

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
held
at Room P4 - County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Friday, 13th March, 2020 at
10.00 am**

PRESENT:

COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:

County Councillor R. John (Chair)
County Councillor P. Pavia
County Councillor T. Thomas

FAITH REPRESENTATIVES:

Revd. Peter Baines
Mrs. S. Gooding
Major N. Pryor
Dr. L. Brown
Mr. A. Szwagrzak

TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. N. Jenkins

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sharon Randall-Smith | Head of Achievement and Attainment |
| Wendy Barnard | Democratic Services Officer |
| Angela Hill | Temporary RE Adviser |

APOLOGIES:

County Councillor A. Webb

1. SACRE Membership Update

The Chair welcomed SACRE Members and temporary RE Advisor, Angela Hill, to the meeting. Best wishes were passed on to the RE Advisor. Paula Webber. The Chair conveyed the sincere condolences of the group to a Member due to a recent bereavement. Neil Jenkins was welcomed to the meeting. Neil replaces Rhian Davies as a Teacher Representative.

The Clerk delivered a membership report. Changes were summarised as follows:

| County Councillors | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| M. Lane Vacancy | Resignation notified 26/6/19: Sent a reminder to Group Leader 25/02/20 |
| J. Watkins Vacancy | Ongoing vacancy: Sent a reminder to Group Leader 25/02/20 |

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| Representing the Roman Catholic Church (1) | |
| A. Szwagrzak appointed | |
| Representing the Buddhist Faith: | |
| Ngakpa Namgyal Chatral | In presenting apologies, concerns were expressed that meetings in Usk are difficult to attend, and meeting dates should be arranged with as much notice as possible. |
| Representing the Hindu Faith: | |
| Vacancy | |
| Representing the Jewish Faith: | |
| Vacancy | |
| Representing the Muslim Faith: | |
| Vacancy | |
| Representing the Sikh Faith: | |
| Vacancy | |
| Representing Teachers Associations (7) | |
| Mr A. Jones Vacancy | Replacement to be sought |
| Mr. N. Jenkins | Replaces Mrs R. Davies who resigned 11/11/2019 |
| Co-opted Members (2) | |
| Mrs K Fitter Vacancy | resigned |
| Tudor Thomas Vacancy | Moved to County Council representative |
| R E Consultant | |
| Angela Hill | Temporary Cover via EAS |
| Representing Chief Officer, Children and Young People | |
| Sharon Randall-Smith | |

In reviewing its membership, it was agreed that SACRE prefers members to live in Monmouthshire where possible. Considering the Co-Opted and Faith Representative vacancies, it was suggested that it may be worthwhile to reach out to educational institutions such as Coleg Gwent and University of South Wales (Newport) as there may be interest from lecturers and students. Group Leaders have been reminded of the County Councillor vacancies. Professional associations will be requested to submit nominations for the teacher representative vacancy.

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It was noted that Andrew Jones is no longer a member of SACRE creating a vacancy for the office of Vice Chair. Nominations were sought and Neil Jenkins was elected as Vice Chair.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th June 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2019 were confirmed as a true record subject to the following amendment:

Item 11, para 3: Remove "The concerns were not generally shared"

3. To approve SACRE Annual Report 2018-2019

The SACRE Annual Report 2018/19 was approved. Sharon Randall-Smith was thanked for compiling the report.

4. Curriculum Development:

SACRE considered proposals for the curriculum for schools in Wales and referred to the Minister's press release response to the recent consultation on the following key points.

- Removal of right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons, which will presumably come into effect when the new curriculum is launched in 2022
- The name of Religious Education to change to Religion, Values and Ethics when the new curriculum comes into effect

The consultation responses appeared to indicate that consultees were broadly in favour of the proposed changes.

Regarding the change of name to Religion, Values and Ethics, some concern was expressed that the wording of the consultation questions was regarding access to the curriculum, with no separate question about the name. It was commented that the Minister took no account of the views of faith groups on the proposed name; agreeing the choice of learners instead.

It was confirmed that SACRE has no remit to consider the proposed change to the name of RSE whilst accepting that there can be an overlap. It is the intention of the Minister that students have a broad and balanced education that reflects society. Religion, Values and Ethics education must be objective, critical and pluralistic.

SACRE agreed the importance of promoting discrete areas on the curriculum. The Minister will provide support, guidance and training for teachers. SACRE should monitor what is, and becomes, available. As Religion, Values and Ethics will be included within Humanities, there will be more non-specialist teachers delivering lessons. SACRE must support such teachers to access the training available, and support schools and leadership teams. Some concern was expressed that RE teachers feel behind with planning and preparations for the Humanities Areas of Learning and Experience (AOLE).

Views were expressed in support of the new title and of the move to Humanities AOLE, and of commitment to the objective, critical and pluralistic approach to learning.

It was questioned if the Minister will consult on the new framework, noting that the planned WASACRE meeting has been cancelled due to COVID 19. It was reported that a reiterated

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version of the draft framework on RE will be made available for consultation to individual SACRE members with a short timescale for responses. It was agreed to hold a special meeting for SACRE to provide input to the consultation. It was confirmed that curriculum changes are planned to be implemented from September 2022.

It was confirmed that it is the responsibility of SACRE to agree the right curriculum for schools in Monmouthshire. A regional approach was not preferred.

5. Monitoring Provision and Standards

SACRE considered reports as tabled from Caldicot School and Osbaston Church in Wales Primary School. Reports for Goytre Fawr Primary School and Thornwell Primary School will be presented at the next meeting.

Both reports, made confidentially available to members, had many positive aspects demonstrating high standards, as summarised by the RE Adviser. Development points will be a focus for improvement going forward.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that SACRE has no formal role in monitoring provision in Voluntary Aided Schools but can offer support, congratulations etc. SACRE has a monitoring role in Voluntary Controlled Schools and schools maintained by the local authority.

It was further clarified that if there are problems in Voluntary Aided Schools there would be no involvement from SACRE. Intervention would be made by the Diocese or Archdiocese as appropriate. It was emphasised that there is a very good relationship between the local authority, SACRE and the Diocesan Directors of Education. SACRE will always offer support to all schools as appropriate.

It was agreed that letters would be sent by the Chair and Education Officer to recognise the inspection outcomes at Caldicot School and Osbaston Church in Wales Primary School.

6. WASACRE business

- i. The minutes from the WASACRE meeting held on the 21st November 2019 were received and noted.
- ii. It was noted that the forthcoming WASACRE meeting, Merthyr Tydfil, 17th March 2020, was cancelled due to COVID 19. The RE Adviser provided an update that meeting was due to cover the consultation at the time, updates on the RE framework and curriculum. Some information was provided about the Equality and Diversity qualification that awards students 2 B grade GCSEs. It was explained that some Headteachers are seeking to do this instead of RE at KS4. It was pointed out that the qualification does not cover the requirements. Chief Officers have been written to and schools will be contacted in due course. It was suggested that members research the specification for the course. Welsh Government and WASACRE are monitoring the situation.
- iii. Mrs Suzanne Gooding was nominated for WASACRE Executive and Dr. Louise Brown for Vice Chair of WASACRE.

7. To confirm the dates of future SACRE meetings

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26th June 2020 at 10.00am – in a school, with a pupil presentation

13th November 2020 at 10.00am – venue

The meeting ended at 11.55 am