

HARROW SACRE
(STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING
ON 8 MARCH 2022

Attendance

Group A

- * Mercedes Afnan
- * Ven Sumana Sramaner
- * Diana Ohene from 8.00pm
- ~ *Ciara O'Flaherty*
- * Vijay Hirani
- * David Cryer
- ~ *Varsha Dodhia*
- ~ *Gill Ross*
- * Doreen Samuels
- ~ *Zafar Khalid*

- * Asad Omar
- ~ *Mohammed Amar*

- ~ *Paramjit Singh-Kohli*
- * Phiroza Gan-Kotwal

Religious traditions and Christian churches

- Baha'i
- Buddhist
- Christian (Catholic)
- Christian (Catholic)
- Hindu (Swaminarayan)
- Humanist (Harrow Humanists)
- Jain
- Jewish
- Jewish
- Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque)
- Muslim
- Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque)
- Sikh
- Zoroastrian

Group B

- * Mary Abbott
- * Alison Stowe
- * Revd James Power

Church of England

Group C

- A Fatema Rahemani*
- * Heena Mistry
- * Elizabeth Boulter

Teachers' Associations

- NASUWT
- NAHT
- NEU

Group D

- * Cllr Camilla Bath Conservative (Vice Chair)
- A Cllr Christine Robson Labour*
- * Cllr Angella Murphy-Strachan Labour

Local Authority

- Cllr Dr Lesline Lewinson Conservative (reserve)*
- Cllr Simon Brown Labour (reserve)*
- Cllr Sasi Suresh Labour (reserve)*

Advisor to the SACRE

- * Lesley Prior (Advisor to Harrow SACRE)

Clerk

- * Vivian Wright (Clerk to SACRE)

* denotes presence

A denotes absence with apologies

~ denotes absence without apologies

1. Welcome

Alison welcomed everyone to the meeting especially two new members, Heena Mistry representing the NAHT and Elizabeth Boulter representing the NEU.

2. Apologies for absence

RESOLVED: To note apologies for absence from Gill Ross, Fatema Rahemani and Cllr Christine Robson.

The following members were also absent:

Group A: Ciara O'Flaherty, Varsha Dodhia, Zafar Khalid, Mohammed Amar and Paramjit Singh-Kohli.

No apologies had been received.

Attendance:

Doreen asked if a WhatsApp group could be formed for mutual support and to remind each other of upcoming meetings. Alison and Heena will investigate. Alison will assume members are in agreement to be part of the group unless she hears from them within two weeks from the date of the meeting.

Action: Alison and Heena

Membership:

Group D

Cllr Camilla Bath is standing down from the council next month. In Harrow it is customary for Group D members (LA representatives) to be members of the council. This is not a prerequisite of the constitution which states that they should be "three representatives nominated by Harrow Council". Alison will investigate whether it is possible to Camilla to continue as a LA representative when she is no longer a councillor.

Action: Alison

Meanwhile, in view of her wealth of experience and long and dedicated service to SACRE, Alison co-opted her to SACRE and to the ASC.

Quorum

The meeting was quorate after Diana's arrival at 8.00pm.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd December 2021 and extraordinary meeting held on 13th January (previously circulated)

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Meeting on 2nd December 2021

p.2. Item 2. Membership

As noted above, two new members have joined the committee as representatives of teacher unions. They are also very committed RE

specialists. Heena Mistry teaches at Canons Lane Primary School and Elizabeth Boulter at St John's C of E Primary School.

p.2. Item 4. Matters arising: workforce data

Alison has contacted Whitefriars School but has not heard back. She will contact their RE lead at the RE Coordinators meeting next week.

Action: Alison

p.5. Item 6. Determinations

Vaughan School: Alison has informed Vaughan School that they have been granted a determination. The minutes of the relevant governors' meeting have been circulated.

p.5. Item 7. Collective Worship Policy

This is now on the website. In response to a question about whether the Collective Worship requirement is to be dropped, Lesley assured members that it is still a legal requirement and to change this would require a change in the law.

There were no further matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Meeting on 13th January

There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

5. Local and National updates

Local

- **RE Network for Primary Subject Leaders:** the primary subject leaders group goes from strength to strength. Their termly meeting takes place next week.
Their WhatsApp group now has 30 members.
The last meeting was very productive; the group focused on Ofsted requirements and also shared a range of resources. They ensure that their resources have proper academic provenance.
The RE Leaders had some enquiries about visits and visitors: Vivian can put out a message if any schools are looking for a visitor from a particular faith tradition. Members noted that it is not just members from group A who can contribute to these.
Some schools are also providers of support and training and this includes St John's Primary School, where Elizabeth is a teacher. Alison and Lesley are visiting the school next Friday to discuss ways of working together.

National

- **AGM and Conference:** the AGM will take place in Birmingham on 23 May. It will be a face-to-face meeting and conference held at the Macdonald Burlington Hotel in Birmingham. This is very close to Birmingham New Street Station. Harrow will usually pay the conference fee and travel expenses for a

member attend the conference. So far, no one has volunteered/been nominated to attend.

As noted at the previous meeting, Dr Richard Kueh, the lead RE inspector at Ofsted, is one of the keynote speakers and will be updating members on developments at Ofsted. He is also doing a series of online talks which will cover similar ground. He is a very clear and precise speaker.

In response to a question about whether his talks are recorded, Lesley explained that Richard is not prepared to share his slides. However, there is a slide share facility on the Ofsted website, which presumably covers much of the same ground. Lesley has wondered if it might be worth asking him to do an online talk for Harrow, either at the start or end of the AS process.

There is no speaker charge as this is regarded as part of his outreach work for Ofsted and no travel costs as it is online.

Lesley has also asked Richard whether schools, where RE provision is inadequate, should automatically be denied outstanding status even if they excel in other respects. Richard's reply was diplomatic and inconclusive. RE is not a deal breaker at the moment despite the fact that that collective worship is a legal requirement and one of the core British values promoted in schools is respect for the law.

At this point (8.00pm) Diana Ohene joined the meeting.

- **NASACRE Virtual Training courses** (*previously circulated*): NASACRE is running a series of online twilight training sessions. Details are circulated to SACRE members via email. As Phiroza is not online at the moment, Alison will check the website and make sure she knows about any upcoming sessions. Lesley is attending two sessions: one on determinations and one on membership.

6. ASC

- **Nominating bodies:** all members, apart from Zafar Khalid and Mohammed Amar, have indicated that they would like to form part of the ASC. Mohammed and Zafar appear to be out of touch with SACRE as they have not attended any meetings in this academic year; however, Asad Omar has indicated his readiness to be on the ASC and will represent Islam. Alison thanked Asad for this.
Vivian has contacted members' nominating bodies and the Council has given its approval.
- **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:** the first duty of the ASC is to elect a chair and vice-chair. Lesley confirmed that it is not against the rules for the Chair of SACRE to also be chair of the ASC. Alison indicated her willingness to stand for election.

Chair: James Power, seconded by Doreen Samuels proposed Alison Stowe as Chair of the ASC.

Elected unanimously

Vice-Chair: David Cryer, seconded by Vijay Hirani proposed himself as Vice-Chair.

Elected unanimously

- **Options for the ASC:** four options are available when a syllabus is due for review:
 - The current syllabus can be retained just as it is;
 - The current syllabus can be retained in essentials but updated with some new materials;
 - A syllabus from another LA can be brought in: some London SACREs have purchased syllabuses from Hampshire or Somerset, which can be customized for local needs with the parent authority's permission;
 - A commercially produced syllabus can be purchased: RE Today Services is a major provider; this is an expensive option; again it can be tweaked to reflect local conditions.

Teachers have asked that members of the ASC retain the existing syllabus and review and update it. The Assessment and EY materials will need to be updated.

- **Inaugural meeting:** It was agreed to hold the first meeting of the ASC on the same evening as the next SACRE meeting on Thursday 23 June. This meeting will be held via video conferencing.

7. Annual report for NASACRE (*previously circulated*)

The draft report has been circulated to members. GCSE and A level results do not have to be included this year. This may change once these public examinations are resumed but for last year only teachers' assessments were used and these are not published. There is a disclaimer in the report to this effect.

The report follows a new refreshed format set out in a NASACRE template. This will enable NASACRE to improve the way it monitors reports.

Lesley thanked Vivian and Alison for their contributions and Vivian for her meticulous minutes which make Lesley's task much less onerous.

8. News from Faith Groups relating to schools

- **Islam:** Asad informed members that Ramadan starts on 2nd April, so the first two weeks will be in the Easter holidays. Eid-ul-Fitr falls on Monday 2 May which is a bank holiday so children will not require a day off school.
- **C of E:** James informed members that St Mary's has resumed its programme of school visits. Several schools have booked up for elongated series of visits. Alison warmly recommended these visits and added that her own church of the Holy Trinity in Wealdstone is also open although not quite as glamorous as St Mary's!
- **Judaism:** Doreen added that synagogues are also open for visits.

This information is very useful for RE leaders.

In response to a question from Mercedes about how she should approach visits, bot being a teacher herself, Lesley explained that in May last year, Ofsted published a report on knowledge in RE. This report identified three types of knowledge:

- What people learn;
- How they learn and where they learn it from;
- How they personally interact with learning and if it changes them.

Lesley felt that we should be giving pupils the tools to know where authentic information can be found. We need to think about which resources are authentic, genuine and inclusive. Lesley believes that this is a safeguarding issue in an intellectual sense.

It is always a good idea to keep a dialogue open between the visitor and the school visited.

9. Any Other Business

There were no items of Any Other Business.

10. Future Dates:

- **Thursday 23 June 2022 via video conferencing.**
- **Wednesday 14 September 2022**
- **Tuesday 6 December 2022**
- **Wednesday 1 March**

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed:

(Chair)

(Date)