

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

14 July 2020 (6.00pm – 7pm)

The meeting took place via zoom (video-conferencing platform)

Present:

Representing Christian denominations and other religious dominations and beliefs (Group A):

Luthaneal Adams, Pagan Federation*
Wendy Brice-Thompson, Roman Catholic (Vice Chair)
Peter Feinson, Baptist
Jenny Fox, Salvation Army
Dawn Ladbrook, Evangelical Free Church
Dr John Lester, Baha'i faith
Saddhabhaya, Buddhist
John Smalles, Evangelical Free Church
Barry Smith, United Reform Church

Representing the Church of England (Group B):

Stephanie Ellner, Church of England
Ruth Everett, Church of England
Marlene Wylie, Church of England

Representing teachers (Group C):

Clare Beech
Kathryn Everitt
Terry Riches

Representing the Local Authority (Group D):

Councillor Gillian Ford (Chair)
Councillor Judith Holt
Councillor Stephanie Nunn

Professional advisers:

Julia Diamond-Conway
Deborah Weston

Michelle Morgan – Clerk

*indicates for part of meeting

**Chair's
Initials**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr G Ford (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions were made to new members Kathryn Everitt and Terry Riches.

Apologies for absence were received from Sansar Nawal.

The following members were not in attendance and no apologies had been received, Rabbi Lee Sunderland, Pastor Aloysius Peter, Kamal Siddiqui, Nasir Mubasher, Tariq Mahmood, Om Dhir, Kirsty Fanning, Cllr Phillipa Crowder and Cllr Tele Lawal.

2. NEW OR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members in attendance.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2020 AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1. The notes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020, were agreed as a true record.

Julia Diamond-Conway advised that although not recorded as an action in the minutes, discussions had been held with the Local Authority as to what the Agreed Syllabus would look like should Havering follow the same route and package as Redbridge.

Luthaneal Adams arrived at 6.05pm.

3.2. Matters arising from the minutes, not included elsewhere in the agenda, were noted as follows

3.2.1. Letter of thanks (minute 1, refers): The Chair confirmed that a letter of thanks had been sent to former SACRE Member, Louise Linton.

3.2.2. Resource catalogue (minute 3.2.2 refers): Deborah Weston agreed to circulate the places of worship list template for Redbridge so that it could be amended to reflect Havering information.

ACTION: Deborah Weston

3.2.3. Membership (minute 3.2.4, refers): Julia Diamond-Conway reported that she had contacted the Board of Deputies with regards to identifying another representative to replace Rabbi Lee Sunderland once again. Confirmation had been received that this was being looked into however those who would usually

have identified potential candidates were currently furloughed. It was hoped that an update would be available by the next meeting.

ACTION: Julia Diamond-Conway

- 3.2.4. Syllabus errors (minute 3.2.5, refers): Kamal Siddiqui was not present to confirm if he had submitted the errors within the syllabus with regards to the Sunni Muslim faith. Deborah Weston advised that these concerns had been identified when reviewing the syllabus previously and that Mr Siddiqui had been advised that the syllabus followed national guidelines and needed to represent the full diversity of Islam.
- 3.2.5. Ofsted Inspections (minute 4, refers): The clerk advised that she had set up an alert for any Havering school Ofsted Inspection and would advise SACRE should any reports refer to RE.
- 3.2.6. Future Art Competition (minute 9, refers): Julie Diamond-Conway referred to the WIRE Award (Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education) which some SACREs were taking part in; the award would include meaningful tailored activities agreed by Havering SACRE. Further clarification was sought with regards to the specifics of the award and it was therefore agreed that further information would be brought to the next meeting. Members noted that Gold, Silver and Bronze levels could be agreed with activities linked to CPD and trips to places of worship. SACRE Members agreed that it would be a great opportunity to congratulate schools on their work whilst also increasing the profile of SACRE.

Action: Julia Diamond-Conway

4. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ACTIVITY

SACRE Members were asked to consider supporting virtual tours of places of worship as, due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, visitors to buildings were restricted. Julia Diamond-Conway acknowledged that SACRE Members were voluntary and would not be expected to set up the tour, however could speak with their faith leader to see what options were available. Marlene Wylie and Clare Beech (Church of England) agreed to discuss options with Julia Diamond-Conway after the meeting. Dawn Ladbrook also shared an interest in involving the Evangelical Free Church. An update and if completed, an example of a virtual tour, would be brought to the next meeting. Other interested SACRE Members were encouraged to contact Julia Diamond-Conway to discuss.

Action: Julia Diamond-Conway/Clare Beech / Marlene Wylie / Dawn Ladbrook

It was hoped that in the near future, schools would be able to welcome back representatives from various faiths into school.

5. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There were no questions relating to the national developments in religious education document.

6. NASACRE CONFERENCE

It was noted that the NASACRE Conference had been cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The 2021 Conference however had been scheduled for 24 May 2021 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in London.

Interest was sought as to who would like to attend on behalf of Havering and Deborah Weston reiterated the importance of attending so that discussions around various funding opportunities and projects could then be shared locally.

It was agreed that Wendy Brice-Thompson would attend on behalf of Havering. Ruth Everitt explained that she would also be in attendance representing other SACREs. Julia Conway-Diamond agreed to request the funding for members to attend; Wendy Brice-Thompson would complete the delegate form on the NASACRE website.

Action: Julia Diamond-Conway / Wendy Brice-Thompson

7. SCHOOL WEBSITE MONITORING UPDATE

It was noted that a number of Members had completed the website monitoring form prior to the COVID-19 lockdown and provided summaries of their key findings. Overall feedback was mixed with some concern shown that schools did not always include a wide variety of faiths within the curriculum and that having schemes of work available on the website did not actually evidence that effective RE teaching was taking place, just that the school had the intention to do so.

Deborah Weston advised that it was the role of SACRE to inform schools about the statutory regulations that required them to publish the curriculum for every subject for each school year. It was agreed that both Julia Diamond-Conway and Deborah Weston would formulate words to reiterate these statutory responsibilities that the Chair would then be able to forward onto schools on behalf of SACRE. In addition, SACRE Members agreed to forward any completed website monitoring forms to the clerk.

Action: Julia Diamond-Conway / Deborah Weston / Chair

8. HAVERING AGREED SYLLABUS

It was noted that Julia Diamond-Conway had been in discussion with staff at Havering Education Services (HES) about revising the syllabus.

Suggested revisions to the current syllabus had been advised as follows:

- Expand the 1 page unit plans into full unit plans (cost £9900)
- Expand the medium length unit plans into full unit plans (cost £6600)
- Add resources lists to each unit (cost £1375)
- Update unit 2.14 which had proved unpopular in Havering schools (costs £550)
- Create an assessment exemplification document (cost £550)
- Create a document to highlight progression within the syllabus in light of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework (costs £1000)
- RE Today advisors leading a day's worth of training and a launch event (price to be deducted if all items on the list were purchased) (cost £2000)

Although the costs would be shared with Redbridge the total would be £7334. Some concern had been shared that although Havering might recoup some funds by offering a launch event, in the current situation a face to face launch would not likely be a viable option. Additionally, as funding to Havering has been reduced, the LA is unable to fund all changes as requested. As a result HES had considered the requested revisions and identified those 3 that were felt to be the most urgent and could be funded:

- An assessment exemplification document (£550)
- A document to highlight the progression within the syllabus in light of the new Ofsted Framework (£1000)
- Update unit 2.14 (£550)

Deborah Weston advised that Redbridge had agreed to underwrite the cost of the list of 7 recommendations (subject to Havering covering £7334) although acknowledged that the borough was slightly more fortunate in terms of funding than Havering. Disappointment was shared that Havering

could not offer more funding however it was noted that the Local Authority had fulfilled its statutory duty as there was already a comprehensive syllabus in place and that teachers had access to high-quality RE training. The Local Authority also funded SACRE.

Clarification was sought around unit 2.14 and it was noted that the unit focused on what religions say when life gets hard and focused very much on death. Although death was an important element of the curriculum, spending sometimes several weeks on this subject was not always deemed appropriate by teachers.

Deborah Weston made the suggestion that SACRE could request Havering to fund the £2100 in this academic year and ask for a commitment in the next financial year for a similar amount to cover the remainder of the list. In addition, the launch conference could be postponed until face to face meetings could go ahead and thus recoup some of the cost. SACRE Members agreed to this suggestion to ask for the full funding however over 2 financial years.

Action: Julia Diamond-Conway

It was noted that teachers would require as much notice as possible with regards to attending a launch conference.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business to discuss.

10. DATES OF MEETINGS IN THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

It was agreed that SACRE Members would be advised of the autumn term meeting date by the Chair. It was anticipated that remote meetings might need to continue into the autumn term.

Action: Chair

The meeting closed at 7pm.

Chair.....

Date.....