

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION****19 SEPTEMBER 2007**Representatives of the LEA

Councillors: † Ms Nana Asante † Mrs Anjana Patel
* Mrs Lurline Champagnie

Representatives of Christian and Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

* Mrs M Besser (Chairman)	* Mr D Liversedge
Zia Baig	Mrs S Lynn
* Mr M Bishop	† Councillor Asad Omar
* Mrs N Desai	* Mrs S Panjwani
* Mrs P Gan-Kotwal	* Mr N Ramsley
* Mrs M Hale	Rabbi D Roselaar
Envoy B Haylock	Prof H Singh
Dr V Kapashi	* Mr P Singh-Kohli
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 A Stowe
† Mrs S Mistry	† Mrs R Shakar
† Ms B Pandya-Arepalli	Rev'd Dr S Thompson

Co-opted Members

Mr J Dave * Ms P Stevens
Mr M Shah

Adviser to the Council, Nominated by the Corporate Director, Children's Services

* Mr P O'Dwyer

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**71. **Apologies for Absence:**

RESOLVED: To note that (1) apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel, Mrs Shruti Mistry, Councillor Asad Omar and Mrs Bavita Pandya-Arepalli;

(2) apologies and a resignation had been received from Mrs Rehana Shaker;

(3) a resignation had been received from Ms Suquena Panjwani.

72. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that Pat Stevens was in attendance as a reserve Member for the Church of England.

73. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

74. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the minutes of the meeting held on the 8 March 2007 be taken as read and signed as a correct record;

(2) the minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2007 be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

In the attendance list, Mr Neville Ransley's surname is misspelt 'Ramsley'.

75. **Matters Arising**(a) **SACRE Membership:**

Pat Stevens reported that nomination forms had been circulated to current members of SACRE for confirmation of Membership for the academic year 2007-08 and that most of the forms had been returned to her. It was noted that Ms Beverley Wilson would represent the Rastafarians from the 19 September 2007 in place of Brother Leroy Lindsey and that Ms Sukaina Gulamhussein would represent Shia Muslims from the working party on 20 September 2007 and at future SACRE meetings in the place of Ms Suquena Panjwani.

RESOLVED: That Pat Stevens (1) contacts SACRE Members from 2006-2007 to see if they wished to remain as Members;

(2) takes the necessary action to fill vacancies;

(3) responds to a survey on vacancies on SACREs, organised by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

(b) **NASACRE London Meeting:**

Alison Stowe reported on a meeting of London SACRE representatives, organised by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). Discussion centred around the recent report on religious education by the Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED), entitled "Making Sense of Religion", a proposed national strategy, recruitment and training of teachers specialising in religious education. She emphasised a report that GCSE requirements were changing with the introduction of controlled assessment tasks, marked by teachers, and circulated a SACRE leaflet from another Local Authority, detailing the duties of a SACRE member. A summary of "Making Sense of Religion" was distributed.

RESOLVED: That (1) members study the "Making Sense of Religion" report, with a view to formulating a response at the next SACRE meeting on 5 December 2007;

(2) SACRE revises its "Handbook for SACRE members", to present the duties of SACRE members in a clear, user-friendly text.

(c) **SACRE Showcase for Councillors:**

RESOLVED: To request a suggested date from Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel, after which the working party consisting of Alison Stowe, Patrick O'Dwyer, Pat Stevens and Shruti Mistry could make the necessary arrangements to organise this event.

(d) **SACRE Constitution:**

Pat Stevens reported that a copy of a proposed revised constitution had been submitted for suggestions to the Legal and Governance Services Department for an answer to the query raised by a clause in the 1996 Education Act. She explained that Jill Travers (Principal Lawyer: Governance) was working on our queries and would report to SACRE in due course.

RESOLVED: That SACRE await a response from Legal and Governance Services.

(e) **SACRE advice on the religious needs of pupils:**

Mrs Stowe outlined procedures to be followed by the working party on the religious needs of pupils to take place on 20 September 2007 from 1.00 – 4.00 pm in Committee Room 3 at the Civic Centre. Participation in the working party would be open to all Members and the views of faith community representatives and teachers would be particularly welcome.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

(f) Multi Faith Calenders:
Pat Stevens distributed to Members:

- copies of the Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals;
- updated advice from SACRE regarding occasions when families might request authorised absence for their children to carry out religious obligations.

Discussion took place on the inclusion on the SACRE advice of the festivals/commemorations of Fasika on 5 May, Negus Day on 7 October, Gokul Asthami, Krishna Jayanti, Ganesh Chaturthi and Lailat Ramadan.

RESOLVED: That (1) Pat Stevens arrange for copies of the SHAP Calendar and the current SACRE advice to be circulated to all schools and colleges, with the correction that Eastern Orthodox, Armenian and Rastafarian Good Friday takes place on 25 April (not 27 April) 2008;

(2) Pat Stevens and Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel arrange for the new, detailed Multi Faith Festivals calendars 2008-2009 to be purchased for High Schools, Colleges and libraries;

(3) Pat Stevens carries out further research on Fasika, Negus Day, Gokul Asthami, Krishna Jayanti, Ganesh Chaturthi and Lailat Ramadan to report to the meeting on 5 December 2007, with a view to their being included in Harrow SACRE's advice to schools.

76. **Pupil/Student Representation on SACRE and Early Look at GCSE results 2007:**
Mrs Desai reported on a meeting of the Harrow Student Advisory Group held on 25 June 2007, that she had attended with Mr Baig to represent SACRE. Mrs Desai expressed that she had faith with young people expressing their ideas and participating in policy making together with adults.

Dheemal Patel, from Park High School, agreed to represent the Harrow Student Advisory Group on SACRE and attended the meeting with Ravi Mistry. The students gave an account of the GCSE Philosophy and Ethics course that they were following in religious education, leading initially to a short course qualification, which they intended to convert to a GCSE full course qualification.

It was suggested that for the next SACRE meeting the students bring ideas from the Student Advisory Council on the wearing of religious artifacts in school, that would honour individual beliefs, while keeping within the framework of school uniform and health and safety requirements. This would provide a valuable student dimension to the discussions of the working party on the religious needs of pupils.

SACRE Members applauded the inclusion of young people in their deliberations and expressed that they looked forward to further contributions from them.

SACRE members asked if they could have copies of GCSE syllabuses to gain insight into what was expected of students at this level. Pat Stevens reported that the statistics relating to success in Religious Education at GCSE level 2007 were yet to be published.

RESOLVED: That (1) an agenda item for the meeting due to be held on 5 December 2007 is included in order to allow young people to report to SACRE their views on wearing religious artifacts;

(2) Pat Stevens provides copies of the GCSE Religious Education syllabuses for Members at the meeting on 5 December 2007.

77. **Resources for School - Launch of the Jain and Baha'i Packs:**
The launch of the Jain resource pack on 11 July 2007 was deemed to be an interesting and inspiring occasion. SACRE extended its thanks to the Jain community for their generosity in funding the packs for schools, especially in the commissioning of a writer of children's books to create "Exploring Jainism" a user friendly book for primary children. Copies of the Jain pack were available for SACRE members to collect, if they had not already received one.

Mrs Besser suggested two dates in January for the launch of the Baha'i pack. SACRE members suggested that 23 January 2007 was a good time for the launch. Mrs Besser explained that as a small local community, the Baha'is would fund a third of the cost of the packs for all schools and it was agreed that SACRE would contribute £500 from its budget and schools would be asked to contribute £17 for the pack. This would enable all costs to be covered.

Mr Singh Kohli reminded members that the Sikh packs were under consideration and Mr Lindsey commented that the Rastafarians were beginning to plan their pack. Councillor Mrs Lurline Champagnie recommended that the material in the packs and other teaching materials might be used to build up the section on faiths in the adult reference libraries.

RESOLVED: That (1) Ms Stevens would ascertain the availability of the Council Chamber and Members' Room for the launch of the Baha'i pack on 23 January 2008;

(2) Mrs Besser and members of the Baha'i community would work with SACRE to organize the details of the launch;

(3) Ms Stevens would contact the Librarian to discuss the possibility of additions to the faith sections of libraries at the recommendation of SACRE.

78. **Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and Non-Statutory Scheme of Work:**

Mr Bishop and Ms Stevens reported that the statutory Harrow Agreed Syllabus document was being prepared for electronic publication by the Harrow Council Communications section and should be available during the Autumn Term. A sample non-statutory unit of work was demonstrated, which followed closely the way in which the Qualifications and Assessment Authority (QCA) set out planning documents for the National Curriculum. Members received an outline of the Agreed Syllabus and Non-Statutory scheme of work and thanked all concerned for their hard work in developing a lively interactive syllabus, which would enhance the quality of learning and teaching in schools.

RESOLVED: That this report be noted.

79. **SACRE Budget - Half Year Review:**

Ms Stevens distributed the half-year review of the SACRE budget. Councillor Mrs Lurline Champagnie was pleased that there were plans to spend the allocated budget productively by the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: That this report be noted.

80. **Update from**

(a) **Harrow Multi-Agency Forum:**

Ms Stevens outlined recent activities of the Multi-Agency Forum and the contents of materials SACRE had received from this organisation.

RESOLVED: That (1) this report be accepted;

(2) Ms Stevens gather an update on the development of the Street Pastors scheme, following the presentation made on 5 June 2007.

(b) **Harrow Inter Faith Council:**

Mary Hale, the Chair of Harrow Inter Faith Council paid tribute to the work of Pat Stevens as Secretary until her resignation at the AGM in February 2007. She summarised recent events, which included a conference organised by the Runnymede Trust, at which it was suggested that young people of all faiths might mount a theatrical production. She reported on two functions examining climate change, organized by Harrow Baptist Church and the Kol Choi Jewish Community, Hatch End and noted that Harrow Inter Faith Council had a stall at the "Under One Sky" celebration.

Future events included an open week at Middlesex New Synagogue from 28 September 2007 until 3 October 2007. Prayers for World Peace at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters from 21 until 27 October 2007 and a Youth Voice session entitled "Religion: Help or Hurt?" at the London Inter Faith Centre on Sunday 9 December 2007. Mr Liversedge, who was unable to attend the meeting, submitted information on public debates to be held at St Paul's Cathedral.

RESOLVED: That (1) the above be noted;

(2) Harrow Inter Faith Council to note that SACRE members would be delighted to participate with any visits to places of worship that were being organised.

81. **Dates of Next Meetings:**

The Working Party to devise guidance for schools on the religious needs of pupils would be meeting on 20 September 2007 at 1.00 pm.

The next meetings of SACRE were scheduled for 5 December 2007 and 12 March 2008.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.00 pm)

(Signed) MRS M BESSER
Chairman