# Minutes

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Tuesday 7th November 2017 at 7.30pm**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Present:  (Groups in brackets) |  | Rev M Williams (B) (Chair)  Mr P Henry (C)  Mrs R Johnson (A)Rev D Smith (A)  Ms Sarah Webb (A) | |  | Mrs M Cockram (C)  Cllr M Burstow (D)  Mr L Bracken *\* from 8.00pm*  Miss V M Stone (C) | |
| Apologies:  Absent: |  | Cllr R Broadbent (D) (Vice-Chair)  Cllr N Patel (D)  Cllr S Gordon (D  Cllr H Ramsey (D) | |  | Mrs C Smyth (B)  Mr K Siddiqi (A) | | |
| In attendance: |  | Ms P Smith-Orr - Consultant/Observer  Mrs P Garry - Clerk |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ITEM** | **ACTION BY** |
| **1.** | **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| **2.** | **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  Apologies had been received from Councillor Broadbent, Mrs C Smyth. Councillor Patel, Councillor Gordon and Mr Siddiqi and were consented. |  |
| **3.** | **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**  Nominations were invited for the positions Chair and Vice-Chair.  In the absence of any other nominations, Revd Mark Williams agreed to stand for the position of Chair. Cllr Broadbent had indicated his agreement, in his absence, to stand again as Vice-Chair.  **RESOLUTION: Revd Mark Williams unanimously appointed as Chair for the period of one year i.e. until Autumn 2018 and Cllr Richard Broadbent unanimously appointed as Vice-Chair for the same period.** |  |
| **3**. | **MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH JUNE 2017**  Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record with it being noted that Sarah Webb is from “Sutton Schools Work” not “Sutton Schools Network”.  Some actions had been completed, and those not already elsewhere on the agenda are further discussed under Matters Arising below. |  |
| **4.** | **MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA**  **SACRE Budget**  RB had been liaising with Cognus (previously Sutton Education Services) who are responsible for the administration and finances for SACRE. RB had circulated a report to members prior to the meeting setting out the situation and what he had managed to establish. RB cautioned that he had been informed that there would be a reduction in the budget next year, although the amount is not yet known. SACRE members felt very strongly that this budget should be protected and did not feel that a 10% management charge is appropriate bearing in mind that it is a statutory requirement. PS-O also informed members that the schools ‘pay’ for the RE Courses which she runs but was unclear whether this income remains with Cognus. MB suggested that someone submit a question to the local authority full council meeting to confirm the budget and to ask whether the management of SACRE, and its budget, should return to the local authority.  **Item 7 – Other SACREs**  MW had still not managed to make contact with the Chair of Merton SACRE. He would endeavour to do this over the coming few weeks. |  |
| **5.** | **APPOINTMENT OF SACRE MEMBERS**  The Chair asked members to approve appointing Sarah Webb to Group A.  He also advised that Mr Siddiqi had submitted his resignation as he was no longer a representative of MCWAS. He did indicate he would be willing to remain as a Muslim representative.  **Action: MW will contact him to discuss his membership.**  Mr Henry was moving out of the borough to a new school and therefore had also tendered his resignation. MW thanked him for his contribution to SACRE. SW said she may know of a teacher who would be interested in joining SACRE.  **Action: SW will seek a teacher representative.** | **MW**  **SW** |
| **6.** | **NATIONAL NEWS**    **REC commission on Religious Education (and online consultation)**  PS-O stressed the importance of members completing the survey. The interim report says that SACREs are an important group and where there are advisors things are better. It doesn’t say that there should be a national curriculum but that there should be a national entitlement so that the local syllabuses could be strengthened.  PS-O highlighted some of the questions. She said that there was a suggestion that a change of name should be implemented so that it reflects what RE is all about. There were various suggestions e.g. religion and ethics, philosophy, religion and ethics, religions and world views. PH commented that some schools offer ‘Philosophy’ but the curriculum is actually a lot about religion. They are taught about how organisations are formed and religious views which give students a safe environment in which to express their views. DS agreed that students should gain a wide knowledge of different religions around the world. PS-O said that this would be dependent upon the age group.  PS-O added that it is a local requirement to offer RE but the rules are not always adhered to by some schools, particularly academies as there is no accountability. This is why it is important that the national entitlement should be statutory and Ofsted should monitor this.  PH said the report stated ‘that there will not be a national syllabus’ and commented that this means that schools don’t have to put it into the timetable. PS-O informed members that a school had failed Ofsted recently because they were not teaching RE.  Page 13 of the report also says ‘holding schools to account for the provision of quality of RE’ followed by ‘renewed and expanded role of SACRE’.  PS-O stressed the importance of completing the survey. She will be attending a commission looking at the next steps.  **Action: SACRE members to complete the survey by December 2017.**  **Church Times Report on State of Religious Education *(Enclosure B)***  Governors noted the report.  **State of the nation re Secondary school RE (link sent by email)**  PS-O referenced the report that had been circulated. She highlighted the worrying statement that 1 in 4 children are not being taught RE in discrete lessons. However, this is in conflict with the fact that over the last four years of annual reports, it shows GCSE entries have gone up.  LB felt that there was disparity between the aims set out in the report and what is actually happening. | **All SACRE Members** |
| **7.** | **SACRE SELF EVALUATION**  PS-O had completed the evaluation as discussed at the last meeting. The two items identified had been fed into the new development plan for 2018. |  |
| **8.** | **SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017**  The development plan was discussed and progress noted for the January 2017 to December 2017 document.     * **Item 3 – Annual Report – this is being finalised (see item 12)** * **Item 6 – Collective Worship –** the target date has been moved due to other priorities but will be continued in the 2018 plan**.**   **Action: PS-O will circulate an example of collective worship guidance to members prior to the next meeting.**   * **Item7 – Faith Ambassadors.** Merton are looking at training year 6 pupils. MC felt that this might work really well but that it should start with year 5s now in order to prepare them for their work from September next year. RJ cautioned that children might not be keen to continue it in secondary school as they might not feel so comfortable.   **Action: PS-O will write to the RE Co-ordinators in primary schools to see if they might want to launch this initiative.**  **Item 9 – Engaging with stakeholders from other faith communities.** It was noted that there was a list of the Sutton website. SW suggested contacting the Faith Officer within Sutton Police to see if he could provide a comprehensive list.  **Action: MW will make contact with Faith Officer**  PS-O also presented the new 2018 plan which builds upon the previous one and has two new actions set out at the last meeting. | **PS-O**  **MW** |
| **9.** | **KS3 SYLLABUS**  This had been completed and sent to schools. PS-O had received an email from one teacher who was very pleased with it. |  |
| **10.** | **RE CO-ORDINATORS MEETINGS AND SCHOOL VISITS**  PS-O had asked RE Co-ordinators (by survey) various questions. Two of the important ones were:   * Does your school use the Sutton syllabus and, if so, would they like any help with it? * How often does your school have collective worship and would you like some guidance on this? There were a variety of answers to this question but all respondents said that they would. * Would you like a visit from SACRE to offer support and guidance   PS-O and MC had visited Culvers House. They observed a very good year 6 RE lesson except that there was no real reference to RE! All RE is taught by HLTAs in PPA time. Their RE Co-ordinator attends meetings. She asked if there could be a course for HLTAs. |  |
| **11.** | **COURSES FOR RE TEACHERS**  PS-O did arrange a course for HLTAs (see above request from Culvers House) but it was cancelled by the borough due to low sign-up. PS-O will go back to the school to give the HLTAs some training. |  |
| **12.** | **SACRE ANNUAL REPORT**  PS-O is awaiting exam results to go into the report.  **Action: PS-O will circulate the draft report to members for approval prior to submitting to NASACRE.** | **PS-O** |
| **13.** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  There was no other business to discuss. |  |
| **14.** | **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**    **Tuesday 27th February 2018 at 7.15pm**  **Tuesday 15th May 2018 at 7.15pm**  **Venue: Both meetings will take place in room G2, Ground Floor, at Sutton Civic Centre** |  |

Closing Time of Meeting: 8.50pm

Chair’s Signature .............................................................. Date.........................