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

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**Held Online via Zoom**

**on Wednesday 14th October 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 | A |
| Andrew Avison | Free Churches Group (Salvation Army) | P |
| Narada Das (Nathan Hartley) | ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaishnava | A |
| Iris Segall | Jewish Community | P |
| Imam Mohammed Gamal | Muslim 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) | P |
| Mary Patterson | Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) | A |
| Mark Quinn | Bath Spa University | A |
| Polly Netto | National Education Union (NEU) | A |
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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)**  DW, in the Chair, welcomed members to SACRE’s second online meeting. He also welcomed Laura Harris, NATRE Regional Ambassador for RE. Apologies were noted as listed above, including Iris Segall and Mary Patterson, who notified the Clerk that they would be joining the meeting a little late.  DF outlined the protocols for the online meeting. |  |
|  | **Public Discussion and Members’ Declarations (Agenda items 2, 3)**  Laura Harris spoke about her role and the work she had done so far. She is a Primary School teacher in Congresbury and the LTLRE Hub Leader for the area, running network groups for teachers. NATRE has launched a national project with 10 regions and LH is the South West Ambassador, from Cornwall to Wiltshire. One day a month is allocated for the work, aiming to help teachers become aware of the support available. She works through local groups and tries to establish where gaps in the network might be and attempt to fill them. She also works at bringing organisations together, e.g., NATRE, AREIAC, REQM, Dioceses in the area and so on. There is a surprising amount going on in different projects in the region. She has been in post for nearly two years but that may come to an end in January. It has been enjoyable to meet teachers across the region, set up some new groups and learn from more experienced teachers. She has engaged more closely with the Ofsted Framework and with other national developments. She thinks there may now be more opportunities opening up for continuing professional development (CPD) now that people have become more used to working and meeting online.  AA asked about providing resources more remotely. LH agreed; a great quality speaker is no longer beyond reach if people will work from home. NATRE are also working on a central service for resources online: courses, virtual visits, including IS offering visits to the Bristol Progressive Synagogue. LH had just taken her class to the Progressive Synagogue in Bristol and had an excellent experience.  LH had to leave at this point.  No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made. |  |
|  | **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th July 2020 (Agenda items 4.1, 4.2)**  KB arrived at this point and asked about Item 2007/4: Had there been any more information about the Rastafarian community? EJ said she’d hit a bit of a wall after initial enquiries. He also asked about Charles Bleakley and DF said that he had not yet replied to requests for further information.  KB noted that in item 2007/19 ‘Sandford’ should be ‘Saltford’.  KB proposed that, with that amendment, the minutes be accepted as an accurate record; DW seconded; and all approved. [DF will insert DW’s signature on the minutes when he had sent his e-signature.] | DF, DW |
|  | **Membership and elections (Agenda items 5.1, 5.2, 5.3)**  DF reported that Nathan Hartley had resigned as Vice Chair. DF had received a proposal from JOH, seconded by YK, for KB to take up the role. No other candidates had been proposed, and KB was unanimously elected as Co-Vice Chair for three years.  Regarding the review of membership vacancies, DF said that he had heard from Tim Powell (Unitarian representative) and he had apologised for not letting us know that he was stepping down from SACRE. Members had agreed last time that in the absence of a forthcoming replacement, AA should be the sole Free Churches Group representative. DF had also contacted Gagan Deep Singh about non-attendance and he had also resigned. GGS would ask if other members of the Sikh community might come forward to represent them.  DF reported that he had received an application from Ashish Rajhansa to join SACRE as a representative of the Hindu community. This has been supported by YK. Mr Rajhansa was not able to attend this evening but we could go ahead and recommend him to the LA if SACRE wished. JOH joined the meeting at this point and also recommended Mr Rajhansa. JOH proposed and IS seconded – all approved.  Regarding the intention for all SACRE members to have Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates, DF had emailed all SACRE members to see who might need it. TB, IS and EJ reported that they had certificates. TB would send his certificate number once he had recovered it. AA said he had Enhanced DBS from the Salvation Army and that if it was registered within 28 days the certificate was transportable to other roles. DW reported that his Diocesan DBS certificate allows him to go into any school. DF requested that all members who had not done so send him their certificate number for the records. If nothing is received he will assume a DBS needs to be done.  DF reported that the Government site says we have to get an application form from the employer, i.e., B&NES Council/Children’s Services. He had just received confirmation from SL that the Local Authority would be paying for any required SACRE DBS checks to be completed. SL had also enquired how to get this completed as soon as possible and would contact DF as soon as it was received.  EJ was happy to hand it over to SL for further action and JOH said it would be helpful for all SACRE members to be checked at the same time and then renewed together. We were unclear how long the certificate was valid – KB said it was up to the organisation requesting the checks.  TB said that he had his DBS though his church and had found that DDC online [[www.ddc.uk.net](http://www.ddc.uk.net)] was helpful in making checks.  DW suggested that we let SL make the necessary decisions. | All members to send DBS cert numbers to DF. SL |
|  | **SACRE Management: Finance Statement (Agenda item 6.1)**  DF reported that the budget for this year was in place and included funding for Agreed Syllabus Review and for the first phase of the ‘RE-Live’ project, sponsored by Westhill and NASACRE. £6,000 had been ear-marked for the Review but this had been reduced because of VAT. DF had repurposed the budget lines to restore the £6K, but this meant there was a bit less for support for schools in other categories. He would report on progress with those projects later in the agenda.  KB asked about the £3,000 and DF reported that this was the VAT taken from the £15,000 awarded for the contract.  EJ reported that there was a new Director of Education and had tried to discover why we were paying VAT for an educational service. AA said that this would be an unintended consequence of outsourcing consultancy.  JOH asked if DF could add a line about VAT in the Financial Statement, so that this would not be forgotten in next year’s budget. | DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Development Plan for 2020-21 (Agenda item 6.2)**  DF reported that the development plan for this year matched the budget. He asked for suggestions on how best to support schools as there was £500 available, particularly since there were restricted possibilities for conferences and school visits in the current situation. DF suggested that one possible use was to pay for his time to follow up on website traffic light reviews with individual schools.  EJ supported that proposal but mentioned that she had been to recent Local Government training on anti-Semitism and suggested that if there was a way of getting that sort of material into schools it would be a very good way of spending the money.  JOH mentioned the Black Lives Matter campaign and Black History Month. DF suggested that it could be included in the RE-Live project without additional costs.  EJ spoke about the way that some religious matters become secularised. She gave an example of African Drumming session in a school where the religious significance got lost. Similar things happened with presentations of Indian dancing.  IS mentioned the virtual visits to the Synagogue as a possible cause worth supporting, perhaps with a donation to reduce costs to schools.  TB said that £500 was not much and that he would be looking for at least double that to go towards a reasonable school project. He said that schools were in an unknown situation experiencing new pressures. Perhaps there was mileage in sponsoring a piece of work on the current crisis and what people are going through.  KB followed up on the idea of website evaluations. This would be helpful and provide practical support. JOH proposed that we help schools with their websites.  KB proposed asking schools for ideas. If none came back by Christmas DF should go ahead with letters to schools offering support for website improvement.  DW, as Chair, proposed that we go ahead with a plan to offer £500 to a school for an RE related project. DF could make that offer in his next school briefing message with a deadline for proposals being the end of term. In the event of bids coming in, he would consult with SACRE by email on how to make the award. If there were no bids, he would go ahead with the letters to schools offering support for website development. JOH seconded the proposal and all agreed. | DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Annual Report for 2019-20 (Agenda item 6.3)**  DF introduced the draft report, noting that the sections on website reviews and school examinations were still to be completed. He was not sure if the LA would be providing any statistics on grades this year, since they had been given via schools’ assessments rather than examinations. DF would check with SL.  KB asked if we could have a pictorial representation of the overall picture. DF said that was more difficult with the surveys due to the relatively small number of replies and the number of different questions, but he would look further into that possibility. He would send out the questionnaire for SACRE members to consider.  EJ reported on her personal investigations in relation to one school. SIAMS reports gave a lot of information but this was often not reflected on the website. | DF, SL |
|  | **SACRE Management: South-West SACREs conference and NASACRE EGM (Agenda item 6.4)**  DF reported that the SW SACREs conference was being planned as an online event. He was part of the planning team which would be meeting online in the first week of November. JOH wondered about the cost and DF thought that it would be much less expensive, allowing for more SACRE members to attend.  NASACRE was holding its EGM on 17th November; all members are invited to join the online event. DF would send out further information when it came through. | DF |
|  | **SACRE Management: Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews Project (Agenda item 6.5)**  DF said that he had made a series of suggestions about this to the Project Leader, Claire Clinton, and there were further discussions taking place with the REC. He felt that it was unlikely that there would be sufficient funds on offer for our SACRE to be involved. He was due to have an online meeting with Claire and would report back to SACRE on developments. | DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Support for schools, teachers, pupils and the community in current Covid-19 conditions (Agenda item 7.1)**  DF reported that he had sent supporting links for teachers in his latest email briefing and that many teachers were saying that the current conditions were extremely tiring. |  |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Developments for the new Agreed Syllabus and website: Update: Agreed Syllabus Review (Agenda item 7.2)**  DF reported that he had five expressions of interest from teachers wishing to join the Review Working Group so far (two from Norton Hill, Trinity, Chew Stoke and St Martin’s in North Somerset). The deadline for applications is 19th October. There was a need for more primary teachers to join, though we may be assisted by contributions from Haringey, Bristol and North Somerset.  There were gaps in the exemplar material for the Syllabus that this Group could address. Much of the allocated funding would go to these teachers’ schools for their contributions. There were additional tasks that might result from responses to the proposed survey that would be sent out shortly. The survey could be found at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1hgDW3fPLDSiixRAK3FTcem1ahscmPLUYPkONGAHxZPI/edit> but could not be accessed beyond the first page of questions without entering an email address. DF would find a way of sending the whole survey to members for consideration.  He asked that the next SACRE meeting be partly devoted to Agreed Syllabus Review and that the meeting be reconstituted at a key point as an Agreed Syllabus Conference, consisting of representatives from each of SACRE’s four groups.  JOH wondered if there would be enough time to allow this to take place and DF thought there would be, but that if more time were needed if might be possible to set up an additional meeting.  DW suggested that if an additional meeting might be needed it would be worth pencilling in a date around 3 weeks further on. Another alternative would be to start the scheduled meeting at 6.30 and end at 9.30 if needed, with a 20 minute break.  AA suggested that if the papers were sent out in sufficient time, SACRE members could be asked to submit comments in advance; this would enable us to estimate the required time and to plan for a longer meeting if thought necessary. Members agreed and DF suggested that he send the relevant papers out to members at least two weeks before the meeting, requesting comments in the following week. [JOH later suggested that comments be received 13th January, the date set for the next SACRE agenda planning meeting.] | DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Update: Westhill/NASACRE Award (Agenda item 7.3)**  DF reported that five teachers (four from Bristol and one from North Somerset) had been recruited to take part in this project, which was being developed across the whole AMV area. Two draft mini-schemes of learning linking our Syllabus with ‘Big Ideas for RE’ had already been produced and these would be trialled in schools this term. DF was in touch with a Westhill trustee, Elizabeth Jenkerson, who would be monitoring the project as it developed. | DF |
|  | **Agreed Syllabus: Training for Teachers (Agenda item 7.4)**  In the absence of MQ, there was nothing further to report on this item. |  |
|  | **Standards in RE and collective worship: Report on school self-evaluation questionnaires (Agenda item 8.1), Evaluation of school websites: schedule of reviews (Agenda item 8.2) and SACRE WIRE Award (Agenda item 8.3)**  DF pointed out that the analysis of the school self-evaluation questionnaires had been included in the annual report and thanked SACRE members for their reviews of school websites. There were a few that hadn’t been done and he asked for volunteers to pick those up. DW said he would cover the two Church Schools: St Michael’s Junior and St Philip’s Primary. TB offered to review Broadlands Academy and Peasedown St John Primary. KB said he could review St Martin’s Garden Primary. DF thanked them and requested that he receive their reports by the end of the month.  Regarding the WIRE Award IS & KB reported that no schools had so far applied and that it was likely that teachers were exhausted by current pressures on their workload. | DW, TB, KB, DF |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Learn, Teach, Lead RE (Agenda item 9.1)**  MR and MP not present but MP sent a brief message to say that the LTLRE group was due to meet online the next day. |  |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Website (Agenda item 9.2)**  DF reported that he had updated the list of visits and contacts to include the virtual Synagogue tours and new contact details for Wells Cathedral Education Offices. |  |
|  | **Regional and local developments: SACRE Resource Centre (Agenda item 9.3)**  JOH reported that she would be in touch with Robert Jenkins at Saltford School after half term. | JOH |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Diocese of Bath and Wells (Agenda item 9.4)**  DW reported that Pauline Dodds had recently led training for new RE leaders and received really positive feedback from the 12-15 participants. Diocesan advisers have been spending a lot of time practising and rehearsing online presentations.  Regarding SIAMS; it was not known when it is being reinstated. The Dioceses will follow Ofsted’s lead on this. In the meantime, the emphasis has been on supporting schools with the care and well-being of children. Advisers have also been reminding schools of the importance of keeping RE on the timetable, particularly at this time; but the approach has been to encourage without pushing. |  |
|  | **Regional and local developments: Updates from the Bath Interfaith Group (IFG) and B&NES Faith Foundation (Agenda item 9.5)**  JOH updated members on Bath IFG’s work which was celebrating its 30th anniversary with a special event on 25th October. It was going to be at Christ Church where Marcus Braybrook had been the pastor. He was returning to give an address. The contributors plus a panel of four and a camera crew would be in the Church and the event would be beamed out on Facebook. If conditions meant that no one could go to the Church, the event would take place via Zoom. Amongst those invited were the Mayor, Cllr Dine Romero and local MP Wera Hobhouse.  JOH has also met with the Mayor of Bath about the Multifaith event in February 2021. It’s going to be online. The Mayor has been very supportive and asked what she could do to help at the recent conference on ‘Combatting Loneliness’.  JOH reminded us that this week is the Week of Prayer for World Peace.  DF reported that ND had sent through a Briefing Note about the new B&NES Faith Foundation. He would forward this to members. JOH noted that the Foundation did not appear to be an interfaith group as such.  DF reported that he had information about the B&NES Food Poverty Steering Group, who were interested in working with faith communities.  KB had also heard of this group; the Steering Group had made a report to the Children’s Health and Well-being Panel that he had attended. They wanted people from different religious communities to contact them – as they might have a greater awareness of their respective communities and any needs they may have in this area.  EJ also noted that Cllr Liz Hardman also had further details and could be contacted at: [liz\_hardman@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:liz_hardman@bathnes.gov.uk) | All faith & belief group representatives |
|  | **National developments: (Agenda items 10.1, 10.2)**  The latest NASACRE briefing had been circulated with the papers before the meeting.  KB noted the NASACRE Briefing that they are reviewing Guidance on Collective worship. DF will keep an eye on that and report back on developments. | DF |
|  | **Date and Venue for Next Meetings (Agenda item 11)**  The next meeting would be held online or at Bath Spa University on Wednesday 10th February 2021. Members are asked to note the new starting time to allow for the Agreed Syllabus Conference to take place: 6.30 pm. Subsequent meetings were scheduled for Thursday 1st July 2021 and Wednesday 13th October 2021, DF would ask MQ to book a room for Bath Spa meetings if required. | All members  DF, MQ |
|  | **Other Business (Agenda item 12)**  There was no other business. |  |

David Williams (Vice-Chair)

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