman thanked Prof Norman for giving an interesting insight into his beliefs after the session concluded with a lively question and answer session.
- (4) It was agreed that the clerk would circulate the slide presentation to members by email.