

# The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

## Minutes of Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012

- Present:**
- Group A:**  
Catherine Jinkerson, Christine Morgan, Kathy Turner, Dr Shira Lewin Solomons
  - Group B:**  
Rev. Maurice Stanton-Saringer, Rev. Lisa Cornwell, Jo Fageant
  - Group C:**  
Kevin Price, Sue Cresswell, Michael Freeman, Lesley Green
  - Group D:**  
Cllr Beth Rowland
- In attendance:** Daniel Thompson, Humanist  
Jan Lever, LA Consultant
- Clerk:** Anne Coffey – WBC
- Apologies**
- Group A:**  
Anju Sharma, Shahid Younis, Sukhdev Bansal
  - Group C:**  
Hilary Winter
  - Group D:**  
Cllr Kate Haines

The meeting took place at the Methodist Church, Rose St., Wokingham, due to the Oakwood Centre in Woodley being unavailable.

### 1. WELCOME and APOLOGIES

Michael Freeman, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced all members to Daniel Thompson, a Humanist representative. Apologies were received from Anju Sharma, Shahid Younis, Sukhdev Bansal, Hilary Winter and Cllr Kate Haines.

Michael informed members that he will be joining the Reading SACRE as an ATL representative.

### 2. ELECTIONS

Michael and Cllr Rowland stood down. Maurice proposed Michael for Chairman; Kathy seconded, unanimously agreed. Kathy proposed Cllr Rowland for Vice-Chair; seconded by Rev Lisa Cornwell; unanimously agreed.

### 3. MINUTES OF JUNE 11<sup>th</sup> MEETING

There were no amendments to the Minutes of the last meeting.

### 4. MATTERS ARISING

- I. Membership (Humanist) – Daniel Thompson was recommended to Michael, who invited him to this meeting.
- II. Helen Currie covered the RE trail at the last network meeting and offered to be available for any further RE trail support.

- III. Maurice is still awaiting a response regarding training for teachers of RE who are not RE specialists. Jo said the Diocese does not offer free training for RE teachers; cost for a full day is £75 if part of the Diocese, £110 if not. Network meetings are free but they are not specifically training sessions. Jo has info regarding training. **ACTION – Jo to send info to Anne for inclusion in Education News e-bulletin for schools.** Michael reported that he and Jan met with Hayley Davies-Edwards (SACRE budget holder at WBC) and clarified confusion over the budget before she left the council. The new SACRE budget holder at WBC is now Emily Waddilove (previous LA contact) and Michael and Jan will be meeting her and Richard Stanley (Head of Learning and Achievement in Children’s Services) on December 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss budget and other issues. Hayley had explained that WBC has reservations about network meetings but Michael informed her of the statutory obligation to renew the RE syllabus and then embed it, which is what the network meetings are achieving. All SACRE members are invited to attend these. Michael has requested termly budget statements from WBC and hoped to have one tonight but staff changeover at WBC has delayed this. The SACRE needs to justify expenditure and put in a new bid before Christmas. **ACTION – Michael to follow up with Emily re budget statement.**
- IV. Investigating trainer for Muslim faith – Shahid not present; he has spoken to people and was awaiting responses.
- V. Quote for website design – Shahid emailed to say that he had a few quotes, all around £1,000 = too costly. Discussion followed regarding having a single pan-Berkshire SACRE website, with the general feeling being that LAs would not pay towards a shared SACRE website when SACRE info is already on their own sites. Michael and Jan will raise with Richard Stanley in December. Jo has info from the various syllabus launches which can be put on relevant LA sites. **ACTION – Jo to send to Anne for uploading to Wokingham site.**
- VI. Foreword to syllabus – done.
- VII. Copies of Reading news item – Anne to distribute at end of meeting.
- VIII. SACRE calendar – Michael asked Anne to email all members reminding them to send her info for the calendar/spreadsheet, which will demonstrate the spiritual richness of the borough. **ACTION – Anne to email members and all to respond with info regarding festivals, events, etc., for the calendar.**

## 5. CO-OPTION OF HUMANIST REPRESENTATIVE

a) Daniel gave his presentation.

Daniel teaches 4 days at Desborough Academy in Maidenhead and works 1 day per week as Divisional Secretary of Windsor and Maidenhead NUT. He has been an RE teacher for 8 years.

His view of Humanism – making moral decisions based upon their effect on others.

Useful websites –

[www.humanismforschools.org.uk](http://www.humanismforschools.org.uk) Lesson plans, worksheets, videos etc..

[www.simpleguidetohumanism.org.uk](http://www.simpleguidetohumanism.org.uk) Worth looking at.

High level educational resources are available including speakers for schools.

Daniel is aware RE is facing challenging times. He is moderate and believes BHA and SACRE can learn from each other in a proper dialogue – not anti-faith dogma. He quoted several Humanists including Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of the BHA.

Questions followed.

b) The vote: 8.05pm Daniel left the room while members discussed co-opting him. It was agreed that, according to the constitution, co-option had to be time limited and for a specific project. After general discussion, members gathered in their groups to discuss how they would vote. It was felt that it was preferable to co-opt Daniel as an individual rather than a place for any Humanist. All groups agreed that under the conditions of the constitution, they would co-opt Daniel for the limited time of this academic year, (to be reviewed at the end of that year) and for a specific project, namely to produce a humanist appendix for the new syllabus and to attend/participate in/contribute to secondary network meetings. It was noted that he has already attended Wokingham secondary network meetings and Jan felt it could be helpful to have him engaging with other secondary heads of RE.

## **6. PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS**

Shahid was not present but has requested that this be on the next meeting's agenda. Agreed.

## **7. SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Jan stated that we have fulfilled everything on the old development plan and within budget.

## **8. NETWORK MEETINGS**

Jan reported that there have been two primary and two secondary network meetings for teachers to support them with implementing the new syllabus. It is in the SACRE plan (not the LA's) that the SACRE should help the schools with the work. Jan hopes SACRE members can attend network meetings to discuss with teachers. Despite the slight query from the LA, she is hopeful that network meetings will continue under the SACRE banner; they are a key feature in the new development plan. The ones which have taken place were really well attended – 8/9 people at the secondary meetings (joint with Reading) and 20+ at each Wokingham primary network meeting. This shows real commitment but also a need for support.

Teachers were asked what would help them most:

- A directory of speakers from the faith communities, to visit and talk about their beliefs. This just needs co-ordinating.
- A continuation of network meetings so they can get together with other RE teachers
- The opportunity to access places of worship readily. The model of synagogue 'open days' is good.
- A programme to help translate the syllabus into schemes of work.

Catherine commented that as a primary teacher she had not realised that the SACRE was responsible for the new syllabus. She has found information to share. Daniel suggested the Times Educational Supplement for resources, also RE Stuff.co.uk, (website [www.restuff.org.uk](http://www.restuff.org.uk)).

Jan suggested it would not be costly to arrange trips to places of worship for teachers.

## **9. NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The new plan is about embedding the new syllabus. The plan is in three main sections; A. for the SACRE, B. for teachers and C. to do with the syllabus. An

additional item in C could be 'To add the humanist appendix to the pan-Berkshire syllabus'.

Network meetings are a crucial part of the plan as they are the only means of communication.

Beth suggested that Helen Currie could do another RE trail for other areas, e.g. Woodley and Earley. Jan agreed the SACRE could organise; if done with church schools the Diocese would look upon this favourably.

Jan will take ideas to the LA – an increased budget will be needed. If there are any further comments, please email Jan. **ACTION – All to study development plan and email comments to Jan.**

#### **10. NASACRE SOUTH EAST CONFERENCE**

Jan provided copies of her notes from the conference. Rather gloomy outlook for RE but the RE Council is taking responsibility and has a strategic plan. Jo noted the inaccuracy of RE no longer being required by statute in Free Schools and Academies.

#### **11. AGREED SYLLABUS IMPLEMENTATION**

Jan and a colleague wrote a well-received planning tool called 'Discovery', (for purchase) offering medium term plans to help primary schools in Bournemouth and Poole. Following requests for a similar version for Berkshire, she has re-written them to be in line with the pan-Berkshire syllabus as a solution to the top layer of planning needed to implement the syllabus. Discovery will have two launches, November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The Wokingham launch on Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup> will be hosted at Gorse Ride Junior School, Gorse Ride South, Wokingham, RG40 4JJ. SACRE members are all invited to attend.

#### **12. ANNUAL REPORT**

Members were provided with copies of the draft Annual Report. Jan is liaising with the Data Officer at WBC for RE exam results; they are missing from the draft report as they are currently only provisional but will be included in the final version. Jan noted that last year, of 150 SACREs, only 50 submitted an annual report.

#### **13. CALENDAR/DIARY**

Michael pleaded again for members to submit information to Anne regarding holy days, events, festivals etc. for the SACRE calendar, which will be posted on the SACRE page of the WBC website.

#### **14. NEWS FROM MEMBERS**

This was held over to the next meeting.

#### **15. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Monday February 25; Monday June 3. Venues tbc.

#### **16. AOB**

Kathy suggested thanking Jo and Jan for all their excellent work on the new syllabus. Michael said that there would be a presentation in due course to acknowledge all their hard work.

Shira has drafted a letter to Edexcel re mistakes in Victor Watton's books. Michael asked that she finalises it and sends it to him for signing on behalf of the SACRE group.

There being no more business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm. (The meeting began 30 minutes late at 7:00pm because so many members were delayed by the road works around Wokingham).