

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

held on Monday, 20 July, 2015 at 6.00 p.m.

at the Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall

Present

Councillor Rochelle
Mrs. S. Blackmore
Mr. P. Prasadam,
Mr. C. Hopkins
Ms. Karen Donnellan
Dr. G. Gomez
Mr. D. Lomax
Mr. M. Lad
Father J. Nankivell
Mr. R. Simmons
Mr. R. Askari

In Attendance:-

Mr. L. Blaylock (R.E.Today)
Mr. S. Flynn (Children's Services)

1/15 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Craddock, Phillips and Robertson, M. D. Thakker, Mrs. B. Groombridge, Saeed-Ur-Rahman.

2/15 Appointment of Chairman for 2015/16 Municipal Year

Resolved

That Mr. C. Hopkins is appointed Chairman of SACRE for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

3/15 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year

Resolved

That Mr. D. Lomax be appointed Vice-Chairman of SACRE for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

4/15 Late items to be introduced by the Chairman

The Chairman agreed to report the outcome of the National Society Statutory Inspection of Holy Trinity C E (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School as a late item as the next meeting of SACRE would not take place until October, 2015. The Chairman reported the resignation of Ms. Louise Evans and welcomed Dr. G. Gomez representing the Roman Catholic Church.

Mr. Simmons reported that this would be his last meeting of SACRE as he was retiring.

5/15 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)

There were no items for consideration in the private session.

6/15 (a) Minutes – 9 March, 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March, 2015 were submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March, 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(b) Strategy Sub-Group – 18 June, 2015

The Notes of the Strategy Sub-Group were submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That the notes of the Strategy Sub-Group held on 18 June, 2015 be noted.

7/15 Election of Spokespersons for the Groups

The report of the Executive Director (Resources) was submitted:-

See annexed.

Resolved

That the following members be appointed as Spokesperson for their individual Group:-

Mr. C. Hopkins – Local Education Authority
Mr. D. Lomax – Christian and other religious denominations
Councillor Rochelle – Local Authority
Vacancy – Teacher's Association representative

8/15 Appointment of Strategy Sub-Group

The report of the Executive Director (Resources) was submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

(1) That the following members be appointed as to the Strategy Sub-Group:-

Mr. C. Hopkins – Local Education Authority
Mr. D. Lomax – Christian and other religious denominations
Councillor Rochelle – Local Authority
Vacancy – Teacher's Association representative

(2) That meetings of the Sub-Group take place on the following dates commencing at 4.30 p.m. in a Conference Room, Council House, Walsall:-

Wednesday, 16 September, 2015
Wednesday, 10 February, 2016
Wednesday, 22 June, 2016

9/15 Dates of meetings of SACRE 2015/16

The report of the Executive Director (Resources) was submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That SACRE agree to hold meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year as follows:-

Monday, 12 October, 2015
Monday, 7 March, 2016

Monday, 18 July, 2016

**10/15 Annual Report of the Standing Advisory Council on religious education
– September 2013 to September 2014**

The Annual Report was submitted:-

See annexed

Mr. Flynn outlined the content of the report and in particular the production of the Units of Work which now totalled 18; the Local Authority was now more efficient at sharing these with schools as they could now be accessed from the website for schools which also included information on SACRE. Positive feedback had been received on the content of the website.

With regards to examination results, more students were opting for the full course and less for the short course.

The Development Plan previously focused on working with schools and to encourage schools to network; resources had been produced for schools and the Agreed Syllabus would undergo a review this year. Mr. Flynn undertook to present a concise development plan to the next meeting.

In response to questions, Mr. Blaylock (R E Today) referred to the primary school network group of approximately 20 representatives and Ms. Maeer had addressed the group to share good practice and her involvement of children in planning R E and strengthening the pupil voice. Ms. Maeer had also agreed to be part of the Agreed Syllabus working group. The network meetings would be taking place as twilight sessions in order to encourage more representatives to attend.

Monitoring within schools had proven difficult; the production units of work had been suspended pending the review of the Agreed Syllabus; the units of work were in addition to SACREs statutory duties.

Resolved

That the report of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education be received and noted and referred to Council for information.

11/15 Establishment of Agreed Syllabus Conference

The report of the Executive Director (Resources) was submitted:-

See annexed

Mr. Blaylock reported that two meetings of the working group of all phases of school teachers had taken place and their feedback on the sessions was all positive. A questionnaire had been sent to Schools to obtain information on the teaching of R E in schools and training as well as information on the current Agreed Syllabus. Information was also requested on the time schools spent on teaching R E. 45 responses had been received to the questionnaire which had proved to be most helpful. Further working group meetings would be held on 10 September, 2015, 18 November, 2015 and 8 February, 2016 by which time it was hoped that the review of the Agreed Syllabus would have been completed for recommendation to the Agreed Syllabus Conference and SACRE. The working group dates would be included on the website.

Concern was expressed at the budget available to SACRE and felt that representations should be made to the Council to increase the budget in order to fund the work to be undertaken on the review of the Agreed Syllabus.

Resolved

- (1) That the Chairman be requested to make representations to the Council to request additional funding to enable specialist advice to be sought in connection with the Statutory requirement to review the Agreed Syllabus;
- (2) That approval be given to the establishment of an Agreed Syllabus Conference comprising all members of SACRE, meetings to be held at 6.00 p.m. immediately prior to scheduled meetings of SACRE.

12/15 Pupil Conference 22 May, 2015 – feedback

Mr. Blaylock gave a brief presentation on the activities undertaken and the success of the pupil conference held at Aston Villa Football Club on 22 May, 2015. Pupils present included six pupils and a teacher from ten primary schools and pupils from St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thomas More secondary schools who assisted the younger pupils. The day also included a tour of the football ground and lunch paid for by SACRE; the benefits of the Conference were considerable, including the networking which took place between the children who attended.

Resolved

That the feedback on the Pupil Conference held on 22 May, 2015 be noted.

13/15 The Feast – Youth Encounter Conference – November 2015

A flyer advertising The Feast Youth Encounter Conference was submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That the information on The Feast, Youth Encounter Conference be noted.

14/15 National Society Statutory Inspections

(a) Little Bloxwich C E Voluntary Controlled Primary School

A copy of the National Society Statutory Inspection report was submitted:-

See annexed.

Resolved

That the National Society Statutory Inspection report in respect of Little Bloxwich C E Voluntary Controlled Primary School be noted and the school congratulated on the outcome of the inspection.

(b) Holy Trinity C E. Voluntary Controlled Primary School

A copy of the National Society Statutory Inspection report was submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That the National Society Statutory Inspection report in respect of Holy Trinity C E Voluntary Controlled Primary School be noted and the school congratulated on the outcome of the inspection.

(c) Rosedale C E Voluntary Controlled Infant School

A copy of the National Society Statutory Inspection report was submitted:-

See annexed

Resolved

That the National Society Statutory Inspection report in respect of Rosedale C E Voluntary Controlled Primary School be noted and the school congratulated on the outcome of the inspection.

15/15 Termly meetings with representatives of faith groups

Mr. Flynn referred to meetings which used to take place with representatives of faith schools and representatives of SACRE twice a year. Faith groups in Walsall had shown a willingness for these meetings to resume.

Resolved

That Mr. Lomax be appointed as SACREs representative to meet with representatives of faith schools twice a year on dates to be agreed.

16/15 Late items

Mr. Simmons reported that this would be his last meeting of SACRE as he was retiring; he had enjoyed his time as a SACRE member and had acted as an advocate of the SACRE in his work.

Resolved

That SACRE record their thanks to Mr. Simmons for his services to SACRE during his membership and wished him every success in the future.

17/15 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 12 October, 2015 at 6.00 p.m.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 7.20 p.m.

Chairman:

Date:

