

East Sussex SACRE
Minutes of meeting held on Monday 15 November 2010
County Hall, Lewes



Present Councillor Trevor Webb (Chair), Councillor Brian Gadd, Councillor Pat Rodohan, Councillor Richard Stogdon, Father David Smith, Ms Ros Gillies, Dr Brenda Vance, Mrs Rebecca Stutters, Dr Paul Kitchenham, Mrs Pat Lock, Mr Bev Devaux, Mr John Court

Also Attended Margaret Cutting (Clerk), Lilian Weatherley (Advisor to SACRE), Lesley Wickham (LA Advisor) and George Jelliss (Humanist Observer)

Welcome, Introductions

Actions

Councillor Webb welcomed Lilian Weatherley and Lesley Wickham to their new roles in the East Sussex SACRE

1 Lilian Weatherley (LW) as asked by Cllr Lock, gave an overview of her career to date and explained how she felt this experience should enable her to support the East Sussex SACRE. Among her various roles, LW trained as a primary teacher but taught both primary and secondary, has worked as an Ofsted and SIAS Inspector, is a published author and was the Religious Education Adviser for the Dioceses of Winchester and Portsmouth for many years. Lilian also sat on 6 SACREs.

1.1 There then followed a Q&A session:

- Paul Kitchenham (PK) asked about the role of Druids and other nature religions within SACRE. LW advised that representation on SACRE should be in proportion to people in the community and so each SACRE had a different make-up. PK felt that if the Lamas celebrations were indicative, there were a large number of such people within Eastbourne.
- Father David (Fr D) explained that each SACRE was made up of voting and non-voting members. The faith of voting members had to be recognised by law and SACRE. It was possible to make representation at National level to become a voting member.
- Cllr Webb (Cllr W) sits on the Hastings and Rother interfaith community panel. He would like to see representatives of the Hindu and Muslim communities involved with SACRE. There is a need to identify groups and to make links with them. Fr D advised that Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid could attend meetings if he received help with transport.

Action: Cllr Webb to speak to the Imam

Cllr Webb

1.2 Discussion took place around changes being made by the new government:

- LW advised that representatives from the RE Council had met with Ministers regarding SACRE/LA/RE. They are in discussion about the National Curriculum and RE. Noted that RE and Early Years are both the responsibility of the LA. A meeting of the National Association of RE Advisors is to take place in Birmingham when more information will become available.
- There are concerns around how RE will be funded nationally if cuts are made to LA budgets. RE is not currently covered by the National Curriculum, and the Agreed Syllabus is meant to represent young people within an area. The RE Handbook should be the starting point for the Agreed Syllabus. Noted that although there are recognised national levels for RE these are currently being revised to ensure consistency when reporting standards and results nationally.
- There is concern regarding Academies being able to determine their own curriculum. It is hoped that they would be preparing young people to work in

a world market and therefore adopt a local syllabus??

1.3 Cllr Webb introduced Lesley Wickham the new LA Advisor.

- Lesley Wickham (LeW) said that changes are dependent on the content of the White Paper. It is difficult to predict what will happen. The LA's duty is expected to be reduced, but accountability is unknown. With reduced resources the LA will only fund what is statutory and essential. SACRE is both. LeW is working with LW on ways of making the syllabus both manageable and appropriate. The challenge is waiting for the steer from the White Paper.
- Cllr W queried whether the government would make SACRE optional. LeW said that she would be surprised if this was the case as strong steers were coming from the government on the importance of faith and working with the community.

1.4 Makeup of SACRE

- Fr D highlighted the importance of SACRE training courses, and that the previous government had viewed SACRE valuable for social cohesion.
- Cllr W was of the opinion that SACRE had to be relevant to faith groups or they would not attend meetings. If membership reduced further the group may be asked to justify why it existed.
- LeW said that people expected action and we had to ensure that the agenda provided this to encourage members to attend meetings. There may be a need to look at the effectiveness of the meeting structure. Community needs change, communities are becoming more transient and we have to respond to that.
- Cllr W expressed concerns that young people, especially from the Muslim Community, were losing their community roots. For Cllr Rodohan (Cllr R) there is a need to understand each other's faiths rather than where in the world people originated. Agreed this needed to be fed into the curriculum.
- Bev Devaux (BD) said that in the past SACRE membership was wider, and queried whether it should be investigated why some groups no longer take part. Was it because they felt that their input was not going into education?
- There is a cost implication for LW and LeW to attend events. LW advised there is a need to ensure, by working with other groups, that information produced for schools was correct and accepted by the faith communities.

1.5 Time requirement for RE

- LW advised that legally schools had to allocate sufficient time to deliver the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, which in KS 1/2 is the equivalent of 1 hour per week.
- Ros Gillies (RG) advised that within Roman Catholic Schools this is 2 hours.
- A collective act of worship is statutory but not part of the allocated time for RE. It was agreed that in many schools this is tokenistic. There has been no test case in law.
- Ofsted no longer look at RE provision in depth. The SIAS inspection for Aided Church Schools does however give SACRE some idea of standards.
- Cllr Stogdon asked about LW's time in Dubai and the amount of time allocated to RE in Muslim schools. LW advised that Islamic religious education was allocated a similar amount of time as schools in the UK and that the teachers there were amazed that many UK schools have worship before school and say prayers at lunch time as they do. Most schools in Dubai now follow an English style curriculum and are inspected in a similar way to Ofsted.

Business Meeting

2 Councillor Webb opened the business meeting explaining that in the absence of

Councillor Lock he would be Chairing the meeting.

2.1 **Apologies had been received from:** Cll Matthew Lock, Dr Taleb Durgahee, Kevin Fossey, Dr Derek Bastide, Martin Lloyd, Ms Jill Bell

3 **Minutes of previous meetings**

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 12 November 2009 which were unable to be approved due to meeting 25 February being unable to continue:

- The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

3.2 Notes for the Clerk from discussions held on 25 February 2010:

- iii – LW had responded to George Jelliss (GJ) regarding Humanist membership of SACRE. LW advised that this would need a change in primary legislation and at national SACRE level. With a change in East Sussex constitution others could become co-opted members.
- GJ quoted Circular 1/94, para 103 which gives SACREs the power to co-opt Humanist members.
- After discussion it was agreed that this should be an item on the agenda for 17 February 2011.

MC

Action: LW to prepare a briefing paper and advice to be sent with papers

LW

The notes were agreed

4 **Election of Chair/Vice Chair**

LW advised that in conversation with Cllr Lock he had indicated his willingness to stand again. Cllr Lock had also suggested that each committee nominate a chair who would be contacted and find replacements if members were unable to attend.

Cllr Stogdon nominated Cllr Lock. This was seconded by Ms Pat Lock.

Cllr Webb was agreed by a show of hands

Group A:

Chair: Dr Brenda Vance

Vice Chair: Rebecca Stutters

Group B:

Chair: Paul Kitchenham

Group C:

Chair: Bev Devaux

Vice Chair: John Court

Group D:

Chair: Cllr Lock

Vice Chair: Cllr Webb

5 **What is the role of RE in assisting areas of social deprivation:**

In the absence of Cllr Lock this item was postponed to the next meeting.

6 **ASC**

Copies of the draft Agreed Syllabus were distributed.

- LW and LeW had worked through the working group's draft, which following a change of government was now out of date. There had been formatting problems and LW had cut and pasted the draft into the Isle of Wight framework and reorganised the content to make it coherent and hopefully user friendly. Some of the additional content had been written by Graham Langtree (RE Advisor for Devon and author of the non-statutory framework) and LW and had been included in case the ASC thought teachers in East Sussex might find them useful ie the cross curricular links.
- LW advised that Cllr Lock had approved the title 'A Journey of Discovery' but had asked that images of East Sussex be included.

- It was agreed that the working group should meet with LW and LeW to work through the changes with suggested launch date of March 2011 to coincide with Celebrating RE Month

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting for a working group meeting on 14 December, including room and parking

MC

7 **SACRE Conference Budget Implications**

- LW advised she had spoken to Cllr Lock regarding the cost of SACRE venue. A suggestion was made that meetings were held in schools, with possibly a 10 minute presentation by the subject leader. However, it was queried whether Heads would be in agreement.
- It was agreed that meetings up to the AGM in November 2011 should be held as already agreed when the matter is to be reviewed again.

MC

Action: LeW to bring this matter to SMB for discussion with Heads.

LeW

- It was noted that biscuits should be substituted for the sandwiches which had been provided in the past.
- LW asked for SACRE's approval to meet with subject leaders. It was understood that previously the Advisor had arranged twilight training sessions. Agreed.

LW

Action: LW to discuss this with PK/BD

- Fr D queried whether the remaining budget funds had been allocated. He felt that it would be prudent to do so. LW advised that she had spoken to Nina Siddall and Councillor Lock regarding the purchase of support materials.
- Cllr W agreed that expenditure on previous budgets should be reviewed in light of the current underspend

Action: LW to investigate underspend

LW

8 **Sussex Peace Centre**

- LW advised that as Thursday's Child had now closed, the information was provided for members to become involved if they so wished.

9 **Accord Award**

No members were aware of this award and LW is to investigate with Susan Thompson.

LW

10 **Items to be considered for the next SACRE meeting 17 February 2011**

- Review of constitution
- Update on White Paper
- Agreed Syllabus
- Cllr Lock presentation (item 5)
- Finance update on the budget

11 **Any other business**

LW advised that at SACRE meetings she had attended in the past they had opened with a reflection. She had discussed this with Cllr Lock who had asked her to prepare a reflection for the meeting. As SACRE was close to Remembrance Day LW read a poem written by a Year 4 child. Rebecca Stutters agreed to lead the reflection on 17 February 2011

Date of Next Meeting

- 17 February 2011 Uckfield Civic Centre, Ashdown Room
- 29 June 2011 The Magnet Centre Chapel Training Room