

Minutes of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious

Education

County Hall, Worcester

Thursday, 10 February 2022, 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr. Mel Allcott (Chair), Cllr. Matthew Jenkins (Vice -Chairman), Mr Graham Bounds, Rev. Duncan Hutchison, Cllr. Emma Marshall and Dr Yvonne Stollard'

Also attended:

Stephen Pett, RE Today - Adviser to SACRE
Lisa Bradbury - Worcestershire Children First
Kate Griffiths, Committee Officer

723 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence had been received from Charlotte Betteridge, Danielle Evans, Chris Giles, Ellie Hill, Tasnim Khawaja, Jatinder Loyal and Christine Parker.

The SACRE meeting was not quorate as there was not a member from Group C (Representatives of Recognised Teachers Associations) in attendance. It was proposed that the meeting carry on and any decisions which needed to be made should be proposed and seconded and if agreed by the members present would be taken as agreed pending the approval by members of the absent group after the meeting.

724 Confirmation of the Minutes

There was an amendment made to the minutes of the last meeting on 14 October 2021 – Minute 715 stated that Dr Katherine Lack was doing work on scriptural reading, however it should read that Rev Catherine Lack was carrying out the work.

Subject to this change being made, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

725 Support for Teachers

Conferences - The content of the conferences was discussed as well as how to advertise them; suggestions included advertising at teacher meetings, via the Diocese and Chris Giles and by Twitter. Information about the Conferences would also be distributed by Worcestershire Children First direct to schools. The conference would cost £95 to attend or to gain access to the recording.

Network meetings –The main network meetings were run by Catherine Atkinson for the Rivers Multi Academy Trust which included Church and Community Schools. The Diocese were setting up some network meetings in Deanery areas which would start later in the year.

Finance – The SACRE budget was £8,626 a year. £5,500 for the SACRE Advisor from RE Today, £105 NASACRE membership so £3,021 needed to be spent or at least allocated by 31 March.

Proposals for how the money could be used was discussed. Ideas included lesson planning for teachers to help schools with little engagement in teaching RE; providing boxes of resources which could be rented or borrowed by schools; the provision of training days to help RE Co-ordinators or further investment in training hub leaders.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed, pending agreement from Group C, that the money would be used for two, day long courses of 'Help I am an RE Co-ordinator' for primary teachers, to be run by RE Today. RE Today would invoice for the money before the end of March and would hopefully be able to run 1 course in the summer and 1 in the autumn in person if possible.

RESOLVED (with agreement from Group C) – That the SACRE funding should be used for two 'Help I am an RE Co-ordinator' sessions to be run by RE Today.

726 Annual Report

It was noted that this report would be sent to DfE and NASACRE. No amendments were suggested. A new format would be used for future reports.

727 Workforce Data

Consideration of the workforce data suggested that all schools were not providing RE to all pupils as they should be doing, however the workforce data was considered to be problematic as only a sample of schools were surveyed and the data did not give the full picture. It was proposed that a short survey be created and sent to schools to get more targeted information. Questions would include how many hours of RE were taught, what they called their 'RE' provision and what would help them to provide more RE? The results of the survey would then enable follow up work to be done with schools that were providing little RE.

It was suggested that as an incentive to fill in the survey, schools would be entered into a raffle to win £50 for the RE department.

RESOLVED (with agreement from Group C) – That Stephen Pett create an online survey and it be sent to all middle and secondary schools; and that entry into a raffle to win £50 is used to encourage schools to respond.

728 National News Update

With regard to the perceived lack of Government funding for RE a suggestion was made that SACRE could contact local MPs. It was agreed that as a first step SACRE members should encourage their MPs to attend an online event on 1 March chaired by Sir Peter Bottomley, to encourage them to support RE. (see attached information and example letter.)

Secondly, Stephen (with help from RE Today colleagues) would draft a letter from SACRE to local MPs to be considered at the next meeting.

The NASACRE Conference was being held on 23 May – There was limited funding available for a SACRE Member to attend.

NASACRE's SACRE self-evaluation tool – This would be considered at the next meeting.

RESOLVED (with agreement from Group C) – that SACRE members encourage their local MPs to attend the online event on 1 March.

729 Feedback from Members

Yvonne Stollard explained that last year the Faith and Belief Forum had held a session considering World Views. Some attendees had been quite concerned by the idea.

A sample handbook based on a Religion and World Views Approach was being written by RE Today and could be discussed at the next meeting.

730 Any Other Business

None

731 Future Meeting Dates

It was explained that the legislation covering Local Authority Committee meetings did not allow decisions to be made at virtual meetings because attendees had to be physically present. Therefore, SACRE meetings would be held in person unless the legislation is amended.

Future meeting dates:

- Wednesday 8 June, 2022, 2pm
- Tuesday 11 October, 2022, 2pm

The meeting ended at 4.00pm

Chairman