

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION****20 SEPTEMBER 2006**Representatives of the LEA

Councillors:	* Ms Nana Asante	† Mrs Anjana Patel
	* Councillor Mrs Lurline Champagne (Chairman)	

Representatives of Christian and Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

* Zia Baig	Mrs S Lynn
* Mrs M Besser	* Councillor Asad Omar
† Mr M Bishop	Mrs S Panjwani
* Mrs N Desai	Rabbi D Roselaar
* Mrs P Gan-Kotwal	Prof H Singh
* Mrs M Hale	* Mr P Singh-Kohli
* Dr V Kapashi	* P Wearing
Brother L Lindsay	

Representatives of the Church of England

* Mrs M Abbott	† Rev'd S Pothen
Dr K Pinching	

Representatives of Teachers

† Mr R Crocker	* Mrs R Shakar
† Mrs S Mistry	† Mrs A Stowe
† Ms B Pandya-Arepalli	† Rev'd Dr S Thompson

Co-opted Members

Mr A Aggarwal	* Mr M Shah
Mr D Liversedge	* Ms P Stevens

Adviser to the Council, Nominated by the Director of Education

* Mr P O'Dwyer

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**23. **Apologies for Absence:**

RESOLVED: To note that (1) apologies for absence had been received from Mr M Bishop, Mr R Crocker, Mrs S Mistry, Ms B Pandya-Arepalli, Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel, Rev'd S Pothen, Mrs Stowe and Rev'd Dr S Thompson;

(2) if a member had neither attended nor offered apologies for three consecutive meetings, the Chairman would write to the faith group to establish if the individual still wished to be a member of SACRE.

24. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no reserve members present at the meeting.

25. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note (1) the following interests declared by Council Members:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Councillor Ms Nana Asante	Declared a personal interest in that she was a Governor at Stanburn First School

Councillor Mrs Lurline Champagnie	Declared a personal interest in that she was a Governor at Hatch End High School
Councillor Asad Omar	Declared a personal interest in that he was a Governor at Nower Hill High School

(2) the following interests declared by non-Council members:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Mrs M Abbot	Declared a personal interest in that she was a Governor at Pinner Park First School
Ms P Stevens	Declared a personal interest in that she was the secretary of the Harrow Interfaith Council

26. **Minutes of the Meeting on 13 June 2006:**

Mrs Desai reported that the reason she had not attended the 13 June 2006 meeting was that her agenda had been lost in transit. Apologies were offered to Mrs Desai, who was disappointed that she had missed the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of SACRE and of the Standing Conference for the Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, both held on 13 June 2006, be taken as read and signed as correct records subject to the following amendments to the SACRE minutes:

Minute 8 – Declaration of Interests

Amend the spelling of Mrs Abbott's name.

Minute 15 – Education for Councillors

Amend the spelling of Mrs Gan-Kotwal's name.

Minutes 17, 19, 21, 22

Refer to 'Pat Stevens' without a title.

27. **Matters Arising**

(i) NASACRE Conference Material:

RESOLVED: To note that Pat Stevens had agreed to forward material from the National Conference to Councillor Paul Osborn, Portfolio Holder for Issues Facing Young People, and all other Councillors.

(ii) Contacts with London SACREs:

RESOLVED: That Councillors Ms Nana Asante and Mrs Lurline Champagnie, and Pat Stevens, meet to discuss ways of working with other London SACREs.

(iii) SACRE Showcase for Councillors:

RESOLVED: To note that (1) Paddy O'Dwyer and Pat Stevens would act as leads for the working party to set up a showcase; and

(2) Councillor Paul Osborn would be invited to be involved in the project.

(iv) Report on the Multi-Racial Forum on Racial Harassment:

Pat Stevens, member of the Harrow Multi-Agency Forum on Racial Harassment steering group, tabled and presented a brief report on the Multi-Racial Forum on Racial Harassment. She noted that the overall picture was that Harrow was one of the safest boroughs in London, but that there had been 44 recorded faith hate crimes in the period 2004-2006. A pilot project for reporting racial and faith harassment in schools had been initiated. Pat Stevens was to meet with the Harrow Council Race Hate Coordinator to devise strategies for schools to deal with this and to prevent further incidents. A full report on the forum was available from Pat Stevens on request. It was noted that contact details for race hate crimes had been published in the latest Harrow People magazine.

RESOLVED: That Pat Stevens continue to report to SACRE on the Forum's work.

28. **SACRE Constitution:**
The SACRE constitution, as updated on 28 September 2004, was tabled at the meeting. It was noted that this document formed part of the current SACRE handbook, and that although it still carried the term 'Draft', the constitution had been agreed by SACRE. Pat Stevens had asked John Robinson, Director of Corporate Governance, for comments.
- RESOLVED:** That (1) members look at the constitution before the next SACRE meeting and forward any comments by email to susan.bole@harrow.gov.uk or by post to Susan Bole, SACRE Clerk, People First Strategic Services, Civic Centre, Harrow HA1 2UW;
- (2) the constitution be discussed at the next SACRE meeting in the light of any comments received.
29. **Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and Scheme of Work:**
It was noted that although the syllabus was still in draft form and without photographs, it was already being used by some schools. Permission had been sought for the publication of some pictures of festivals, and the Communications Unit would be finishing the syllabus by adding pictures including those of buildings. It was noted that no photographs of children in Harrow's schools would be used.
- The draft introduction to the syllabus was tabled. This included a letter from Mike Bishop as Chairman of the Agreed Syllabus Conference and introductions to the following faiths and philosophies: Baha'i, Humanism, Islam and Zoroastrianism. Jain and Bhuddism introductions had been received since the draft was printed.
- RESOLVED:** To note that (1) Rev'd S Pothen had agreed to write the Christianity introduction;
- (2) Mrs Desai had agreed to submit the Hindu introduction.
30. **Baha'i Materials:**
Dr Stephen Vickers had brought a collection of materials about the Baha'i faith. It was noted that there was very little material currently available about the Baha'i faith outside the community itself.
- Dr Vickers explained that the packs, one for primary children and one for secondary students, were prototypes. As yet there were no pictures and he was happy to receive comments and recommendations which could be incorporated into the final products. Mr Vickers was happy for members of SACRE, other teachers and interested professionals to look at the packs in order for feedback to be gathered. He would then price up the packs.
- RESOLVED:** To note that the Chair would establish if there were funds available, and if so, SACRE members would consider if it would be appropriate to purchase the packs for Harrow's schools after they had been seen by interested parties.
31. **Collective Worship:**
It was noted that Mrs Stowe had given her apologies but hoped to present her paper at the next SACRE meeting.
- RESOLVED:** That the item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.
32. **Determinations:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no determinations to report.
33. **Guidelines on Meeting the Religious Needs of Pupils:**
Festivals September 2006 - July 2007
Each member present was given a copy of the comprehensive SHAP calendar of Religious Festivals and a list of religious festivals on which pupils would be permitted authorised absence from Harrow's schools. The authorised absence list would be reprinted and distributed to SACRE members and headteachers in the light of comments from Members. It was noted that the list did not include festivals that fell on non school days, or minor festivals.
- RESOLVED:** To note that Pat Stevens would republish and circulate the list of religious festivals on which pupils would be permitted authorised absence from Harrow schools with the minutes of this meeting.

Swaminaryan Beads

Pat Stevens had been asked for guidance from SACRE regarding the wearing of swaminaryan beads. These blessed beads were worn by some Hindus to symbolise a vow. It was felt that the decision about the beads could only be made by the school. However, members agreed that children should be allowed to wear the beads in school as long as they were not visible and they were removed during lessons such as PE and Design and Technology where there might be a health and safety risk.

Mixed Swimming

It was noted that two mosques arranged single sex swimming for children on Saturdays, covering the national curriculum. A Brahmin family had asked that their child swim in a single sex environment.

RESOLVED: To note that (1) Mrs Desai had offered to speak to the Brahmin family to establish if it might be appropriate for the mosque to be approached to enable the child to swim at the Saturday sessions;

(2) Pat Stevens would liaise between the family and Mrs Desai.

Staff Leave for Festivals

The headteacher of Park High had reported that eleven of the Hindu staff at his school had asked for time off for Diwali, which in 2006 fell on a Saturday. He had requested advice from SACRE.

RESOLVED: To note that Pat Stevens would inform the headteacher of Park High that SACRE considered that the issue should be referred to the Local Authority (Councillor Janet Mote and Governing Bodies) rather than to SACRE.

34. **News from the Faith Communities:**

The Chairman requested that members submit news items in writing before the next meeting.

Mrs Hale reported that there was to be an event on the following Sunday at Kingsbury Bhuddist Temple to raise funds for an orphanage in Sri Lanka. Further details were available direct from her.

Patrick O'Dwyer tabled an extract from the 'Harrow Governors' Newsletter'. It was noted that Harrow was keen to recruit new governors. Governing body meetings normally took place 6 times a year, although there could be more. Paddy O'Dwyer was happy to distribute literature on the role of governors and also visit interested parties. Mr Baig explained that he had expressed an interest to be a governor but had not been invited to do so. Mr O'Dwyer explained that, although names of volunteers were forwarded to schools, the onus was on schools to make contact as appropriate vacancies occurred.

A booklet about Black History Month (Autumn 2006) and 'We Served', the untold story of the West Indian contribution to World War Two were both tabled.

RESOLVED: To note that (1) members should submit news items to Susan Bole;

(2) SACRE members would speak to their community groups to make known the need for governors.

35. **Dates and Venues for the Next Meetings:**

It was noted that members had enjoyed a guided tour of St Lawrence's historic church and that Reverend Paul Reece had welcomed members to a short evening service before the formal meeting on 20 September.

7 December 2006 - time to be confirmed – Pat Stevens was in the process of arranging for the meeting to take place at the Zoroastrian Centre, Rayners Lane.

8 March 2007 - time to be confirmed at the Brent Seikh Centre – Mr Singh-Kholi would liaise with the Chairman regarding the details.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

36. **Any Other Urgent Business:****Membership**

It was noted that Mr Haylock had tendered his resignation from SACRE since the last meeting. The Chairman had written in appreciation of his service. Mr Crocker had also expressed a wish to resign, and confirmed he would put this in writing in due course.

RESOLVED: That Pat Stevens invite a representative of the Free Churches and a teacher, preferably a primary headteacher, to join SACRE.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 8.10 pm, closed at 9.30 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MRS LURLINE CHAMPAGNIE
Chairman