

**MEETING OF THE LANCASHIRE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HELD AT COUNTY HALL, PRESTON, ON
MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2010**

MINUTES

PRESENT

**Christian and other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting the
Principal Traditions in the Area**

- Roman Catholic Church - Mr B McMullen
Mr B Stuart
- Islam - Mr N Anwar
- Buddhism - Kelsang Pagpa
- Teacher Associations** - Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
Mrs S Greenhow (NASUWT)
Mr P Martin (ASCL)
(Chairman)
Mrs A Robinson
- Church of England** - Mrs J O'Rourke
Mrs H Sage
- Local Authority** - County Councillor K Iddon
County Councillor P Malpas
County Councillor A Thornton
- Co-opted Members** - Mrs J Clarke (Teachers in the Primary Sector)
Mrs K Cooper (LASGB)
- Officers in Attendance** - Mrs H Harrison
Ms J Anderson
Mrs K Dale

Dr Malcolm Craig, representing the Bahá'í faith, Mr A Brennand representing the Pagan Federation, and Mr F Williams attended the meeting as Observers.

Katharine McDonnell, Democratic Services - Blackpool Borough Council, also attended the meeting as an Observer.

Presentations were made by the following:

Heather Warburton, Administrative Officer, Quality and Continuous Improvement Service, Lancashire County Council - the SACRE budget

Robin Grinter, Greater Manchester Humanists and British Humanist Association - Humanism

Dan and Amira, students at Broughton Business and Enterprise College (accompanied by their teacher, Joanne Harris) - Youth SACRE

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

1 RESOLVED: That Peter Martin be appointed Chairman of the SACRE for the ensuing year.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

2 RESOLVED: That County Councillor Albert Thornton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the SACRE for the ensuing year.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Jo Busby, Yvonne Taylor, Colin Wills, Imam Owes Data, Kailash Parekh, Harsha Shukla, Rabbi David Braunold, Salim Jogi, Jas Singh, Lisa Fenton, Christian Pountain, CC Kevin Ellard, CC Yousuf Motala, Ms Laura Heaton and Ms Carrie Mercier.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

With reference to the minute regarding the Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship/SACRE Officer post, the Chairman reported that he had received a written assurance from the Authority formally confirming that support for the SACRE would continue to be provided. However, the present post holder of the Consultant Post for RE and Collective Worship would leave the authority on 31 March 2011 and the post would then cease to exist. It was expected that details of the support to be provided would be known and able to be reported by the next meeting of the SACRE on 7 February 2011.

3 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 20 September 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CONSTITUTION OF THE SACRE

Members noted the approval on 8 October 2010 of the appointment of Reverend Sandra Crawford as a representative of the Baptist faith to serve on the SACRE on the Free Churches group and on 11 November 2010 that of Imam Owes Data as a representative of Islam, both within the larger group entitled 'Christian and other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting The Principal Traditions in the Area'.

UPDATE ON THE SACRE BUDGET BY HEATHER WARBURTON, DIRECTORATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, QUALITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Heather reported that a budget of £33,825 had been allocated to the SACRE for the 2008 – 2009 academic year. In the academic year 2009 - 2010, this sum had been augmented by an additional sum of £19,075 through a school improvement initiative bid to support actioning the SACRE Development Plan. In 2010 – 2011, there had been an increase in the budget to support the review of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus.

The budget supported the following:

- 50% of the post of the Consultant for RE and Collective Worship
- Travel expenses, supply costs for teachers who are members of the SACRE
- Attendance at the QCDA Conference for SACRE's
- Attendance at NASACRE Annual Conference
- Work with The Lancashire Council of Mosques and the Education Officer
- Developmental work including publications and the website
- The SACRE Annual Report
- SACRE Development Plan
- Network group meetings and support materials
- An exemplification group with materials bought in from Lat Blaylock
- Work with the Youth SACRE and Youth Voice group and staging the Youth Conference
- A new Able, Gifted and Talented group
- The development and launch of the new Agreed Syllabus in March 2011

In total the Lancashire SACRE received £52,900 to undertake its statutory work and to provide resources and materials for schools.

Member expressed their appreciation and thanks to Heather for the work that she carried out on the SACRE's behalf, often 'going the extra mile'.

4 RESOLVED: (i) That the report on the SACRE budget be noted.

(ii) That members' thanks to Heather Warburton for her work on behalf of the SACRE be noted.

UPDATE ON THE LANCASHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

It had previously been proposed to ask the SACRE to delegate the task of formally approving the Annual Report, before its submission the QCDA by the end of December, to the QSS which had considered it at its meeting of 11

November 2010. However, the Annual Report was now ready for final consideration and approval.

The SACRE was legally required to produce an Annual Report and the Lancashire report was based on a formula provided by the QCDA which relied on the provision of a large amount of statistics. The 2009 – 10 Annual Report would be published electronically and the draft version was already available for members to view and comment upon on the SACRE website in the members' password protected area.

Members considered the draft report in detail at the meeting and noted that Appendix 7 which showed GCSE results in bar graph form and various photographs still needed to be added.

The comments were made that the Religious Education Council was not mentioned in the report and that School Governing Bodies ought to be included in Appendix 8 – the Annual Report distribution list.

The SACRE agreed to approve the Annual Report and there was therefore now no need for the special meeting of the QSS which had previously been set for December, specifically for this purpose.

5 RESOLVED: That the SACRE Annual Report 2009 – 10 be approved, subject to the amendments mentioned above, prior to submission to the QCDA by the end of December 2010.

REPORT OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS SUB-GROUP

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group which took place on 11 November 2010.

Discussion took place regarding the SACRE's role in monitoring RE and how best to take forward the data which had been collated following the return of the questionnaires which had been taken into secondary schools by the School Improvement Partners on their visits during the Spring term. The information about County schools would be collated to provide an overall picture and provide information for SACRE to plan support.

The Diocesan schools (with the exception of one RC diocese) had also provided information. To respect confidentiality, this information would not be used by the SACRE and it was suggested that this information be collated into individual dioceses and sent to the individual SACRE diocesan representatives for them to take through their own diocesan structures.

Regarding the County schools, Helen Harrison would approach Paul Dyson-Knight for advice on how best to follow up non-returns (of which there were 15) and what ought to be done with the data returned from aided schools. Helen had also asked to attend a meeting of Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers [LASSH] and speak to Heads about the questionnaires and SACRE's duty to monitor. Consideration would need to

be given to how best collate the data in a way which would inform the SACRE Development Plan.

Members welcomed the help that the Authority and Paul Dyson-Knight had provided in carrying out this survey and the subsequent analysis of the data.

With regard to the QSS minute on Forward Planning, members noted that Helen Harrison had been informed verbally that there would be no School Improvement Initiative funding available to bid for in the next year which would have serious implications for the Development Plan. This would be discussed, together with the SACRE Self Evaluation Form, at the next QSS meeting on 18 January 2011 and a request was made for as many members as possible to attend this meeting. To accommodate the availability of a greater number of members, it was suggested that this meeting start at 10.30am.

A query was raised as to whether or not Observer members of the SACRE were permitted to attend the QSS and the Clerk advised that that Observer members were welcome as there were no voting issues since the role of the QSS was simply to make recommendations to the full SACRE.

6 RESOLVED: That:

(i) Helen Harrison approach Paul Dyson-Knight as to how best take forward the data from the return of the SIPs questionnaires.

(ii) The data returned by the Diocesan schools be collated into dioceses and sent to the SACRE diocesan representatives for them to take forward through their own diocesan structures.

(iii) The time of the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group on 18 January 2011 be set as 10.30am and that as many members as possible attend the meeting.

NATIONAL UPDATE

Helen Harrison presented a national update on key RE issues. Helen was the SACRE's link with the Religious Education Council (REC), AREIAC (Association of Religious Education Advisers and Consultants), NASACRE and HMI.

A small delegation from the REC had recently met with Nick Gibb, Minister of State for Schools, and received assurances that local determination would remain. RE however was not part of the current curriculum review. Academies would be expected to deliver RE but it was not clear whether they would have to make use of the Agreed Syllabus as stated in the recent Non Statutory Guidance for RE in England and Wales, published by the DCSF in February 2010. The comment was made that, if this was to be the case, they should pay for its use

Reductions in local authority funding would have serious capacity issues for RE. NASACRE had produced a guidance document regarding the requirements for support for RE by a local authority. Loss of the QCDA would affect the level of support for the curriculum.

Some SACREs had started to lobby both their local MPs and government ministers and it was suggested that Lancashire SACRE might write to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, Nick Gibb and local MPs asking for clarification and for continued support for SACREs. Members felt strongly that the heart of the Agreed Syllabus 'what it is to be human' had the potential to enhance the life of the community.

The presentation on National Issues for RE is on record in the minute book.

7 RESOLVED: That letters be written to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, Nick Gibb, Minister of State for Schools and Lancashire MPs asking for clarification on the level of support to be provided for RE and requesting continued support.

ROBIN GRINTER of GREATER MANCHESTER HUMANISTS AND THE BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

Robin Grinter gave a presentation about Humanism explaining that Humanism was above all a powerful secular morality that declared that we could be good without God.

Robin had written three units for teaching humanism for the Manchester SACRE – humanism supported the search for personal meaning and Helen Harrison welcomed the opportunity to make reference to this material as part of the syllabus review.

Members made comments and raised queries as follows:

- Humanist Practice – a humanist celebrant would conduct, for example, a humanist funeral which would be seen as a celebration of a person's life
- Nurturing a child's spirituality – humanists believe that there is a 'spirituality' all around, for example, in art or nature or beauty
- An afterlife – humanists do not believe in an afterlife, only in having one life and therefore wanting to live that well
- Agnosticism – humanists live without faith in god but some are prepared to question their own belief and would be open to the appearance of evidence

A copy of Robin's presentation is on record in the minute book.

8 RESOLVED: That Robin Grinter be thanked for his enlightening presentation.

YOUTH SACRE/YOUTH VOICE

Students Dan and Amira from Broughton Business and Enterprise College attended the meeting with their teacher, Joanne Harris.

Dan and Amira informed members of their recent activities as members of the Youth SACRE. They had been on visits to the Salvation Army, a local Mosque and All Hallows Catholic High School. They had looked at the Agreed Syllabus and come to the conclusion that it was about asking big questions, such as the meaning of life, does God exist? They were looking forward to delivering the Youth Conference in March 2011.

In response to questions from SACRE members, Dan and Amira thought that the visits made to various places of worship had helped them acquire knowledge which would be very useful for their GCSE and felt that RE made it easier to respect people from different backgrounds religions/ cultures. Dan expressed the wish to learn about smaller minority religions.

It was suggested that the Youth SACRE might endorse the approaches to be made nationally for continued support for RE to Michael Gove, Nick Gibb and Lancashire MPs.

9 RESOLVED: (i) That Dan and Amira and their teacher, Joanne Harris, of Broughton Business and Enterprise College be thanked for their work that they put into the Youth SACRE

(ii) That the Youth SACRE be asked to consider endorsing the approaches to be made nationally for continued support for RE to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, Nick Gibb, Minister of State for Schools, and Lancashire MPs.

REPORT FROM THE ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER, PRIMARY, JO CRABTREE

Jo Crabtree gave a brief update on her activities as Advanced Skills Teacher since the last meeting of the SACRE.

Jo had held several network meetings and the next series to be held in January 2011 would be looking at the new planning format. In the future network meetings might need to be run more independently due to capacity issues.

Jo had delivered training at in inset day at Queens Drive Primary School in Preston, where RE was delivered by teaching assistants. Jo had helped to bloc RE in the timetable and make its delivery more creative.

Jo had also been giving advice on alternative families and dealt with an enquiry regarding Jehovah's Witness children and Christmas. She had also promised that she would send an invitation to Nick Gibb to visit a primary school to see how RE worked.

Jo would also bring 'Quirk' to the next meeting of the SACRE

10 RESOLVED That the report from the AST primary be noted.

REPORT FROM THE LANCASHIRE CONSULTANT FOR RE AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Helen Harrison presented a report on her activities since the last meeting of the SACRE. A copy of which is on record in the minute book.

Helen asked for her thanks to Jo Crabtree and Laura Heaton (ASTs) to be noted, and in particular that their skills in delivering effective support for Lancashire's teachers of RE were outstanding.

11 RESOLVED: (i) That thanks to Jo Crabtree and Laura Heaton, ASTs, be noted.

(ii) That the report from the Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship be noted.

CELEBRATING RE MONTH MARCH 2011

'Celebrating RE month' would take place in March 2011 and SACRE members were asked to encourage and promote RE events in their faith communities. Members noted that there was more information available on the web at the following address: <http://www.celebratingre.org/>

The new Lancashire Agreed Syllabus would be launched during RE Month on 25 March 2011 and it was envisaged that a competition would be run sponsored by the SACRE to find the 'most imaginative key question linked to the best answer'.

OBSERVERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The Observers supported the SACRE's decision to write to MPs and Michael Gove and Nick Gibb asking for continued support for RE.

Andrew Brennand had recently addressed a Pagan Conference and reported that he had spoken of the Lancashire SACRE in favourable terms.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was reported that the member's details forms would be circulated again with a request for any member who had not yet completed one to do so. These details were for inclusion on the SACRE website.

A request would be sent out shortly to faith representatives on the SACRE asking them to create a snapshot piece about their faith community for inclusion in the revised Lancashire Agreed Syllabus.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 7 February 2011 at 10am to take place at County Hall, Preston.

County Hall, Preston,
November 2010