

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religion, Values and Ethics (SAC) held at Remote Meeting on Wednesday, 4th March, 2026 at 3.00 pm

PRESENT: Faith and Belief Representatives:

Jonathan Greaves
Phillip Middleton
Bev Bannon

Teacher Representatives:

Sue Marles
Charlotte Rhodes
Claire Rosato

County Councillors Representatives:

County Councillor Louise Brown,
County Councillor Rachel Buckler,
County Councillor John Crook,
County Councillor Paul Pavia,
County Councillor Angela Sandles; and
County Councillor Laura Wright (Chair)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sharon Randall-Smith	Head of Achievement and Attainment
Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer
Geraint Edwards	Head of Litigation and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer

APOLOGIES:

Clare Werrett, Hayley Jones, Sue Cave and Maddie Sareirah

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

2. Question from Philip Middleton: The issue of Chair's absence necessitating the postponement of meetings

SAC considered the question raised by Phillip Middleton concerning the issue of the Chair's absence necessitating the postponement of meetings.

It was explained that if SAC wished to make provision for someone to take the Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, a constitutional amendment to that effect would be necessary.

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The Chair stated her commitment to the role and provided assurance that in the event of her unavailability, she would provide the Vice Chair with as much advance notice as possible.

It was agreed to revisit this matter in the event that an issue arises.

3. To consider realigning meetings to one per term.

It was agreed to realign meetings to one per term in line with other authorities. This is the minimum number of meetings required under the constitution.

4. Membership Report

The Membership List was noted. No changes have occurred since the previous meeting. The Clerk has written to various churches and groups to advise of vacancies but no nominations have been forthcoming.

It was agreed that a press release or other appropriate communications would be helpful to promote the work of SAC, but also to say that SAC is looking for members and particularly in certain groups which are not currently represented.

5. Update from EAS RVE Adviser

The report of the LASIS (formerly EAS) RVE Adviser (as below) was delivered by the Head of Service, Achievement and Extended Services.

1. Curriculum for Wales and RVE Support

LASIS continued to provide guidance and professional learning to support schools with the effective implementation of RVE within the Curriculum for Wales. This included advice on curriculum design within the Humanities Area, guidance on using the Monmouthshire Agreed Syllabus, and support for planning for progression in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics.

2. Professional Learning and School Support

A range of RVE-focused professional learning sessions is being delivered regionally, including support for enquiry-led learning through collaboration with partner schools. Monmouthshire schools have engaged with some of these opportunities; however, further uptake would be beneficial. Individual schools received targeted support on curriculum development and self-evaluation where requested.

3. Estyn and Self-Evaluation

Schools were supported in understanding Estyn's expectations relating to RVE within the current inspection framework. LASIS provided guidance on integrating RVE within whole-school self-evaluation processes and on the effective use of pupil voice to inform improvement planning.

4. National and Regional Collaboration

LASIS continued to contribute to national and regional groups, including collaboration with Welsh Government and NAPfRE, to share emerging guidance and promote

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high-quality and consistent RVE provision. Relevant updates were shared with schools and with SAC members as appropriate.

5. Priorities Moving Forward

Key priorities for the Spring term include:

Strengthening curriculum design and progression in RVE

Funding has been allocated to support the development of RVE within the secondary sector, and several Monmouthshire schools have expressed interest in participating. The work will focus on:

- developing a shared and accurate understanding of RVE requirements within the Curriculum for Wales to ensure consistency of interpretation across the partnership
- reflecting on current curriculum arrangements in light of Curriculum for Wales expectations and Estyn's identified areas for development
- creating a shared set of principles and guidance that defines what high-quality RVE teaching looks like across the partnership

Providing continued professional learning

LASIS will continue to offer professional learning and respond to the emerging needs of individual schools to support high-quality RVE provision.

Following presentation of the above points questions and comments were invited from SAC Members.

1.. In terms of Curriculum Models and Guidance, Schools are actively reviewing different curriculum models and schemes to determine the best fit for their context and curriculum delivery. Welsh Government provided separate guidance for both Church in Wales and Roman Catholic schools during the development of the RVE curriculum, with links to the agreed syllabus.

2. It was emphasised that RVE delivery must take account of the distinctive faith nature of Church in Wales and Roman Catholic schools, while still meeting national curriculum requirements.

3. Catholic schools are required to dedicate 10% of curriculum time to RE as part of their faith teaching. This creates some ****timetable pressure****, and schools therefore explore different schemes to balance Catholic teaching with RVE statutory elements.

Despite the challenges, there are no concerns about compliance, and some schools are using the curriculum in enlightening and inspirational ways.

4. Catholic schools, such as those represented by Bev Bannon, rely on resources provided by the Archdiocese. It was confirmed that these resources are compatible with what schools must present as part of their Catholic identity and RVE obligations.

Collective Worship Survey:

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An update was provided on the survey sent to all schools regarding Collective Worship. 16 responses have been received to date, but it was agreed that the survey would be sent out again to elicit more responses to be able to see the complete view.

Interfaith Council Junior Competition: Building Community

In response to a request, it was agreed that a communication could be sent to all Primary Schools regarding the above competition.

6. WASACRE Business

- WASACRE Minutes from November 2025

The minutes of the Autumn WASACRE meeting were received.

- Sharing the date (Spring WASACRE Meeting): Thursday 19th March via Zoom. Meeting link, agenda and papers to be sent nearer the meeting.

County Councillors Brown and Buckler will represent Monmouthshire plus the LASIS RVE Adviser will be attending

- WASACRE Executive Committee nominations

No nominations to the Executive Committee were required as County Councillor Rachel Buckler is a sitting member of the Executive Committee representing Monmouthshire until 2028.

It was unanimously agreed to nominate County Councillor Rachel Buckler for the position of Vice Chair of the Executive Committee.

7. Forward Work Plan

The Forward Work Plan was noted and it was agreed to add the following topics for future meetings:

Annual Report preparations

Teacher Voice

Add Teaching of Ethics to the update on the bedding in, content and delivery of WJEC/GCSE

8. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record.

9. Next Meeting: 17th June 2026

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm