



Minutes of the meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION held on TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2006 at 10.00 AM

Present: Milton Keynes Council
Councillor Irons (Chair)

Jewish Community
Z Friedman

Oxford Diocese
R Davey

Sunni Muslim
G S Baloch

Teachers' Association
D Evans

Vishwa Hindu
H Padhya

Officers: J Fageant (Advisor to the SACRE) and P Taylor (Committee Manager)

Apologies: N Beales (Greek Orthodox Community), T Cutting (Bridgebuilder Trust), B Dalal (Shia Islamic Mosque/ Muslim Community), M Moffoot (Methodist Church), K Obhi (Sikh Society of Milton Keynes), P Obhi (Sikh Society of Milton Keynes), L Rowlands (Bahai Faith)

1.0 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED -

1. That Councillor Irons be elected Chair for the Council Year 2006/07.
2. The position of Vice-Chair be left vacant.

2.0 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The SACRE considered the Minutes of its last meeting held on 21 February 2006.

The SACRE noted a letter from I McGarahan informing the SACRE that due to a change of job, she was now no longer based in MK and could therefore no longer carry on as a member of the MK SACRE.

The Chair thanked I McGarahan for her work and expressed disappointment at the loss of such a valuable member. The Chair asked that a replacement representative from ATL be sought.

Z Friedman presented the SACRE with a written report on the Jewish SACRE conference. The Chair requested that this document be circulated to members. **(Attached as Annex)**

RESOLVED -

1. That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2006, be agreed as a correct record, subject to the following:
 - 'R Padyha' to read 'H Padhya' in the list of Apologies.
 - That, in Minute 23.0, 'Collected Worship' read 'Collective Worship'.
2. That the Committee Manager contact ATL to request a replacement representative for I McGarahan.

3.0 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) FOR TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

The SACRE received an update on CPD for teachers of RE and noted the following:

1. The intended pattern of CPD was in place with a twilight session taking place each term.
2. Half day sessions on 'Self-evaluation of RE' and 'Preparing for Inspection' attracted a small attendance but were considered a success by attendees.
3. Upcoming courses included a half-day on 'Standards of RE' and a whole day on 'Collective worship'.
4. Publicity for the courses was said to be poor, with leaflets not reaching the relevant people or arriving too late.

J Fageant would discuss the way in which CPD was advertised with G Morris (Assistant Director of Education – School Improvement) and find out if a copy of the training programme could be sent to SACRE members.

4.0 REPORT ON THE NASACRE AGM

Jo Fageant provided an oral update on the NASACRE AGM. Members heard that the meeting had concentrated on the challenge that all SACRE's faced concerning how they could monitor the provision and quality of RE and Collective Worship in schools. It was noted that all SACRE's were struggling with this duty, particularly regarding how to get the relevant information from schools. It was noted that SACRE's possessed no authority to make schools complete forms and this could cause a problem, especially if the schools felt that the forms were time-consuming.

Members were reminded that the Milton Keynes syllabus for RE, which is available electronically, was the document against which provision of RE should be assessed

J Fageant and P Taylor were to arrange a hard copy of the syllabus for M Baloch.

5.0 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The SACRE received a report on advice and training in relation to Collective Worship in Schools.

J Fageant reminded Members that a simple A5 leaflet on Collective Worship had been distributed to schools 3 or 4 years ago. This was a purely informative document that covered what had to be provided, what legislation had to be adhered to, and who schools could go to for support. However, newer materials were now available which presented the same information in a more 'upbeat' manner and more resources were now available on the internet. On-line resources were particularly useful and were well known by RE teachers.

The SACRE decided that a new leaflet should be produced. It should be enthusiastic about Collective Worship and cover the following topics

1. The legal requirements for Collective Worship
2. Suggestions on good practice
3. Resources that schools could use, including local speakers

It was felt that funds for the project should be made available from the SACRE budget and Tim Cutting from the Bridgebuilder Trust was identified as an excellent resource to lead on this matter due to the work that the Trust does in schools regarding Collective Worship. J Fageant would discuss the proposal with G Morris as it would be reliant on support from the LEA.

6.0 PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN SCHOOLS

The SACRE considered how it could monitor the provision and quality of RE and Collective Worship in schools without the aid of Ofsted reports. J Fageant advised Members that it was up to schools to decide exactly how they met the legal requirements regarding RE and Collective Worship and that some of the more organised schools had already designed self-evaluation forms.

Examples of self-evaluation forms were available on www.reonline.org.uk. This was an excellent, if large, document and it was suggested that schools should be made aware of its existence.

J Fageant informed the SACRE that a summarised version of this self-evaluation form was also available on-line which could be filled

in, submitted electronically and the results analyzed. This system would allow for results to be compared nationally, although its usefulness would be dependent on how many other Local Authorities used it. It was noted that so far the system of self-evaluation and analysis of RE and Collective Worship had been embryonic across the country.

It was also noted that the self-evaluation form was simple to fill in and could be completed at the same time as a school was inspected by OFSTED, as they would have the necessary information at hand. An afternoon meeting could be arranged to give guidance to schools on how to complete the form. Being part of this scheme might cost the SACRE as little as £50 per year.

Although SACRE had the financial capability, the program would be difficult to run if it was not supported by the LA.

The Chair suggested that D Francis, who had given a talk to the NASACRE concerning the electronic form, could be invited to talk to Members and explain to them how the system worked. The SACRE agreed that this would be useful and asked that he be invited to the next meeting of SACRE.

J Fageant and the Chair would speak to G Morris to see if resources and support were available for the scheme. It was stressed that this scheme would only measure RE; no scheme as of yet was available to monitor Collective Worship.

7.0 SACRE REPORT

The SACRE considered a first draft of the Milton Keynes Annual SACRE report 2005-2006. The final report is due to go to the QCA at the end of the calendar year. No development plan would be included in the appendices this year but a revised 'current development plan' would be considered for next year.

8.0 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Members received an update on membership of the SACRE. Councillor S Clark was unfortunately unable to attend meetings because of her Cabinet commitments and the Liberal Democrats had chosen not to put forward a Member. Councillor Geary had been appointed as a Member and needed to be contacted and his position clarified. Councillor Miles had asked for clarification of SACRE membership and should be contacted in regards this matter.

Due to the departure of Rev M Stanton-Saringer, the Church of England was a member short. As noted above, the ALT needed to be contacted and a replacement for I McGarahan appointed.

Members noted that under the SACRE constitution, members could serve for three years and were then eligible for re-appointment. It

was also suggested that local organisations be contacted in order to try and recruit new members. For example there were no Buddhists represented on the SACRE. The SACRE agreed to try to encourage more representations by holding meetings at a wider variety of locations. It was suggested that Mr Asrif of the Wolverton Mosque and M Dalal of the Shia Islamic Mosque be contacted about the possibility of holding meetings at their respective Mosques.

9.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The SACRE decided that they would like to have the next meeting at Christ the Sower School. They would invite D Francis to give a presentation on the self-evaluation forms and if he could attend they would invite RE teachers and other interested parties along. They would like to have the next meeting on Tuesday 7 November, and at a time that was convenient for Mr Francis. If he could not be present then the next SACRE meeting would be held on 27 February 2007, with the Hazley School suggested as a possible venue.

RESOLVED -

That the next meetings of the SACRE would take place on Tuesday 7 November and Tuesday 27th February 2007, with the former date dependent on the availability of Mr Francis. Exact times and locations to be arranged outside the meeting.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11:40 AM