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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Monday 2 November 2015

2.00 pm

PIETY Islamic Centre, 19 Greenbank Avenue, St Judes, Plymouth

Members are asked to note that a training/awareness session and lunch will be held at the above venue, prior to the meeting, from 11.15 am.

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

For further information on 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

AGENDA

PART I – PUBLIC MEETING

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 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2015.

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. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Chair will welcome new members.

6. UPDATES ON SACRE ISSUES:

6a. Councillor Membership Update

6b. Cornwall SACRE

6c. Prevent Duty (Pages 9 - 12)

7. PLYMOUTH RE HUB/LEARNTEACHLEAD (LTLRE) RE CONFERENCE

Members will be provided with news from the Plymouth RE hub, and feedback from the recent LearnTeachLead RE (LTLRE) conference at Dartington.

8. OFSTED REPORTS - PLYMOUTH SCHOOLS

Members will be provided with information relating to recent Ofsted inspections of Plymouth schools.

9. FEEDBACK FROM 2014 SACRE AWARD TO ORESTON COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Members will be provided with feedback following the presentation of the SACRE award to Oreston Community Academy in 2014.

10. 2015 PROVISIONAL EXAM RESULTS/ANNUAL REPORT

Members will be provided with details of Plymouth's provisional exam results and annual report.

11. FEEDBACK/PLANS FROM THE MORNING SESSION - TRAINING/AWARENESS ABOUT ISLAM

The Chair will lead a discussion following the training/awareness session.

12. PLYMOUTH SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PRIORITIES

Members will be provided with details of the Plymouth SACRE Development Plan priorities.

13. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY PLANS 2016

Members will be provided with details of the plans for Holocaust Memorial Day 2016.

14. PLYMOUTH CENTRE FOR FAITHS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY (PCFCD) NEWS

Members will be provided with news from the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity.

15. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Members will discuss and confirm the date, time and venue of the next meeting.

16. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

PART II - PRIVATE MEETING

AGENDA

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE

that under the law, the Panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

NIL.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday 29 June 2015

PRESENT:

MarkAndrew Dearden, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

Councillors Drean, Jarvis, Morris and Dr Salter.

Catherine Bowness, Shelley Catchpole, Martin Edmonds, Katey Freeman, Pete Grainger, Monica Henderson (substitute for Anna Kelly), and Helena Mitchell.

Co-opted Representatives: Dr Clare Hamon and Ben Kerr.

Apologies for absence: Jamie Heselden, Liz Hill, Anna Kelly, Christoforos Mamas, Caroline McVicar and Jatindra Saha.

Also in attendance: Jonathan Marshall (RE Adviser) and Lynn Young (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 1.40 pm and finished at 4.10 pm.

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.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Councillors in accordance with the code of conduct.

2. MINUTES

Members reviewed the minutes and it was highlighted that paragraph (d) of minute 30 should read £100,000, not £100,00.

Agreed that subject to the minutes being amended as above the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2015 are confirmed as a correct record.

3. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

4. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, welcomed Councillor Jarvis (Group D) to his inaugural SACRE meeting.

Members were advised of the following vacancies –

- (a) Buddhist representative (Group A); Jonathan Marshall advised that he had a potential candidate to fill this position;
- (b) Jamie Halselden, Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth representative (Group A), had decided to stand down from SACRE;
- (c) United Reformed Church representative (Group A). Councillor Drean advised Jonathan Marshall that he had a contact within the United Reformed Church who could assist with finding a potential candidate to fill this position;
- (d) there were vacancies for NATRE, VOICE and UCU union representatives (Group C), the VOICE union had already been in contact with Democratic Support regarding union vacancies;
- (e) Christoforos Mamas, Greek Orthodox Community (Co-opted representative), had decided to stand down from SACRE;
- (f) there was a vacancy for a Conservative Councillor (Group D).

Jonathan Marshall advised members that he had been contacted by the Democratic Support Team Leader regarding the possibility of reducing the membership of Group D (The Local Authority).

Following a discussion, members raised the following points –

- (g) the current [full] membership of Group D allowed the group to be representative and remain politically neutral;
- (h) a reduction in Group D membership could be interpreted as unwillingness of the Local Authority to be involved in SACRE. RE remained the only curriculum subject that the Local Authority was responsible for;
- (i) the Group D membership (ie six places) was in-line with other SACREs and national guidance.

Agreed that Jonathan Marshall would write to the Democratic Support Team Leader, to advise of the above and that the current arrangement was beneficial for SACRE in order to retain the broadest Local Authority support.

5. **SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, provided an update on the SACRE development plan. Members were advised that –

- (a) the SACRE development plan was being finalised and members would receive a copy when it was completed;
- (b) the amount of the SACRE budget for 2015-2016 was £6,000;
- (c) £1,000 of the budget was held at the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural

Diversity (PCFCD) and allocated for payment of membership fees, travel, conference fees and SACRE refreshments;

- (d) the remaining £5,000 of the budget, held by Heather Ogburn, Senior Leadership Adviser at Windsor House, was allocated for Holocaust Memorial Day and initiatives such as supporting teachers to develop new, creative and interactive pieces of work, and providing funds for a scheme which awarded funds to schools to enable them to deliver innovative projects;
- (e) further work included –
 - a Muslim Youth Forum was in the process of being set up by Jonathan Marshall, supported by Oliver Colville MP, who had agreed to provide backing for a visit of this new group to the House of Commons;
 - an art project and a listening project were both in the planning stages, neither of which would require much money;
 - some of the budget could be used to fund a SACRE evening event with an influential speaker, who could help to raise the profile of Plymouth SACRE.

6. **LEARNTEACHLEAD RE PROJECT**

Katie Freeman (Primary Hub Leader) provided members with an update on recent activity within the Plymouth Hub. Members were advised that –

- (a) the last Hub meeting of the current academic year had recently taken place, the first meeting of the new academic year would take place at Ridgeway School;
- (b) Hub meetings were attended by an average of 20 delegates, with the most well-attended having 48;
- (c) 65 teachers had attended the Plymouth Conference with Lat Blaylock in April;
- (d) an 'Assessment without levels' document had been drafted by Hub members – this would contain the information that Hub members wanted to see at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2;
- (e) Katie Freeman had produced resource packs for various religions which she had presented to NATRE, who had found the work exciting. It was possible that this work could be used nationally, and 5 primary schools would be used in a trial scheme;
- (f) funding was still uncertain for the next phase of the project, Jonathan Marshall advised it was possible that SACRE could provide a small amount of funding.

Jonathan Marshall thanked Katie Freeman for her hard work, and considered that Plymouth were very fortunate to have her support, along with that of Ian Hartley, and considered

them both to be passionate and innovative in their outstanding support for teachers and Religious Education.

7. **PLYMOUTH CENTRE FOR FAITHS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, provided members with an update on the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity. Members were advised that –

- (a) the staff currently working at the Centre were –
 - Sara Wells, Administrator
 - Sarah Hall, Education Officer
 - Bev Smerdon, Development Officer;
- (b) the Centre provided a unique range of services to schools and other organisations;
- (c) the faith/culture speaker service was very popular, although it was more difficult to provide speakers of certain faiths/cultures than others;
- (d) the Centre could arrange visits and faith trails to the Plymouth Synagogue, local churches including the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Islamic Centre for Plymouth and Cornwall;
- (e) 65 Plymouth schools now subscribed to the Centre's services, this figure was an increase on previous years.

8. **NATIONAL AND LOCAL RE NEWS AND UPDATES**

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, provided members with an update on national and local RE news. Members were advised that -

- (a) Jonathan Marshall and Helena Mitchell had attended the South West SACRE Conference at Dillington in March, which had proved to be a very interesting day. 'Community cohesion' was on the agenda, a subject which was an important aspect of SACRE's work;
- (b) a 'Religious Education' section was now available on the Plymouth School Room page of the Plymouth City Council website, and contained basic SACRE information, including links to key websites such as NASACRE, RE Council, NATRE and the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity;
- (c) the NASACRE website contained some information that was only available to members – the log-in details were available from Democratic Support;
- (d) the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education, a group 'to provide a medium through which parliamentarians and organisations with an interest in religious education can discuss the current provision of religious education, press for continuous improvement, promote public understanding and advocate rigorous education for every young person in religious and non-religious world views'. It was due to elect a

new Chair in the near future;

- (e) an e-mail had been received from Cornwall SACRE regarding joint working with Plymouth and Devon SACREs. This initiative would be given due consideration, and information fed back to the group at a future meeting.

(Monica Henderson left the meeting part way through this agenda item)

9. **NASACRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM MAY 2015**

Councillor Dr Salter provided members with an update following his attendance at the NASACRE Annual Conference and AGM in May. Members were advised that –

- (a) the keynote speaker at the event was –
 - Rt Hon Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, 2002-4, Visiting Professor, School of Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication Studies, University of East Anglia;
- (b) the seminar leaders were –
 - Denise Cush, Professor of Religion and Education at Bath Spa University
 - Mary Myatt, Lead Ofsted inspector, Culham St Gabriel's Lead Consultant for Teacher Conferences, adviser, writer and trainer;
- (c) the need to reform to 1944 Education Act was discussed at length;
- (d) there was a strong focus on the teaching of Religious Education;
- (e) the issues of austerity and the deletion of RE Adviser posts by a large number of Councils were discussed;
- (f) there is an abundance of useful information on the NASACRE website, including an audio recording of the Rt Hon Charles Clarke's address and Denise Cush and Mary Myatt's presentations;

Following a discussion, the following points were raised –

- (g) Jonathan Marshall expressed his disappointment that prominence was not given to the document recently written by Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead entitled 'A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools' (part of the Westminster Debates series), which highlighted a number of important issues surrounding the teaching of Religious Education. This document was available on the NASACRE website;
- (h) different schools had different views on teaching Religious Education;
- (i) the media played a part in highlighting the issue of Religious Education in schools;
- (j) teaching of the national curriculum was only compulsory in maintained schools, not

independent schools or academies;

- (k) changes in the way Ofsted would inspect early years provision, schools and further education and skills would come into force in September 2015; the impact on Religious Education was not yet known.

The Chair thanked Councillor Dr Salter for his report and attendance at the Annual conference and AGM.

(Pete Grainger left the meeting part way through this agenda item)

10. **PLYMOUTH SACRE'S RESPONSE TO LORD NASH'S LETTER/FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS FROM DEVON SACRE REGARDING OFSTED INSPECTIONS**

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, reminded members of SACRE's letter sent to Lord Nash in April. Members were advised that –

- (a) Barbara Wintersgill had produced a piece of important research for Devon SACRE regarding Ofsted inspections;
- (b) it was acknowledged that a reply had not been received from Lord Nash (who was still in post), and a further letter would be sent asking for a response;
- (c) Ofsted inspectors used the new inspection framework, but few seemed to understand the changes;
- (d) it was important to encourage children in Religious Education;
- (e) a number of Ofsted inspectors did not scrutinise the teaching of Religious Education, focusing their attention on other subjects;
- (f) it was acknowledged that it was important to raise the profile of Religious Education and it was suggested that various newsworthy items could be put on to a medium such as Youtube;
- (g) it was essential to gauge the views of parents, and to establish whether they wanted their child(ren) to receive Religious Education lessons, it was also important to raise the profile of this issue and counter negative views.

Agreed that the Chair would write a further letter to Lord Nash asking for a reply to SACRE's letter of 1 April 2015.

(Shelley Catchpole left the meeting part way through this agenda item)

11. **THE 'PREVENT DUTY' AS PART OF THE SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL SCHOOLS**

Jonathan Marshall, RE Adviser, updated members. Members were advised that –

- (a) the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 contained a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. A commencement order for the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 was made on 26 March 2015. This specified that the 'Prevent duty' (i.e. section 26) of the Act comes into force on 1 July 2015;
- (b) in schools, the responsibility for this issue would be within the remit of the member of staff in charge of Safeguarding;
- (c) the teaching of Islam in schools would require a sensitive approach to prevent unintentionally furthering a negative image of the faith and consideration of the impact on young Muslim children and young people in our schools;
- (d) it was suggested that a future SACRE meeting be held at PIETY (Plymouth Islamic Education Trust) as this would help members to better understand the Islam faith.

12. **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next SACRE meeting will be held on Monday 2 November 2015 at 10 am, at a venue yet to be decided. A SACRE workshop will be held in the morning, with the formal business meeting in the afternoon.

13. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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The Prevent duty, resilience and Religious Education –

A personal reflection from Jonathan Marshall

In order to clarify what the duty is and what it means for schools and for Religious Education, some extracts may be helpful, from the Department for Education, “The Prevent duty – departmental advice for schools and childcare providers” June 2015...

“From July 2015 all schools and Early and Later Years childcare providers are subject to a duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and it applies to a wide range of public facing bodies to have, during the exercise of their functions, *due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation, from whatever source, should be seen as part of schools’ and childcare providers’ wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation) whether they come from within their family or are the product of outside influence.”

The advice goes on to state that the Prevent duty is, “...entirely consistent with schools’ and childcare providers’ existing responsibilities and should not be burdensome.”

Furthermore, “Schools and childcare providers are in a particularly influential place to help build pupils’ resilience to all forms of radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values enabling them to challenge extremist views.”

(The Fundamental British values are; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values first appeared within the Prevent Strategy in 2011 and were adopted as part of Teachers Standards the following year, so they are not new.

Extremism is defined as, vocal or active opposition to these values.)

The advice emphasises that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues, “...on the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which these issues can be discussed.”

“The statutory guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. The Home Office has developed a core training product for this purpose – Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) Individual schools are best placed to assess their training needs in the light of their assessment of the risk. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that their Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide support and advice to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.”

As we know all teachers have responsibility for this safeguarding role and a number of the issues and big questions around free speech, radicalisation and terrorism will, no doubt, be addressed and discussed within a PSHE/Citizenship/RE “safe space” context but I would like to offer some thoughts on how RE teachers are uniquely placed to offer something more and central to “Prevent” – equipping young people with awareness, understanding and resilience.

Let us remember RE’s place within the school curriculum. It remains a statutory requirement but we increasingly need to emphasise the profound educational contribution RE makes to the learning, growth and development of our young people. RE remains at the heart of the

two key aims of the National Curriculum; “Every state funded schools must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which; promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, (SMSC) mental and physical development of pupils and; prepares them, at school, for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Promoting British values is now part of the SMSC curriculum in schools* and they are closely inter-related, as defined by Ofsted in their latest “School Inspection handbook”, June 2015. It is intended that these values will help build resilience, acting as an antidote to the dangers of being drawn into extremism which leads to violence and harm, not only to the vulnerable young person but also to wider society. We have seen some tragic examples of this over recent years and, indeed, we have our own local example in Nicky Reilly. Reilly was self-radicalised over the internet and left Plymouth by bus, in May 2008, with a home-made bomb in his rucksack, intending to blow up the Giraffe restaurant in Exeter. He continues to serve a long prison sentence.

What made Nicky Reilly vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremism? There is no easy answer. He did have special educational needs, mental health problems and his father and brother were both in prison. But there is no check list for a would-be terrorist, whether influenced by extreme right wing or AQ/ISIS views and propaganda. Later in the same year as Reilly’s crime, two doctors tried to blow up Glasgow airport. In what ways were they vulnerable?

However, there are some common themes. Goebbels, Hitler’s Propaganda Minister said that every individual German, who was not part of the Nazi movement, was like a worm and the purpose of propaganda was to make the little worm feel that he/she was part of a great dragon.

For some, the immense power of the call is too overwhelming and allied with a personal need and search for meaning, purpose, belonging and truth it becomes irresistible, as we read from the descriptions of the so-called, Jihadi brides.

There will be clues and part of the awareness training, mentioned above, is to alert us to them but the same signs can be indications of a whole manner of concerns, not necessarily related to radicalisation or terrorism. But our support and help may still be needed, so, either way, it doesn’t matter.

Helping to build pupils’ resilience to all forms of radicalisation is new. But I am wondering if this is something already closely related to what RE is about. Resilience is not a word that usually pops up in RE or religion itself but perhaps it is worth reflecting on, to see what it might mean for us in the classroom? To see if it relates to other areas of our work. It is an interesting choice of word and to me it has to do with a certain kind of strength, of buoyancy; the ability to stand on solid ground, within oneself. It is a good RE word!

Resilience points to and can only arise from a certain kind of inner strength; inner resources. In being resilient, there is the hope that wise choices will follow as well and one will live wisely and compassionately. Not subject to the vagaries and pressures of passing fads and fashions, one is instead moved and directed by other, more transcendent forces and human values. Though clothed in a different language and form, we are surely exploring here, with a little re-framing, what we might regard as spiritual development and this is very much the business of RE.

The Plymouth Agreed Syllabus for RE states; “RE should also promote and encourage a deepening appreciation of the spiritual and its value in providing young people with the opportunity to identify and cultivate inner resources and a growing sense of an inner life;

indispensable tools for the journey through life.” (Engaging with Religion and Worldviews 2014)

In 2009 the Children’s Society published “A Good Childhood – searching for values in a competitive age”. The importance of an inner life, as described above, was highlighted and also that children should experience, “...the feeling of belonging to something bigger than oneself, something that gives meaning to one’s own small existence. Religious people experience this or it can come from music, dance, drama or painting – from anything that takes you out of yourself and makes you thankful for what you have rather than focusing on what you don’t have.”

It is difficult to imagine that a young person who has grown and developed through a range of good quality RE experiences; who has sensed their potential for an inner life and inner resources; who has experienced belonging, beyond boundaries of difference and where it has been understood that, “We are as big or as small as the space we make for others who are not like us.” (Lord Sacks)... It is difficult to imagine that such a young person, who lives and is taught in an atmosphere where there is mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and where compassion for the “other” is real...It is difficult to imagine that for that young person, the call to become part of a great dragon would be heeded.

That someone in my school, in my classroom, will be drawn into violent extremism is rare, it is a small risk but it remains a risk and we must be aware and vigilant.

*The Department for Education: “Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools. November 2014

Jonathan Marshall MBE, stepped down from his full time post last year but remains, on a limited commissioned basis, RE Adviser to Plymouth SACRE and the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity, where he was Director and which he helped found in 2000. He is a member of the LTLRE Steering Group and continues working with “Prevent” both locally and nationally. He is also a Home Office registered WRAP trainer.

Jonathan recently revised a small booklet for schools entitled, “Building Bridges” July 2015, which explores the search for, and promotion of values, through Belief, Faith and Culture. It is available in hard copy from the Centre. For details; Tel 01752 254438 Email: info@pcfcd.co.uk

Also contact the Centre **for training opportunities**; these include: WRAP sessions; the Prevent duty and promoting British values in educational settings and Understanding Islam.

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