

Standing Advisory Council For Religious Education

held on Monday 10th March, 2008 at 5.30 p.m.

at the Salvation Army Citadel, Green Lane, Walsall

Present

Mrs. M. Gibbons (Chairman)
Councillor D. Turner
Mr. C. Hopkins
Father M. Leadbeater
Mrs. M. Gibbons
Captain Stubbings
Mrs. B. Groombridge

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mrs. C. Hughes, Mrs. J.A. Smith, Councillor K. Phillips, Mrs. S. Blackmore and Reverend A. Bateman.

Members were informed that the meeting was inquorate and **AGREED** to adjourn for 10 minutes. At the end of which period, the meeting still being inquorate Members **AGREED** to proceed as far as possible with the items on the agenda making recommendations where appropriate.

Presentation – Society of Friends

Mrs. Groombridge gave a presentation to Members on the background and work of the Society of Friends – Quakers:-

(see annexed)

In response to questions, Mrs. Groombridge confirmed that meetings were often totally silent and no-one would have any knowledge on whether any member of the congregation might speak at the meeting. Quakers had special permission to hold their own Quaker weddings; they could be held in Quaker meetings and two people were appointed for each area and were known as 'registering offices'. The wedding party would attend the gathering and during the silence, the bride and groom would stand up and using a set format of words would make their address; everyone present signed the register.

The society had its headquarters in London but the organisation of events took place regionally rather than centrally. Walsall belonged to the Central England area. Any duties would be taken on by Quakers and every local meeting had a clerk to arrange business meetings and produce minutes.

Members had an opportunity to ask questions of Mrs. Groombridge and at the end of the presentation, the Chairman thanked her for her informative presentation.

SACRE requested that Father Nankivell submit a presentation to the July meeting.

Feedback from NASACRE Conference on 17th January, 2008 – Speech of Jim Knight M.P.

Feedback from the NASACRE Conference of 17th January, 2008 together with the speech of Jim Knight M.P. was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mrs. Gibbons informed SACRE that other SACREs seemed to be better attended, more active and more powerful than Walsall SACRE.

The conference focused on community cohesion. Some areas operated a 'junior' SACRE. It was highlighted that some schools visited all the places of worship in one week and some schools were twinned and held sports activities between the different faith schools. Mr. Taylor referred to the launch of the new secondary syllabus and the duty on all schools to manage and plan for community cohesion and from September 2008 all schools would be inspected on that element. There were now regional advisors for RE. OFSTED would expect young people to be part of the planning process as well as teachers.

Members referred to the ministers speech at the conference on community cohesion and it was hoped that resource material would be available as community cohesion depended on housing policy.

Mr. Yates referred to an audit he had undertaken on equal opportunities and diversity and undertook to request that his report be submitted to SACRE in the future.

Mr. Taylor referred to an intelligence gathering exercise on possible causes of tension in Walsall. There was little data on eastern European migrants and it had been found that there was little data although there was a shortage of interpreters.

The Members present noted the information provided.

NASACRE Conference 8th May, 2008

Information on the NASACRE Conference on 8th May, 2008 was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Members noted that a letter would be circulated to all Members of SACRE to ascertain those who would be interested in attending the conference on 8th May, 2008.

Review of the Agreed Syllabus

The report of Constitutional Services was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Taylor referred to the timeframe in which the content of the agreed syllabus needed to be reviewed and an opportunity should be given to all faith groups to have an input into the content of the syllabus.

The Members present recommended that work on the review of the agreed syllabus should commence.

Update on monitoring of Agreed Syllabus

It was **AGREED** that this be deferred to the next meeting.

Proposed local conference seminar – progress

Mr. Taylor circulated a draft itinerary for the proposed conference:-

(see annexed)

It was suggested that the conference be arranged for 50/70 attendees and be held at the Bethel Centre; the conference would be open to other Black Country Authorities and it was suggested that it be held on Friday 14th November, 2008.

The Members present **AGREED** that the sub-group should be contacted with a view to making a decision on this matter.

Self-Evaluation Action Plan

The report of Constitutional Services was submitted:-

(see annexed)

with regard to paragraph 2e of the appendix, attention was drawn to the fact that Walsall did not have a specialist RE advisor.

The Members present received the information.

Five year development plan – progress

The report of Constitutional Services was submitted:-

(see annexed)

David Taylor undertook to contact Julie Grove for training information.

Standing Item:-
Budgeting requirements for 2007/08

Mr. Taylor confirmed that Education Walsall would support actions for SACRE but a budget outline would be required.

Members present requested that the sub-group be contacted for their views on meeting twice per term.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 7.05 p.m.