

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 21 March 2018

### **Present:**

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans, David Jefferys  
and Sarah Phillips

Mrs D Angell, Ms H Arnold, Mr R Hagley, Mr S Mahmood,  
Mr A Nandra, Mr C Town and Reverend S Varney

### **Also Present:**

Julia Andrew, LBB Head of School Standards

## **20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The Chairman welcomed Julia Andrew, Head of School Standards to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keith Onslow, Samantha Barnett, Patricia Colling, Virginia Corbyn, Sanjay Gupta, Edlene Whitman and Carol Arnfield – LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Sarah Phillips and Christopher Town.

The Chairman informed members that Mr Jed Stone had resigned from his role on the SACRE Committee. As the London Borough of Bromley's Development Control Committee had not ratified their decision to grant planning permission for Bullers Wood School for Boys, Mr Stone felt he could no longer sit on a Council Committee. The Chairman said that he had tried to contact Mr Stone on a number of occasions to discuss his decision. Currently, he had not received a response, and had hoped that now a temporary site for the school had been agreed, Mr Stone may reconsider his resignation.

Mr Mahmood emphasised that Mr Stone would be a great loss to the SACRE as he had made a valuable contribution over many years. This had been expected to continue, with Mr Stone providing support in relation to the secondary elements of the SACRE Advisor's role. Mr Mahmood's plea was for the Chairman to try and persuade him to return. The Chairman agreed that he would continue to try and make contact with Mr Stone to discuss his decision.

**ACTION: Chairman**

**21            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**22            A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH DECEMBER  
2017**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017  
be confirmed as a correct record.**

**B) MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 15: Oral Update & Publications – A) SACRE Advisor

The Chairman advised members that the letter to schools encouraging them to engage with the SACRE had not yet been sent, as the issue of resourcing the SACRE had not yet been resolved. This would be delayed until the SACRE was able to say something worthwhile, and be in a position to deliver anything they promised.

Minute 15: Oral Update & Publications – B) Humanist Representative

The Chairman informed members that since the last meeting, he had advised Humanists UK and the member of the Baha'i faith who had been interested in joining the SACRE, that representatives were not currently required for the Bromley SACRE.

Minute 17: SACRE Draft Action Plan

The Chairman advised members that Bromley schools were not using Fronter in the way LBB officers had expected. In the past, the Bromley Agreed Syllabus and related documents had been uploaded on to Fronter as it was believed it would allow them to be easily accessible for all staff. The LBB Head of School Standards said she had since discovered that only Headteachers and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO) had access to Fronter, which was password protected. Although the use of Fronter was being reviewed in Bromley, it was considered to be useful. SACRE needed an area within it, which was available to all, so she was exploring if all teachers could be provided with password access.

A teacher representative noted that her school had previously used Fronter, but had since decided it was not suited to their needs, and were using Pixl instead. Another platform suggested was London Grid for Learning (LGfL), which required a login and password, but all teachers would already have access. Members considered that there was no need for SACRE documents to be password protected. They felt it was important that the documents were available to everyone, including parents. There would be a need to communicate to Headteachers what information was available and how it could be accessed. The Chairman agreed, and said that this would be included in the letter drafted to schools.

**ACTION: LBB Head of School Standards**

**23            COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION  
REGULATION (GDPR)**

The Chairman informed members that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) would come into effect from 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The SACRE would need to be sure it handled any data it held properly, and be aware of who was responsible for it. As the SACRE was part of the London Borough of Bromley they were ultimately responsible, but if individuals processed any data that could identify people, they needed to do it carefully. If one person misused the data, lost information or breached the regulations, the whole of the SACRE would be accountable.

Members were requested to inform the Chairman and clerk as soon as possible if they became aware that a document had been mislaid; and any papers that they handled, which included any personal information, would need to be kept securely. Members noted that the personal details of SACRE members should only be used for the purposes of the Committee, and not be passed on to any third parties.

The Chairman advised SACRE members that 'Compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)' would become a standing item on future agendas to act as a reminder.

**24            ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS**

**a            SACRE ADVISOR**

The Chairman reminded SACRE members that at the last meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017, a possible plan to cover the SACRE Advisor role had been suggested, with Ms Virginia Corbyn using some of her time to cover the primary elements, and Mr Jed Stone the secondary. As Mr Stone had since resigned from his role on the Committee, the Chairman and LBB officers were considering a way forward, and welcomed any suggestions from members.

In response to a question, the Chairman said that every Local Authority had a pot of money allocated for School Standards. In previous years, when the pot of money had been larger, SACRE had been allocated its own budget. As this was no longer the case, the SACRE would need to bid for money required from the School Standards budget. There was an argument that the School Standards budget should only be used to the benefit of the schools that the Local Authority had direct responsibility for. However, very few schools were left, as most within the Borough had become Academies.

Members considered that if there was not a SACRE Advisor, the SACRE would be unable to fulfil its statutory duties. Previous SACRE Advisors had arranged teacher training events and activities for schools. These were highly valuable and it was felt that all students should benefit, whether they attended Local Authority schools or Academies. Reverend Varney noted that during the previous academic year there had been money available, indirectly, to fund

the time of Mr Kieran Osborne, and at the last meeting it had been agreed that Bromley SACRE would draw on Ms Corbyn's expertise, which it was assumed would not be cost free. The Chairman stated that it had been planned to share the cost of Ms Corbyn's time with the London Borough of Bexley, but a definitive amount had not yet been decided. Reverend Varney said that some of the required elements of work to be undertaken were known; leading on school visits and writing report; attending meetings and following up any actions; and contributing to the SACRE Annual Report. The required hours to deliver these could be roughly calculated, and a bid for funding submitted. It would then be up to the London Borough of Bromley to decide if they would fund the role. Members understood that there was a structural problem in the method the money was drawn down, but this was not the SACRE's issue and they needed an Advisor's time and expertise in order to deliver their statutory role.

Reverend Varney offered to meet with the Chairman and LBB officers to discuss the SACRE's requirements. The Chairman agreed that this would be beneficial and requested that a meeting be arranged after Easter for himself, the LBB Head of Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education, the LBB Head of School Standards and Reverend Varney to agree the requirements of funding a SACRE Advisor role. It was noted that Ms Corbyn had agreed to assist with the primary elements of the role, but a secondary advisor would still need to be identified. If Ms Corbyn was to facilitate the revision of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus, the work required by the secondary advisor would be reduced. Members considered that as most secondary schools in the Borough were Academies, the RE leaders were able to facilitate network and communication methods via a different model to primary schools. The Chairman noted that before Mr Osborne had left his role as LBB RE Advisor, he had been exploring the possibility of forming a wider schools network with the Heads of RE at Hayes School and Ravens Wood School. The Chairman said he would contact Mr Osborne and see if this had been established, and if so, enquire if and how it could be 'tapped into'. **ACTION: Chairman**

**RESOLVED that a meeting be organised after Easter to discuss a bid to fund a SACRE Advisor role.**

#### **b SACRE ANNUAL REPORT**

SACRE members had been provided with a copy of the Annual Report 2016-2017. The Chairman advised that the report was mainly factual and included exam results tables, membership and attendance at meetings. Members commented that overall the report was very positive.

Members enquired as to how the production of the Annual Report had been funded. The Chairman responded that it had been a joint effort between himself, the LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education, and the clerk as part of their job roles. It was noted that when the SACRE had an RE Advisor, there had been more content than what there was currently.

Members enquired who the SACRE Annual Report was circulated to. The Chairman confirmed that the clerk submitted it to NASACRE, the Secretary of State for Education and all Councillors. Councillor Representatives queried why the report did not go to a meeting of Full Council, and requested that it did so in order to raise the profile of the SACRE. **ACTION: Clerk**

**c NASACRE AGM**

The Chairman advised members that he would be attending the NASACRE Conference and AGM, which was being held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at the Merchant Taylors' Hall, City of London. The theme of the conference would be 'Stronger Together - Celebrating the power of Community'. There was scope for another member of the SACRE to attend, and members were advised to contact the Clerk as soon as possible if they would like a place booked.

The Chairman would report back on the NASACRE Conference and AGM at the next meeting.

**d MONITORING / COMPLAINING ABOUT NON-COMPLIANCE IN THE TEACHING OF RE**

SACRE members were provided with copies of two documents entitled 'Report for NATRE on LA maintained schools' and 'Why SACREs should complain to schools when they neglect RE'. Both documents referenced the 'State of the Nation Report', which the Chairman had highlighted at the last SACRE meeting. It was noted that these documents acted as a reminder that this was part of a SACRE member's responsibilities. Members visited schools by invitation, which would cease if the schools felt that the SACREs feedback was that they were not happy with what they had seen. The SACRE was there to support and assist the schools, and were not there to inspect them, but members could not 'turn a blind eye' if what they saw was wrong, as it would make them complicit with it.

Members enquired if there were any schools which SACRE representatives had visited where they had been worried about what they had seen. The Chairman said that a number of interesting discussions had taken place with Headteachers during previous visits, where he had been firm and advised that they could not do certain things, but there was nowhere that he had been where he had thought it was terrible, although if a school knew they were not compliant, they would be very unlikely to invite SACRE members to visit.

The Chairman stated that, when invited into schools to see their delivery of Religious Education, SACRE members were generally impressed with what they saw. They sometimes made suggestions of other things that the school could do, and if they did not see any Collective Worship taking place, they usually just commented that they were disappointed not to view what the school did. Mr Mahmood expressed that he favoured an indirect approach, with members saying what the SACRE's understanding is, and then drafting a report following the visit. In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed

that a report was written after each visit to a school, and the school were provided with a copy. The report should be available for Ofsted Inspectors to view, however it was not known how often they would request to see documents relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship. The LBB Head of School Standards said that Ofsted should be viewing documents from across the curriculum, and that the Headteacher should be making these documents available to Ofsted Inspectors. There should also be a policy on Religious Education, and a lead within the school.

## **25 SCHOOL VISITS**

The Chairman advised members that as the SACRE did not currently have an RE Advisor, no school visits had been able to take place since the last meeting. However, he had been invited to attend this years' RE Day at James Dixon Primary School, and the invite had been extended to SACRE members. The clerk had informed members that it would take place on the morning of Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018, 9.00am - 12.00pm, and the Chairman, Councillor Robert Evans, Edlene Whitman and Virginia Corbyn would be attending.

## **26 SACRE DRAFT ACTION PLAN**

SACRE members were provided with a copy of the SACRE Draft Action Plan for 2017-18. Members noted that the Action Plan would be a good starting point for setting out the requirements for the SACRE Advisor role, and enable them to apply for funding from the School Standards budget.

## **27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr Mahmood informed SACRE members that he would be unable to attend the meeting planned for 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and asked if it would be possible to look for an alternative date. The Chairman agreed that this would be explored, and members would be advised of the new date. **ACTION: Clerk**

*Subsequently, a new date of Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018 was agreed for the summer term meeting.*

## **28 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018  
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019

All meetings to start at 6pm

The Meeting ended at 6.57 pm

Chairman