

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 25 JUNE 2013

PRESENT:-

Group A:
Christian Denominations and
Other Religions or Religious
Denominations

Mr Arun Bedi (Sikh Community), Mr David
Burbidge (Baptist Church), Mr Mark Cawte
(Methodist), Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte (United
Reformed Church), Reverend David Howell
(Swindon Evangelical Alliance) and Mr M S
Khan (Muslim Community)

Group B:
Church of England

Ms Steph Mundin

Group C:
Teacher Organisations

Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Lottie Rowe, Mrs Mandy
Sandleton, Ms Mel Shepherd, Ms Catherine
Lomax and Mr Paul Sunners

Group D:
Councillors

Councillors Fay Howard, James Robbins,
Alan Bishop and Fionuala Foley

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Janet French, Reverend Norma
McKemey, Mrs Penny Summers, Reverend Beth Brown, Mr Tony McAteer, Mr
Dinesh Patel and Councillor John Haines.

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for Municipal Year 2013-2014

Resolved – (1) That Mr Mark Cawte be Chair of the SACRE for the
Municipal Year 2013/14.

(Mark Cawte took the Chair.)

(2) That Lottie Rowe be Vice-Chair of the SACRE for the Municipal Year
2013/14.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in
any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

3. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

4. Chair's Announcements

David Howells advised the SACRE that after sixteen years of visits to
secondary schools he was piloting a QCF in Luton for Voluntary work in Education,
the first of its kind. This included some units for Learning and Support Level 3. The
Diploma followed three pathways, Education of Teachers youth and children work
and pastoral/chaplaincy/therapeutic work. A similar course might also be run in

Swindon in the future.

The SCARE wished David Howells every success with his project.

Mark Cawte reported that at the meeting held on 19th June the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee ask that SACRE be consulted on whether it wished to be part of a Review of Sex Education in Swindon, and if so, to submit its comments back to the Committee. This was supported by Mr Sunners, the SACRE representative on the Committee.

The Chair advised the SACRE that the Clerk has checked the legal powers of the SACRE which are very specifically limited to supporting Religious Education and Collective Worship, and that it is not allowed to step outside of this scope. He requested that if any faith representatives on SACRE feel that they or their communities would like to be consulted on any recommendations arising from such a review by the Children Young People or the Safer and Stronger Overview Committees the clerk will forward the appropriate details to the Scrutiny Officers.

The SACRE discussed the review and SACRE's involvement in it, the moral and educational involvement within SACRE's work and noting the advice of the Chair and Clerk determined that any involvement should be on a personal level.

5. Minutes

Resolved – That, subject to the last sentence of Minute34 being amended to read “The SACRE were concerned that at least one school had not entered any pupils for RE examinations for a four year period and what this meant in terms of access to RE for pupils in the school” the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2013, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

6. Membership Update

The SACRE Advisor submitted a report seeking the views of SACRE as to whether it considered it was appropriate to make changes to its membership following the Census 2011 returns. It was noted that there could not be changes to Groups B or D and so any changes would be to Groups A or C. Any proposed changes would need to be confirmed by Swindon Borough Council.

Group A – This group differed across SACRE's and tended to reflect local identity. It was noted that the Buddhist and Jewish faiths were not represented on Swindon's SACRE. It was noted that Mr Gurchoran Singh Lyal had been nominated to replace Mr Arun Bedi as a Sikh community representative. There had been no request for representation received from the Buddhist faith group in Swindon.

The SACRE discussed the educational advantages of having representation from all the major faith groups on the SCARE. The SACRE Advisor also drew Members' attention to paragraph 3.6 of her report and the request from Humanists both locally and nationally for representation on this group. The SACRE debated the merit and potential issues of Humanist representation on the Swindon SACRE, which if agreed, would need to be a co-opted member.

Group C – The three teacher representative vacancies was noted.

Resolved - (1) That Mr Arun Bedi be thanked for his service and a representative of the Sikh community on this SACRE and the nomination of . Mr Gurchoran Singh Lyal as a Sikh representative on SCARE be noted.

(2) That officers approach the local Buddhist and Jewish faith communities to ascertain if they wish to be represented on the Swindon SACRE and if positive responses are received a nominee to serve on SACRE.

(3) That the British Humanist Association be approached to nominate a representative to serve on SACRE, pending confirmation of the appointment and term of office at the next meeting of SACRE.

(4) That nominations for vacancies in teacher representation be sought, if possible encompassing all the relevant bodies representing teachers and headteachers in Swindon.

(5) That further to (1) to (5) above, the nominations of representative be considered at the next meeting for confirmation by Swindon Borough Council at its meeting in November 2013.

7. Examples of Work at Network Meetings

The SACRE Advisor and Head of Commissioning – Economy/Attainment submitted a report provided examples of activities carried out at RE Network meetings and updated Members on the Network meetings for RE Teachers and Co-ordinators in Swindon.

The SACRE split into groups to undertake examples of the activities and following their conclusion discussed the responses made by groups and lessons that could be drawn from them.

Resolved - (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor be thanked for organising the activities undertaken at the meeting and commended them to the Secondary Teaching and Learning Group for RE.

8. National Developments in RE

The SACRE Advisor and Head of Commissioning – Economy/Attainment submitted a report (a) updating Members on national developments in relation to religious Education, (b) attaching a letter dated 7th June 2013, received from the Religious Education Council of England and Wales concerning the Phase 3 Draft Programme of Study for Review, and (c) a copy of Religious Education Draft Programme of Study for Key Stages 1-3.

SACRE noted that the response deadline was 5th July 2013 and undertook a brief discussion of each key stage as set out in the supporting documentation.

SACRE also discussed the next part of the national debate on the function of SACRE and the role of Religious Education in OFSTED inspections. It was noted that an Early Day Motion on religious tolerance was expected.

Resolved – (1) That the report and its contents be noted.

(2) That the Groups represented on this SACRE be requested to forward any feedback on the Religious Education Draft Programme of Study for Key Stages 1-3 to the SACRE Advisor for inclusion in a combined response from this SACRE.

(3) That it be noted that SACRE Members can submit individual responses to the consultation.

(4) That a report on the national debate on the role of SACREs be submitted to the next meeting.

(5) That officers write to Swindon's two Members of Parliament seeking their support in the forthcoming Early Day Motion on religious tolerance.

9. SACRE Development Plan 2012-14

THE SCARE considered a joint report of the SACRE Advisor and Head of Commissioning – Economy/Attainment updating Members on SCARE's development plan, work undertaken and expenditure allocated.

Further work by the Sub-Group was necessary to progress 3(b) (To develop and strengthen the local element of the locally agreed syllabus and it was hoped that a date could be arranged to undertake this work. It was anticipated that this would go to teachers groups in October 2013 and be reported back to SACRE in December 2013. There was discussion regarding the amalgamation of 3b and 4b on the work plan.

It was reported that the walk would need to be postponed unless volunteers were willing to take it forward.

Resolved – That the report and Development Plan for 2012-2014 be noted.

10. Dates and Times of Meetings

It was noted that meetings of the SCARE would be held on:

Tuesday 1st October 2013 commencing at 6:00pm

Tuesday 3rd December 2013 commencing at 6:00pm; and

Tuesday 18th March 2014 commencing at 6:00pm

Meetings would be held in the Civic Offices, Euclid Street unless an alternative venue was volunteered.

11. Ms Sarah Lawrence

The Chair reported that after ten years' service as Clerk to Swindon SACRE Sarah Lawrence was leaving Swindon Borough Council in July 2013.

Resolved – That SACRE's appreciation for the work undertaken by Sarah Lawrence on behalf of this SACRE be recorded. SACRE also recorded its best wishes to Sarah in her new job.