

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2011

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), Mr Tony McAteer (Catholic Community) and Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)

Group B:
Church of England

Miss Janet French and Mrs Penny Summers

Group C:
Teacher Organisations

Miss Lottie Rowe, Mrs Mandy Sandleton and Ms Sara Crabb.

Group D:
Councillors

Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Claire Ellis and Raymond Fisher

Also in attendance: Ms Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor).

Apologies for absence were received from Reverend Norma McKemey, Ms Steph Mundin, Mrs Tracy Mason and Mr M S Khan.

12. 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.

13. Public Question Time

Representatives of the Swindon Interfaith Forum attended and did not ask a public question, but circulated with the permission of the Chair, copies of leaflets regarding "Restorative Justice – A Conversation with Tony Aldridge" and "Mind Matters October to November 2011" for Members' information.

14. Chair's Correspondence and Announcements

The Chair reported the receipt of the following correspondence:

(a) The NASCRE Newsletter for Summer 2011 which included perspectives on the national position of Religious Education and support for SCAREs and best practice;

(b) A letter received from the Accord Coalition seeking nominations for the 2012 Accord Inclusive Schools Award;

(c) A letter received from the British Humanist Society about membership on the SACRE; and

(d) An invitation to the London and South East SACREs Annual Meeting to be held in London on 13th October 2011.

Resolved – (1) That the correspondence be noted.

(2) That the letter received from the British Humanist Society about membership on the SACRE be considered as part of Agenda Item No. 6 (Membership Update).

(3) That the letter received from the Accord Coalition seeking nominations for the 2012 Accord Inclusive Schools Award be highlighted to schools via Schools Online.

15. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 7th June 2011, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

16. Membership Update

The SACRE considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out issues relating the SACRE's membership (b) an oral report from the Clerk advising the SACRE that Swindon Borough Council had approved the SACRE membership at its meeting held on 22nd September 2011, and (c) the current vacancy of Vice Chair of SACRE.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Membership of SACRE as appended to the Report be noted and new Members to the Council be welcomed.

(3) That the SACRE formally records its appreciation to those members who did not seek reappointment for their work on behalf of the SACRE.

(4) That the position of Group C (Teacher Associations) in relation to Academy Schools be noted.

(5) That the SACRE Advisor be authorised to seek appropriate representatives to fill vacancies in the SACRE membership.

(6) That no action be taken at this time in respect of the request from the British Humanist Society for representation on the SACRE.

(7) That, further to (6) above, the British Humanist Society be advised that their request for representation on the SACRE will be further considered following the release of the Census results which will help inform the discussion on the wider make-up of Swindon SACRE.

(8) That further to the receipt of a list of secondary schools and primary schools in the Borough the Clerk to the SACRE be requested to forward to all members of the SACRE, a list of junior schools within the Borough.

(9) That the Chair, on behalf of the SACRE, be requested to write to all Academies

within the Borough indicating that the SACRE would welcome their continued representation on the SACRE and advising them that (a) the Agreed Syllabus continues to be available to all schools, and (b) the SACRE advisor is available to continue working with all secondary schools for the remainder of the financial year.

(10) That the appointment of Vice-Chair of SACRE be considered at the next meeting.

17. Understanding Local RE

The SACRE received an oral report from Miss Lottie Rowe setting out the successful work undertaken in her school in respect of the Face to Faith live video link and discussion that took place during the previous term. The SACRE discussed the work undertaken and the benefits arising for the school and pupils.

Mr. Mark Cawte gave a brief summary of his attendance at the “Burma Day” event on 20th June 2011 (Minute 7).

Resolved – (1) That Miss Lottie Rowe be thanked for her presentation to SACRE.

(2) That updates on events such as Face to Faith or other good Religious Education good practice be reported to future meetings of the SCARE.

18. National Developments in RE and Collective Worship

The SACRE received a report of the SACRE Advisor setting out national developments in relation to the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.

The SACRE debated (a) the role of Religious Education in the English Baccalaureate in the light of comments attributed to the Prime Minister, David Cameron, and the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, in relation to the possible inclusion of Religious Education and the English Baccalaureate, (b) the number of pupils taken examinations in Religious Education, (c) Government changes to education that would impact on SACREs, and (d) the wider role of religious education within the community.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Chair, on behalf of SACRE, write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Education, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Multi-Faith leaders in the House of Lords setting out this SACRE’s view as to the importance of religious education in the community and in particular, following recent riots, the positive role of religion and religious education in providing young people with a moral compass.

19. Feedback on the Launch of the Agreed Syllabus

The SACRE Advisor submitted a report setting out a summary of the feedback received from the launch of the locally Agreed Syllabus held on 16th June 2011.

The SACRE considered (a) feedback set out in the report together with an oral update from members attending the launch, and (b) the benefits and cost

implications of another event promoting the launch of the locally Agreed Syllabus for those not able to attend the event on 16th June, 2011.

Resolved – (1) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to consider the benefits and cost implications of another event promoting the launch of the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

(2) That the SACRE's appreciation to all teachers contributing to workshops at the launch of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education held on 16th June 2011, be recorded.

20. Update on Network Meetings

The SACRE considered (a) a report of the SACRE Advisor updating members on Network Meetings for Religious Education co-ordinators in Swindon, (b) an oral report from the SACRE Advisor regarding the last meeting, (c) the possibility of the establishment of a central resource centre for Religious Education teaching, and (d) the current position of the meetings resulting from the role of Teaching and Learning Academy Group meetings.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

21. SACRE Development Plan Update - September 2011

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report setting out the current position on the delivery of the SACRE Development Plan for 2011/13. The SACRE was informed that the SACRE Advisor had written to secondary schools regarding provision but had not received any response.

Resolved – (1) That the updates to the SACRE Development Plan for 2011/13, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

(2) That the Development Plan 2011/13 be reported to each meeting of the SACRE for monitoring.

(3) That the SCARE Advisor be requested to re-circulate her letter and guidance to secondary schools.

22. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

Resolved – That the next meeting of the SACRE be held on Tuesday 6th December 2011, commencing at 6:00 p.m. at a venue to be confirmed.