**Minutes of the Meeting of the Bath and North East Somerset Council**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**Held Online via Zoom**

**on Thursday 9th July 2020, 7.00 – 9.00 pm**

**Attendance:**

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| **Committee A: Christian Denominations and other Religions** |
| Jane O'Hara  | Baha'i Community (Chair) | P |
| Mary Read | Catholic Community | P |
| Andrew Avison | Free Churches Group (Salvation Army) | A |
| Narada Das (Nathan Hartley) | ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaishnava (Vice-Chair) | P |
| Iris Segall | Jewish Community | P |
| Imam Mohammed Gamal | Muslim Community | - |
| Gagan Deep Singh | Sikh Community | - |
| Tim Powell | Unitarian Community | - |
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| **Committee B: Church of England** |
| Tony Bradley |  | P |
| David Williams  | (Vice-Chair) | P |
| Miranda Young | CofE Cathedral Education Office | A |
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| **Committee C: Teachers’ Associations** |
| Kevin Burnett | National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) | A |
| Mary Patterson | Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) | P |
| Mark Quinn | Bath Spa University | A |
| Polly Netto | National Education Union (NEU) | P |
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| **Committee D: Local Authority** |
| Cllr Eleanor Jackson |  | P |
| Cllr Yukteshwar Kumar  |  | P |
| Stephen Luke | Senior Adviser: School Improvement and Achievement | A |
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| **In attendance** |
| Dave Francis | Clerk/Associate Adviser | P |

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

| **Item** | **Notes and resolutions** | **Action** |
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|  | **Welcome to members (Agenda item 1)**JOH, in the Chair, welcomed members to SACRE’s first online meeting. Apologies were noted as listed above, including Mary Read – present for first hour. DF outlined the protocols for the online meeting and checked that all agreed for the meeting to be audio recorded. The file would be deleted within three weeks. | JOH, DF |
|  | **Public Discussion and Members’ Declarations (Agenda items 2, 3)**No members of the public were present. DF reported that the Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg would not be joining us this time. He would be reinvited once physical meetings were reinstated. No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made. | DF |
|  | **Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2020 (Agenda items 4.1, 4.2)**Item 2002/4: EJ would investigate the size of the Rastafarian community in Bath and report to the next meeting.Item 2002/18: DF reported that he had been working with Laura Harris, the SW Regional Ambassador for RE, on the Westhill/NASACRE project and would invite her to attend the next SACRE meeting.DW proposed that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record, YK seconded, and then all approved. [DF has inserted JOH’s signature on the minutes.] | EJ, DF |
|  | **Membership and elections (Agenda items 5.1, 5.2)**DF said that TP had not attended recent SACRE meetings and he had sent him an email and a follow-up letter asking whether he wished to continue as a representative for the Unitarian Church community. No reply had so far been received, so DF proposed that he be removed from SACRE membership. He asked if members were happy that AA was now the sole Free Churches Group representative. This was all agreed. DF would send an email to Tim Powell informing him of SACRE’s decision.DF reported that he had recently sent a request to Dr Charles Bleakley of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) asking for some further information about the community locally with a view to membership of SACRE. A reply was awaited.JOH asked about GDS’s recent attendance. DF would check the records and write to him if he had not attended three consecutive meetings and not provided apologies.DF reported that JOH’s term as Chair and Nathan Hartley’s term as VC goes through to October 2022; David Williams’s term as VC goes to February 2023.JOH introduced a discussion about the need for SACRE members visiting schools to have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. EJ said there was a good chance that the LA would pay the required fee and had been chasing the Safeguarding Officer to gain confirmation. She advised that we should go ahead on the understanding that the cost would be met by Children’s Services. IS said that the process normally cost £40 but was free for volunteers. She was getting her certificate through the Synagogue. MR wondered whether it was needed for visitors who would be accompanied but IS said that sometimes she was unaccompanied in schools. TB said that he had Enhanced DBS through his Church and that it was transferable to other responsibilities for a small fee. IS said the certificates don’t expire but it’s good practice to renew at no cost. She thought SACRE members should get the certificate as some schools do ask for it. She said that the application form does request information about the type of contact that the applicant will have with children and young people. YK said that all councillors have the DBS.It was decided that DF would email all SACRE members to see who already had a DBS certificate and who might need to apply.  | All members DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Finance Statement (Agenda item 6.1)**DF reported that the budget for 2019-20 had been completely spent, including the contingency which had been largely used to support the Agreed Syllabus Review process and his meetings just before Covid-19 lockdown with colleagues from Bristol, North Somerset and Haringey. The schools DF visited were Shoscombe, St Julian's, Chandag and Norton Hill. |  |
|  | **SACRE Management: Development Plan for 2020-21 (Agenda item 6.2)**DF introduced the proposed development plan for the coming financial year, 2020-21.He reported that, thanks to support from EJ, YK and JOH in particular, additional funding for the Agreed Syllabus Review had been gained. However, having waited until last week to get a contract for SACRE work this year, the final amount awarded came in at £3,000 short of what had been initially agreed. There had been no time for further negotiation so, in the present circumstances, this had been accepted.DF was pleased to say that a Westhill/NASACRE Grant had been awarded. This consisted of a £4,000 grant with the expectation of a further £2,000 to be contributed from the SACRE budget, both figures to be calculated over two financial years. The plan was to use £1,000 from item Aii this year, and the other £1,000 from item Aii next year, as the project overlapped with the Agreed Syllabus review work and production of new materials. However, with £3,000 less in the expected budget for this year, savings would still have to be made somewhere in the Development Plan. EJ said that she had not seen any notification of the reduction and would raise the matter at the scrutiny panel on Tuesday. DF said he would email EJ & YK with information about the reduction. He explained that there was very little room to manoeuvre without abandoning meetings or all support for schools other than the Agreed Syllabus Review and Development work, so he proposed moving item 7.2 up today’s agenda to discuss in this context. | EJ, YK, DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Update: Planning for Agreed Syllabus Review (Agenda item 7.2)**DF asked members to consider Paper 7’s budget implications. He pointed out that £3,500 was in the plan for 2020-21 to write new materials for the Agreed Syllabus and £1,250 for the Steering Group to edit and assure quality. He couldn’t say what the SACRE budget might be for the year 2021-22, but with £2,000 coming into the budget from the Westhill/NASACRE Award in each of the two years being considered (Feb & July 2021), it would seem appropriate to move £1,000 from the quality assurance work into 2021-22 and lose £2,000 from the writing of new materials in this year’s budget, thus accounting for the £3,000 shortfall this year.It would mean that much of this year’s new syllabus development would be built around the Westhill/NASACRE Award, with its focus on Education for Diversity’ and the development of contemporary RE schemes of learning featuring contemporary events but that much relevant work could still take place.JOH wondered if the document we had was the most up to date one; she had a later version with very different figures. DF undertook to check the newer document and when he had seen it advised that the £3,000 still needed to be saved. JOH pointed out that if the newer figures were correct it left the budget in a better situation. DF agreed; he would send the updated AS Review plan to members and send his proposal for saving £3K in the hope that it could be recovered following the meeting of the Council scrutiny panel. | DF  |
|  | **SACRE Management: Report on the proposal for SACRE to support implementation of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) (Agenda item 6.3)**MR spoke about the materials she had provided. All schools would have the main document from the DFE. She spoke in favour of the material provided by Bristol SACRE but then had to leave the meeting. PN said as she was Head of PSHE as well as RE in her school, she was happy to answer questions via email. JOH noted that sex education was not compulsory in primary but schools should send information to parents if they are tackling it. She suggested that we include a check of primary school policy on RSE when we reviewed school websites; do such policies reflect the 2020 requirements? DF thought that might add another level of complexity to the website review exercise and DW thought that it might not be part of SACRE’s duty to check on RSE.DF added that, in a prepared comment sent in by KB, he wondered whether the role of our SACRE in relation to RSE might be to help any school that hit an obstacle with its community, to be put in touch with someone from a particular faith group that might help overcome the obstacle?JOH thanked MR for the information and asked if we could make a decision about the proposal. DW said that we didn’t have a statutory responsibility in this area and TB said that the question had been brought to us but wondered what other SACREs were doing and what their capacity to do it was. JOH reminded us that MR had done training in this area and could perhaps advise further.DF mentioned the Bristol materials that MR had sent and MP said that she thought the Bristol material was on the LTLRE website. She would check.Members agreed that we could direct enquiries towards the Bristol SACRE advice and ask whether they would welcome contact with a SACRE member of the faith community involved. PN agreed that signposting for individual enquiries would be more appropriate for SACRE rather than offering further suggestions. | MP  |
|  | **SACRE Management: Learn, Teach Lead Area 2: Progress report (Agenda item 6.4)**MP said that there had been a Zoom Hub group meeting. Hub leaders had discussed online resources and emailed out ideas to the list. She reported that many teachers were tired and trying to do their best in difficult circumstance. Schools were tending to prioritise English, Maths and Science in the materials they were providing for pupils but the LTLRE group had provided some RE resources, e.g., for a Ramadan project and one on what faith communities were doing in lockdown – these had been shared with link schools. MP had also collaborated with a Bristol colleague on a project supporting the Black Lives Matter campaign. This was for secondary schools. It used music and the arts and would go on the LTLRE website.This year’s LTLRE conference had been postponed but the planning for the conference would go forward for next year.  |  |
|  | **SACRE Management: Opportunities for SACRE members: Report on the South-West SACREs conference and NASACRE AGM Papers (Agenda Item 6.5)**DF, JOH and KB had attended the SW SACREs conference and reported back. Sessions were very useful and would impact on this year’s SACRE work, including the development of the website review model we were using to monitor our school’s provision of RE and collective worship.KB had sent in a suggestion for guidance to schools based on what the new Ofsted Framework was asking of schools. DF suggested that this be considered as part of the syllabus review process.NASACRE did not hold an AGM this year, but reports from the Executive had been published on the NASACRE website. DF had already shared the username and password for access to these via email and in Paper 5. He repeated the information in the Zoom Chat and invited members to copy and save it if they didn’t have a record.  | DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews Project**DF reported that he had been involved in consultations about this project, being supported by the Culham St Gabriel’s Trust (CSTG) and NASACRE. Paper 6 outlined the proposal which includes a questionnaire and an Action Research project in investigating an aspect of the CoRE proposals for SACREs to be developed into ‘Local Advisory Networks’. He invited comments from members, particularly noting that much less money than hoped had so far been provided to fund the work (£250).DW suggested that just two SACREs do the work and share the money. Then it would have deep research and the remaining 6 could make comments on the product. DF liked the idea and undertook to take that back to Claire Clinton, the Project Director. | DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Support for schools, teachers and pupils in current Covid-19 conditions (Agenda item 7.1)**DF reported that he had put together lists of resources that may have been of assistance to RE teachers as they supported pupils during the current conditions. These included advice for parents/carers educating their children at home. He had sent two letters to schools during this time and noted that MP’s LTLRE group had also provided supporting materials. | DF  |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Westhill/NASACRE Award: Action Plan (Agenda item 7.3)**DF reported that work had begun on this Award Project, which would, ideally, involve teachers from each of the Local Authorities sharing the Awareness, Mystery, Value Agreed Syllabus. Teachers from each LA had already been invited to participate and there were already two expressions of interest. JOH wanted to know about the costs of online meetings DF confirmed that most of the work would be conducted through digital media, meaning that participating teachers / schools could receive direct grants rather than compensation for travel expenses and supply cover.EJ suggested that DF might make use of the LA Zoom account, which would also bring in IT support. Someone from Democratic Services could nominate DF to be the host of each designated meeting and that would save SACRE a little of the Project fund. YK added that he had used online platforms like Zoom many times and assured us that the host could pass control over and then leave. Democratic Services had a Business as well as Pro-account but either would be useful for our purposes. EJ said there would also be a phone contact for participants if their internet connection failed. IS added that individual hosts could host their own meetings and YK offered to provide DF with contact details in reply to a request to his Council email address. JOH wondered if all the partner SACRE advisers had agreed to work with him on this and he confirmed that they had. All the SACREs had now invitations to teachers to join the Project. | DF YK |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Training for Teachers (Agenda item 7.4)**DF reminded members of the training day led by the Holocaust Education Trust (HET) on 15th January 2020 at Bath Spa University. DF and MQ would investigate whether the HET would be offering online training this year. If not, it might still be possible to hold a physical training day in the new year, depending on circumstances.Other training opportunities for visits from the Associate Adviser, or online consultations could once again be on offer. One appointment had already been made with Somervale School.  | MQ, DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Bath Abbey Footprint Project (Agenda Item 7.5)**DW reported that he had been contacted by the Leader of this Project, Polly Andrews, about how to develop the project in relation to RE.MP said that she had also contacted her and that she had offered her school a free trial of any materials as well as a visit for Year 10s. This would have taken place last week but has had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. MP reported that they had a good meeting, and she had taken Polly through all the details of the AMV syllabus. She had also updated her on GCSE and A level specifications. They had looked at different Exam Boards’ overlap on Christianity and explored what could be done at the Abbey. It was acknowledged that it would be difficult to get pupils out for a whole day, so they planned two sessions of two hours each. These were on pilgrimage and Christian beliefs and practice and looking around the Abbey. Since then, Polly had been developing the ideas to suit Key Stage 2 to 6th form students. This had not yet been trialled of course. Polly would come to a forthcoming LTLRE meeting to share materials and ideas with teachers. | MP |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Black Lives Matter and Syllabus Review (Agenda Item 7.6)**JOH noted that Bath as well as Bristol had built wealth on the slave trade. She had spoken to Cllr Dine Romero about four memorial windows in Bath Abbey that had slave trade connections. The staff there were going to use this as an opportunity to put information in the Abbey about the history. DW added that Jeremy Helier has also written some resources for secondary schools and would send information about it to DF and MP. PN said that she had been doing a lot of cross-curricular work with History colleagues as well as making links between RE and PSHE. She said it depended who the RE teachers could work with as to whether the issue was being covered. MP added that her collaboration with a Bristol teacher on a unit for Year 8 on protest made a lot of cross-curricular links and made use of art and music; it featured individuals with religious beliefs such Malala, Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi and included the recent tearing down of the statue of Edward Colston. She had also done a walking tour of Bristol exploring the history of Christianity in the city as well as New Testament teaching relating to equality. JOH said that there was also modern slavery to take account of. DF said that he hoped these ideas would feature in the Westhill project. EJ added that she used to teach African religions and that these should be treated seriously. She spoke about African people being forced over to the Caribbean and the wide-ranging effect on religion including black-led churches today. EJ offered to share those materials if she was able to recover them. JOH wondered if there could be an event specifically addressing this topic. EJ noted that 11 million black Africans died in the slave transports and could investigate whether some trainers on the subject might be available to lead training in Bath & North East Somerset. | EJ, DF, DW, MP |
|  | **Standards in RE and collective worship: Report on school self-evaluation questionnaires (Agenda item 8.1) and Evaluation of school websites: schedule of reviews (Agenda item 8.2)**DF said he would add a summary to the report indicating any trends since the evaluation exercise began.Members considered the proposal to review the school websites of schools that had not responded to the self-evaluation request. DF said he would send out the list of schools for members to review the websites and they would be free to let him know if they could not manage their allocation. JOH offered to do a few more if needed. | All members |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Website (Agenda item 9.1)**DF and MP had added a few items to the website. Contact details for the Wells Cathedral Outreach & Learning Manager had been added. | DF, MP |
|  | **Regional and local developments: SACRE Resource Centre (Agenda item 9.2)**JOH said Neil had retired and a new person had verbally agreed to take on the role. The Headteacher had agreed for the artefacts to remain at Saltford School. JOH would endeavour to meet with the new RE teacher and to arrange for the new contract to be signed. She suggested that we don’t put any further funding into the resource collection for the time being. | JOH |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Diocese of Bath and Wells (Agenda item 9.3)**DW reported that SIAMS inspections, which were aligned with Ofsted inspections, were not currently taking place. The Diocese had sent a message to schools thanking staff for all they were doing; they didn’t want to add to the pressures they were already under. Instead, the Schools Advisers had producing simple activities and resources for teachers leading collective worship and offered these to schools. They were also working on how to help schools enable pupils to ‘finish well’ if they were in Year 4 moving on to a Middle School, or Year 6 moving on to Secondary.  | MY DW |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Bath Interfaith Group (IFG) (Agenda item 9.4)**JOH updated members on the IFG’s work: DF would continue to forward her notices. The final ‘live’ event just before lockdown began in March was a talk on Progressive Revelation: ‘One God, Many Faiths’ by a member of the Bahá’i Faith.Several planned events had to be cancelled, and the IFG continued with discussions via video conference. The first was to look at ‘The response of faith communities to the Covid-19 pandemic’; with contributions from seven faith communities, held in May. In July, another was planned on the topic of ‘Charity’ from the perspectives of six faiths (using their Holy texts). A celebration is planned at Christ Church in Julian Road in Bath to commemorate 30 years of Bath IFG in October 2020 – it is still hoped this may happen in the Church itself.  | JOH |
|  | **National developments: (Agenda items 10.1, 10.2)**The latest NASACRE briefing had been circulated with the papers before the meeting.DF said that the new South-West Regional Ambassador for RE, Laura Harris, would be invited to forthcoming SACRE and LTLRE meetings.  | All membersDF, MP  |
|  | **Date and Venue for Next Meetings (Agenda item 11)**The next meetings would be held online or at Bath Spa University on Wednesday 14th October 2020, Wednesday 10th February 2021 and Thursday 1st July 2021. DF would ask MQ undertook to book a room for Bath Spa meetings if required. | All membersDF, MQ |
|  | **Other Business (Agenda item 12)**JOH asked about members’ experience of the online meeting today. Members generally approved, though IS suggested that we disable the waiting room facility once we start, since TB had had difficulty getting back into the meeting after finding he had lost his connection. | JOH |

David Williams (Vice-Chair)