

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)  
HELD ON 7 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 6.15 PM**

**Present**

Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Christine Morgan	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Shira Solomons	Judaism
Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Stephen Vegh	Chairman Secondary RS Teacher
Sue Cresswell	Trade Union Representative NAS/UWT
Beth Rowland	Wokingham Borough Councillor
Chris Singleton	Wokingham Borough Councillor
Jan Lever	Local Authority Representative / RE Advisor
Anne Coffey	

**Also Present:**

**1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed members and introduced Rev. Philip Hobday who replaces Rev. Patrick King in Group B. Philip is from Earley St Peter's Church in Woodley. Apologies were received from 4 members prior to the meeting and 2 more were received later that evening.

**2 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Anne reported that Michael contacted her to propose Stephen as Chair and Beth as Vice-Chair, who were both willing to stand again. Anne asked for any other nominations: as there were none, Lisa seconded Stephen for Chair and Anju seconded Beth for Vice-Chair. Agreement was unanimous and Stephen and Beth were re-elected.

**3 MINUTES**

Beth proposed that the minutes be approved; Lisa seconded the proposal and the minutes of the last meeting were approved.

**4 MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising from the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were all listed on the agenda along with progress / outcomes as follows:

**4.1 Stephen liaising with Emily regarding West Berks inter-active RE Trail and unused WBC SACRE RE Trail.**

Catherine Jinkerson has now taken on reviewing the RE Trail and has asked Emily Waddilove for the files in order to update them. There is an issue with the original document being a .pdf file, so Anne will investigate a way to revert the file to a Word document.

**4.2 Anne attended the September NQT event; SACRE flyer, Training/Network meetings flyer were included in delegate packs (around 100).**

Anne assisted at the NQT (Newly Qualified Teachers) event. About 100 SACRE flyers plus RE Network meeting flyers were included in delegate packs and delegates were informed as to Anne's role as SACRE Clerk.

#### **4.3 New constitution was presented at Council Executive meeting in September, not full Council meeting in July (item 5 on agenda).**

The revised constitution was presented to the WBC Executive in September and accepted.

### **5 ADOPTION OF REVISED CONSTITUTION**

The revised constitution was adopted.

### **6 PAN-BERKSHIRE HUB UPDATE**

#### **6.1 Crossing the Bridges**

Jan summarised the Crossing the Bridges project for the benefit of newer members. It had come about as a result of conferring with RE teachers and listening to what they really want by way of support for RE teaching. The SACRE had been granted £2,000 from Culham St Gabriel's (a charitable trust) which had been put towards the initial phase of Crossing the Bridges; designing booking forms, evaluation forms and teaching booklets for visitors to places of worship. More funding was needed and a successful application was made for the NASACRE/Westhill award, providing £3,800 to continue the project. Currently, places of worship are willing and keen to open to schools. Children are investigating specific aspects, e.g. what can they find out about the Christian belief in God from their experience in a place of worship?

#### **6.2 Directory**

As part of the project, Catherine has offered to build relationships with places of worship and create a Directory, containing basic information about each place of worship and what can be provided by those places. Catherine reported that she emailed people after the Pan-Berks SACRE Conference and initially had a really good response, although interest has waned a little with the passage of time. She has reminded those people today, resulting in two responding positively but she accepts that there will be a lot of chasing required. Catherine confirmed that she is doing a lot of outreach work and Jan implored SACRE members to assist by contacting Catherine with details of any contacts they know of. Beth queried what gaps in the SACRE existed as far as contact possibilities in the faiths; i.e. Lisa and Philip are present and represent Christianity. Anju mentioned that Shahid is always open to inviting visitors and Sukhdev represents Sikhism. Catherine mentioned that she had a pro-active Muslim parent at school and Stephen mentioned Julie Siddiqi, who is the Muslim Chair of Slough SACRE

#### **6.3 Forms**

Shira queried the target audience for the form, i.e. places of worship or speakers, as she had to amend hers accordingly. Jan replied that it was being worked on. Shira also suggested that a web-form would have stronger response generation than a form which had to be downloaded and emailed back.

#### **6.4 Visits to places of worship**

Jan informed members of another trip in March (March 8<sup>th</sup> 2017) for RE teachers to visit places of worship, funded by the Westhill award. The Directory will facilitate this; teachers will experience the different places of worship and collect exemplars of

children's work using the Crossing the Bridges teaching/learning booklets. These will be disseminated. We need to achieve as much as possible with the Crossing the Bridges project this year as next year the focus will be on the revised syllabus.

## **7 FEEDBACK ON PAN-BERKS CONFERENCE**

### **7.1 Conference aims**

Jan had distributed a report on the conference, plus a list of attendees which showed that Wokingham was the best represented group. The aim of the conference was to update everyone and rally support for the second phase of the Crossing the Bridges project. The aims of Religious Education were discussed along with what enquiry-based RE can look like in the classroom. There was a panel of people from different religious backgrounds and Anne Andrews (from Oxford Diocese) asked all of them the same question. Jan said it was an intriguing experience and showed a real willingness for dialogues between different faiths. Anju thought it was a brilliant event and very inter-active, offering the chance to talk with people from other faiths. Catherine reported that Rev Hudson said it was a real privilege to be alongside other religious representatives.

### **7.2 Conference report**

The report on the conference is colourful, contains attractive photographs and looks very professional. Jan produced the report for submission to Westhill. This week Westhill are designing the web page for the Crossing the Bridges project; Jan will send the link when it is active and will keep the website updated as the project progresses. <http://www.westhillendowment.org.crossing-the-bridges-project>

### **7.3 Press coverage**

Catherine asked if a press release had gone out but Stephen explained that it had been thought better to wait until there was more to report. It could be done now.

**Action: Jan to draft a press release for all media.**

## **8 FEEDBACK ON RE TRAINING**

Jan reminded members that she had sent a link out via the Clerk, to a site where members can download a Powerpoint presentation of the RE training offered on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Jan believes it is important to support RE teachers early in the school year as many of them find it challenging, especially if it is early in their careers. The main request at RE network meetings has been ideas for teaching RE and the training is tailored to cover roles and responsibilities as well as how to teach. Jan finds it refreshing in Wokingham to find that teachers are really keen to get support and very appreciative of it. The training was received well and hopefully the teachers gained more confidence in teaching RE, backed up by the USB manual provided by the SACRE in the last academic year.

## **9 NETWORK MEETINGS UPDATE**

Jan referred to the summary which had been distributed. Wokingham had a good turnout of attendees; not many places have such good attendance. Stephen encouraged members to attend if at all possible. Catherine said that teachers were always pleased to meet SACRE members and see that they are genuinely interested in what teachers are doing in RE, what issues they face, etc.. Anne passed round some spare flyers with network meeting dates on. Stephen asked her to email members a reminder the week before the February network meeting.

Philip queried the reference to the [REC](#) Code of Practice – Jan explained that REC stands for Religious Education Council and the code aims to encourage professionalism in RE teaching. Stephen asked if some of the other LA logos could be removed from the network meetings flyer as they were not relevant.

**Action: Jan to ensure that just Reading and Wokingham logos are used on flyers for network meetings.**

**Action: Anne to email reminder to members before Feb network meeting.**

## **10 NATIONAL UPDATES**

### **10.1 Understanding Christianity**

Research has shown that Christianity is the most poorly taught faith, so the Church of England has produced a teaching manual, 'Understanding Christianity', which was launched in May. The manual is a set of resources for use from Foundation Stage to the end of Year 9. It is concept-focused and adopts an enquiry approach to help children and young people gain an understanding of the whole narrative and picture of Christianity, a progression which is sometimes missing in RE education. The aim is an understanding of the core beliefs people hold and the impact on their lives. These resources are being offered to schools if they undertake the training required. Anne Andrews offers training and schools will be notified when they can sign up for the two days of training. The Church of England is strongly encouraging church schools to use the resource but it is being well received in other areas also. Chris is a member of All Saints Parochial Church Council and will enquire if they are aware of it. Jan has kept teachers up to date about this at network meetings and as soon as the Diocese provides dates, teachers will be informed. It has taken a while as the trainers had to be trained in the first instance.

### **10.2 New syllabus for GCSE**

Sue and Stephen, both RE Secondary school teachers, commented that the new RE syllabus was much more theological.

## **11 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT TO BE SHARED**

Copies of the draft annual report for 2015-2016 were distributed and Jan asked everyone to read it and let her know of any additions or amendments by the end of next week (Friday 18<sup>th</sup>) as it needs to be designed and finalised before submitting by the end of next month. Referring to the item about network meetings, Jan explained how she now has a definitive list of which schools have consistently not attended the meetings, thus making it easier to target them directly and encourage more involvement. According to Emily these are the schools which have less involvement with other activities also. Anju suggested including Catherine's details in the report which Jan agreed with.

## **12 CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN/BUDGET AND NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR**

Jan provided copies of the budget and reported that everything is on target. There is already £560 available for the Secondary Federation Training Day, which Stephen is planning. WBC supports the SACRE with £6,800. The Hub received the Westhill award of £3,800 for the Crossing the Bridges project (£1,900 for this financial year and the same in the next financial year). In addition, each SACRE has contributed £1,700 to the Hub this year to be used for the Crossing the Bridges project. This project will finish at the end of this financial year, and the focus of the Hub's work in the next financial year will be the syllabus review. Jan will present a draft syllabus project plan to all Berkshire SACREs for approval.

Anju expressed confusion at the layout of the budget Word document; it was suggested that an Excel spreadsheet would be more helpful.  
Beth suggested alerting the other SACREs to apply for more funding.

**13 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:**

Philip offered to see if his church hall would be available for the February meeting; Anne will email him a request.

**Action: Anne to email Philip re using Earley St Peter's Church hall for the next meeting.**

**14 AOB**

There was no other business.  
The meeting closed at 8pm.