



Democratic and Member Support

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Published 01/03/22

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Monday 7 March 2022

1.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting, Warspite Room, Council House

Members:

Katie Freeman, Chair

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair

Councillor Jonathan Drear, Councillor Margaret Corvid, Councillor John Mahony, Councillor Rebecca Smith, Councillor Jonny Morris, Dr Judith Beckman, Lesley Clark, Ben Kerr, Nic Gibson, Dr Catherine Bowness, Ed Pawson, Alex Parks, AnnMarie AllChurch, Ms Gwen Hughes, Claire Wills, Claire Linden and Sara Wells.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on webcasting, attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/accesstomeetings>

Tracey Lee

Chief Executive

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

PART I

Agenda

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by SACRE Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021.

4. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. Interim Annual Report

Update

6. Collective Worship 'Time to Breathe'

Update & Discussion

7. School Workforce Data 'Support Plymouth Schools'

Update & Discussion

8. Welcome to New and Returning Members

The Chair will welcome new and returning members to the forum.

9. Local and National Developments

SW SACRE Conference

10. World Views

Update & Discussion

11. Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity

Update.

12. SACRE Chair Nominations & Membership:

(Pages 7 - 10)

13. Updates from Members:

14. AOB:

15. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 1pm on 27 June 2022 in Warspite Room, Council House.

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Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday 15 November 2021

PRESENT:

Katie Freeman, in the Chair.
Councillor Mrs Mary Aspinall, Vice Chair
Councillor Margaret Corvid, Councillor Jonathan Drean and Councillor Rebecca Smith.

Co-opted Representatives: Annmarie Allchurch, Dr Judith Beckman and Lesley Clark.

Apologies for absence: Claire Linden, Sara Wells, Ed Pawson, Dr Catherine Bowness

Also in attendance: Michael House (Education Advisor), Hannah Whiting (Senior Support and Research Assistant)

The meeting started at 1.00pm and finished at 2.40pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

Minutes

Minutes agreed from last meeting on 22 March 2021 by Lesley Clark, seconded by Ann-Marie Allchurch with adjustment to Lesley's surname to 'Clark' on 35.

Chairs Urgent Business

No urgent business was raised by the Chair.

Welcome to New Members

Chair welcomed new members Councillor Margaret Corvid and Councillor Rebecca Smith.

Recruitment of new members and updates

Michael House explained that current vacancies in Group A are Baptist, Methodist (chase), United Reformed Church, Hindu, Islamic.

Lesley Clark will ask contacts to try and find a new Greek Orthodox member.

Chair and Michael House to look at constitution and possibility of moving Greek Orthodox into Membership Group A.

Chair hopes to welcome Jen Sanga from the Buddhist community at the next meeting.

Chair informed the group there is ongoing recruitment for a new Imam in Plymouth and once this is complete, they will represent in the Islamic seat.

Chair explained that whilst Marjon's is currently an empty seat she hopes to be able to welcome a new member at the next meeting.

Emma Butler has retired from her previous job role but would like to continue with SACRE. Chair to provide Hannah Whiting with new contact email.

Chair informed members that Liz Hill will continue on SACRE as a co-opted member, leaving the NAHT vacant.

Councillor Mary Aspinall proposes that Ann-Marie Allchurch would move from NATRE to NAHT member, seconded by Chair.

Michael House explained there are current vacancies in Group C for NASUWT, NATRE, UCU, Special Schools, Voice, PASH and ATL.

Chair explained that the NUT member is Gwen Hughes but she has not attended a meeting in a long time. Michael House to speak to Gwen Hughes and confirm she would still like to continue as a member.

Chair informed members that PASH and ATL no longer exist.

Chair to approach headteacher at Plympton Academy before next meeting to fill one position.

Michael House to approach a member of staff at Longcause School to fill the Special Schools seat.

With regards to Group D, Councillor Mary Aspinall will find out if Councillor Margaret Corvid is replacing Councillor Ian Tuffin or Councillor Jonny Morris.

Councillor Mary Aspinall will speak to Councillor John Mahony about his interest in joining.

Michael House explained that in the Co-opted Group, RE Consultant and Plymouth Association of Governors seats were vacant.

Chair thanked Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity and Jonathan Marshall for their support in increasing membership.

Councillor Mary Aspinall to enquire with the monitoring officer whether a serving Councillor can sit in a group other than Group D.

Local and national development updates

Chair informed members that NASACRE are having their RE conference virtually in January 2022 over two days.

Annmarie Allchurch provided an update on the Learn Teach Lead conference that was held in October with a wide range of speakers on RE and people finding their faith. The 'Nobody Stands Nowhere' video was very good and informative and will be used widely in other settings. This includes St Andrew's CE Primary School, where there will be a 'World Views Day' and there will be a display of pupils work on this. Chair asked if some examples of this work could be shared at the next SACRE meeting. Annmarie Allchurch confirmed this would be done.

Chair gave an update on the RE Hub. It is really busy with guest speakers this year including a researcher approach and a speaker looking into views within Islam. Schools are sending different representatives each time so the ideas spread across the school, rather than just going through one member of staff. There are projects looking into a World Views curriculum. There will be a session on World Views led by Chair and Ed Pawson will present from a Secondary perspective.

Chair informed members that Plymouth is one of 5 cities for the 5 cities project, bringing together members of the media, teachers and faith groups for conversations with the aim of breaking down barriers and looking at understanding diversity and different points of view. Chair is on a panel that will be discussing British Values.

Chair to connect Jonathan Marshall to Lesley Clark. Jonathan Marshall has poetry, written post war about the holocaust and he has managed to remove the copyright for some activities and discussion for local children for use in schools. The children will need to think about the meaning of the poems and then begin to write their own poetry. Chair hopes that between herself, Jonathan Marshall and Lesley Clark, they are get this utilised in schools.

Chair gave an update that the Church of England has released information about collective worship and how to make it more inclusive. A bill has gone through the House of Lords to look at collective worship in primary schools. Chair proposes that SACRE look at providing training for school staff about what collective worship is and what it looks like in practice. Chair to update at next meeting.

Annmarie Allchurch explained that in her school of St Andrews CE Primary School, that collective worship has been carried out, even with COVID19 restrictions, by approaching it on a Key Stage and/or class basis. This happens 3 times a week.

Chair explained that contacts have said COVID19 seems to be the reasons collective worship has not come back into schools, and some schools do not understand the clear differences between assemblies and collective worship.

Councillor Mary Aspinall explained that it would be a good time to contact schools and provide advice on collective worship on a class by class basis to ensure schools can carry it out whilst staying safe. SACRE must do this and ensure it has done its part to evidence in the case of an OFSTED inspection.

Michael House explained that he produces a health and wellbeing education briefing

newsletter, next going out on the 4 December, collective worship and compliance around religious education is going to be in there.

SACRE Procedures and Constitution

Michael House and Chair to have a working party with Lesley Clark to review the current SACRE constitution.

Members asked to send feedback to SACRE@plymouth.gov.uk on the constitution and structure/houses within two weeks of the minutes being received by 8 December 2021. Hannah Whiting to share minutes of meeting on or before 24/11/21. Michael House, LC and Chair to then organise a meeting.

Election of next Chair

Chair and Vice Chair agree to remain in their positions until the scheduled July 2022 SACRE meeting.

Any members who are interested in becoming Chair to speak to current chair before scheduled March 2022 meeting.

Working group to look at formalising an outgoing Chair attends meetings alongside new chair for a year, to support.

Non-Compliant schools

Michael House informed members that there was no update on Non-Compliance from Plymouth High School for Girls (PHSG). Any conversations that have been had have been responded to with statements about the difficulty of compliance during COVID19.

Chair asks for previous letter to be adjusted and re-sent and the schools academy trust to be contacted, as they should have a policy on collective worship. Chair to seek advice on this from Deborah Western through NATRE and send a copy of a revised letter to Michael House to send shortly.

Vice Chair suggests herself, Chair and Michael House meet early in the Spring Term to discuss any response and the way forward, perhaps contacting the DfE.

Updates from members

Michael House explained in Ed Pawson's absence that the South West SACRE Conference is due to be held on 28 February 2022. It is not clear yet whether this will be a virtual or face-to-face event, due to the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Michael House and Hannah Whiting to email details out to members when there is more information.

Lesley Clark asked for dates of rest of meetings for SACRE next year, Hannah Whiting and Vice Chair to speak to Democratic Support about this and Hannah Whiting will confirm dates with members as soon as possible.

Any other business

None.

Date and venue of next meeting

1PM Monday 7 March 2022. Warspite Room, Council House.

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SACRE Chair

The appointment of the Chair

As SACREs are bodies appointed by the local authority, in principle the local authority has the right to appoint the Chair of SACRE. Where the local authority decides not to exercise this right, SACREs appoint their own Chair. The agreement about this at a local level, including the process for the appointment of the Chair of your SACRE, and the eligibility of candidates, should be clearly set out in the SACRE's Constitution. Where the SACRE's constitution shows the Chair can be elected, the SACRE needs to have an open and fair process for making this appointment.

The roles of the Chair

There are a number of key roles that the Chair performs, grouped under three broad headings:

- Specific
- General
- Strategic

Specific

The specific role of the Chair is to ensure that the SACRE fulfils its statutory duties and responsibilities. To do this the Chair will need to have a clear grasp of the nature and make up of SACRE, what it is responsible for and what it can do beyond its statutory functions. The Chair should also take a leading role in SACRE's on-going process of self-evaluation and development.

During SACRE meetings it is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the meeting. This includes making sure that the business of the meeting is dealt with and that all members can participate and contribute fully. The Chair also has the responsibility to decide on any involvement from non-members who are present. For example experts who might be brought in to advise SACRE on a specific matter pertinent to an agenda item being discussed; likewise, if it is deemed necessary, to decide when someone should be asked to leave the meeting or be removed from it.

General

The Chair of SACRE is responsible, with the clerk and the professional officer, for constructing the agenda for each meeting. This includes deciding on items where the press and public might need to be excluded if they are present; see: The Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.

In the meeting it is the Chair's role to sign the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record as well as to ensuring that any actions resulting from the minutes have actually taken place. If the Chair needs a mandate to act on SACRE's behalf before the next meeting that should be sought at the meeting being Chaired.

If there are issues relating to inefficiencies in the timeliness of notice for meetings, the publication of agendas and reports, the provision of funding or support or the venue of SACRE's meetings it is the Chair's place to bring this up with the most senior paid official of the local authority.

Strategic

In many ways the Chair of SACRE is its public face and may be asked to represent SACRE at Council meetings or public events, including interfaith events. In this way the Chair of SACRE becomes a champion for religious education and collective worship in the local authority and its schools. Therefore, it is important that the Chair of SACRE has a clear understanding of the nature of RE and collective worship and how that effects different schools in different ways, the role that RE and collective worship play in a broad and balanced education and their contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Beyond understanding these, a good and effective SACRE Chair needs to believe in the positive contribution of these elements of education in the development of each pupil and of society. The Chair also needs to be committed to ensuring the inclusive involvement of all SACRE members and the constituencies that they represent.

Key tasks

Ensure that:

- a clear timetable of meetings for the year is agreed and publicised
- membership of the SACRE is efficiently maintained, i.e. that the four groups of SACRE have appropriate representation, with good attendance and participation
- SACRE produces guidance to support the local authority and its schools with regard to religious education and collective worship
- an annual report is produced each year and sent to the Secretary of State as required by statute
- SACRE members have a programme of training, and when necessary induction
- there is a Vice or Deputy Chair if the Chair is unable to make a meeting
- where there is an agreed a code of conduct it is adhered to by all SACRE members

Notes

The legislation relating to SACREs is contained in the Education Act 1996:

- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/V/chapter/III/crossheading/constitution-of-standing-advisory-councils-on-religious-education>
- The Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1994/1304/regulation/5/made>.

The constitution of SACRE should clearly set out the role for the Chair of SACRE and this should be publicly available.

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