

# The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

## Minutes of the Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015

- Present:**
- Group A:** Christine Morgan
  - Group B:**
  - Group C:**  
Sue Cresswell, Michael Freeman (Chair), Lesley Green, Nigel Matthias, Celia Thatcher
  - Group D**  
Cllr David Lee, Cllr Beth Rowland (Vice-Chair)
- Clerk to the SACRE:** Anne Coffey
- LA Representative** Jan Lever
- Apologies:**
- Group A**  
Anju Sharma  
Sukhdev Bansal  
Kathy Turner  
Shahid Younis  
Catherine Jinkerson
  - Group B**  
Rev. Lisa Cornwell, Rev. Patrick King
  - Group C**  
Stephen Vegh
- Not present:** Dr Shira Lewin Solomons
- Guests:** WBC Link Officer to Wokingham SACRE, Emily Waddilove  
Louise Robinson, GLP (Global Learning Programme)

### 1) WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Michael welcomed members, including new member Nigel and guests Emily and Louise. All introduced themselves.

### 2) GLOBAL LEARNING PROJECT (G.L.P.) *(This was moved up the agenda from item 6 as Louise had to leave early.)*

Louise Robertson, Local Advisor for Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey, gave a very informative presentation about the work of GLP, which was launched two years ago. Louise had been a secondary teacher in Oxfordshire for 20 years before joining GLP. David asked what specific actions GLP undertook and Louise gave examples. Louise provided for members some copies of a GLP Primary Senior Leadership Team Pack, examples of how GLP links to RE, and a case study. She said she would send the presentation to Anne for distribution to members. Michael thanked Louise for an exciting presentation and all agreed that the GLP is empowering and crucial for fostering engagement. **Action: Anne to circulate Louise's presentation.**

### **3) FORMAL APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2015.**

Michael welcomed Celia at this point, who will be replacing Lesley in Group C, and asked her to provide Anne with her details. Beth pointed out that the minutes need amending to remove her name from the action after item 8.3. Once amended, they were accepted as a true record of the meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **4) MATTERS ARISING**

**4.1 Inviting Buddhist member** – Michael informed the group that a letter to the Buddhists was ready but that he needed to add future meeting dates before sending it.

**4.2 SACRE publicity flyer** – Emily explained that it would not cost much to reprint as WBC graphics team had converted it to a Word document which can more easily be amended and then printed. Jan will amend where necessary. The Borough Librarian is willing to display the flyers in libraries. The aim will be to have new ones before the end of term but Michael wants to check that they are up to date. A new background colour would distinguish them from old ones.

**4.3 Nasacre news** – see item 5a.

**4.4 Teachers' training sessions 2015** – see part 2, item 7.

**4.5 Sonning CofE Primary School images for website** – Lesley has found the original images and will send to AC.

**4.6 Stephen's idea re Secondary Network meeting and Secondary Conference** – Stephen is not here to pursue this.

**4.7 Writing to Cllr Lee re presentation of Annual Report** – plan altered.

**4.8 Re Shira's and David's suggestions** – not in a position to write to NASACRE yet.

**4.9 Jan to send notes on Wessex hub for distribution** – Jan suggested she will send only when relevant.

**4.10 SACRE Vision** – there is an underlying vision, which is what is important.

**4.11 Thoughts re councillor proposals for added budget** – responding to Lord Nash – Michael said we should send a copy of the syllabus and our annual reports.

**4.12 Checking out West Berkshire R.E. Trail on inter-active site and WBC SACRE R.E Trail unused** - Michael would like to consider turning the R.E. Trail into an interactive website over the next six months.

**4.13 Dates of next meetings** – Anne suggested Monday October 19<sup>th</sup>, Monday February 8<sup>th</sup>, Monday June 13<sup>th</sup> as those dates do not clash with Council meetings. All present agreed with this suggestion.

### **5) NEWS FROM FAITH MEMBERS**

There was no news from faith members.

**INSERT:** So at this point Michael asked Emily to rejoin SACRE as a member. Emily clarified that Jan is basically her replacement as the LA representative on the SACRE and Jan's role is to represent the Local Authority. Emily suggested she could look at the agendas for meetings to see if there are any items which would benefit from her attendance at meetings. Michael felt it would be valuable to have Emily present as there may be items to which she can bring WBC knowledge. Nigel pointed out that Emily has a heavy workload with her other commitments.

### **6)**

#### **6.1 Feedback from NASACRE AGM 21/05/2015**

Michael praised Jan for her informative feedback from the NASACRE AGM and Conference on 21/05/2015 and would like her notes put on the SACRE page of the R.E. section of the Schools' Hub. Jan reported that there were a couple of key issues in the world of R.E.: first, the question as to whether R.E. should be nationally or locally determined, or a combination of both: second, Charles Clark was keen to put

across the view that non-theistic beliefs should be discussed in schools, which was a significant issue to raise in that public arena.

### **6.2 What the final bid entails.**

Chairs of the six Berkshire SACREs met twice to think about working more closely together. The results were positive and one outcome was to put in a bid to Culham St Gabriel's for a Pan-Berkshire R.E. Hub. A grant of £2,000 was gained for specific work, i.e. bringing together faith communities and schools. The aim is for faith representatives to come into schools and talk about what it means to them to be a Muslim/Christian/Jew etc. It has been difficult but is even harder to take children out of school. The project is about developing better links between people of faith communities, places of worship and schools, as well as a better awareness in the faith communities of what schools need.

Jan, Jo and Anne, who each advise two of the six SACREs across Berkshire\*, have organised a training session where members of faith communities who want to take part in the project can attend and meet teachers who can say what they would like from faith communities. The aim is to build a directory of places and people who can help in this way. As well as pro-forma booking forms, there will be specific notes regarding what teachers want to explore and evaluations. Beth asked how people delivering R.E would know about the project; Jan responded that she, Jo Fageant and Anne Andrews were working on this and had pro-formas and letters ready to be sent out. The session will be at the Church of the Latter Day Saints, 296 Meadway, Reading, RG30 4PE, from 2pm to 5pm Monday June 29<sup>th</sup>. The project will be opened up to R.E. teachers at the Pan-Berkshire conference on 15<sup>th</sup> June so links can begin to be made informally. Michael asked who was holding the fund; Jan advised that it is the Oxford Diocese. Michael asked if the Diocese would be charging for this; Jan explained that she, Jo and Anne Andrews were happy to do related admin free of charge. She clarified that the Pan-Berkshire Conference is a separate finance item. Michael asked Emily if she knew of Jo's replacement as Diocesan representative but Emily did not.

*\* Jan Lever is adviser to the Wokingham and Reading SACREs; Jo Fageant is adviser to the Slough and West Berkshire SACREs and Anne Andrews is adviser to the Bracknell Forest and Windsor & Maidenhead SACREs.*

**6.3** Michael noted that as Jo had left and Patrick and Lisa were absent, the SACRE was not quorate and therefore could not vote on any issue raised at the meeting.

## **Part 2**

### **7) THE BUDGET AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

a) Beth noted that the SACRE used to bid for funding from WBC but this seems to have been dropped; also, WBC is the worst-funded authority in the country. We need to align the SACRE to the WBC budget process. Emily explained the current process, noting that traditionally in non-syllabus review years the SACRE budget is around £5,000. In the last syllabus year and for the two following years the funding increased. However, subsequently there was more communication with the WBC finance team and Alan Stubbersfield (Head of Learning and Achievement) and a figure of £5,800 was arrived at for the last financial year. This year it remains the same. There is a breakdown in the budget plan because Alan Stubbersfield asked what the SACRE statutory responsibilities are and Emily included extras like the network meetings. Michael enquired if the savings from not using Oakwood were in fact a deficit. Emily pointed out that there has not in fact been a reduction in funding between last year and this year.

Beth said we should already be thinking of what is needed for next year and the SACRE members should be involved so that each member can be confident that we are doing what is right for the SACRE. Emily will be having a meeting in November with the finance team. David emphasised that the SACRE could gain funding despite WBC being the worst-funded authority, if we can get across the importance of the

benefits that the SACRE can provide. We need a short, punchy presentation to impress people; respect for others' religions is becoming an important issue in today's world. Emily reminded members that we have to consider whether the SACRE has the ability and resources to make things happen. Beth suggested that she meet with Michael and Emily to discuss funding; the October SACRE meeting will be too late. David suggested including the Leader of the Council and Charlotte Haitham-Taylor. Nigel commented on Ofsted's increased emphasis on SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) development. Jan added that Heads need to be involved. A Church of England Christianity project puts the emphasis on more theological literacy (underpinning beliefs and actions). Nigel agreed that the subject is becoming more academic with more rigour. David suggested that there be a meeting to find out what Ofsted requires nationally; combine that with GLP and British Values to provide information for an evidence-based meeting. Emily reminded everyone that there is a Schools Improvement team in the Local Authority. The SACRE's statutory duty is to advise the LA and we need to link in with the priorities of the Schools Improvement team. However, it is only a small team so we need to consider who will do the work. Michael pointed out that some members may question why they are here if their knowledge and experience is not valued, especially as they all give freely of their time. He felt there is a need for members to be more empowered, so the number of people actively involved can increase. Beth also expressed a wish to get back to feeling valued.

**b)** Michael expressed praise for Jan Lever's primary network meetings, which are very good and well-attended and must be maintained. He suggested we consider how we can further enrich primary networks. Secondary schools are very busy, which has affected attendance at secondary network meetings. Information is emailed to RE Coordinators and publicised in Education News, but not all staff will see Education News and secondary schools also have exams to contend with. As the SACRE can no longer afford to sponsor the Secondary RE Conference, Michael asked if there should be more training sessions like those Jan organised in the autumn term. Jan made it clear that despite any issues highlighted, Wokingham is still in a positive position and she finds it a pleasure working with the schools because of the enthusiasm she encounters. Jan was thanked for making this point.

### **8) A.O.B.**

Michael informed everyone that Lesley is retiring and thanked her for her contribution to the SACRE. He made a presentation to her on behalf of all SACRE members, which she accepted with her usual cheerful smile. Michael also thanked Sue for her provision of the facilities and purchasing of refreshments for the three meetings this year. Nigel offered Emmbrook School for the next academic year, with the proviso that February may be difficult, but Emily suggested we use WBC instead on that date.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm