

HARROW SACRE
(STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 25 JUNE 2024
7.00pm at All Saints Church, Harrow Weald

Attendance
Group A

Religious traditions and Christian churches

* Mercedes Afnan	Baha'i
A Ven Sumana Sramaner	Buddha Dhamma
A Camilla Bath	Christian (Catholic)
A Laura Thornton	Christian (Catholic)
A Karen Collier	<i>Christian (Free Church Federal Council)</i>
A Vijay Hirani	Sanatan Dharma (Swaminarayan)
A Arvind Halai	Sanatan Dharma (Swaminarayan)
* David Cryer	Humanist (Harrow Humanists)
A Varsha Dodhia	Jain
* Gill Ross	Jewish
A Muhammad Dattoo	Muslim
A Paramjit Singh-Kohli	Sikh Dharm
* Phiroza Gan-Kotwal	Zoroastrian

Group B

Church of England

* Mary Abbott
* Alison Stowe
A Revd James Power (*Last meeting*)
* Revd Mike Still

Group C

Teachers' Associations

A Fatema Rahemani	NASUWT
Sejal Kapadia	NEU for next meeting
A Heena Mistry	NAHT
A Elizabeth Boulter	NEU
A Sayyeda-Maryam Jessa	NEU

Group D

Local Authority

* Cllr June Baxter Conservative
* Cllr Janet Mote Conservative
A Cllr Sasi Suresh Labour

A Cllr Ramji Chauhan Conservative (*reserve*)
A Cllr Hitesh Karia Conservative (*reserve*)
A Cllr Ghazanfar Ali Labour (*reserve*)

Advisor to the SACRE

* Lisa Kassapian (RE Advisor)

Clerk

*Vivian Wright (Clerk to SACRE)

Observer

* Cllr Kandy Dolar, Councillor for Wealdstone South

** denotes presence*

A denotes absence with apologies

~ denotes absence without apologies

Introduction

The Revd John Barker, the vicar of All Saints gave members a fascinating introduction to the church which was designed by the architect William Butterfield. It has been associated with the Crosse and Blackwell family, WS Gilbert and Leefe Robinson. Now it is used as a local resource and hosts a varied programme of events and activities open to all members of the community.

Note: these minutes are accompanied by Lisa's presentation for the meeting. The technology made viewing the slides at the meeting somewhat intermittent, so please take time to look at this presentation which makes an excellent supplement to these minutes.

1. Welcome

Alison welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially The Revd Mike Still, who replaces the Revd James Power as a Church of England Representative. This would have been James's last meeting, but he has sent apologies as he is away on a field trip, so Mike has joined SACRE early and is attending the meeting in his stead. There is also a new Conservative councillor, Cllr Ramji Chauhan who replaces Cllr David Ashton as a reserve.

In addition, Alison was very pleased to welcome Cllr Kandy Dolar who is attending as an observer.

Remembering Lesley

Lesley Prior, our much loved and respected advisor died on 20 April 2024. Alison spoke of Lesley's many achievements and her significant contributions to Harrow SACRE, NASACRE and the world of Religious Education. She will be much missed. Members shared their memories and held a minute silence in reflection.

2. Apologies for absence

RESOLVED: To note apologies for absence from Sumana Sramaner, Camilla Bath, Laura Thornton, Vijay Hirani, Varsha Dodhia, Doreen Samuels, Paramjit Singh Kohli, Rev James Power, Fatema Rahemani, Heena Mistry, Elizabeth Boulter, Sayyeda-Mariam Jessa and Cllr Sasi Suresh.

SACRE: apologies to the Muslim members for the date clash with Eid al Ghadir.

Quorum

The meeting was inquorate as there were no representatives from Group C.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

As the meeting was not quorate, this item was deferred until the next meeting for voting.

Alison Stowe, seconded by Mary Abbott, nominated herself for the position of Chair.

David Cryer, seconded by Gill Ross, nominated himself for the position of Vice Chair.

No further nominations have been received so far.

4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 March 2024 (previously circulated)

p. 5. Minute 9. Local and national updates

Local

HMD: Bhopal should read Gopal.

With this correction, the minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

p. 2. Minute 4. Matters arising from the minutes:

- **NASACRE courses:** a reminder that Harrow SACRE has renewed its subscription to the NASACRE training webinars; there is a webinar for new members on 26 June at 6.30-8.00pm.
- **p. 3. Minute 6: Website monitoring:** Alison has written a report on the website monitoring for the RE Newsletter. In this she suggested that the name of the RE leader should be included on the schools' websites. Lisa reminded members to keep a watching brief on their school websites.
- **Minute 7. Understanding Christianity:** Lisa reported that Harrow RE Subject Leaders have expressed interest in this training and that grant funding has been confirmed through RE Today to secure reduced costs for resources and training for Harrow community schools. A full day training has been confirmed. *See Minute 13 Future Dates.*

There were no further matters arising from the minutes not already covered on the agenda.

6. Report back from Annual Conference

The conference took place at the Hilton Hotel in York on 20 May 2024. The theme was "How can SACREs support high quality RE and Collective Worship?"

Mary reported on the NASACRE Annual Conference and AGM:

In the talk on “A Year in the World of RE” with Paul Smalley and Dr Kathryn Wright, Mary mentioned that positives included the publication of Approach to RE Toolkit and the National Content Standard. Negatives included the lack of trainee RE teachers and lack of subject knowledge among those teaching RE.

Mary also drew members attention to the Culham St Gabriels’s Westhill Awards and AREIAC’s Young Ambassadors for RE project and an inspiring presentation by Lat Blaylock on “35 Ideas for Activist SACREs”. These are attached to these minutes together with the Conference programme and summary. More information can be found on the NASACRE website.

Mary chose two follow up workshops; one called “Making your SACRE work for you”. This included a wealth of ideas:

- Seeking feedback from School Councils
- Traffic lights for the Development Plan
- Visiting a place of worship
- Bringing children’s work to meetings
- Feedback from webinars at SACRE meetings
- Congratulating schools if they achieve an RE Quality mark or good exam results

Harrow SACRE is already implementing several of these ideas.

Mary’s second workshop was about RE Hubs <https://www.re-hubs.uk/> . This is a brilliant website with a wealth of ideas, resources and training. It is all free. See also minute 11.

7. New NASACRE Constitution and registration as a CIO (Power Point presentation and email previously circulated)

Lisa explained that NASACRE’s application for charitable status as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) will make business easier for NASACRE especially in the areas of staffing, banking and organising the conference. It will not make significant difference to local SACREs. NASACRE is offering an online consultation on 9 July between 7 and 8pm.

Discussion to be fed back to Barnabas Consulting

Action: Lisa

8. NASACRE self-evaluation

At the last meeting, members had reviewed section 1: Management of SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders.

Members present divided into their groups and discussed aspects of the Self Evaluation Toolkit and gave feedback on the section they had considered:

Group A:

Section 3: the effectiveness of the Locally Agreed Syllabus

3.a. The Review Process: there is a need to collate feedback in a systematic way through a survey or questionnaire: developing to established

3.b. The Quality of the LAS: excellent.

Group B

Section 4: improvement in the provision and quality of Collective Worship

4.a. Supporting pupil entitlement: developing

4.c. Responding to requests for determinations: established to advanced.

Group D

Contributing to cohesion across the community and promotion of social and racial harmony

5.a. SACRE's membership: established; membership reflects the religious diversity of Harrow

5.b. Understanding of the local area: established

5.c. Engagement with the community: established: there is understanding and a clear commitment to the role of RE in establishing community cohesion.

5.d. SACRE's role within the wider LA initiatives on community cohesion: established to advanced. SACRE asks for information from its Councillors.

Lisa will feed these reviews into the development plan.

Action: Lisa

9. Report back on Development Planning Meeting 24 April 2024

The Chairs' group (Alison, Lisa, Mary, David and Janet) had met online. David explained that the group uses the Self-Evaluation Toolkit to determine what SACRE is doing and what needs to be done. SACRE has completed/is working on or regularly considers:

- Annual report
- Determinations
- National and Local Updates
- Membership
- Constitution
- Monitoring of RE results
- Oversight of Collective Worship
- RE leaders' meetings

An area that needs developing is a questionnaire for schools to include feedback from pupils. This will be SACRE's next major work. Now that Ofsted is inspecting RE, SACRE can ask schools about their Ofsted reports and can also be seeking feedback from academies.

The Chairs' Group will meet again on Wednesday 25 September 2.00-4.00pm via Zoom.

Vivian will contact members of group C to ask if any of them can attend.

Action: Vivian

Lisa showed a slide of the updated development plan with traffic lights and a slide showing SACRE's development aims.

10. Local and National updates

Local

Harrow RE Subject leaders' network group Wednesday 19 June

Re subject leaders discussed age related expectations, moderated and shared work and considered Assessment to raise attainment. They felt more training was needed in assessment.

Determinations: Norbury and Glebe Schools have determinations that are due for renewal. Alison is visiting Glebe and Lisa has arranged a meeting with Norbury. There is a very clear procedure to follow to ensure that the schools are providing CW of a suitable standard and quality.

National

Publications: a wealth of influential RE documents have been published over the last term. As well as the 'Religion and Worldviews Approach to RE Toolkit' and the 'National Content Standard' referred to in minute 6 above, Lisa drew members attention to The Religious Education Subject Report April 2024 Ofsted's 'Deep and Meaningful' which advocates that schools should be ambitious for pupils to develop all aspects of knowledge: substantive, ways of knowing and personal knowledge. The RE curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to review and build on important knowledge over time. There is a drive to ensure that teaching specifically develops pupils' knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions and that there is development of manageable assessment methods that move beyond the simple recall of information.

11. News from Faith Groups relating to schools

RE Hubs

As mentioned under minute 6 above, RE Hubs provides an excellent range of training and resources. Mercedes has attended a training session with helpful advice on hosting and making visits from and to schools. She was full of praise for the training which gave advice on how to help children and encourage them to ask questions.

Please inform Vivian if you attend any of these training sessions.

12. Any Other Business

Praise for DRO: Gill was thanked by a parent who had found the DRO document very supportive when she had to justify her daughter's absence from school to celebrate Shavuot.

There were no further items of any other business.

13. Future dates

Chairs' Group: Wednesday 25 September, 2.00-4.00pm via Zoom.

Understanding Christianity: Wednesday 16 October 2024, 9.15am - 3.15pm

Venue: St John's CE School

SACRE dates for 2024-5

Tues 8 October 2024 (moved from 18 September)

Time: 7.30 (agreed to revert to original time)

Venue: tbc (Gill will investigate the possibility of the Mosaic Centre <https://choosemosaic.org/>; if not available, a school might be a possibility.)

Weds 4 December 2024

Weds 5 March 2025

Summer term date: to be set by the council.

Alison thanked Mary for offering her church for this evening's meeting and the vicar, Revd John Barker for his interesting introduction to the church.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed:

(Chair)

(Date)