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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)/  
Standing Advisory Council (SAC) held  
at County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance on Wednesday, 26th October, 2022 at 10.00 am**

**PRESENT: COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

County Councillor M. Groucutt (Chair)  
County Councillor Angela Sandles and Louise Brown

**FAITH REPRESENTATIVES**

Rebecca Morteo  
Nick Pryor  
Sue Cave  
Suzanne Gooding  
Beryl Quinlan  
Jonathan Greaves

**TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES**

Charlotte Rhodes  
Suzanne Hamer  
Neil Jenkins

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer
Hayley Jones	Curriculum Partner (SACs and RVE)
Geraint Edwards	Solicitor

**APOLOGIES:**

County Councillor Paul Pavia and Sharon Randall-Smith

**1. Minutes of the previous meeting held on, Wednesday 15th June 2022 and matters arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

**2. Annual Report**

SACRE/SAC reviewed the draft Annual Report for 2021/22. A small number of amendments were made. The report was approved for circulation.

**3. Constitution Update**

The Legal Adviser to SACRE/SAC noted that a further piece of work is required in view of recent constitutional changes. The terms of reference require changes to be implemented as a

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result or formalising the transition to a Standing Advisory Council (SAC) and SACRE legacy responsibilities. In liaison with the RVE Partner and the Head of Achievement and Extended Services, work is ongoing to prepare a report for the next meeting to recommend that the Monitoring Officer implements the necessary constitutional changes.

It was agreed that a draft version of the report will be circulated to Members in reasonable time prior to agenda dispatch in order that comments may be made. It was clarified that changes to the Constitution of the County Council will be required.

A Member asked about the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) statement that accompanied the last report to Council stating it was more relevant to RSE than RVE and noting that there had been no opportunity for SACRE/SAC to make comments.

The Legal Adviser explained that at this stage, review of the EQIA is not now within SACRE's remit. The EQIA is prepared by the relevant officer as part of their report to inform the Members' decision-making process to comply with the authority's public sector equality duty. The content of the EQIA is separate from any resolution.

In this case the decision was made by Council to approve the RVE Agreed Syllabus so the EQIA would not be open to review or amendment after the event. It was acknowledged that the EQIA should have been provided at an earlier stage. To avoid this happening in future, SACRE/SAC will have sight of the accompanying EQIA before any report making recommendations to Full Council progresses.

The Member suggested that it should be possible for a revised document to be received by Full Council referring to the Equality Act 2010. Members were reminded that SACRE is not a Committee of the Council.

The Chair requested that the Legal Adviser prepares a short report for the next meeting to explore how best to address the concerns and to provide reassurance that the issues have been considered.

#### **4. Membership Update**

It was noted that Kate Wilding, Teacher Representative, has resigned from SACRE/SAC and there are now four vacancies for Teacher Representatives. The RVE Partner and Head of Achievement and Extended Services will seek new Teacher Representatives to fill the vacancies.

Membership will be reviewed as part of the constitutional changes. This work is ongoing. It was suggested that timings of meetings could be reviewed to encourage better attendance of school-based staff.

A Member asked who schools can contact locally about aspects of the new curriculum e.g. are there Humanists who will visit schools. It was confirmed that a Humanist representative will be joining the SACRE/SAC from the next meeting. The RVE Partner offered support and contacts to schools on topics and the Church in Wales representative can also offer support.

A Member understood the addition of a representative of non-religious philosophical convictions and queried the appointment of a Humanism representative stating that the legislation refers to

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reflecting proportionality in the local area. It was queried if there are other groups applicable e.g. Climate Change and Pro-Life, and questioned if there is a Humanist Group in Monmouthshire.

The Legal Adviser clarified that a Humanist representative has already been added to SACRE/SAC by Full Council. Regarding other groups with non-religious philosophical convictions, representation can be considered on a case by case basis depending on expressions of interest. It was also highlighted that there is the opportunity to co-opt members on a short-term basis pending any constitutional changes.

#### **5. EAS RVE Partner Update**

The RVE Partner provided an update that Welsh Government resources are awaited and WASACRE should have details at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

A brief report of Estyn inspections that have taken place is included on the agenda. A separate section has been added to cover collective worship. WASACRE and SACREs have noted that there is insufficient coverage of collective worship and this point has been raised with Estyn. In future, inspection reports will be presented to SACRE/SAC each term.

SACRE/SAC Members were invited to pass ideas on how to monitor provision to the RVE Partner.

It was agreed that it would be helpful if a summary plus the statutory legislation could be sent out to all schools about the difference between collective worship assembly and RVE as there is a misconception across the teaching profession including headteachers regarding delivery. The RVE Partner will raise this matter in the NAPFRE meeting and with WASACRE to request appropriate guidance. A Member reminded that the curriculum did not make changes to collective worship. It should be of a broadly Christian nature.

SACRE/SAC will be sending information to schools for Holocaust Memorial Day. Information about Interfaith Week has been circulated to SACRE/SAC Members. Applications for Farmington Scholarships are available to schools for university or school-based projects.

#### **6. WASACRE**

The draft minutes of the last WASACRE meeting were received. The next meeting will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 10.00am, there will be a Members Seminar on SACRE/SAC to which all elected Members and SACRE Members are invited.

#### **7. Any Other Business**

The Chair encouraged all SACRE/SAC Members to attend the training on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

A Member asked about the availability of RVE resources on Hwb and if SACRE /SAC Members could be directed to them as they are not easy to locate. The RVE Partner explained that there are no official resources published. When available, this will not include guidance on what should/should not be taught as this is decided at school level working within the What Matters statements. It was added that there are generally no discrete RVE lessons in the primary sector, but individual schools can choose to have standalone lessons if that is more suitable.

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It is planned to include an overview of the new curriculum at the Members' Seminar.

#### **8. To confirm the date of the next SAC meeting - 15th February 2023**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 15th February 2023. Provisional dates for the coming year are:

14<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 3.00pm

8<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 3.00pm

8<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 3.00pm

8<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 3.00pm

**The meeting ended at 10.53 am**